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Our new shepherd

Father William Joensen named 10th bishop
of the Diocese of Des Moines



Father William Joensen, pictured with his mother, Marilyn, was named the 10th bishop of the Diocese of Des Moines on Thursday, July 18. Bishop-elect Joensen's ordination and installation is Friday, Sept. 27. The Ames native is a philosophy professor at Loras College in Dubuque.

Pope Francis on Thursday named Father William M. Joensen, Ph.D., a priest of the Archdiocese of Dubuque, as the 10th bishop for the Diocese of Des Moines.

His ordination as a bishop and installation in the Diocese of Des Moines will be Friday, Sept. 27. Watch dmdiocese.org for details.

Bishop-elect Joensen, 59, grew up in Ames, the oldest of five children. He attended Iowa State University, earned a bachelor's degree in zoology and was in medical school when he discerned a calling to the priesthood. He was ordained in 1989 and served in parish ministry for six years before begin-

ning graduate studies.

Since returning to the Archdiocese of Dubuque, he has served at Loras College in Dubuque as philosophy professor and assisted at parishes in and around Dubuque.

Bishop Richard Pates now serves as administrator of the diocese until Bishop-elect Joensen is ordained and installed as the bishop.

The Diocese of Des Moines welcomes Bishop-elect Joensen.

Passing the torch

Bishop Pates welcomes new leader of the Diocese of Des Moines



Bishop Pates introduced Bishop-elect William Joensen to the diocese on Thursday, July 18 at a press conference at the Catholic Pastoral Center.

Bishop Richard Pates’ remarks at the announcement of our new bishop.

Este es un día muy alegre para la Diócesis de Des Moines. Tengo el gran placer de anunciar el nombramiento por parte del Papa Francisco del Reverendo William M. Joensen como el décimo obispo de Des Moines.

Cuando me presentaron a mí hace once años como el noveno obispo de Des Moines, hablé primeramente en español. Mi propósito en esa ocasión fue la de llamar la atención al significativo número de hispanos en nuestra diócesis y de su importancia para nuestra comunidad. Sus números han aumentado a cuarenta mil. Tenemos doce Misas en español cada domingo. Dos hispanos de segunda generación están estudiando para el sacerdocio. La comunidad ha llevado a cabo varios encuentros y hemos tenido noventa y un participantes en extenso entrenamiento de liderazgo. Mis amigos, el contingente hispano de la diócesis se llena de regocijo: Bienvenido nuestro Obispo-electo. ¡Estamos contentos y emocionados de que venga a Des Moines!

This is a happy day for the Diocese of Des Moines. I am very pleased to announce the appointment by Pope Francis of the Reverend William M. Joensen as the tenth bishop of Des Moines.

Father Joensen is a priest of the Archdiocese of Dubuque. Born in 1960,

he is the son of the late Alfred W. Joensen and his mother Marilyn E. who currently resides in Ames. He is the oldest of five children. His younger brother Tom and his wife Jennifer and their two children, Michael and Olivia, live in Ankeny and were founding members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish. Tom, an attorney, works at 801 Grand and now will be able to look down on his older sibling at 601 Grand.

Father graduated from Iowa State University, thereafter attended medical school. Before completing medical training he entered the Josephinum Seminary in Columbus, Ohio.

Father Joensen was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Dubuque on June 24, 1989. His early years of ministry were as an associate pastor in the towns of Dubuque and Waterloo.

Since 1995 he has been active both pastorally and in teaching at the college level basically combining the roles of professor and chaplain to college students. During that time, he served terms as Chaplain at Clarke College in Dubuque, Chaplain at Loras College, Director of Spiritual Formation at St. Pius X Seminary program and since 2010 he has been Dean of Campus Spiritual Life at Loras College and an Associate Professor of Philosophy. He has been a member of the philosophy department at Loras College since 2002.

He was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Philosophy from the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC in 2002. The title of his dissertation was: “Genetic Enhancement and the Ends of Medicine and Human

Life.”

He has established a remarkable compendium of academic presentations and publications which we will be happy to post on our diocesan website for your reference.

As we heartily welcome you, Bishop-elect Joensen, I am very proud to introduce you to the Diocese of Des Moines.

We are a Catholic community constituted by 23 counties of Southwest Iowa, 80 parishes, 17 Catholic Schools, 3 Catholic hospitals. With the Hispanic population we have a total of 140,000 members. We are growing. The non-Hispanic population has grown by 15% in the last ten years. Our outreach includes among others immigrants from Vietnam, Cambodia, South Sudan, Eritrea, Myanmar, Iraq, Kenya and several other nationalities.

We presently have 114 priests, 105 deacons, 19 sisters and 17 seminarians serving our community. The clergy are characterized by their devoted pastoral commitment and their love for Iowa. We are blessed with 21 extern international priests in ministry who have been warmly welcomed by their American counterparts.

The Diocese benefits from an exceptional staff whom I am confident will serve you well. They engage their ministry at a very high level, are generous and find their identity in service.

The laity have accepted the mantle of responsibility placed on their shoulders by the Second Vatican Council.

They admirably lead and participate in their parishes. They have initiated, led and executed remarkably grace-filled events the impact of which has extended far beyond the diocese.

The faithful of the Diocese of Des Moines are extraordinarily generous and supportive, genuine in their expression of faith in prayer and action, possess classical values while open to progress and new developments. They are committed to the full expression of social justice honoring the dignity of every individual human-being from the moment of conception until natural death. They are true Iowans. You will be happy to know they are evenly split into Hawkeye and Cyclone fans.

As we very happily welcome you on our common journey of making Jesus Christ known and loved in our times, we also excitedly embrace the New Moment with you as we respond to the calling of being missionary disciples of Jesus Christ.

Welcome, Brother William.

Lea esta declaración en español en DMDiocese.org y haga clic en Ministerio Hispano.

“My greatest hope is that people encounter Jesus”

Bishop-elect seeks to accompany people on life's journey to heaven

Des Moines Bishop-elect William Joensen's remarks at the announcement of his appointment.

I am likely the most amazed person in the room today—amazed and a little bit dazed, if truth be told. Less than two weeks ago, after the Fourth of July, I was beginning to turn my thoughts to planning and preparation for a new academic year. The call from the United States Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Pierre, with the request to become your bishop, was not simply a huge surprise, it was rather daunting. Among my initial responses was: “You’re sure, Archbishop, that the Holy Father knows about this and signed off on it?” To which he gave his little French chuckle and reassured me that, yes, the Holy Father was on board.

Beyond surprise and some trepidation, though, my heart was stirred and filled with peace and attraction to the position. For I am thoroughly an Iowa guy—you’ll notice that I didn’t say “Iowa Boy,” as I’m aware that former DSM Register columnist Chuck Offenburger still retains proprietary claim over that title! My first 22 years were in Ames, graduating from Ames High and Iowa State; there were two brief but pivotal years in Iowa City, and eventually 24 years as a priest in Waterloo and mainly Dubuque. I may be fortunate to have lived and studied in different places in the country and even the world, but I LOVE this state and its people with their rootedness in the land and their deep faith, and I’ve always wanted to spend my life here serving others. I love the premium that people place on education, their no-nonsense approach to life that is a healthy reality check for politicians and priests alike. I respect our culture’s core values that find their nucleus in the family and community. Yet people are people, neighbors are neighbors, and so the diverse backgrounds, nationalities, and challenges and blessings that Iowans represent all contribute to the quality of life and human dignity that I believe finds its fullest expression in Jesus, the source of all life and goodness.

My greatest hope and heart’s desire as a priest, soon-to-be-bishop, is that people have the graced chance to encounter Jesus, to experience his love and his mercy (as I certainly have!), and to form a friendship with him through Sacred Scripture, the life of the sacraments—especially the Eucharist—and through the communion we know with one another. Jesus is the truth I’ve staked my life on, but I am humbled and inspired when I am privileged to walk with other people and witness their deep goodness, the sacrifices they make for those they already care about and for those who don’t believe God or anyone else cares for them—as Jesus indeed does. I want to do what the good priests



Bishop-elect William Joensen celebrated Mass at St. Ambrose Cathedral in Des Moines on July 18 with Bishop Richard Pates and Fathers Ross Parker, James Downey, Daniel Ladu, Michael Amadeo and John Bertogli.

of this Des Moines Diocese and other pastoral ministers and people of God do: bear the living water of Spirit to others (cf. Jn. 4:10), allowing them to draw compassion, hope and strength from the abundance Jesus has poured forth in his Cross and Resurrection. Part of the Spirit-led renewal called for these days is being ever true to our vocations so that we can help restore the bruised—for some, broken—trust that people hold for the Church. Likewise, if we are simple as doves and clever as serpents as Jesus counsels us to be, we know that we also need a good measure of prudence and fortitude to remain ever firm in the faith, to engage the many voices and spirits blowing in our own time that would confuse and scatter the flock.

As it seems I’ve been given the opportunity to become a shepherd and teacher of the faith, I want to accompany and occasionally navigate (as the son of a former Air Force navigator might be inclined to do) for people on their life’s journey to heaven. Jesus saves us for the sake of his heavenly Father. That is our mission: to help God make this world become ever more the Kingdom, so that we can one day behold Jesus and his Father face-to-face. And in the process, we will see how beautiful we all are in the light of God’s glory, starting with Jesus’ Mom, Mary.

Me gustaría ofrecer algunas palabras, especialmente a nuestros hermanos y hermanas hispanos. Aunque mi español es de un nivel básico, sé que juntos hablamos un idioma común: el lenguaje del Evangelio, la creencia de que el Espíritu de Jesús nos habla, llamándonos juntos en

la amistad, en la confianza y en el amor—en la casa del pueblo de Dios -la Iglesia. Espero colaborar con ustedes, comunicarme en diferentes niveles y aprender de ustedes cómo podemos servir mejor a Cristo y su Reino. Gracias por sus oraciones.

[Though my Spanish is only at a basic level, I know that together we speak a common language: the language of the Gospel, the belief that the Spirit of Jesus speaks to us, calling us together in friendship, mutual trust, and love, into the house of God’s people—the Church. I look forward to collaborating with you, to communicating on different levels, and to learning from you how we can best serve Christ and his Kingdom. Thank you for your prayers.]

A friend of mine with whom I’ve served in ministry at Loras in the past, Fr. Bob Gross, once said to me, “Bill, wherever you are, you’re all there.” For roughly three decades, with timeout for some more schooling, “there” was NE Iowa, specifically Loras College. But now God has called me here, and while it might take a little bit, I promise to be all here, pouring myself out for the people, the priests and religious of the Des Moines Diocese, and for the citizens of the metro area and SW Iowa, including members of various faith communities: Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and other traditions. This is an area of no small distinction: the seat of our state government, the World Food Prize Foundation, Drake University, Living History Farms, Mercy College of Health Sciences, Dowling and St. Albert’s High Schools, many corporate headquarters, and the vast number of farms and agriculturally related

enterprises that make this Cyclone proud.

Of course, I am keenly aware that in undertaking this role, I am only taking the baton from those who’ve served with distinction for so long: starting with Bishops Dowling and Drumm, with successors like Bishop Dingman and his great passion for social justice, Bishop Charron with his compassion and approachability, and of course, the man standing here with me, Bishop Pates. I’ve witnessed Bishop Pates’ evangelical spark, his engaging personality, his love for Christ and for his flock, not only of this Diocese, but his work for the larger Church in his solicitude for immigrants and refugees and others looking for a place to call home. I’ve sensed his paternal regard and astute discernment for his seminarians whom he sent us at Loras, and for Loras students from the Des Moines Diocese whom he sought out as a good shepherd, just like Pope Francis instructs us to do. Like Elijah and Elisha, I will only partly be tongue-in-cheek as I ask him to throw his mantle over me and give me a double portion of his Spirit (cf. 2 Kgs 2:9)—which ultimately is THE Spirit in which we become brothers and sisters, united in one faith, one Lord, one baptism (cf. Eph. 4:5).

Lea esta declaración en español en DMDiocese.org y haga clic en Ministerio Hispano.



Bishop-elect William Joensen had a busy day July 18 at the Catholic Pastoral Center meeting diocesan staff, priests, press and laity.

Welcome!

Five things to know about our new bishop

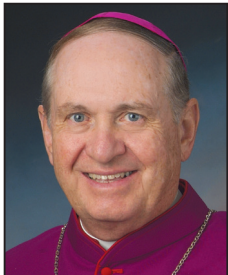
- 1. He grew up in Ames.
- 2. He’s been a priest for 30 years, 21 of them in Dubuque as a professor.
- 3. He’s a good friend of Davenport Bishop Thomas Zinkula, who also served in the Archdiocese of Dubuque.
- 4. He’s an avid cyclist.
- 5. He loves Iowa.



History in the making

Bishop-elect joins a list of nine other men who have led our diocese.

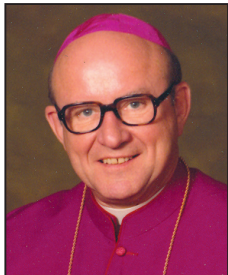
The Diocese of Des Moines was established Aug. 12, 1911. The following bishops have served:



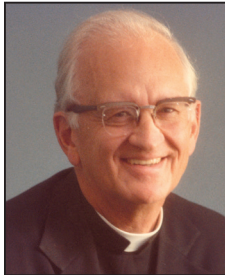
2008-2019 Bishop Richard E. Pates



1994-2007
Bishop Joseph L. Charron,
C.P.P.S.



1987-1993 Bishop William H. Bullock



1968-1986
Bishop Maurice J. Dingman



1965-1967 Bishop George J. Biskup



1948-1964
Bishop Edward C. Daly, O.P.



1934-1948 Bishop Gerald T. Bergan



1919-1933
Bishop Thomas
W. Drumm



1912-1919
Bishop Austin Dowling

Congratulations

Bishops from Bishop-elect William Joensen’s home diocese offer congratulations.

Archdiocese of Dubuque

“Today, our Holy Father Pope Francis gave voice to God’s will by naming Father William Joensen as the next bishop of the diocese of Des Moines; and Father Bill said, ‘Yes,’” said Dubuque Archbishop Michael Jackels. “We are sad to lose Father Bill as a member of our presbyterate; he will be missed. Hopefully, the faithful of the Diocese of Des Moines will very soon come to appreciate the gift God is giving them in their new bishop.”

Diocese of Davenport

“Father Joensen will be a wonderful bishop and I am overjoyed that he was chosen to be the next bishop of the Diocese of Des Moines,” said Davenport Bishop Thomas Zinkula, a good friend of Bishop-elect Joensen. “I look forward to collaborating with him in the province of Iowa.”

Diocese of Sioux City

“Today is an exciting day for the Diocese of Des Moines as they formally announce their new bishop....” said Sioux City Bishop Nickless Walker. “Congratulations to Fr. William Joensen. Please pray for him as he begins his new position as Bishop of the Diocese of Des Moines.”

How does the Catholic Church appoint a new bishop?

Each year, vacancies for bishop arise as a result of death, retirement, illness or expansion of a diocese. The Holy Father, Pope Francis, makes the appointments. He has assistance from the Congregation for Bishops, an office at the Vatican, and his representative in various countries. In the United States, his representative is Archbishop Christophe Pierre.

The papal nuncio, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, looks at a list of suitable candidates recommended every three years by the Iowa bishops. He consults with the Iowa bishops and others as needed to help him create a list of three candidates.

The papal nuncio sends his list of three suitable candidates for bishop with his recommendation to the Congregation for Bishops. This list is called a terna (Latin for “three”).

In addition, information on the needs in a diocese is collected and forwarded on to the Congregation for

Bishops. The congregation considers the needs of a diocese when making a recommendation to the Holy Father.

The Congregation for Bishops is free to nominate any one of the three suggested by the papal nuncio or it can name one whose name does not appear on the terna yet who is known to them to be the most qualified for that vacancy, given the needs and circumstances of the local diocese.

The cardinal overseeing the Congregation of Bishops submits to the Holy Father the name deemed to be most suitable for a vacancy. The Holy Father can choose any priest to fill the vacancy. However, he almost always trusts the competency of the Congregation for Bishops in its recommendation.

After the Holy Father has made his decision, the candidate is notified. An announcement is made shortly thereafter.