

# Bishop ordains four permanent deacons

By **DAWN PROSSER**  
Director of Communications

Four men were ordained Aug. 5 to the permanent diaconate for the Diocese of Sioux City by Bishop Walker Nickless at the Cathedral of the Epiphany in Sioux City.

Will Fergen of Mater Dei Parish, Sioux City; Alan Loew of St. John Paul II Parish, Carroll; Mark Steinberg and Jeff Stanek of Holy Trinity Parish, Webster County received the sacrament of holy orders during the ordination Mass.

Bishop Nickless noted in his homily that the ordination Mass coincided with the feast of the dedication of the Basilica of St. Mary Major, also known as the feast of Our Lady of the Snows and the date is significant for the men to be ordained.

“We celebrate this ordination on a feast that reminds us of the importance of Mary in our lives,” the bishop said. “We pray for Mary’s intercession today in all our lives, but especially on these four men to be ordained deacons. May Mary, our blessed mother, guide, guard and make fruitful your ministry as deacons.”

The bishop recalled that each of the four originally didn’t believe that they were suitable candidates for the diaconate, as they stated in recent interviews for The Lumen. Their comments ranged from, “My faith is lukewarm at best,” to “No way are you ever going to see me in a Catholic Church.”

The bishop assured the men that “no matter how unworthy we feel,” God’s grace, mercy and love can transform “all of us into vessels of mercy and holiness.”

“God indeed, works in strange ways. He has called these men to the service and ministry of deacons here in the church of the Diocese of Sioux City,” he said.

### Scripture references

The Scripture readings selected for the Mass illustrate the men’s call to the order of deacon, the bishop explained. In the first reading from Numbers 3:5-9, the Lord spoke to Moses, “They have been set aside from among the children of Israel as dedicated to me.”

Bishop Nickless pointed out that God selected Fergen, Loew, Stanek and Steinberg as they were “filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom,” just as the seven were selected in the second reading from Acts 6:1-7b.

“It is God who has chosen them and called them. The Holy Spirit has prepared them through study and prayer to become ministers of God among us,” said the bishop of the



Mark Steinberg, Jeff Stanek, Alan Loew and Will Fergen are presented to the assembly at their ordination to the permanent diaconate. (Lumen photo by Dawn Prosser)

four to be conferred with holy orders.

As in the Gospel reading from John 12:24-26, Bishop Nickless said the four were like the grain of wheat that must first die, “die to self; die to sin; die to the temptations of the evil one so that they can produce much fruit.”

“They, like all of us, must follow the Lord in life, in death, in resurrection and accomplish great things all for the glory of the Lord and establishment of the kingdom,” the bishop pointed out.

### Advice and prayer

Just moments away from the ordination rite, the bishop offered advice for the four men and their ministry as permanent deacons for the Diocese of Sioux City.

“I encourage you, my brothers, to center your life more and more on prayer. Spend time with the Lord in adoration, praying of the Divine Office and reflect and meditate on the

word of God as found in Scripture,” he said.

Noting that each have full and busy lives with families and work responsibilities, Bishop Nickless pointed out that the men who would be ordained deacons were willing to “commit yourselves in service to the Gospel, of the sacraments and in charity.”

“We pray for you today and promise our prayers for the days to come,” the bishop said.

He also thanked the candidates’ wives (Patty Fergen, Ann Loew, Elizabeth Stanek and Caroline Steinberg) for their role in the formation of their husbands for the diaconate and “for sharing the gift of their husbands for service to the church.”

### The rite

Following the homily, the candidates made promises of the elect and a promise of obedience to Bishop Nickless and

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## THE LAST GIFT

### Le Mars group strives for every soul to be remembered, marked with gravestones

By **RENEE WEBB**  
Content and Design Coordinator

A non-profit organization in Plymouth County established a few years ago is working to ensure every soul is honored with a permanent gravestone marking their final resting place.

The Last Gift was the brainchild of Steve Kolker, a parishioner of All Saints Parish in Le Mars. And while it was formed in late 2020, its roots were planted years earlier.

“It’s a God thing. He works in complicated ways and sows a lot of seeds out there,” said the organization’s founder.

### The idea

Kolker explained how years earlier a very active member of the Knights of Columbus had died. The man, Dave, was only about 40 years old and was unmarried.

“Years later I am walking out in the grave-

yard and I trip over a metal marker used by the funeral homes that has a name on it,” he said. “It’s there usually to mark the grave until the headstone comes.” The temporary marker was that of his fellow Knight whom he had served as a pall bearer for about 10 years earlier.

Knowing the family didn’t have much money, he asked his brother Knights if they had a benevolent fund to buy a marker. They did not, but opted to collect money at their various events and eventually had enough money to buy a gravestone. The idea and concept of providing permanent stone markers at gravesites never left him.

“I thought that was a neat project and said someday I was going to do this. Fifteen years later I was at a meeting and we were talking about our bucket lists. I told them about this project (about buying permanent gravestones) and said some day I wanted to start something



Lynn Steckelberg and Steve Kolker stand in Calvary Cemetery in Le Mars near one of the gravestones provided through the organization The Last Gift. (Lumen photo by Renee Webb)

like that,” said Kolker, who even mentioned he wanted to name the organization The Last Gift.

Two weeks later, the two women who had heard Kolker talk about the bucket list idea called him. The women took it upon themselves to set up the first meeting because they thought the organization would be a great service and wanted to get involved.

### The nudge

“The angels,” as he described them, “called me to attend my first meeting,” he quipped.

That push is what was needed to have the organization come to fruition.

Since that time, they have become a 501(c)3 nonprofit thanks to the assistance of SHIP out of Sioux City and involved two local funeral directors.

When Lynn Steckelberg, who is also a parishioner of All Saints Parish, learned about The Last Gift while the men and their wives were playing cards one night, he was on board

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**Bishop Walker Nickless celebrates Mass Aug. 4 at Cathedral of the Epiphany in Sioux City to mark his 50th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood. (Lumen photos by Dawn Prosser)**



## 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF PRIESTHOOD

# Bishop Nickless marks jubilee Aug. 4 with Mass

By **KATIE BORKOWSKI**  
Communications Specialist

On the Feast of St. John Vianney, Aug. 4, Bishop Walker Nickless celebrated the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

Many gathered at the Cathedral of the Epiphany in Sioux City for a Mass to celebrate the bishop's years of priestly ministry. Bishop Nickless was the principal celebrant with Archbishop Emeritus Jerome Hanus, OSB; Archbishop-elect Thomas Zinkula of Dubuque (currently Bishop of Davenport); Msgr. Kevin McCoy, vicar general; Father Brad Pelzel, vicar general; Father David Esquiliano, rector of the cathedral; Father Daniel Guenther, vicar forane of the Northeast Deanery; Father Timothy Pick, vicar forane of the Northwest Deanery; Father Terry Roder, vicar forane of the Southeast Deanery; and priests of the diocese as concelebrants.

The deacons of the Mass were Deacon Bruce Chartier and Deacon Jorge Fernandez. The master of ceremonies was Father Andrew Galles, director of worship, with Deacon Mark Prosser as assistant master of ceremonies. Seminarians of the diocese were the servers for the Mass.

The Missouri River Choral Society directed by John Flannery served as choir for the Mass with Dr. Jeremy Owens as organist. The Mass setting for the anniversary liturgy was the Mass of the Epiphany, written by Father Ross Caniglia.

Dr. Mark and Renee DeMay were the lectors and members of bishop's family were the gift bearers. Members of the chancery staff were the ushers and greeters.

Bishop Nickless welcomed those who traveled a distance to attend this special Mass – visitors, friends and family from Denver and beyond.

"I also want to welcome in a special way the bishop who ordained me a bishop, Archbishop Jerome Hanus, and his



**Bishop R. Walker Nickless delivers the homily as Archbishop Emeritus Jerome Hanus, OSB, and Archbishop-elect Thomas Zinkula of Dubuque are seated in sanctuary.**

successor, the Archbishop-elect Tom Zinkula," he said. "To all my family and to everyone else who is here, thank you so much. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to give praise to God."

### Reflecting on 50 years

St. John Mary Vianney, the patron of parish priests, died on this day, Aug. 4, 1859, noted Bishop Nickless.

"He served as pastor of a small city in France named Ars," he said. "His holiness of life sanctified the entire city... One biography reads, 'Though he was not known for his intelligent gifts or academic writings, his counsels overflow with extra ordinary piety and insights into the spiritual life.'"

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## Pope Francis sends letter to Bishop Nickless for 50th jubilee

At the end of Mass, Father David Esquiliano read a letter sent to Bishop Nickless from Pope Francis regarding the bishop's anniversary.

"Venerable Brother Ralph Walker Nickless Bishop of Sioux City celebrating the golden jubilee of the priestly ordination, who preaches the truth of Christ in love to the ecclesial community of the faithful fulfilling the episcopal duties entrusted to him," wrote the pope,

in Latin but was read in English. "We accompany with our prayers, and through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we pray for the gifts of good health and, most of all, the light of the Holy Spirit, who sanctifies in truth. We impart a blessing for him and his flock, as well as ask for prayers for our office, so that we may be able to exercise the Petrine Office with the joy of the Gospel."

## Deacon Jerome Reicks dies in Sioux City at age 90

Deacon Jerome "Jerry" A. Reicks, Sr., 90, Sioux City, died July 31, 2023, at the Holy Spirit Nursing Home.

His funeral Mass was Aug. 8 at St. Michael Church in Sioux City with Bishop Walker Nickless officiating. Entombment was at Calvary Mausoleum.

Deacon Reicks was born on Jan. 9, 1933, in a farmhouse near Petersburg, Nebraska. He was the second of five children born of Alphonse and Elizabeth "Schmitz" Reicks. He attended St. John the Baptist School, graduating in May 1951.

He moved to Fremont, Nebraska, working at the Nebraska Ordinance Plant in Meade, Nebraska making shells during the Korean War. He married Barbara J. Baum on Jan. 31, 1953, at St. Boniface Church in Elgin, Nebraska. They were blessed with two sons and three daughters.



Deacon Reicks worked as a mechanic and drywall subcontractor in Fremont before moving to Sioux City in 1963 to establish Tri-State Drywall Company, which he owned and operated for 36 years until his retirement.

Throughout his life, he remained dedicated to his Catholic faith, actively participating in church activities, and the Knights of Columbus. He served as president of St. Michael Home and School Association. He was also one of the original board members of Trinity Heights. Additionally, his dedication to the Carmelites and their buildings showcased his love and support for their mission.

He was ordained a permanent deacon Nov. 20, 1982, at the Cathedral of the Epiphany by Bishop Paul V. Dudley of Sioux Falls. Deacon Reicks served at St. Joseph Church for 25 years before transferring to St. Michael Church.

Following retirement, Deacon Reicks and Barbara spent half the year in Sun City West, Arizona. He served as deacon at Our Lady of Lourdes retirement parish. He later served Sun City West full-time.

Deacon Reicks is survived by his wife, Barbara, and their four children, Jerome "Jerry" and Brenda Reicks, Stephen Reicks, Patricia Stusse and Diane Glover and numerous other relatives and friends.

Deacon Reicks was preceded in death by his parents Alphonse and Elizabeth Schmitz Reicks, as well as his siblings and spouses.

## Borkowski takes Kuemper position

Longtime Lumen Media staffer and Communications Specialist Katie Borkowski will be leaving her position as of Aug. 11. A resident of Carroll County, she has accepted the position of secretary and administrative coordinator for Kuemper Catholic School in Carroll.

Borkowski initially joined the Catholic Globe staff as a Briar Cliff University mass communications intern, then accepted a full-time reporter position 20 years ago.

"We will greatly miss having Katie as part of the team," noted Dawn Prosser, director of communications. "Katie's willingness to assist wherever needed and her wide range of communications skills – writing, reporting, photography and digital media – have been an asset to the team. However, we are happy that she can bring her energy and skills to our friends at Kuemper Catholic School for years to come and we will keep her in our prayers."



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# AUGUST: Month of Marian feasts

**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

The summer months have quickly passed by and now we are well into August and anticipating the first day of school for our teachers and young people.

I want to thank all for the prayers and well-wishes for my 50th anniversary of my priestly ordination earlier this month. I so appreciate your kindness in thinking of me.

Traditionally, we Catholics dedicate this month to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, described as "the seat of her love," particularly for her son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. This practice dates back centuries.

Pope Pius XII consecrated the church and the world to Mary's Immaculate Heart in 1942, the 25th anniversary of the apparitions of Mary at Fatima. Two years later, Pope Pius XII declared the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to be celebrated on the octave of the Assumption (Aug. 22).

Pope Pius XII's consecration was renewed by St. Pope Paul VI at the close of the third session of the Vatican Council. In 1969, he moved the date of the feast to the third Saturday after Pentecost. The church celebrated the memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary on June 17 this year.

August is rich with Marian celebrations. You may have noticed that we had an optional memorial of the Dedication of the Basilica of St. Mary Major on Aug. 5 including Psalm 15, "You are the highest honor of our race. Blessed are you, daughter, by the Most High God, above all the women on earth; and blessed be the Lord God, the creator of heaven and earth."

Be sure to check your parish website, bulletin and/or social media for the schedule of Masses for Aug. 15, the feast of the Assumption, a holy day of obligation. This is the day the church celebrates the assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, body and soul, into heaven.

The Assumption has long been celebrated by the church. Pope Pius XII confirmed the dogma of Mary's assumption for the faithful in his 1950 document, *Munificentissimus Deus* (Most Bountiful God).

Scripture does not specifically spell out the Assumption, but we can look to Revelation 12:1 for language that Biblical scholars believe indicate that Mary was assumed into heaven: "A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of 12 stars."

The Eastern Orthodox Catholics also celebrate Mary on Aug. 15. However, they commemorate what they call the Dormition of Mary, or Mary falling asleep.

The final Marian feast day we will commemorate this month will be the memorial of the Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Aug. 22. As we recognize that Christ is the king over all the earth, our savior and redeemer, the mother of the savior is crowned as queen for her role in our salvation.

St. Pope Paul VI said that Mary's Immaculate Heart is "the model of perfect love toward God and toward our fellow beings."

For the remainder of the month, let us meditate upon Mary's heart during our personal prayer time. Consider reciting the prayer found at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception's Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel in Washington, D.C.:

*"Father,  
You prepared the heart of the Virgin Mary to be a fitting home for your Holy Spirit. By her prayers, may we become more worthy of your glory. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen."*

As I begin my 51st year of priesthood, please remember me in your prayers as I pray daily for all of you.

Your brother in Christ,



Most Reverend Walker Nickless  
Diocese of Sioux City



The Diocese of Sioux City presently has eight diocesan seminarians. Seven of them recently gathered in Sioux City and an eighth, the inset, is Tommy Kollasch who is studying in Rome.

## Support of the faithful energizes seminarians

By **DAWN PROSSER**  
Director of Communications

"We are blessed as seminarians for the Diocese of Sioux City to have such a strong community behind us," noted Jake Rosenmeyer, seminarian for the Diocese of Sioux City from Divine Mercy Parish in Algona. "It really makes the process much easier."

The seminarian, who attends Kenrick-Glennon Seminary in Shrewsbury, Missouri, pointed out that the faithful of the Diocese of Sioux City provide much encouragement and prayers for the seminarians. Several organizations including the Knights of Columbus, Catholic Daughters of America, St. Serra clubs, parishes and faith formation programs are among those to offer their support to the seminarians.

"There's a lot of support and it helps to keep an eye on the end goal of coming back and serving all these people who are making connections through various ways," he said.

Many parishioners in the diocese also support the eight seminarians through the annual Seminarian Appeal. The contributions to the fund help to educate the men who are studying for the priesthood and hope to be ordained as priests.

"As this education fund continues to grow, we hope to provide the best training possible for our seminarians who will serve as your future pastors," Father Shane Deman, director of seminarians and Father Travis Crotty, director of vocations posted to the diocesan website.

Appeal brochures were recently mailed to households in the diocese. Those wishing to participate in the appeal can return a gift through the U.S. Mail or online at [scdiocese.org/seminarian-appeal](http://scdiocese.org/seminarian-appeal). The goal for the 2023 appeal is \$200,000.

The vocation leaders note that the campaign has been successful in recent years and is crucial in funding the education of the men in seminary.

"The Seminarian Appeal has continued to grow over the years and I am very grateful for the widespread support from across our diocese," Father Deman explained. "Investing in seminarian formation will, we pray, give us holy shepherds who truly know Jesus Christ and who are capable of leading their flocks to the Lord in a spirit of joy. Thanks to all who support our mission."

"Supporting the annual appeal helps us to be able to cover expenses so the burden is not so heavy on our own families. But even more important than the monetary support is the fact that we know everyone in the diocese is praying for us," Rosenmeyer pointed out. "Those prayers are certainly felt and that's what matters because we all need prayers. So, as you all pray for us, we all pray for you and it just helps to build up the kingdom."

Seminarians include Rosenmeyer, Thomas Kollasch of Divine Mercy Parish in Algona, James Fitzsimmons of Cathedral Parish in Sioux City, Garrett Hugeback of St. Joseph Parish in Wall Lake, Anthony Vera of All Saints Parish in Le Mars, Zach Steffens of St. Mary Parish in Spirit Lake, Brian Schmit of St. Anthony Parish in Hospers and Matt Staley of St. Rose of Lima Parish in Denison.

To learn more about discerning for the priesthood, visit [siouxcity-priest.org](http://siouxcity-priest.org) or contact the Vocations Office at (712) 233-7523 or [demans@scdiocese.org](mailto:demans@scdiocese.org) or [crottyt@scdiocese.org](mailto:crottyt@scdiocese.org).



### Quo Vadis

The annual discernment retreat, Quo Vadis, that is sponsored by the Office of Vocations was held in rural Salix. Young men open to a vocation to the priesthood joined with diocesan seminarians and the vocations director, Father Crotty, for the weekend.

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## Catholic school graduate serves as FOCUS missionary

By TOM BETZ

I recently received a call from 2020 graduate Lizbeth Marquez. I had remembered her as a student at Bishop Heelan and also knew her older sister Rosa, '10 and brother Mauricio "Mo" Marquez, '13. Lizbeth, the daughter of Rosa and Jose, wanted a chance to sit down with me and my wife Julie to share her story.

We scheduled a time to grab some coffee at Caribou Coffee. After a little catching up, Lizbeth shared about her journey. She graduated from Heelan and made her way to the University of Nebraska Omaha. Like many young grads, Lizbeth found herself a little confused at times. "What is my path?" She also found herself looking to Christ for direction.

The St. John Paul II Newman Center on UNO's campus became her happy place. I hear from many young alumni that Newman Centers can have that effect. She began to really get involved there and was challenged to get out of her comfort zone more than once. It showed her that she can make a difference and be a leader. Their mission is simple, "To share the transformative love of Jesus Christ with every college student in Omaha."

Reflecting, Lizbeth said, "college was not a walk in the park. Nor did I do things perfectly. There were many mistakes, worldly experiences, and numbing that took place throughout my first couple of years. But, my friends and missionaries challenged me to live for heaven. Their endless invitations to daily holy hours, vulnerable prayer, daily Mass and virtuous friendship impacted me. Because once we encounter Christ, we must respond."

Lizbeth's faith continued to grow and God has led her to become a FOCUS missionary, (Fellowship of Catholic University Students). Lizbeth will be assigned to a different university to work at when she graduates in December with degrees in psychology and medical humanities.

"We're all on a mission together. We're all here for the same reason. Because of Jesus, our ordinary lives have been transformed in extraordinary ways – and we can't help but spread that joy. That's what it means to be a missionary," she said.

Voted "most dramatic" by her senior class at Heelan; she will use her outgoing personality during her three-year commitment to share the message of God.

"Though hesitant at first, after this encounter I began to seek Jesus more consistently through prayer, the sacraments and virtuous friendships. As I have come to know the truth that Jesus wants us not only to be well, but to live abundantly (Jn 10:10), I deeply desire to share that

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Marquez

## Schmit discerning call to the priesthood

By KATIE BORKOWSKI  
Communications Specialist

The Office of Vocations has announced the Diocese of Sioux City has two new seminarians, including Brian Schmit of St. Anthony Parish of Hospers.

Schmit is the son of James and Joan Schmit. He is a 2022 graduate of Gehlen Catholic School in Le Mars and recently completed his freshman year at Iowa State University.

This year, he will begin the propaedeutic stage of formation at Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary in Winona, Minnesota.

Over winter break this past year, Schmit participated in a Seek weekend. He acknowledged that is where "I felt like the Lord was calling me to the priesthood."

"On the first day that we were there, we had Mass and a couple of talks," he said. "I do not know why but the thought of the priesthood kept coming to mind, even though it was never mentioned that day. Later on, at Seek, one of the speakers talked about how we need to take action in our lives and stop waiting around forever, which I took to heart because the priesthood was something I had been thinking about for a while."

Schmit pointed out later that day, when the attendees prayed in adoration, he took his thoughts to prayer, "asking the Lord if he was calling me to the priesthood."

"While I was kneeling there praying, a guy that was ahead of me turned around and asked to pray over me," he said. "I had asked him to pray for me to know if I was being called to the priesthood, and while he was praying over me, a sudden wave of peace and calm washed over me. It was



The parents of Brian Schmit, a new seminarian, help dress him in his new cassock and surplice during a recent Mass with Father Dan Greving at St. Anthony Church in Hospers. (Submitted photo)

at that moment that I was sure the Lord was calling me to enter the seminary."

Since then, Schmit has had continued peace in "my decision and in my prayer about this choice."

Though no one has strongly encouraged him to discern the priesthood, Anthony Vera, a seminarian for the diocese from LeMars, was "a good role model" for Schmit in high school.

"I first got to know him through cross country," said Schmit. "He was always joyful and strong in his faith. Throughout high school, he helped me to grow in my faith through his example."

Schmit commented one of his favorite prayers is the St. Michael Prayer and his favorite novena is



Schmit

the Surrender Novena.

This fall, he looks forward to "continuing to grow in my relationship with God and growing in fraternity with the other seminarians."

## Bishop's 50th brings many together to celebrate

FROM PAGE 2

Bishop Nickless acknowledged it is not always good to compare "yourself with a saint, none the less, I can identify with St. John Vianney, 'not known for intellectual gifts or academic writings.'"

"I have strived the best I can for 50 years to imitate St. John Vianney's priestly and pastoral manners," he said. "Please pray for me and for my brother priests who celebrate the feast of our patron saint – a model of holiness and dedication to the people they are sent to serve."

In his homily, Bishop Nickless focused on his 50 years of ordained ministry as a priest.

"When I was a student in Rome, studying in the seminary, my grandparents visited. They came over to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary," he said. "I thought, 'My gosh, they're old.' After I was ordained a priest, one of my sisters and I were able to accompany my own mom and dad to celebrate their 50th anniversary in Rome. We had the extraordinary privilege of celebrating a private Mass with our Holy Father, now St. John Paul II."

Now, the bishop said, "it is my turn. How does one adequately celebrate and mark 50 years as a priest? The answer is what we are doing right now, praying together in the holy sacrifice of the Mass and in sharing the Eucharist, the supreme prayer of thanksgiving by the church to God, who holds all the glory to himself."

"We thank God in humility and gratitude," said Bishop Nickless. "Thank you for praying with me this evening."

Recalling the first reading from Jeremiah, he said, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. Before you were born, I dedicated you...I appointed you."

"The mystery of God's choice, I simply said, 'Yes,' to priesthood 50 years ago, but all I did was respond to his choice," said the bishop. "I trusted that the Lord God our loving father would show me the rest and with his gift of grace and mercy, here I stand 50 years later."

He noted he did ask himself, "Why me? I'm not the smartest or the brightest. I'm certainly not the holiest."

"I've made lots of mistakes and bad decisions along the way," said Bishop Nickless. "Yet, as Jesus told the 11 in our Gospel today (from St. Matthew), 'Go forth and make disciples and behold, I am with you until the end of the age.' In our journey through life, in my journey through priesthood, God has always been there for me and for each of you."

### Thank you

The bishop thanked each of the people who have and are still helping him along the way.

"Each of you here tonight is an example to me. Your love and friendship, your mercy and forgiveness have made a difference in my life and helped bring me to this day," he said. "The call to priesthood began before I was born. My grandmother kept telling me, 'You're going to be a priest someday.' My parents, may they rest in peace, and their self-sacrificing example and love for all 10 of their children, grandchildren and great-grandchild-



Bishop Walker Nickless blesses the faithful during the recessional at his 50th anniversary Mass. (Lumen photo by Renee Webb)

dren was a beautiful example of love, care and fidelity."

Bishop Nickless pointed out he was blessed to have people from every parish he served in as a priest present for the Mass.

"My life as a priest has indeed been an extraordinary gift," he said. "Through me, an instrument of God, the Lord has touched many lives and hearts through the marriages I have performed, through

the baptisms, the Masses I've prayed, the confirmations, the confessions I've heard, the anointings of the sick and the burials. He gave me the right words to say in counseling and spiritual direction and words of advice and encouragement to those who came to me. All I can say, in the words of my dad's favorite song, 'It's a wonderful life' – my life as a priest, unworthy as I am, it's wonderful."

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# Seeking to be a better man led Denison parishioner to seminary

By **RENEE WEBB**  
Content and Design Coordinator

Before Matthew Staley sensed he was being called to the priesthood, he felt a call to virtue.

"I felt called to be a better man and I knew that the faith was the way to do that," said the new seminarian studying for priesthood in the Diocese of Sioux City. "I wanted to grow closer to God and live my life in accordance with how God would want me to live my life."

A native of Charter Oak, Staley was a member of St. Boniface Church in his youth where his parents led the youth group, which is now in church building status. St. Rose of Lima Parish in Denison is now his home parish. His parents are Rick and Julie Staley. He is the youngest of four children. The oldest sibling is Alyssa Herbold of Kingsley, who has four children with husband Phil, followed by brother Ryan and his wife Monica of Eden Prairie, Minnesota and sister Katie of Council Bluffs.

After graduating from Charter Oak-Ute in 2014, he attended Iowa State University in Ames to study civil engineering, graduating in December of 2018. In early 2019, he started a job at Burns & McDonnell in Kansas City, working for them in their energy global practice as a civil engineer.

## Who am I?

"When I moved down to Kansas City, that was the first time in my life I had been somewhere where no one knew me," explained Staley. "It was the first time I was really out on my own and I had that moment when I asked, who am I and what kind of man am I going to be."

That's when he had what he called a second conversion.

"I was always a practicing Catholic, but after graduating college I had a recommitment and started striving for virtue," said the seminarian, who credited the ability to do so through God and the support of a good men's group in Kansas City.

He spoke of a large Catholic young adult community in Kansas City called A City on a Hill for people in their 20s to 40. Various apostolates from men's groups to women's groups and sports leagues are part of that young adult ministry. It was through A City on a Hill where he found a men's group – Band of Brothers.

"Through that men's group I found brotherly love," said Staley. "It was really neat to see what that group did to my heart. I really helped me grow to know and love God better."



Father Michael Cronin of Denison St. Rose of Lima Parish presents Matthew Staley with a cassock and surplice during a recent Mass. (Submitted photo)

Much of his first two-and-one-half years at Burns and McDonnell were spent traveling around the country helping to design and build solar power plants.

He lived for three months in northeast Kansas, six months in southern Indiana where he really connected with a young and holy priest, southeast Texas for three months where he tried to establish a young adult group and then he was off to Wisconsin where he noticed how busy he was and how much that hurt his faith.

## Need for community

"I was still practicing my faith and trying to grow, but I could tell I was too busy with work and was overwhelmed," said Staley. "The project was successful but after that I said I was done moving around the country because I needed my men's group."

He knew there was not only a need for God, but a need for community. After returning to Kansas City in January of 2022, he noted that's when a more defined path to the priesthood came into view. Staley noted he went from a 60- to 70-hour work week to 40 and that made him feel as if he was "holding this whole pile of available



Staley

time" and didn't know what to do with it. Not wanting to misuse the time, he gave it to God and started attending weekday Mass twice a week and doing a holy hour in adoration once a week in addition to attending the men's group.

In time, he was challenged to partake in Exodus 90 – a prayer cenacle for men consisting of intense prayer and fasting for 90 days leading up to Easter. Staley referred to it as "Lent on steroids" as some elements of the challenge include cold showers, no alcohol, no desserts or eating between meals, no television, only computer use for work/school, intense prayer and more. During this time, the small group participating together would read the Book of Exodus.

**A dating fast**  
While not part of the challenge, Staley opted to add no dating to the list.

"I had put dating really high on my priority list. But I felt a call to put dating to the side for a bit and just focus on God," noted the seminarian. "I wasn't dating anyone at the time, but I was always looking because I wanted to get married and have a family. It was too much of my focus and I knew my focus should be on God not on something else."

In setting aside his pursuit of a wife during that three-month multi-faceted fast, Staley said love in other areas – of his parents, family, friends and co-workers – "shot through the roof."

"By the end of the three months I was having so much fun just chasing after God

and loving people along the way," he stressed and at that point he wondered if God was calling him to the priesthood. "It got to the point where I had to ask God, 'What do you want me to do? I realized I had never asked God what his plan was for me.'"

From there he found a spiritual director who helped him to discern God's will in his life. It became a common practice of his to attend daily Mass and after Communion ask God for wisdom to know the Lord's will in his life and the courage to follow. Through advice of the spiritual director, last summer he set a decision date of Christmas as to whether to follow a call to the priesthood.

Having been affiliated with several dioceses, he then discerned which diocese to study with and serve. It took little time for it to be clear that God was calling him for service in the Diocese of Sioux City.

## Inspiration and support

By Christmas he had told his whole family he was going to apply for the seminary and they were all very supportive.

"I've been blessed by a very faithful family over the years. My mom's side of the family are Baptist and they are such strong, faithful Christians – it is amazing. Dad's side is Catholic," noted Staley, who mentioned his mother converted to Catholicism. "There is such strong faith in the family – generations and generations of faith."

Several young priests who are striving for sainthood have provided inspiration to Staley, giving him an example of "what I would like to be."

In mid-August he will begin studies at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary near St. Louis, entering the propaedeutic stage – the first stage of seminary formation that is designed to provide a basic groundwork needed to engage in priestly formation. It is intended to build a strong foundation of human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation.

Staley said some of the discipline acquired through Exodus 90 will be helpful in this stage of formation.

And as far as being called by God to the priesthood, the seminarian said, "God loved me into it. He loved me into serving others, loving his people and loving his church. I fell in love with that. The more and more I attended Mass and spent time in prayer – though it was hard at times to stick to it – it became more and more evident I really love doing this."

## Last Gift members anticipate concept to spread

FROM PAGE 1

with helping. Living near the city cemetery that is located in the middle of the town, he oftentimes would walk through it.

"Day and night there are people up there sitting in the cemetery. I can only assume they are there with their loved ones," he said. "When Steve pointed out how many people were there without headstones, I thought this isn't good."

Steckelberg noted he has seen that some people have tried to make their own gravestones out of rocks and landscaping blocks and realizes that they will never last.

"Walking through the cemetery it is such a quiet, serene place. I figure that everyone should be recognized. Like the name says, this is their Last Gift," he said.

Funded through donations, The Last Gift has been able to fund four gravestones each year since 2021. Individuals, businesses and even All Saints Parish through a special collection have given funds to this group. The men said they purchase modest, small, flat headstones to keep costs down and help donations go as far as possible. Working with the funeral homes, they have been able to buy the gravestones at special pricing and the homes have even offered to set the stones in place.

## Recipients

The first recipient of a gravestone was a man named Jose who died in a Le Mars nursing home. After some research, they learned he had no family, could speak no English and was blind due to diabetes. They had a service for him on All Souls Day of 2021 in the potters' field of the city cemetery where he was buried. Three of the grave markers they are purchasing this year will also go to others in the potters' field.

Many of the recipients of gravestones in last two years were found by members of the organization walking through Calvary (Catholic) Cemetery in Le Mars. They noted that they came across many unmarked graves and some that had been there for 100 or more years. They opted to narrow their scope to graves that had temporary funeral home markers.



Lynn Steckelberg and Steve Kolker of The Last Gift clean grass off of gravestone their organization purchased. They would like the tradition of caring for and decorating gravestones to carry on for generations.

"One of the first ones we found was in Babyland. We started looking around and it was 1964 when this baby had died. That's how long it had been with no headstone," said Kolker, who noted that Steckelberg has been a great asset in researching the lives of these individuals as he is a retired law enforcement officer with investigative skills.

Learning about the personal stories of those with unmarked graves has been part of the process and is a way to help ensure these individuals are remembered.

Through the \$1,134 collected by All Saints Parish, Kolker noted they plan to purchase one gravestone for two additional babies – siblings – who died about ten years apart.

Citing another "God story," the two mentioned they had come across another unmarked grave in Calvary Cemetery and after researching the woman's life they learned she was the grandmother of the baby whom they had also provided a gravestone.

The men stressed many God stories have been part of this project. They also noted that they are learning more and more about cemeteries, how to find gravesites through special software and the project in the future.

## Moving forward

"This isn't where it ends. This is about sowing seeds," said Kolker, who has given talks on this organization to various groups including the Catholic Daughters.

Some groups have joined in to help with this project or done others of their own such as the American Legion pushing for a spot in the city cemetery for veterans. Steckelberg would love to see 4-H or school groups help by pulling weeds or completing other beautification projects.

"I think this will snowball and will spread to other counties and cities," said Steckelberg. "It may have a different name or look a little different but will be the same concept."

## KFHC to host Marian-themed Bible study

The faithful are invited to participate in the latest Siouxland Catholic Radio Brown Bag Bible Study with Anne O'Mara. The study sessions are Sept. 7 and 8 from 12:45 -2 p.m. at the station, 701 West Fifth Street in Sioux City.

The program focus is "His Wisdom, His Chosen Mother." Mary is one of only three individuals whose birthdays are celebrated in the Bible. O'Mara is a former instructor at Briar Cliff University in Sioux City.

Those interested can reserve a space by texting O'Mara at (712) 212-4390.

Walk-ins are welcome. Handicapped parking is available on the northside of the station in the St. Boniface parking lot.

Pray for vocations to the priesthood!



Staff of St. John Paul II Parish in Rutledge, Tennessee, go through donations from St. John Paul II Parish in Carroll. (Submitted photos)

## Carroll parish assists sister parish with same name – St. JPII – in Tennessee

By KATIE BORKOWSKI  
Communications Specialist

As a new school year will begin in just a few weeks, parents are busy checking classroom school supply lists to ensure their children have everything they need for a successful academic year.

Families who have trouble making ends meet and can't afford school supplies are receiving help from caring parishioners in Carroll.

For several years, St. John Paul II Parish has been helping its sister parish – St. John Paul II Parish in Rutledge, Tennessee – with backpacks and school supplies. This year was no different.

Kevin and Cindy Lawler of St. John Paul II Parish in Carroll recently delivered a truckload of donated school supplies and backpacks to struggling families in Tennessee. Thanks to generous parishioners, almost 150 backpacks and several boxes of additional supplies were sent to Rutledge to help local students and families.

### Delivery to Tennessee

Several volunteers helped on loading day by checking to make sure a backpack was provided for everyone on the list and then loaded them into the trailer.

The Lawlers departed Carroll on July 14 to make the 14-hour trip to take the backpacks and supplies to Rutledge, Tennessee.

"There were a handful of parishioners there to help unload and sort the backpacks by grade," said Cindy Lawler. "Clarissa (Chavarria), the pastoral associate at the church, explained to us that the parish is extremely poor and Grainger County where Rutledge is located is one of the poorest in Tennessee."

Once all the items were unloaded Chavarria treated Kevin and Cindy and the visiting priest (Father John) to dinner at a local Mexican restaurant.

Chavarria explained Donna Turchi is the volunteer coordinator for Glenmary Volunteer House. The backpacks go to the children of Grainger County and St. John Paul II Church members in Rutledge.

"This includes mostly farming families," said Chavarria. "Grainger County is known for their tomatoes. Many are Hispanic families that work the fields as well as local families with low income."



Kevin Lawler (in the trailer), a parishioner at St. John Paul II Parish in Carroll helps unload school supplies for sister parish in Tennessee. The supplies were delivered in mid-July.

### Collection of items

The backpack and school supply drive started in 2016, when Father Tim Johnson was pastor of Holy Spirit.

Mary Schon, also a St. John Paul II parishioner, pointed out the sister parish holds a Bible school every summer "that has a lot of needy children. Many of them are children of migrant laborers."

"That is where they get some of the names of the children who will be the most in need of help as the school year starts," she said. "Back in 2016, the first year we did this, they requested supplies for just 42 children. Every year that number has grown. This year we actually got requests for 139 backpacks full of school supplies."

Schon receives a list of the parish students who are in need from Chavarria and puts envelopes out at the two churches of St. John Paul II Parish in Carroll – Holy Spirit and St. Lawrence.

She includes the child's name, gender, grade and supply list. Parishioners pick up envelopes and buy the items to fill the backpacks. Usually, Schon said, after the first weekend "the envelopes are gone already."

"After about 10 days, all of them are gone," she said. "Then I put something in the bulletin saying, 'If the envelopes are gone and you still want to help, leave additional school

supplies and backpacks.'"

### Human element

"I think this project gives our 'sister' parish relationship with St. John Paul II in Rutledge a more direct human element," said Cindy Lawler. "If you just send money, you lose that human connection; not that money isn't important, but that human connection can often mean just as much, if not more."

She also thinks this project "humanizes those in need. By choosing a child's name and then selecting a backpack and supplies specific to that child makes the donation more personal."

"It's not just about some poor kids in Tennessee, it's about 5-year-old Emma starting kindergarten, Carlos entering his senior year in high school and Anna moving onto middle school this year," said Cindy Lawler. "Plus, who wants a child to start their school year with no supplies?"

Schon said it has been heartwarming that "every year we have no trouble at all (getting donations)."

"We keep doing it because the need is so great," she said. "The gratitude is so amazing. It has been very rewarding and satisfying for all the parishioners and myself to coordinate it year after year. We know that they are waiting for it and need it. It is a great way for our

SEE SCHOOL – PAGE 10



The four men lay prostrate before the altar during their ordination to the permanent diaconate on Aug. 5 at the Cathedral of the Epiphany in Sioux City. (Lumen photo by Dawn Prosser)

## ORDINATION: Four men now deacons

### FROM PAGE 1

his successors as bishop of the Diocese of Sioux City. As the assembly knelt, the four elect lay prostrate before the altar for the litany of supplication while the Litany of Saints was chanted.

Each of the men then approached the bishop at his chair, knelt and the bishop laid hands on the head of each and prayed in silence. The bishop then offered the prayer of consecration with his hands extended over the four men who would shortly be ordained deacons.

"Look favorably also on these your servants, we pray, O Lord, whom we humbly dedicate to serve at your holy altars in the office of the diaconate," the bishop recited as part of the consecration prayer. "Send for the Holy Spirit upon them, O Lord, we pray, that they may be strengthened by the gift of your sevenfold grace to carry out faithfully the work of the ministry."

The vestments of a deacon, stole and dalmatic, were presented to the newly-ordained as part of the investiture. Deacon Fergen was vested by Deacon Dennis Brockhaus; Deacon Loew was vested by Deacon David Prenger; Deacon Steinberg was vested by Deacon Rick Roder and Deacon Stanek was vested by Deacon Rick Salocker.

Following the investiture, each new deacon again knelt before the bishop, who placed the book of the Gospels into the hands of each of the four men.

"Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you have become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe and practice what you teach," the bishop instructed each new deacon.

Deacon Dan Goebel and Deacon Bruce Chartier, who served as deacons of the Mass, offered a sign of peace to the four newly-ordained. The vested deacons assembled at the Mass individually offered their sign of peace to the four men.

Deacon Loew and Deacon Stanek then took the place of the deacons of the Mass for the remainder of the liturgy.

After receiving the Eucharist during the Communion rite, Bishop Nickless offered a final blessing for those assembled and for the four newly-ordained deacons:

"May God who has called you to the service of others in his church give you great zeal for all, especially the afflicted and the poor. May he, who has entrusted you with preaching the Gospel of Christ, help you, as you live according to his word, be its sincere and fervent witnesses.

"May he, who has appointed you stewards of his mysteries, make you imitators of his son, Jesus Christ and ministers of unity and peace in the world."

# Prayer Works!



Deacon Fergen



Deacon Loew



Deacon Stanek



Deacon Steinberg

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Bishop Walker Nickless extends his hands in prayer during the Prayer of Consecration for four men ordained to the permanent diaconate on Aug. 5 at the Cathedral of the Epiphany in Sioux City. (Lumen photos by Dawn Prosser)



Deacon Dennis Brockhaus, left, of Mater Dei Parish in Sioux City, vests Deacon Will Fergen, who is also from Mater Dei Parish.



Jeff Stanek kneels before Bishop Walker Nickless during ordination.



Bishop Walker Nickless lays hands in prayer upon Mark Steinberg.



Deacon Alan Loew incenses the congregation during his ordination to the permanent diaconate on Aug. 5 at Cathedral of the Epiphany in Sioux City.

**Congratulations and God's blessings on you!**



**Deacon Will Fergen**



**Deacon Alan Loew**



**Deacon Jeff Stanek**



**Deacon Mark Steinberg**



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Reverend Mr. Jeff J. Stanek



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May God's light shine through your diaconal ministries.



**Lumen Media**  
Official communication of the Diocese of Sioux City

## RETIRED AND INFIRM PRIESTS COLLECTION

### Collection successful, needs continue

By **RENEE WEBB**  
Content and Design Coordinator

This year's Retired and Infirm Priests Collection was a success as it raised \$244,449 by the close of the fiscal year on June 30.

"The faithful of the Diocese of Sioux City stepped up once again to thank the retired and infirm priests for their years of service," said John Schmitz, diocesan director of stewardship and development. "I express my gratitude to all of the faithful parishioners in the diocese who made a contribution to the collection."

According to his records, this is the second highest amount raised since the collection began in 2009. The goal for the 2023 collection that was taken in parishes over Easter weekend was \$200,000.

#### Generous response

While several parishes increased their contributions compared to the past, some doubled their donations over last year.

Good Shepherd Catholic Parish of Breda tallied strong contributions this year. The pastor, Father Terry Roder, surmises that his parishioners are becoming more aware of how blessed they are to have retired priests willing and able to continue help out in the parishes.

"Whether it is to cover for vacation time or illness for pastors, or help out with weddings, funerals and anniversaries, or to be able to offer Masses at some nursing homes" the retired priests continue to offer their services as they can. Father Roder added that what is of immense importance is that some "can be available for the sacrament of anointing in times of emergency, with fewer priests, there are times when we cannot be available."

Another parish that more than doubled its contributions from 2022 to 2023 was Sacred Heart Parish in Sioux City.

Father Tim Friedrichsen, pastor of Sacred Heart, also noted that the parishioners care very much about the retired priests and are

## WAYS TO GIVE:



- Donating online: [sdiocese.org/ripic](https://sdiocese.org/ripic)
- Mailing a check to: Diocese of Sioux City, PO Box 3379, Sioux City, IA 51102
- Giving a gift of grain or stock: call (712) 255-7933 for information
- Remembering the Retired and Infirm Priests Fund in your will
- Making the Retired and Infirm Priests a beneficiary of a life insurance policy or charitable gift annuity

appreciative of the help they receive from retired priests.

"I believe people have become more and more aware of this each passing year," he said. "So I am grateful that they are responding so generously."

Father Friedrichsen said the Sacred Heart parishioners have also responded generously to their building project as well as collections for the parish's needs and other special collections such as for missions.

Contributions to the Retired and Infirm Priests Collection go to support general and special healthcare needs of the retired priests of the Diocese of Sioux City.

"Contributions to the annual Retired and Infirm Priests Collection provide for the long-term support of our diocesan priests," said Schmitz. "The collection proceeds are forwarded to the Priests' Welfare Fund which provides for spe-



Schmitz



Retired priests of the diocese appreciate the faithful's contributions to the Retired and Infirm Priests Collection.

cial healthcare needs of active and retired priests. The fund also makes an annual contribution to the diocesan priests' pension fund to assist in providing monthly benefits to the retired priests of the Diocese of Sioux City in perpetuity."

#### Retired priests speak

Msgr. Ed Girres of West Bend was among the retired priests of the diocese to express their appreciation for this collection.

"As more and more of our priests are reaching retirement age, it is important to keep the diocesan retirement fund growing to match the ever-increasing need," he said. "We rely on the pension fund to cover our day-to-day needs."

Contributions to the collection, Msgr. Girres said, are a sign of the gratitude of the people to the retired priests for their service through the years in active ministry and of continued service in retirement.

"We have served your parishes for years, providing holy Mass, the sacraments and pastoral care," he said. "Many of us continue to do so. Your support is crucial."

Father Merlin Scrad, a retired priest from Carroll, is grateful for the generosity of the faithful.

"Being retired for the past two years, it does my heart good to know that people support this collection for retired priests," said

the priest, who acknowledged that he didn't realize the impact this fund had on the priests until he retired. "Now that I am a recipient, I realize that priests have expenses they didn't plan on having."

Having served in seven different diocesan communities Father Schrad said everywhere he served there was great love and support for the priests. Through this collection, he continues to see the support that enables the priests to live on their own and keep up with expenses in retirement.

While still in active ministry, Father Roder said this collection is important to help meet the rising costs of living and medical care for senior priests.

"We serve God and the church, and trust in God and the church to care for us in our old age," he said. "People know priests who have served and sacrificed faithfully and well."

Although the collection was taken earlier this spring, contributions can be made at any time. (See breakout box on ways to give.)

"The Diocese of Sioux City is committed to caring for our retired and infirm priests," said Schmitz. "Supporting the Retired and Infirm Priests Collection is a wonderful way to thank and honor them for their service, while making sure they are adequately care for in the next chapter of their life."



Mary's Meals utilizes the concept of feeding children where they learn – a global school-feeding charity.

## Josh Blakesley and Mary's Meals Concert in Denison

St. Rose of Lima Parish, Denison, will be a host site for the Iowa Summer Series Concert for Mary's Meals.

Catholic musician and Texas music minister, Josh Blakesley will conclude his 2023 Iowa Summer Series Concert tour across Iowa with an indoor concert with Adoration at 7 p.m. on Aug. 16 at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church located at 916 Second Avenue South in Denison. A free will offering for Mary's Meals will be collected.

Global school-feeding charity Mary's Meals offers a simple solution to world hunger: feed children where they learn to enable the education that can help break the cycle of poverty. This local-managed school-feed-



Josh Blakesley

ing model operates in 18 countries including Ethiopia, Haiti, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

Founded 21 years ago by Catholic leader, Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, Mary's Meals is named after Mary, the Mother of Jesus and was inspired by a hungry little boy who only wanted to have enough to eat and to be able to go to school.

Today, Mary's Meals feeds 2.4+ million children in 5,000+ schools across five continents. A mission made more critical amidst this protracted global hunger crisis.

Donations will go to help feed hungry children supported by Mary's Meals. Just \$25.20 will feed a child for a year. Learn more at [marysmealsusa.org](https://marysmealsusa.org).



Lumen file photo of National Day of Remembrance from 2022.

## National Day of Remembrance memorial set at Trinity Heights

The Trinity Heights Shrine in Sioux City is hosting a memorial service for victims of abortion Sept. 9 at 11 a.m. Bishop Walker Nickless will lead the prayers and participate in the event. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

Pro-life Americans around the country will honor the memory of over 60 million unborn victims of abortion during this National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children. Solemn prayer services will be held simultaneously at gravesites around the country where abortion victims have been buried, as well as many other memorial sites dedicated in their honor.

The event is to ensure that the unborn are not forgotten.



# CATHOLIC LINGO: A rose by any other name

As our diocese has grown in diversity, primarily with Spanish-speakers from Mexico, Central America, Latin America and South America, there have been struggles to communicate. Like many Iowans my age, I had a little knowledge of the Spanish language from high school Spanish classes in the 1980s.

I receive a word of the day from SpanishDictionary.com in my Gmail inbox. Today's word is *antenoche*, which means

"the night before last." Notice the efficiency of one word in Spanish versus four words in English.

There's one word in Spanish to describe "the mother of a child's relationship to the godmother of a child," which is *comadre* (such as co-mothers). My friend Deb and I are *comadres*, which is efficient language in my mind.

Anyone who has studied a second language either in a formal setting or via Duolingo, Babbel or Rosetta-Stone, you have been charged with learning numerous vocabulary words. The more words you know, the better you can communicate.

Fortunately, there are many words with Latin roots, so we have a fighting chance of knowing what the words are in languages other than English. And there's many words like "auto" and "altar" which are the same in English and Spanish.

Those of us who are mono-lingual and only communicate in English, we know a second language well – the language of Catholicism.

After I attempted to pronounce "propaedeutic" for Ann Reed at Siouxland Catholic Radio, we discussed the unique words we use in the Catholic faith. (Father Shane Deman, director of seminarians explained the Propaedeutic Stage in formation is the preparation period for greater



## LUMEN MESSAGE

Dawn Prosser

self-awareness through personal healing and development of prayer.)

Some Catholic words can mystify lifelong Catholics as well as non-Catholics. Examples of familiar and not-so-familiar Catholic terms and their meanings:

**Breviary** – book often used by clergy and laity that contains the prayers, psalms hymns and readings of the Divine Office.

**Chasuble** – poncho-like priests' outer vestment, worn over an alb.

**Dalmatic** – a deacon's outer vestment, similar to the priest's chasuble, but with sleeves.

**Mitre** – a bishop's folded hat.

**Parochial vicar** – a priest assigned to a parish in collaboration with the pastor.

**Thurifer** – someone who carries and swings the thurible, which has incense burning in it during Catholic liturgies.

**Vimpa** – is the light silk cloak that wraps around the shoulders and arms of the mitre and crosier bearer whenever the bishop celebrates Mass. Together with the book bearer the two servers wearing the vimpa are the bishop's immediate attendants and walk behind him in the procession. At large celebrations in our diocese, seminarians serve in these roles.

And why do we have such uncommon words in our Catholic tradition? Some research and a chat with my pastor, Father David Esquiliano, shed light upon our unique Catholic verbiage.

Many of the Catholic terms don't have a common English word to adequately describe what they are and their particular and sacred function.

Father Esquiliano used the bishop's mitre as an example, noting "It's not just a hat. It has a specific function." Bishop Walker Nickless often explains to children



The Diocese of Sioux City's two new seminarians – Brian Schmit and Matthew Staley – served as *vimpae* during the 50th anniversary Mass for Bishop Walker Nickless. (Lumen photo by Dawn Prosser)

that the two sides of the mitre represent the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The incense "boat" isn't a nautical term in the Catholic Church. It might also be called a "navicular," meaning "little boat," used for storing the incense used in liturgies.

Many of the uncommon words we use in Catholicism have Greek or Latin roots. Most active Catholics know what an alb is – the long white vestment worn underneath the priest's chasuble or deacon's dalmatic. (Spiritual leaders from other denominations also wear an alb.)

"Alb in Latin is *albus*, which means white," Father Esquiliano told me. He also pointed out that we refer to the chalice, and not as a cup, due to its specific and sacred function in the Mass.

From this brief research, I concluded that what we celebrate in the Catholic Church, and specifically the during the Mass in consecrating the body and blood of Christ, is so special and sacred that

even our language must be held to a higher level.

Nearly 20 years ago, Father Bruce Lawler and Father Brian Hughes held architectural and liturgical sessions for six weeks for the parishioners of Storm Lake St. Mary. They knew the church was designed by St. Ambrose College artist Father Edward M. Catich, commissioned by longtime St. Mary pastor Msgr. Cleo Ivis in the 1950s.

They noted that once the faithful steps from the main vestibule or entryway into the sanctuary area, there was a slight upward slope to the floor, leading up to the altar. They explained it was to remind those entering the church that we have crossed over into a sacred and special building – not an ordinary space.

Next time and every time you step into a church sanctuary, remind yourself that you have entered a sacred space.

"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." – William Shakespeare

## Mass provides divine encounter with Christ

From the July 30 Gospel passage (Mt 13:44-52), we encounter two profound parables shared by Jesus, describing the kingdom of heaven as a treasure and a fine pearl. These parables reveal to us the immeasurable worth of the kingdom and how it should shape our lives as followers of Christ.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us that Jesus came into Galilee preaching the Gospel of God and proclaiming, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe in the Gospel." Jesus, the son of God, inaugurated the kingdom of heaven on earth, fulfilling the will of the father. This kingdom finds its foundation in the church – the gathering of people around our Lord Jesus Christ.

Just as the men in the parables realized the incomparable value of the treasure and the pearl, we too have found the kingdom of heaven in the Catholic Church.

In her, we discover the fullness of truth, grace and salvation. St. Thomas Aquinas eloquently stated, "There is but one church in which men find salvation, just as outside the ark of Noah it was not possible for anyone to be saved."

The Catholic Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, leads us to the salvific embrace of Christ.

Yet, there are times when we fail to grasp the magnitude of this treasure. Rather than fully embracing the teachings and sacraments of the church, we try to mix them with secular ideologies or adopt practices contrary to our faith. This approach can lead us away from the profound richness of the Catholic Church and the kingdom she represents.

Consider the beauty of the theology of marriage, a sacred union instituted by God. In its fullness, it symbolizes the love between Christ and his church.

However, in today's world, we often witness attempts to trivialize this sacred bond with alternatives such as beach weddings or the incorporation of foreign pagan rituals.

By doing so, we risk losing the true depth and sanctity of the sacrament.

Likewise, the Mass is the most significant prayer and celebration in our faith. It is the source and summit of our Christian life, where we encounter

the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. But some may seek to make the Mass merely entertaining or casual, overlooking the solemnity and reverence it deserves. We must remember that the Mass is not a performance; it is a divine encounter with the living God.

To fully appreciate the treasure we have in the Catholic Church and to live in the kingdom of heaven here and now, we must start with prayer. Let us follow the example of King Solomon, who humbly asked for "an understanding heart" or wisdom. We need to pray earnestly for the grace to comprehend the greatness of the gift we've received in the church.

In addition to prayer, we should commit ourselves to study.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church serves as a comprehensive guide to our faith, but if it feels overwhelming, more accessible versions like the Compendium of the Catholic Church or YouCat for young people can be helpful. Moreover, we can utilize resources like Formed.org, which offers a wealth of videos and content to enrich our knowledge of the faith.

We can come together as families or friends to study and discuss our faith, deepening our understanding and love for our Catholic identity. Through prayer and study, we will come to realize the immense treasure we possess in the Catholic Church, the one ark of salvation.

Let us, therefore, rejoice in this great gift and embrace it with joy and gratitude. May our lives be transformed by the knowledge that the kingdom of heaven is not some distant future but a reality already among us, present in the church.

As we partake in the Eucharist, let us be filled with awe and reverence, knowing that we are in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our salvation.

May our hearts burn with love for him, and may our lives be a reflection of his light and love to the world.

May the Lord grant us understanding hearts and guide us on this journey of faith. Let us pray for the grace to fully live in the kingdom of heaven here on earth and to inherit eternal life.



## CANON CORNER

Fr. David Esquiliano

## 'Three times'

In my younger years playing sports, I thought, was the reason for my existence. Whenever I suffered sprains, bumps or bruises, I simply found someone to patch me back up. I often looked to my hero, Babe Ruth, who had many profound statements. "You just can't beat the person who never gives up."

In other words, keep playing, keep working, keep living your life fearlessly! As I matured, I bounced about, juggling different interests and following the heroes who promoted them. Even when they hurt, I hurt. When they excelled, I glowed with them.

As a Catholic priest, I have often looked to the triune God, the saints and the Blessed Mother to guide me. Whenever I have suffered illness, this quotation from 2 Corinthians 12:8-10 came to mind: "Three times I begged the Lord about this, that it might leave me, but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.' I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me. Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong."

Throughout my life I have also looked often to the words of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen. God walks into your soul with silent steps. God comes to you more than you go to him.

Never will his coming be what you expect, and yet never will it disappoint. The more you respond to his gentle pressure, the greater will be your freedom.

In the midst of despair, it's sometimes difficult to understand where and how God is working in one's life. But be assured that he is always on the move, thinking about you and loving you, even when you do not reciprocate. I, too, have struggled with the question of "Lord! Where are you?!" in times of despair, but when the storm dies down, I see his work clearly.

After doing that whole song and dance a few times, I actually started writing down those difficult moments in a journal. Whenever the dark waters would start to rise, I would read my thoughts and words over once again. It seemed to help me to see more clearly how he was and is working in my life. And, you know what? He has never abandoned nor forsaken me through it all.

What about you? What has the journey of your life been like? Whatever age you find yourself, be assured that our Lord Jesus will always calm the storms that arise. And when you feel like you're drowning, reach for the one thing that will always save you. Say, "Most sacred heart of Jesus, I implore, that I will love you, more and more!"



## VIEW FROM THE SCOOTER

Fr. Dennis Meinen

## COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

## President Schulte outlines Briar Cliff University vision

By DAWN PROSSER  
Director of Communications

Dr. Patrick J. Schulte, named president of Briar Cliff University in March after serving as interim president, held his first community meeting Aug. 1 at the Sioux City Art Center. Community members were invited to Community Connections for refreshments and an opportunity to meet the Briar Cliff leader and to hear about projects and plans for the university.

The new president noted that he arrived in Sioux City from Minnesota just over two years ago as vice president of finance for Briar Cliff and is now serving as the 12th president of the Catholic university.

“From the bottom of my heart, I’m so thankful for this opportunity. While I’m still new to Sioux City, it’s fun to see a lot of you again and get re-introduced to you,” he said to the attendees.

**Building projects**

President Schulte pointed out that the board of trustees has developed and approved a long-range campus master facility plan to best serve the students and the community. He highlighted several current and upcoming projects for the campus:

- Briar Cliff received the largest gift in school history this spring to help fund the new College of Health and Equity building and bring the college back on the main campus, he explained. Toller Hall is being demolished to make way for the new building that will provide a healthcare training facility for students and a space for the underserved to receive health care.

“We found that it made the most sense to take Toller (Hall) down,” the president said of the healthcare building project.

- Fundraising is underway for the



Dr. Patrick J. Schulte, president of Briar Cliff University, speaks at a Community Connections gathering. (Lumen photo by Dawn Prosser)

Charger Dome, as “there’s only so many months of the year where we can be outside comfortably and then we have to go inside.” The dome project is not just focused on athletes but in consideration of recreational opportunities for all students and all students are invited to give input based on their needs for the facility.

- “There’s a real emphasis to focus on the student experience on campus,” the president explained, noting that the university is planning to invest in the student center and residential facilities to provide an “enhanced” experience for Briar Cliff students.

- Students, faculty and guests will be able to experience university hospitality at the new Crowley House, which will serve as the president’s residence and provide space for special events at Briar Cliff.

- The historic 50 steps leading up the hill to the original Heelan Hall building on campus caught the eye of the new president, who noticed they “needed a little care,” and the work would honor the foundresses of the institution. The renovation is currently in progress including blue and gold paint – the school’s colors. The project should be complete this fall.

“We want to encourage people to come to campus,” President Schulte explained, pointing out that the trek up the stairs can provide a fitness opportunity and access to a beautiful view of the city from campus.

**Community engagement**

The connections between Briar Cliff University and the Sioux City area community was important as many area residents have children, family members, neighbors and

employees who are connected to the university. He said he wanted to “engage the community in conversations about what’s happening on campus.”

President Schulte said he has visited with those living in the Briar Cliff neighborhood and they were interested in coming to the campus “but they’re not sure if they’re allowed to come up and use this space.” He noted the community conversation was an opportunity to advise that “the university is for all of us and the education of those students involves all of you as community.”

He said the university wants students to be more than residents of Sioux City, but “actually come down in the community and partner with all of you – your business and you as well. I think that is a really important part for us.”

The community has a vested interest in what happens at Briar Cliff as community members have children, family members and employee family members who may be students at the Catholic university.

Briar Cliff’s marketing department uses multiple media platforms to reach different audiences to share “all the wonderful things we have going on at BCU.”

As he enjoys regular engagement with the students, the new president said he is looking forward to the students’ return to campus in the next few weeks. (Some athletes have already moved back to the dormitories.)

As a practicing Catholic, the president explained that it was the Franciscan values that first attracted him to Briar Cliff and those values are lived out at the university.

“We instill our Franciscan values every day, Catholic or not, Franciscan or not,” President Schulte said. “Franciscan values are the keys to what we are.”



Religious education students from parishes in Ida Grove, Danbury, Mapleton and Odebolt which now makes up St. Therese of Lisieux Parish participated in eucharistic adoration during last year’s Eucharistic Rosary Conference. The parish plans to offer the congress again this year. (Lumen file photo)

## Eucharistic Rosary Congress returns to diocese

*Organizers encourage others to host an event in their parishes*

St. Therese of Lisieux Parish, Ida Grove is offering a Eucharistic Rosary Congress Oct. 1 to 7. This is the second consecutive year the event will be held. Organizers are asking those interested to save the dates of the event as more information will be forthcoming.

For seven days and nights, the faithful will pray the rosary hourly during perpetual Eucharistic adoration with special Masses, processions, confessions and speakers, immersing the faithful in the sacramental

life of the church.

Organizers from the parishes in Ida Grove, Danbury, Mapleton and Odebolt planned a successful week-long Diocesan Rosary Congress in October 2022 and attendees requested that the event be offered in 2023.

The organizers encourage other parishes to consider hosting a eucharistic rosary congress in the spirit of this second year of the National Eucharistic Revival, sponsored by the USCCB. More information is available by contacting Kristin at (443) 286-4121, kristinb@rosarycongressusa.org or rosarycongressusa.org.

## School supplies benefit Tennessee families

FROM PAGE 6

parishes to connect.”

**Sister parishes**

Not only does St. John Paul II have a sister parish in Tennessee, the parish also has a sister parish in Haiti. Before Holy Spirit and St. Lawrence were merged into one parish, each site had its own sister parish.

Now the parish comes together to support both sister parishes. Occasionally, an extra collection will be taken at the Carroll parish to be divided between the two sister parishes, Schon noted.

Father Neil Pezzulo from St. John Paul II Parish in Rutledge has been to Carroll to visit. Within the last year, this sister parish completed a new church, which the Carroll parish helped with financially.

“We are always looking for more ways to connect,” said Schon. “We financially support them. We pray for them. We do whatever we can for them in Tennessee and in Haiti.”

The *Enlightened*  
CATHOLIC

*What is a heresy?*

The Code of Canon Law, Canon No. 751, states: “Heresy is the obstinate denial or obstinate doubt, after the reception of baptism, of some truth which is to be believed by divine and Catholic faith



[credenda]; apostasy is the total repudiation of the Christian faith; schism is the refusal of submission to the Supreme Pontiff or of communion with the members of the Church subject to him.”

There is a distinction between formal heresy and material heresy. In the case of material heresy, the person mistakes or misunderstands key Catholic teaching. They hold a belief in erroneous doctrine through lack of knowledge. With formal heresy the person knows and properly understands what the church teaches and yet still rejects it. They refuse to be corrected. If an individual is willing to be corrected or is unaware that what they are saying is against church teaching then they are not a heretic. Heresy requires full knowledge, understanding and deliberation.

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**Preservation**

As part of a regular maintenance schedule, Most Holy Name of Mary Parish, Remsen St. Mary Church has replaced some of the protective glass, replaced some screens and recaulked and painted the trim around the stained-glass windows. The original work on the windows was completed 10 years ago and it was recommended that the parish complete the maintenance work every 10 years. Father Tim Pick, pastor, noted that the renovation and restoration of the Remsen church has been ongoing for several years and new pews and flooring are forthcoming, thanks to the generosity of the parishioners. (Submitted photo)



**UPCOMING PARISH, AREA EVENTS**

**AUG. 16**

**Trinity Heights Queen of Peace, Sioux City** – Lumen Christi, a diocesan charismatic prayer group, will meet Aug. 16 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Trinity Heights Queen of Peace Marian Center in Sioux City. This group meets monthly, typically but not always on the third Wednesday of the month. For this meeting, Father David Hemann, the bishop's diocesan liaison to the charismatic renewal, will give a short talk on prayer gifts (part 2). The special prayer intention will be the diocesan priests and the needs of their parishes. All are welcome.

**AUG. 17**

**St. Benedict Center, Schuyler, Nebraska** – Wisdom of St. Benedict's Rule for Everyday Life will be held Aug. 17 – 20. It is a retreat with Father Anastasius Reiser, OSB, Father Adam Patras, OSB and Brother Tobias Dammert, OSB. Participants will explore Benedictine values, addressing in the conferences, among other topics, the balance of prayer and work, lectio divina and the importance of silence in this noisy world. Register at StBenedictCenter.com or call (402) 352-8819.

**AUG. 19**

**St. Benedict Center, Schuyler, Nebraska** – Creative Praying with The St. John's Bible is a one-day retreat with artist Glenda Dietrich Moore. Enjoy a day of contemplation and creativity with the aid of The Saint John's Bible, which beautifully presents both Scripture and illumination. No previous art experience is necessary. Please register no later than Aug. 13. Lunch is available at the center for \$12.87 (includes tax). Register at StBenedictCenter.com or call (402) 352-8819.

**AUG. 20**

**St. Benedict Center, Schuyler, Nebraska** – Icon Writing Workshop will be held Aug. 20 – 26. This is a retreat with Dmitrii and Tatiana Berestov. Christian icons have served as "windows into heaven" for nearly 2,000 years. This workshop is an instruction in icon writing in the Byzantine-Russian tradition. Its objective is the completion of one icon, provided attendance for the full six days and the completion of daily assignments as allocated by the instructor. For beginning as well as for intermediate and advanced icon writers. Register at StBenedictCenter.com or call (402) 352-8819.

**ANNIVERSARIES**

**Deacon LeRoy and Bonnie Rupp**



Deacon LeRoy and Bonnie Rupp will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary on Aug. 20.

They were married at Immaculate Conception Parish in Cherokee where Deacon LeRoy serves.

Cards may be sent to the couple's home address - 309 N. 11th St., Cherokee, IA 51012.

**Duane and Mary Margaret Wachter**

Duane and Mary Margaret (Mohr) Wachter will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 11.

They were married at Sacred Heart Church in Early.

They are the parents of two children; Matthew and his wife Sandi, and Susie and her husband Matt, as well as five grandchildren.



**BIRTHDAY**

**Larry Walsh**

The family of Larry Walsh would like to proclaim his 90th birthday on Aug. 30.

He was born Aug. 30, 1933. He and his wife Sharon (who died in 2019) were blessed with five children – Dr. Pat (Lori) of Jefferson, South Dakota; Michael of Omaha, Nebraska; Beth Ann (Brad) of Denver, Colorado; Dan (deceased at 23) and Marty (Mary Catherine) of Dakota Dunes. They have 10 grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

Send birthday wishes to Larry Walsh at 2321 St. Anthony Place, Sioux City, IA 51108.

**Marquez shares journey**

**FROM PAGE 4**

be well, but to live abundantly (Jn 10:10), I deeply desire to share that truth with others," she said.

Lizbeth's passion was easy to feel. When we finished up, she offered to pray for my family and also was kind enough to offer a prayer with another Heelan graduate that was sitting next to us preparing for her nursing NCLEX exams. It was pretty special.

In the changing world we see today, it really makes us proud at Heelan to see so many of our young alumni living their faith. We have several young alumni discerning the priesthood and religious women.

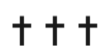
Witnessing Lizbeth's authentic relationship with Christ was inspiring and a story that needed to be shared.

"My parents are strong and faithful Catholics who always taught us the importance of our faith. They showed us this not only by the way they lived out their vocation of marriage and family, but also through the endless sacrifices they made for all of us to attend Catholic schools," she said.

Thanks for sharing your journey with us, Lizbeth. You are creating your "lifetime advantage" every day and ensuring that others do too.

*Betz serves as vice president of advancement for Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools in Sioux City.*

**BORN INTO ETERNAL LIFE**



**AKRON**

Mary Clarey, 73, of Sioux City, died July 31.

**ALGONA**

Lucy DeRoos, 85, died July 27.

**CARROLL**

JoAnn Olberding, 75, died July 25.

Merlin Reinart, 80, died July 24.

Laurel Vogl, 83, died July 29.

**DENISON**

Georgia M. Roeder, 79, died Aug. 6.

**FORT DODGE**

Dan T. Crimmins, 64, died Aug. 5.

Rowena A. Halligan, 92, died Aug. 5.

Ann C. Marino, 77, died July 28.

David J. McColley, 65, died Aug. 3.

James E. "Jim" Wafful, 74, died Aug. 4.

**LE MARS**

Linda M. Denner, 74, of Merrimack, New Hampshire, died July 31.

LaVon F. Holton, 85, died Aug. 3.

**MARCUS**

Elizabeth "Betty" B. Seggerman, 96, died July 26.

**SAC CITY**

Phyllis Luke, 88, died July 29.

**SIBLEY**

James "Jim" Carroll, 65, of Dubuque, died Dec. 25, 2022.

**SIoux CITY**

Marijo Butler, 88, of West Des Moines, died July 23.

Bruce C. Fey, 73, died May 13.

Cataleya M. Makaya, infant, died July 30.

Patricia J. Skuodas, 72, died Aug. 1.

**SPENCER**

Maureen Baker, 77, died Aug. 3.



**WEEKDAY READINGS:**

**MONDAY, AUG. 14**

Deuteronomy 10:12-22; Psalms 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20; Matthew 17:22-27

**TUESDAY, AUG. 15**

Revelation 11:19a and 12:1-6a, 10ab; Psalms 45:10, 11, 12, 16; 1 Corinthians 15:20-27; Luke 1:39-56

**WEDNESDAY, AUG. 16**

Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Psalms 66:1-3a, 5 and 8, 16-17; Matthew 18:15-20

**THURSDAY, AUG. 17**

Joshua 3:7-10a, 11, 13-17; Psalms 114:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Matthew 18:21-19:1

**FRIDAY, AUG. 18**

Joshua 24:1-13; Psalms 136:1-3, 16-18, 21-22 and 24; Matthew 19:3-12

**SATURDAY, AUG. 19**

Joshua 24:14-29; Psalms 16:1-2a and 5, 7-8, 11; Matthew 19:13-15

**MONDAY, AUG. 21**

Judges 2:11-19; Psalms 106:34-35, 36-37, 39-40, 43ab and 44; Matthew 19:16-22

**TUESDAY, AUG. 22**

Judges 6:11-24a; Psalms 85:9, 11-12, 13-14; Matthew 19:23-30

**WEDNESDAY, AUG. 23**

Judges 9:6-15; Psalms 21:2-3, 4-5, 6-7; Matthew 20:1-16

**THURSDAY, AUG. 24**

Revelation 21:9b-14; Psalms 145:10-11, 12-13, 17-18; John 1:45-51

**FRIDAY, AUG. 25**

Ruth 1:1, 3-6, 14b-16, 22; Psalms 146:5-6ab, 6c-7, 8-9a, 9bc-10; Matthew 22:34-40

**SATURDAY, AUG. 26**

Ruth 2:1-3, 8-11 and 4:13-17; Psalms 128:1b-2, 3, 4, 5; Matthew 23:1-12

**The Saints**

**Helena**  
August 18  
255-330



Helena was the mother of Emperor Constantine the Great, who in 313 ended persecutions of Christians in the Roman Empire. She had married a Roman general Constantius Chlorus and gave birth to their only son Constantine around the year 274. Her husband divorced her to marry the stepdaughter of Emperor Maximianus Herculeus. Many believe he did this to advance his own reputation and standing. After the death of Constantius in 308, Constantine became emperor and he summoned his beloved mother Helena back to the imperial court. Helena converted to Christianity in 312 and thereafter was known for her generosity and prayerfulness. It also impacted the faith of Constantine. Helena was given the title of Augusta Imperatrix. With the resources of the imperial treasury, she was tasked with locating relics of Christian tradition. She had many churches built or rebuilt at holy places in the Holy Land. Among the relics Helena reportedly found were pieces of the True Cross and Jesus' tunic.

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