



**Centennial Event**

**DIOCESE OF DES MOINES**

**PRESSRELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release**

**Date:** Dec. 17, 2010

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**Bishop Pates announces the creation of a new parish in Ankeny**

*News conference Friday, Dec. 17 at 10 a.m., at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church in Ankeny*

As the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic community celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, Bishop Richard Pates announced on Friday, Dec. 17 the creation of a new parish called St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church in Ankeny and extremely generous gifts that will help lay the foundation for the new parish.

One of the original parishioners of Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church (OLIH) in Ankeny, Fern Ringgenberg, has gifted 35 acres of land, along Wiegel Drive to the new parish in her and her late sister, Mary's, name for the building of the new church on the west side of Ankeny.

In addition, Don and Charlene Lamberti, also longtime parishioners of OLIH, have gifted \$2 million for a future grade school (K-8) to be at St. Luke the Evangelist Parish. The Lambertis especially applaud the Ringgenberg gift, which enables them to initiate the process for having a Catholic school in Ankeny, a longtime desire of many in Ankeny.

Long-range planning for the new parish includes the grade school and senior citizen housing facility.

"I am pleased to announce this tremendous and generous Christmas gift to the Catholic

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community in Ankeny and the Diocese of Des Moines,” said Bishop Pates. “In our centennial year, we celebrate the legacy of those who have come before us as well as our existing faith communities. With these gifts, we can truly look toward meeting the needs of Ankeny and Polk City families long into the future.”

Bishop Pates appointed Father Lawrence Hoffmann, who serves as current pastor of St. Theresa Parish in Des Moines, to be the founding pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, effective Jan. 1.

The new pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish will look for temporary office space and work with founding parishioners planning for the first information gathering of his new parish sometime in the early months of the new year.

### **New parish**

The city of Ankeny has seen steady growth over the years. In 2000, the city’s population was 27,117. Within five years, the population jumped by 9,000 people to 36,161, according to the 2010 Ankeny Comprehensive Plan. The city expects its population will be about 93,000 by the year 2035, which translates into an annual growth rate of 3%.

Expansion of the city can be seen through the growth of Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart Parish in Ankeny. In the 1950s, Catholics living in the area traveled to St. Michael’s Church in nearby Carney. They worshipped in a home provided by Carney Mining Co. in 1920 for its employees. Ten acres of land was purchased in Ankeny and Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart Catholic Church was born in 1960, beginning with 325 families. The parish now serves about 2,500 families.

### **New school**

Growth in the Ankeny School District’s student population parallels the growth of the city, according to the city’s Comprehensive Plan. It is the 10<sup>th</sup> largest district in the state in student enrollment and the second fastest-growing district in the state. Between now and the

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2013/2014 school year, the student enrollment is expected to grow by an average of 340 students annually.

Currently, there are 24 students from Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Parish who commute to Catholic schools in Des Moines.

### **Founding pastor**

Father Hoffmann, originally of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Panama, located in Shelby County, will be the founding pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish. He was ordained a priest by Bishop Maurice Dingman in 1971. He has served the parishes of: St. Joseph in Des Moines, St. Anne in Logan, Holy Family in Mondamin, Queen of Apostles in Council Bluffs, St. Anthony in Des Moines and St. Theresa in Des Moines.

### **Most recent parishes**

The last parish created in the Diocese of Des Moines was St. Peter Vietnamese Catholic Community, founded in 2008 in Des Moines.

Prior to that, the last new parish that included construction was created to serve expanding in communities west of Des Moines. St. Francis of Assisi Parish, in West Des Moines, began with slightly fewer than 300 families when it was established in 1991 under the leadership of Monsignor Stephen Orr. Three years later, the family count surpassed 620 and today, it serves 2,750 families.

Construction began in 1993 on 15 acres of land and continued in three phases. The parish now has a complex consisting of a worship center that seats 1,000, a parish center, offices and a school that serves 750 students.

### **Recent growth in metro-area parishes**

Other Des Moines metro-area parishes have added to their facilities to accommodate growth in recent years.

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In Waukee, St. Boniface Parish completed construction in 2007 on a new complex that includes a worship center that seats 1,000 and has 25 classrooms. The parish, which serves 1,068 families, turned its former worship center into the parish hall.

In Altoona, Saints John and Paul Parish continues to see growth as well. Last year alone, it saw a jump of 63 new families registered. The parish dedicated new facilities in 2001. The worship center seats 800, up from 300 in the former worship center which is now used as a parish hall.

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*The Diocese of Des Moines Catholic includes 83 parishes in 23 counties in central and southwest Iowa.*