

TOGETHER

a monthly bulletin insert from the archdiocese

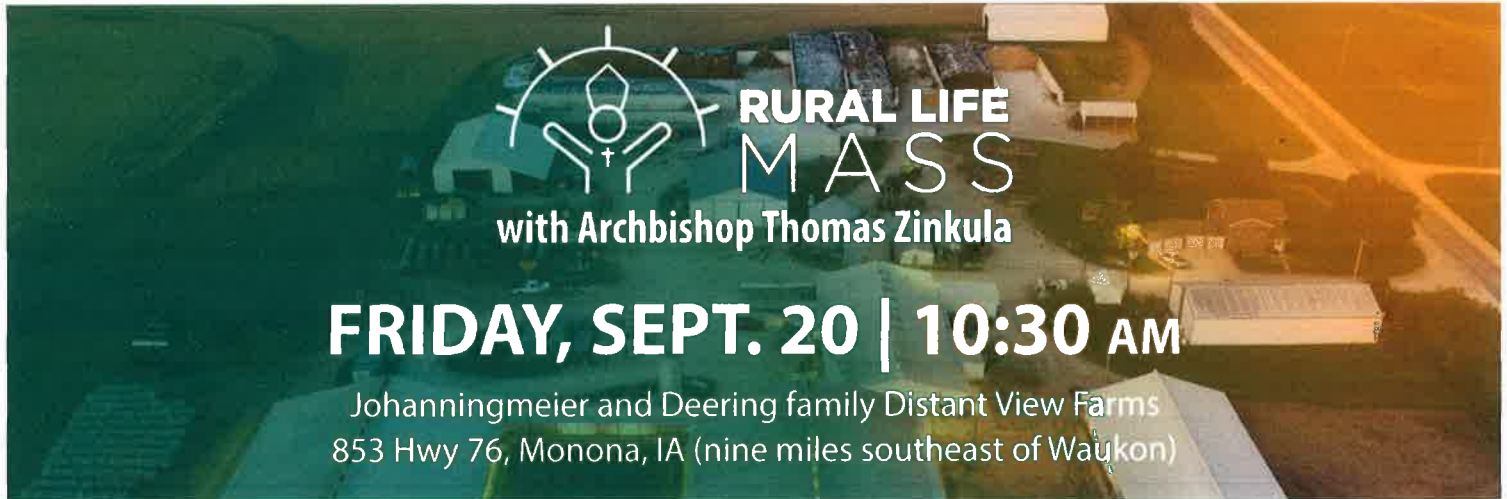


ARCHDIOCESE
of DUBUQUE

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Archbishop to celebrate Archdiocesan Rural Life Mass recognizing those who work the land and live in our rural communities

By Cassie Bird

On Friday, September 20, Archbishop Thomas Zinkula will celebrate his first-ever Rural Life Mass in the Archdiocese, hosted by the Johanningmeier and Deering families at Distant View Farms in Monona. This special event will recognize the many people who work the land and live in our rural communities.

After the Mass, there will be a blessing of the animals and farm equipment, a recognition program, and a free-will offering lunch hosted by St. Patrick Parish, Waukon.

Deacon Brian Zeman, Director of Life, Earth, and Social Justice Ministry in the Archdiocese of Dubuque, and Fr. John Moser, Pastor at St. Patrick in Waukon, led the efforts to organize the Mass.

“The Archdiocese of Dubuque is a vast area that consists of 17,000 square miles of geography. Much of that geography is small rural communities, farmland,

and people who work the land,” Deacon Zeman pointed out. “There’s much focus given to Dubuque sometimes because we are the Archdiocese of Dubuque, but the archdiocese is made up of much more rural geography than metropolitan.”

Although Archbishop Zinkula currently resides within the city limits of Dubuque, he is no stranger to rural life – he grew up on an Iowa farm along with his eight siblings. He is excited to celebrate this Farm Mass in rural Allamakee County.

“Archbishop Zinkula grew up on a farm. He understands their hardships, their joys, and wants to celebrate their rural life and the way they contribute to what is the majority of our archdiocese,” Deacon Zeman added.

He also reflected on the ways in which the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching intersect with life at the farm, although many people do not realize it. Care for God’s Creation, The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers, Solidarity – these values can be identified in the way that farmers steward the land, offer opportunities for workers, and in the solidarity of people who are working to produce foods and goods for the benefit of our human family.

There is even an organization, Catholic Rural Life, that is dedicated to the vitality of the American countryside. Since 1923, the national nonprofit organization has promoted Catholic life in rural America.

In order to learn more about organizing a rural life Mass, Deacon Zeman and Fr. Moser attended the organization’s 100-year anniversary celebration last May. At this celebration, they were able to meet with the organization’s leadership as well as others who have coordinated these Masses. The Archdiocese of Dubuque now has a formal commitment to work with Catholic Rural Life in the future. In order to bring such a Mass to the Archdiocese of Dubuque, Deacon Zeman also drew inspiration from a rural life Mass held in the diocese of La Crosse, Wisconsin.

The hosts of the Archdiocese of Dubuque Rural Life Mass, the Johanningmeier and Deering families, are looking forward to the gathering of the faithful from across the archdiocese that will be held on their property.

“It’s an honor to be chosen to host Archbishop Zinkula’s first Rural Life Mass in the Archdiocese of Dubuque and to share our gratitude for life on

the farm with our church community. We are blessed to live this life every day, and although it is hard work and there are many sacrifices, it has many great rewards to be living, nurturing, and protecting the land and the animals of God," the Johanningmeier family said. "We want to demonstrate how our trust and faith guide us each and every day – to be witnesses to the glory of God in farm life."

"This is an opportunity to share God's gift to us with others and possibly even some who haven't experienced God's love for the farm."

The upcoming rural life Mass is not the only time that the families at Distant View have opened up their farm to their community.

"Every year we host many elementary classes for field trips to the farm. We are honored to share our farm with them and to teach them where milk and meat come from, how the crops are grown to feed the animals, and how to make other food for people. Food is a gift from God that he entrusts the farmer to raise and provide," the Johanningmeiers explained.

"With fewer and fewer farms, many of our youth do not get to learn that food doesn't come from a factory or store, it comes from God's gift of nature and the land and animals. We've hosted many other community events to generate agricultural awareness and education for others including the Hay Expo, Cattleman's Association, and local Fire Department events to name a few."

Education is an essential component to ensuring that the knowledge necessary to maintain and steward farmland is not lost over time.

The Johanningmeier family recognizes that their efforts and daily work ensure the current success of their farm and help preserve the viability of their land for generations to come.

"God is not making more land, so we need to take care of what we have and preserve it for future generations. We have been connected to the land for our whole life and it is our dream that our family remains connected to the land. We don't farm to live, we live to farm," the Johanningmeiers said.



Pictured left to right: Jase, Jaelyn, Mike, Lori, Jacob, Steve, and Jane Johanningmier, Khloe, Klaire, Kohen, Ann, Kade, and Koal Deering

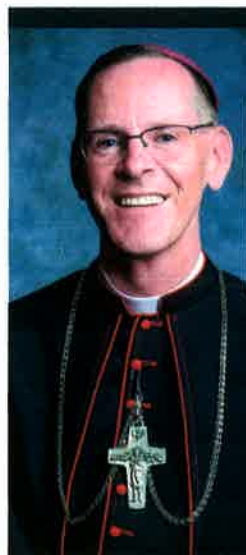
"We pray for the continued safety, health, fruitful yields, and the ability to sustain our way of life into the future. We give honor and glory to God to be able to work the land and to be a part of his magnificent creation and nature."

Make sure to save the date for the Rural Life Mass on Friday, September 20, with

Mass beginning at 10:30 a.m. Come to worship as an archdiocesan family and stay to recognize those like the Johanningmeier and Deering families who steward the land. Additional information, including directions to the farm, can be found at dbqarch.org/rural-life.

Episcopal Ordination and Installation of Bishop-elect Scott Bullock

Mark your calendars for two livestreams celebrating the ordination of former archdiocesan priest, Bishop-elect Scott Bullock. The Diocese of Rapid City, SD will be livestreaming Solemn Vespers and the Mass of Ordination and Installation on their Facebook page and website on September 22 and 23. Visit either [Facebook.com/DioceseofRapidCity](https://www.facebook.com/DioceseofRapidCity) or www.rapidcitydiocese.org/live.



**Episcopal Ordination and Installation of
Bishop-elect Scott Bullock**
September 23, 2024 ~ 4 p.m.

Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Rapid City

Solemn Vespers
September 22, 2024 ~ 5 p.m.

Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Rapid City

Image courtesy of the Diocese of Rapid City, South Dakota.