



OFFICE *of the* BISHOP

June 15, 2022

*via email*

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Addie Magruder  
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Dear Friend in Christ,

I write you to raise awareness and offer my endorsement for an initiative that is bearing evangelical fruit by activating the faith of young people in the Diocese of Des Moines where I have served as bishop since September 2019. *Ut Fidem* (“That there might be faith”) started at Dowling Catholic High School in the Diocese in the fall of 2017 with the goal of helping young Catholics flourish in their faith after completing their secondary education. What began as a small seed has grown to be one of the most impactful ministries in our Diocese, touching hundreds of young students, as well as adult mentors and their families.

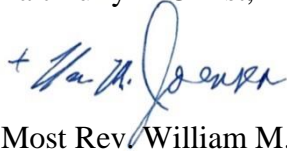
I appreciate how the ministry connects young people to the person of Jesus Christ beyond mere acquisition of faith knowledge. We have witnessed countless students grow in their devotion to daily prayer, their understanding of the Sacraments, their openness to sharing the faith with others, and their desire to join rich faith communities, notably after high school graduation—whether at college student centers or local parishes. The mentoring aspect of the ministry has offered adults in our Diocese a direct opportunity to follow in the footsteps of the disciples, to grow in trust and dependence on the Holy Spirit, and to share their faith in deeply personal ways. I am excited to see how *Ut Fidem* will impact our parishes as more *Ut Fidem* graduates move back to the Diocese after completing their undergraduate studies.

As the *Ut Fidem* ministry has grown over the past five years, I have come to learn that they have received more and more inquiries about their ministry from parties beyond our Diocese. After much discernment, the *Ut Fidem* team has decided to follow the Holy Spirit’s inspiration and accompany other schools and parishes in starting *Ut Fidem*. As Bishop, I would highly recommend the implementation of their ministry. Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has charged us

to be a “synodal” church who accompany others in our pilgrimage toward Christ and his Father; the accompaniment the Ut Fidem team offers will enable schools and parishes to navigate the challenges involved with starting a discipleship ministry from the ground up.

We are all aware that majority of those who leave the Church do so at an early age. Yet it is not out of fear but with great confidence and trust in the Holy Spirit that I commend this missionary initiative to you, your colleagues and collaborators in the work of forming young people who will live their faith in an enduring, beautiful manner.

Faithfully in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "W. M. Joensen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'W'.

Most Rev. William M. Joensen, Ph.D.  
Bishop of Des Moines