



Hornets' road blocked in state title game **1B**

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Faith in the Future

Dubuque Archdiocese considering plans for its parishes

BY JOHN KRUSE
john.kruse@thmedia.com

Laura Dolehide has been a devout Catholic throughout her life, reverently attending Mass weekly.

Her church, St. Columbkille Catholic Church in Dubuque, serves as both the anchor of her faith and a place of community to gather with her fellow Catholics.

Like her fellow parishioners, the Dubuque resident often thinks about the future of her church. She lived in town when Archdiocese of Dubuque closed St. Mary's Catholic Church in Dubuque in 2010.

For her and many area

Catholics, the eventual closure of other parishes seems almost imminent.

"I was visiting Spain, and I saw these beautiful churches that were closed for good," Dolehide said. "No matter where you go, this is something that is happening."

The future viability of the area's Catholic churches isn't just on the minds of parishioners. For several years, leaders of Archdiocese of Dubuque have been weighing the future of their 165 parishes as the number of available priests declines and weekly Mass attendance dwindles.

The archdiocese now is

developing a new strategy that will lay the groundwork for determining which churches remain open and which eventually will close or merge. It also aims to head off future closures, though, by helping churches set goals to increase their vitality so they can continue their missions.

It is through this new strategy that the Dubuque archdiocese hopes to secure the future of the Catholic church locally.

"We have put parishes on notice by having these strong conversations about vitality and goal setting," said Kim Hermsen,

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DAVE KETTERING • Telegraph Herald

The Rev. Tyler Raymond celebrates Mass at Saints Peter & Paul Catholic Church in Sherrill, Iowa, in February.



DAVE KETTERING • Telegraph Herald

Seeing green

Kids wait to fill their bags with candy during the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade in Dyersville, Iowa, on Saturday. **Story: Page 7A**

Casinos expect slam dunk from March Madness

Week 1 of the NCAA basketball tournament is among the busiest times of the year for sports wagering.

BY GRACE NIELAND
grace.nieland@thmedia.com

Area experts hope March Madness will be a slam dunk for local sports betting operations as in-person and online wagering continues to bring in millions.

The annual NCAA basketball tournament tips off Tuesday, with games stretching for nearly three weeks. Like many other major sporting events, the tournament is expected to draw both new and experienced sports bettors.

"Big events like March Madness and the Super

Bowl, they bring in new faces of those people who are interested in betting for the first time," said Brian Joseph, regional sportsbook manager for FanDuel, which operates the sportsbook in Dubuque's Diamond Jo Casino. "We see about four times as many bets the first week of March Madness than we do on any other normal weekend."

More than \$362 million has been wagered so far in the fiscal year that started in July through the sportsbooks affiliated with Dubuque's two casinos, according to records maintained by Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission, correlating to more than

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Brian Joseph

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