



By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

On its first day of business Saturday at its new location, Imperial's St. Isidore Gift & Thrift had a busy day.

People came steadily through the doors at 527 Broadway Saturday morning as the thrift store showed off its remodeled facilities that nearly double the space from the former 746 Broadway location.

Store manager Bill Sullivan said the new location, that most remember housing Einspahr Drug Store, was purchased from Judy Teply, and underwent extensive remodeling the past several months.

New paint, new lighting, new carpeting, a new ceiling, the addition of an office and a remodeled HC/accessible restroom were among the major improvements.

One of the most noticeable additions to the store is the small chapel inside, which is open to anyone during the store's business hours.

There are chapels included in all of the Catholic Social Services (CSS) centers across the diocese.

The Imperial store also has a full open basement used by volunteers for storage, item pricing and categorizing. That's in addition to a large storage and drop-off area to the back.

When the store first opened at 746 Broadway in March 2010, Fr. Christopher Kubat of Lincoln, CCS executive director, said if the Imperial store was successful it would likely move to another location.

It has seen that success, Fr. Kubat said, and fulfills a long-standing dream of Catholic Social Services to do more in the western part of the diocese.

The mission of the thrift store is to help individuals and families in need, Fr. Kubat said.

In addition to offering items that are affordably priced, profits from the thrift store stay in this area, Fr. Kubat said, and are used to help families or individuals with emergency services, such as rent, utility assistance or even counseling services.

People can help in the thrift store mission first with prayer, he said, and also with material donations of items, monetary donations or by volunteering at the store.

Before the store opened for business Saturday, Bishop James Conley of Lincoln offered a blessing and dedicated the store last Wednesday. He blessed several areas of the store, and gave a short talk to the 30 to 40 people on hand.

Also attending the blessing and dedication last Wednesday were Tom Schik, CSS western regional director; Bill Meduna, CSS director of finance; Les Mach, Planned Giving Officer with the diocese; and Pat Walbrecht, CSS executive assistant.

All items sold at St. Isidore's are donated. Sullivan said they do retain the right to refuse any contributions.

The store sells furniture, appliances, TVs, antiques, dishes, glassware, wall art, toys, books, jewelry and home decor items.

The store is staffed with volunteers, most from St. Patrick Catholic Church.

The store hours are Wednesdays 3 to 7 p.m., Fridays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 12 noon.