



# THE BISHOP'S BULLETIN

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Turning everyday  
*Life* into a *Gift* of love



# Understanding the gift of religious interior freedom



All the way back to childhood years, I was able to spiritually mature because of the freedom we enjoy in America to teach and practice our faith. I credit God's spiritual help along with my family, Father Francis Poillot (my childhood pastor), other clergy, religious sisters, parishioners and Catholic school faculty in Faribault for teaching and helping me to freely live our beloved Catholic faith.

We, of course, would not have this without the civil rights in the First Amendment of our country's Constitution. I thank God and all those who have sacrificed so much to help me develop such faith and reason-based convictions that promote both the common good of society and the proper individual goods and rights belonging to each human person.

Because we are made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27) and blessed with a free will, it is important we use that free will to know, love and serve God and others. The more we fall in love with God, the easier it is for us to freely choose the most charitable thing to do in any given situation.

This seems simple but can become more complex if what is good for me and what is good for others seem at odds with each other. The best way to sort this out is to never violate the inherent dignity and rights of any individual person and pray to always make sure that when making a decision, we are considering others' well-being without violating our own inherent dignity and rights as an individual.

I love the question placed to Jesus about which is the greatest of all the commandments and his response: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:30-31a). What we will discover in striving to live Jesus' teaching is that if we love God by receiving his love, we will have what we need to determine how we are to properly love others and ourselves. So if we pray and learn how to receive God's love and then *lose ourselves*

*in love*, we will be able to love others and ourselves in the way God knows best.

At times it may appear that a decision we make is in the interest of loving others for the sake of their good rather than ourselves. Other times it could appear we are loving ourselves more than their good. But if we discern in prayer, with a well-formed Catholic conscience, what is best so as to hold the healthy balance of love of others and of ourselves as *God* knows best, we will find we have a joyful, peaceful interior freedom regardless of the cost of that choice.

A well-developed Catholic conscience is always in accord with reason, faith and the good willed by God. It is in prayer that the interior freedom comes to a person when we ask God "what do you want me to do?" not because we have to, but because we want to choose what he knows is best for the sake of love (him, others and ourselves). Without charity (God's love), we cannot love ourselves or others properly.

With God's love, all is rightly aligned to the ultimate good that is only found in God's perfect plan for us individually and for others. This occurs when we are open to receiving God's grace (his spiritual help) so that "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Corinthians 3:17).

God freely chose to create us in his image and likeness and give us his divine life and love, redeeming us through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and through the Holy Spirit animating us with spiritual capacities, powers and actions. He does not withhold or force his love upon us. He allows us to freely choose for ourselves whether or not we want to receive his love and consequently love him, others and ourselves as he does.

Essentially this means when we receive the Holy Spirit through grace (God's spiritual gifts and virtues and other spiritual powers) and act upon those godly blessings to respond to those blessings, we choose the best course of action as it relates to God, others and ourselves. Such godly free choices enable us to deepen our spiritual capacities and to experience interior peace, joy, and true religious freedom.

## December

- 2 Seminary visit
- 4 4:00 Stational Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph\*
- 6 Episcopal Installation Mass of the Most Reverend Andrew Cozzens as the eighth bishop of the Diocese of Crookston, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Crookston, MN
- 7-9 Watertown/Brookings Deanery visit
- 8 5:30 Feast of the Immaculate Conception Mass and celebration, Immaculate Conception Parish, Watertown
- 16 7:30 Christmas at the Cathedral concert, Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 17 7:30 Christmas at the Cathedral concert, Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 18 1:00 Christmas at the Cathedral concert, Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 4:00 Stational Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph\*
- 7:30 Christmas at the Cathedral concert, Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 19 2:00 Christmas at the Cathedral concert, Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 7:30 Christmas at the Cathedral concert, Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 21 11:30 Bishop O’Gorman Catholic School Board meeting, Catholic Pastoral Center
- 25 12:00 Midnight Mass, Solemnity of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 28 Seminarian holiday gathering, Mass and dinner

## January

- 1 4:00 Stational Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph\*

\*Broadcast on Keloland TV or live stream via [sfatholic.org](http://sfatholic.org)

# Conference offers missionary insight



The Through God’s Love Conference brought together budding missionary disciples from around the diocese to learn more about evangelizing others in their lives and their parishes. A men’s panel and women’s panel (above left) provided real-life examples of what missionary discipleship looks like. Bishop DeGroot gave a rousing keynote and received a blessing from all gathered for the event. (Photos by Bill Sealey)

## THE BISHOP'S BULLETIN

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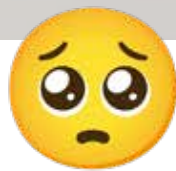
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# Why serve?

## A view from beyond the pew

By Laurie Stiegelmeier



*“There are three openings on the parish and finance councils.”*

You’ve read words like these in your parish bulletin before, but you’ve never considered it. You tell yourself you don’t have the skills, you don’t have the time, and someone else will surely do it. It’s a common response, but not an accurate reflection of reality.

Fear and apathy drive many of us to dismiss a request like this without ever really discerning whether *we* are the ones who should volunteer. It might actually be the perfect opportunity for us to be of service to our parish and our pastor.

### Challenged to serve

Regardless of which parish he’s been in, large or small, Father Ken Lulf, pastor at Sacred Heart Parish in Eden and St. Joseph Parish in Grenville, has found filling vacancies on councils is not easy.

“My experience is that people’s difficulty isn’t with working with the priest, it’s with the faithful. They are afraid of making a bad decision in the eyes of the people in the pews,” Father Lulf said. “That’s got to change. The more the faithful are

engaged, the less time I need to invest in administration and the more I can focus on the spiritual.”

Consistent with the Second Vatican Council’s call for greater participation from lay people in the life of the Church, Father Lulf said we must realize that as the number of priests decline, the response of the faithful will have to increase.

Janet Fischer, parishioner and parish council member at St. Lambert Parish in Sioux Falls, has learned a lot about the workload of a pastor during her four years on the council.

“When you sit in the pews, you don’t think about the work he does during the week,” Janet said. “You know he says Masses, has baptisms and weddings but you don’t see all the different responsibilities he has. Seeing this as a parish council member, I have a greater desire to be on board to help with his workload.”

“As pastor you are CEO, manager and worker bee,” Father Shaun Haggerty, pastor at St. Lambert Parish in Sioux Falls, said. “You’re wearing all these hats; there aren’t a lot of positions out there like that.” He explained that councils are like a board of trustees to advise their pastor.



Don and Janet Fischer, parishioners of St. Lambert Parish, Sioux Falls

Father Haggerty says canon law is designed for the pastor to be in charge; he always has the final say, but he needs to work in concert with councils and consider their input. The role of councils is to keep priests in touch with parishioners who may feel more free to talk to a council member than to the priest, or who may feel that the priest is too busy. Importantly, councils maintain unity and continuity in the parish as priests are reassigned.

“Councils help the pastor know more of what’s going on—to get perspective from the pew. Having the support of the council in difficulty allows the pastor to be more

confident in decisions,” Father Haggerty said.

A highlight for him was how his parish council handled Covid. “We were very united as a council in a time of division. On the other side, the finance council helped the parish stay stable when the church was closed and attendance was down.”

Father Lulf points out another benefit of councils: sharing the history and understanding of the parish with the pastor.

“I’ve been here since July 1. I don’t know anything about the parish, but there are people who have lived here their whole life who do,” Father Lulf said. “I can’t figure it out—they’ve got to tell me, because I don’t know what I don’t know.”

### Councils help guide parishes

Janet describes the parish council as primarily an advisory board. “We discuss programs, ministries (such as lectors, servers, greeters), religious ed, activities, plan events, security... anything the pastor needs to bounce off other people we talk about at meetings. We’re representing the parish which has certain gifts. Father Haggerty is the steward of the entire parish, of all the time and talent of the staff and volunteer leaders of the parish and organizations. We help him guide all these groups.”

Mona Buisker, finance council member and parishioner at St. John de Britto Parish in Britton, explained the role of the council she serves as guiding the parish with finances and being there to guide the priest, whose input and guidance the council also needs and wants. Parishioners can bring questions, concerns and suggestions to the council members who meet quarterly to review and discuss financials.

“We are there to give our guidance to the priest who has the final say,” Mona said. “We start and end every meeting with prayer and every decision we make is with the best interest of the parish in mind. We have to ask ourselves, ‘Are we doing this per God’s plan? If God could tell us, what would he say?’”

Father Lulf said councils are collaborative and a good pastor will take what a council recommends, infrequently going against it. “It’s not what I think,” he said, “it’s

what we think, and guided by the Holy Spirit, we make those decisions for the good of the Body of Christ.”

Father Lulf emphasized collaboration, recalling affirmation from a finance council member who told him after six years, “Father, you made us a lot smarter. You gave us permission to look at the information and comment.”

### With service arises growth

As terms expire, Father Haggerty prays about replacements. He brings names to the council and asks who they have in mind. “I go ask people after a lot of thinking and prayer,” he said, adding that he’s seldom turned down. Janet serves because Father Haggerty did a personal ask.

Father Haggerty encourages council members to develop their prayer life. Book study to provide spiritual guidance and faith development is part of council meetings.

“Not all councils do this, but it is a unique part of our council that our pastor chose to do, and we’ve been receptive,” Janet said. “It’s been very positive.”

“If you have people who know and love the faith, who know and love the Church, they are going to have the mind of the priest,” Father Haggerty said. “They will want the success of the church.”

It may not be clear how serving on a council is missionary discipleship, but Janet says it definitely is. Youth and adult ed and increasing the faith and spiritual life of the parishioners is part of their discussion. Since the rollout, the diocesan vision is discussed at every meeting with the



Mike and Mona Buisker, parishioners at St. John de Britto Parish, Britton

goal of discovering more ways to promote it. Members attend educational programs and hold programs to encourage and educate parishioners in the vision.

Mona thinks of everything we do in our parish, community, job and family as part of missionary discipleship. “We do have to remind ourselves of that once in a while,” she said.

Encouraging others to serve in their parish, she says there are many different ways you can be active. “Your church wants you there. And it’s fun! You’re missing out on something that will enrich you spiritually,” Mona said. “It might not be easy, but you will be repaid. God will give you the time you need to get your other work done.”

“Being on the council has been very rewarding,” Janet said. “I’ve learned a lot. I would certainly encourage people to be willing to serve. It doesn’t take a lot of time, but it’s a tremendous benefit to the parish.”

If people are looking for a way to fulfill the diocesan vision of *Lifelong Catholic Missionary Discipleship Through God’s Love*, Father Lulf says serving on a council is an easy way to do it.

“Your parish is your home, take ownership, don’t wait for someone else.”



## Feeling called to serve on a parish council?

Call your parish office to learn about their needs.



# Turning everyday Life into a Gift of love



*By Josie Bopp*

After hearing a laundry list of to-dos from the Messiah during the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel, ending with a command to perfection might have almost seemed like a tease to the Jewish audience of his day. What more could this man actually demand of us?

The beatitudes, with their praises for those who are meek, to the teaching that anger against a brother is akin to murder, to the command to love even our enemies, is difficult enough, until Jesus wraps it all up with an even more problematic and puzzling phrase: "So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

But rather than a final command piled on at the end of a list of seemingly impossible demands, Jesus is actually offering us an invitation into the life of God, says Father Tyler Mattson, pastor of St. Nicholas in Tea and St. Christina in Parker.

"There is this recognition that as human beings, we're made in the image of God," Father Mattson said. "But to really take that seriously means to look at, okay, what is God's life actually like?"

## *Trinitarian identity*

At the center of Christian theology stands the doctrine of the Trinity, that our God is a communion of persons. Within the life of the Trinity, there is this constant giving and receiving of a gift, Father Mattson says. The Father makes the gift of himself totally to the Son. The Son receives that gift and then makes a gift of himself totally to the Father and the mutual gift of the Father and the Son is the Holy Spirit—a communion of love.

"When we look at our own lives as Christians, we can say, 'My life is a gift, too,' because that's who God is," Father Mattson said.

Jesus' revelation of God as Father, as a God of love, is how we can begin to understand the life we are called to share in when he urges us to be perfect.

"God loves me so much that he calls me his son, he calls me his daughter," Father Mattson said. "He loves me so much that he has created everything for me so that I can be with him."

Father Tyler Mattson is the pastor of St. Nicholas in Tea and St. Christina in Parker, and is the director of Christ the King Campus Ministry in Sioux Falls



Receiving this identity is fundamental to understanding Jesus' invitation to share in the life of God, and though it may be something we have heard before, knowing and experiencing it is a journey, Father Mattson says.

"If that's who God is—he's not just the 'big man upstairs' or Santa Claus keeping the list—he's actually a father who loves me so much that he gave his only son," he said. "That's where I go, 'My life is such a gift.'"

When we begin to understand that God has created each of us as a gift and has called us to participate in his own life, that's where our response comes in.

"With that realization then comes the responsibility of, as Jesus says, 'Love one another as I have loved you,'" Father Mattson said.

## *The gift of self*

"Man...cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself" (Gaudium et Spes, 24). The Second Vatican Council loudly proclaimed the universal call to holiness—that every Christian is called to be a saint. While the Church had always called each person to sanctity, the teaching was loud and clear: holiness isn't just for monks and nuns.

"The call is universal then, because while not everybody can become a monk or a nun or a missionary, everybody can love their kids or their spouse or coworkers; their peers or teachers; your pastor, your parishioners," Father Mattson said.

Sharing in the life of God (holiness) isn't the exception to the rule because God extends us the opportunity to live his life, which is love. Holiness becomes the norm wherever love becomes the norm, Father Mattson says.

"Love is the thing we all can do," he said. "That's the perfection of the Father."

While it may sound sentimental or even superficial, Father Mattson says it's not a question of, "Am I called to make a gift of myself in love" but, "How?" The short answer to that question is through our particular vocation, first and foremost, by entering into the vows of marriage, ordination, or consecration and religious life. Secondly, by the seemingly ordinary vocation of our everyday life.

"It's kind of funny that we can say we're called to love our neighbor, but we forget that the neighbors are the people who

we see—they're the people we're with," Father Mattson said. "There should never be a question of who I'm called to love."

In that way, Father Mattson says Jesus' invitation to share in the perfection of the Father is concrete. To pursue holiness is concrete.

"It's a great freedom that we can have," he said. "Holiness never has to become something that's a secret, or if I just figure out this formula, then I'll figure out how to be a saint. Holiness is perfection, but perfection is love."

Once we've recognized our identity and heard the call to be a gift to others, we look around us and recognize the gift of others on the journey to holiness, that God has created them as a gift.

"I'm not just on this journey by myself in solitude, but it's actually possible to become a saint with other people," Father Mattson said.

## *The gift of others*

In our vocation and in our daily interactions with the people God has placed in our lives lies the great opportunity to go deeper into the perfection and life of God, to love as God loves, Father Mattson says.

"I can share in God's life through them and they can share in God's life through me," he said. "Just like in the life of God, when God is making a gift of himself, so I can make a gift of myself to the other person, and the other person can make a gift of themselves to me."

Father Mattson says there is often a temptation to think the opposite—that other people are actually an obstacle to our holiness. Though there is tremendous value in solitude, a sort of individualism of "I can do it on my own" can be hurtful.



Renee Leach, parishioner at St. Michael Parish in Sioux Falls, shares the gift of love with friends and family. Here she spends time with one of her godchildren, Mercedes Burgwald.

On one hand, Renee says her in-laws were thrilled, and even threw a party to celebrate. She was happy, and says that looking back on her faith journey, she began to get a glimpse of being home.

“So many of the things I was wondering about and questioning were answered,” Renee said. “A part of my soul had been missing out on the fullness of the truth in the Church.”

On the other hand, Renee says her entrance into the Catholic Church was a rift in her family that never fully healed.

“I had to make a decision in my faith journey,” she recalls. “I had to break away from that part of my life.”

In the struggle of finding the joy of being at home in the Church, yet causing pain in her own family, Renee says God provided her with people who could step in and become her family.

“The sisters and the brothers—the things that I had lost because I chose to become Catholic and to really live that part of my faith—God has put people in my life to replace what I’ve lost,” she said. “I continue to be amazed. God cannot be outdone in generosity.”

The gift of God in others is a significant part of Renee’s journey to the Catholic Church, and the support she needed along the way. God wastes nothing, she says.

“There is nothing that happens to us that God can’t use for our good to bring us closer to him,” she said. “Even the most difficult things, the most challenging things, can be used to give him glory because it’s all part of our journey.”

## *Free to love*

In an age of self-reliance and individualism, Father Mattson says this way of living can be difficult and even risky. Staying “stuck” in ourselves is one of the biggest obstacles we face.

“One of the great freedoms of loving other people is that it really does allow us to get beyond our selfishness, our egos, and even beyond our sufferings,” he said.

Father Mattson says Jesus gives us the model for how to suffer, that even in the midst of his own passion and death, he remained in self donation—he was still giving and receiving love from the Father.

“Jesus was able to love to the end, even in the midst of that suffering,” he said. “Because Jesus entered into the depths of it, it allows us to discover love even there.”

“When I worship the God who lives within me, I recognize he’s actually in my neighbor, too,” Father Mattson said. “It’s the same God. I’m not going to lose God by loving my neighbor.”

It’s the people God places in our lives who he uses as the instruments to bring us closer to himself. By loving the other person, and the other person loving me, Father Mattson says both have access to the life of God, to perfection.

Renee Leach, parishioner at St. Michael Parish in Sioux Falls, says the gift of others in her life is why she is the Catholic she is today.

Renee says she grew up as an active Protestant in a faith-filled home, but in a small community with a religious environment she says was very “we and them” between Catholics and Protestants.

“There was this understanding that my mother didn’t want me to marry a Catholic,” she said.

After leaving for Northern State University in Aberdeen for college, Renee says she was struck by the fact that the people inviting her into community were Catholic.

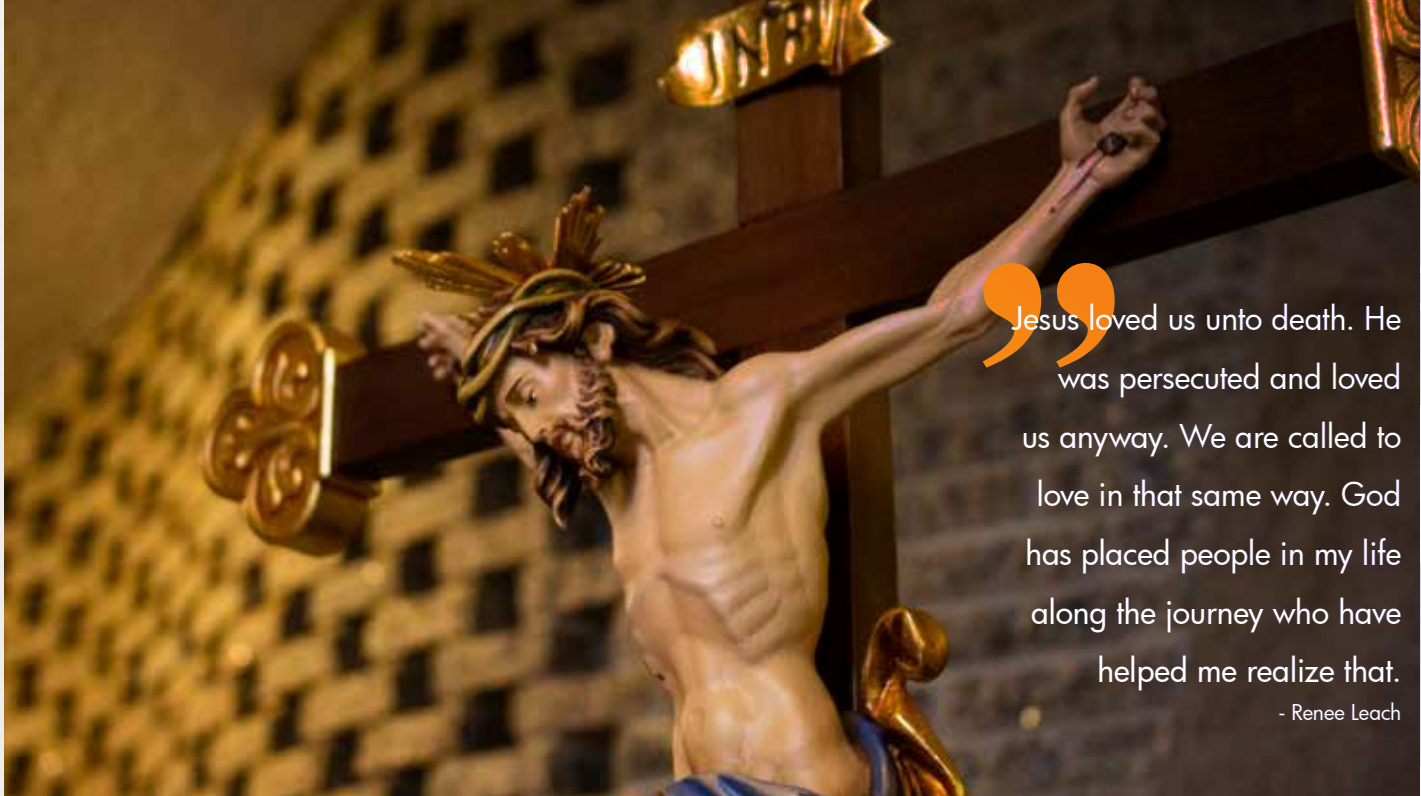
“I saw the joy in how they lived their life,” she said. “There was something that was always a little different about them.”

Renee eventually met and began dating a Catholic man from an enthusiastically Catholic family, and the two attended Mass every Sunday together. Once they became engaged, Renee remembers being asked when she would be converting, while her mother and family remained anti-Catholic.

“There was no way I was going to make everybody happy,” Renee said.

Fast-forward a few years and after the innocent questioning of a student at the Catholic school where she taught, Renee found she had no reason not to join the Catholic Church and she began RCIA.





Jesus loved us unto death. He was persecuted and loved us anyway. We are called to love in that same way. God has placed people in my life along the journey who have helped me realize that.

- Renee Leach

For Renee, stepping back and asking, “What do you want me to learn?” instead of, “Why?” has helped in growing in holiness, even in the midst of the pain of losing her family. In one instance, she remembers praying through the feeling of persecution from another person.

“The image of the cross came into my mind,” Renee said. “Jesus loved us unto death. He was persecuted and loved us anyway. We are called to love in that same way. God has placed people in my life along the journey who have helped me realize that.”

Father Mattson says the challenges of seeking the life of God in others can be an adventure, realizing that they’re not obstacles, but in fact, “a very privileged way I can enter into contemplation, that I am able to become a saint.”

Father Mattson says it goes back to the “gift” language.

“When we love one another as Jesus loved us, we’re making that very concrete gift of ourselves to one another,” he said.

While it is the adventure of the Christian life, Father Mattson says it’s also a risk. Just as we have off days, others can be challenging and try us in different ways.

“That’s why we can become saints so quickly,” he said. “It really does force you to love like Jesus loves.”

Renee says life is hard because we live in a fallen world—things aren’t quite the way they were intended to be when God initially created us. Recalling a favorite quote from Saint John Paul II, Renee says she tries to remember that we have everything we need right now in this moment to be holy and to be happy.

“Sometimes the challenge is stepping back and saying, ‘I’m not going to ask why,’” she said. “The question becomes, ‘What do you want me to learn?’”

Throughout her journey, Renee says forgiveness and gratitude have been key, a practice Father Mattson says is a great way to first experience God’s love and then be able to bring it to others.

“Name 20 things that you’re grateful for today,” he said. “It’ll be hard to get to the end of 20 things and not recognize that you have a loving Father who loves you and provides for you.”

Taking that to the streets, Renee says every encounter with another person is an encounter with God.

“If you can love them in the midst of that encounter and receive what they have for you, it helps us to grow in holiness and on our faith journey,” she said. “Every part of our life, if we really live our lives that way, everything we do should be different than the culture.”

## *Ideas to love others better:*

- Offer a holy hour for someone
- Be a friend
- Treat others the way you want to be treated
- Share burdens
- Forgive others
- Be humble
- Consider others needs
- Share God with others
- Pray for them and pray with them
- Encourage them
- Spend time with them
- Host others in your home
- Cook for them
- Invite others into your life



# We journey together during the Synod on SYNODALITY

By Father Scott Traynor

**D**id you know Pope Francis personally invited you to contribute to a worldwide conversation and consultation in the Church?

In May of 2021, Pope Francis did an amazing and unprecedented thing—he called on every member of the Church around the world to become participants in the “Synod on Synodality.” The official name of this synod is “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission.”

## What is a synod?

“Synod” is not a familiar word. What does it mean? A great biblical point of reference for the reality of a synod is found in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 24:13-35). Cleopas and another disciple are walking together seven miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus on the day of the resurrection. As they walked “they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them” (Luke 24:14-15).

Later in the encounter, after the disciples had recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread, they recounted, “Were not our hearts burning within us as he spoke to us on the way?” (Luke 24:32). Walking together, discussing, welcoming and recognizing Jesus, who is present with us, letting him speak to our hearts and set them afire, these are the essential elements of the reality we call a “synod” in the Church.

The word itself is a compound Greek word: “soon” meaning “with” and “odos” meaning “path.” Hence the root meaning of synod is something like “to walk together.” The rich Christ-centered, Holy Spirit-led conversations and personal interactions of “walking together,” seen in the Gospel passage of the road to Emmaus, is what the Church means when she talks about a synod.

The Synod on Synodality is engaging a truth and two principal questions. The truth: the Church, in announcing the Gospel, “journeys

together.” The questions: (1) How is this “journeying together” happening today in our diocese? (2) What steps does the Holy Spirit invite us to take to grow in “journeying together?”

## A little history of the Synod of Bishops

The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council (commonly known as Vatican II) was a gathering of all the bishops of the world in four fall sessions from 1962-1965. Each session lasted from eight to 12 weeks. The bishops recognized many blessings that came from meeting together and asking the Holy Spirit to lead their discussions on matters of concern for the Church and the world. When Vatican II finished, the bishops wanted a way to be able to continue to receive the blessings of sessions like these, and so the Synod of Bishops was born.

There have been 16 ordinary Synods of Bishops since 1967, occurring every three to four years on average. At these gatherings, a selection of bishops from around the world gather together to pray and discuss, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, a matter of importance for the life of the Church. In addition to the bishops, other theologians, philosophers, and subject-matter experts are often invited to contribute to the discussions.

The participants summarize their discussions in order to offer counsel to the pope. Frequently, the Holy Father will take these contributions and compose a letter to the Church, called a Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation.

A few examples include the Synod of Bishops of 1974 who addressed the topic of “Evangelization in the Modern World,” after which Pope Paul VI composed “*Evangelii Nuntiandi*.” After the synod of 1987 on “The Vocation and Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World,” Pope John Paul II wrote “*Christifideles Laici*.” The Synod of Bishops of 2005 discussed “The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church,” and Pope Benedict XVI wrote “*Sacramentum Caritatis*.”

Pope Francis wrote “*Evangelii Gaudium*” in response to the 2012 Synod of Bishops who reflected on “The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith.” Those documents are important standards for the present day life and mission of the Catholic Church and were shaped in an important way by the blessings and inspiration that came from the conversations of the synods.

### Communion, participation, mission

With the history outlined above, we can understand better why Pope Francis has called for a synod on the topic of synodality. The official title of the synod is “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission.” This helps us understand the Christ-centered, Holy Spirit-led conversation the Holy Father is inviting the entire Church to undertake.

Pope Francis wants every diocese to have a family conversation about some really important things: How can each of us grow in our **communion** with Jesus, and grow together as families, as parishes and as a diocese? How can we invite and foster greater **participation** in the life of our local church, to grow the spiritual family of the Church in scope and depth? Together in Christ and deeply involved in the life of the Church, what is God calling us to in our **mission** to serve all people with the love of Christ? Instead of relying exclusively on a selection of bishops and some experts in these topics, the pope’s desire is to engage as many people as possible, inviting them to reflect on these important questions together as beloved children of God.

### The Synod and our diocesan vision

Pope Francis providentially coincides beautifully with the effort to advance our diocesan vision of building a culture of *Lifelong Catholic Missionary Discipleship Through God’s Love*. To move forward with our diocesan vision, we need opportunities to have intentional, Christ-centered and Holy Spirit-inspired conversations as Catholic families, parishes, schools and organizations that focus on growing in communion, participation and mission as a response of love to God’s infinite, personal and unconditional love for each one of us.

To borrow the headline questions of the Synod on Synodality: How are we “journeying together” today in our diocese toward greater Catholic missionary discipleship? What steps does the Holy Spirit invite us to take to grow in journeying together in lives of Catholic missionary discipleship? The work to engage as broad an audience as possible to contribute

to a discussion on those questions will advance both our diocesan vision and the desire of the Holy Father for the church universal.

### What is being asked of us?

The basic task of our diocesan participation in the worldwide Synod on Synodality is (1) To gather together in our local communities with as many people as possible; (2) To ask the Holy Spirit to fill us with his love and give us wisdom, understanding and right judgment; (3) As we prayerfully reflect and visit with one another about (a) how best to grow together as a spiritual family-*communion*, (b) building that communion in our parishes, schools, organizations and institutions-*participation*, (c) to more effectively be instruments of God’s love in action in our broader community and the world-*mission*.

We will then gather the fruits of these conversations and pass them along with dioceses around the country to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, who will send representatives to the worldwide assembly at the Vatican in 2023.

### What’s next?

The diocesan phase of the Synod on Synodality began in October of 2021 and will conclude by April 1, 2022. We have established a diocesan steering committee to organize our diocese’s consultation, and have identified a calendar of major milestones. Your parish pastor has those details, and they will be available on the diocesan website ([sfatholic.org](http://sfatholic.org)) in early December.

The steering committee’s main tasks will be (1) to identify the specific questions we are inviting local groups and parishes to consider; (2) to determine the best means of involving as many people as possible in the consultation whether by local or regional meetings, in person or online, via surveys, discussion after Mass or other gatherings, or some combination of all of the above; (3) to help each pastor conduct the consultation in the way that works

best in their parishes and collect the responses of participants.

### Where can I find out more?

To understand the process going on around the world, the Vatican has released a very helpful “vademecum” or instruction. It gives many details of the history, theology, vision and practical details of the Synod on Synodality. The organizers have done a good job of anticipating many questions regarding this unprecedented undertaking. For example:

- Characterizing the whole process: “One listening to others, all listening to the Holy Spirit.”
- Defining the hoped for outcome: “We aim to be attentive to how the Spirit speaks through the People of God.”
- Emphasising the focus on Christ and seeking the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: “Synodality is not a corporate strategic exercise. Rather, it is a spiritual process that is led by the Holy Spirit.”
- Assuring that the process is not only spiritual but ecclesiological: “Synodality does not exist without the pastoral authority of the College of Bishops under the primacy of the successor of Peter, as well as the pastoral authority of each diocesan bishop in the dioceses entrusted to his care.”
- Recognizing that the process is definitely adaptable: “The aim is not to overwhelm dioceses and parishes...Each listening phase will be adapted to local circumstances.”

You can find a link to the vademecum and additional information about the synod process worldwide and in our diocese by visiting [sfatholic.org/synod](http://sfatholic.org/synod). We look forward to your involvement and the particular inspirations God may give you to help our diocese grow together as a spiritual family in service to others as *Lifelong Catholic Missionary Disciples Through God’s Love*.



# Advent offers time to quiet our hearts

By Robyn Bruggeman

Advent has always been one of my favorite times of the year, and the Church invites us to fully enter into this rich season, which is also the beginning of the new liturgical year. This time leading up to Christmas is really meant for us to prepare our hearts for the birth of our Lord, and not just historically, but in how he continues to come to us constantly and will come again someday.

Advent is a time for us to slow down, seek silence and take mindful steps to be ready for Jesus. It can be quite the challenge when everything around us is swirling around faster than snowflakes in the South Dakota wind. Oftentimes, people are so caught up in preparation for the holidays that they find themselves hardly taking any time to actually contemplate *why* they're preparing in the first place.

We are so blessed that the Church in her wisdom has the season of Advent so we have time to get into the right mindset for the birth of Jesus! And the Church in her beauty has everything ordered and timed perfectly within the liturgical year. All we need to do is enter fully into it.

Our family has many traditions, and some vary from year to year. We do whatever fits our family for the season of life we're in. The Church helps us by giving each of the four weeks its own theme (hope, love, joy and peace) to ponder, offering an easy way to align our thoughts to the season.

The Advent wreath is a staple in our house, and when that comes out we know it's really time to enter into the season. I love the progression of light. We start in darkness, and each week during Advent we light another candle. The light gets brighter, representing the light of Christ coming into a dark world. And on Christmas, we finally have the Christ candle, just as the world has the light of Christ.

One of our newer rituals is reciting the St. Andrew Christmas Anticipation prayer at mealtimes. We have it hanging or framed throughout the kitchen so it can be easily accessed throughout the day. The prayer quiets your mind and draws you back to the coming of the Lord.

Most years we do the Jesse Tree, which tells the story of salvation history with scripture using Jesus' family tree and leading up to his birth. We also take part in the



The Bruggeman family: (from left) Melody (granddaughter), Jordan (son-in-law), Mikaela, Benedict, Justina, Spike, Robyn, Carter, Julia, Fulton and Blase.

O Antiphons, which are a combination of prayers and scripture. They're an ancient tradition tied to the hymn "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel," and they draw you in deeply during the final days of Advent.

Many parishes offer additional times for the sacrament of confession during Advent. Nothing cleans up our hearts the way that sacrament does! Though it isn't required to go to confession before Christmas, it is strongly recommended. Just like parents make sure to have the nursery clean and ready for a new baby to come home, we should do the same with our hearts for Jesus.

That's not all, though. We have lots and lots of holiday books, but rather than bring them out right after Thanksgiving, we wrap each one individually and have the kids open them one at a time throughout Advent. It adds to the anticipation of Christmas, and each book that retells the Nativity story is an opportunity to slow down and envelope ourselves in God's love. It's fun to see the kids get re-excited about our collection of books each year.

We also have a large Christmas puzzle we all work on throughout Advent. How can a puzzle not encourage you to slow down and ponder?

Probably my favorite tradition is our trav-

eling Nativity. The stable is set up in our dining room, and the Holy Family makes their way throughout the house during Advent until they arrive on Christmas Eve.

There are many options for daily Advent reflections, whether you find them online, on an app or at your local Catholic book store or in a devotional like "Magnificat" or "The Word Among Us." Many of them coordinate with the daily readings we hear at Mass. Reading the daily Mass readings is quite possibly one of the best ways to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Christ and fully enter into the rhythm of the Church. Whichever you choose, they are meant to bring your mind and heart back to preparing for Jesus coming. That's the entire reason for Advent, after all.

The Lord desires closeness with us, to express his love to us. But it's really easy to miss his movements when we're caught up in the hustle and bustle of life, particularly during the holidays.

The Church offers so many ways to help us slow down, silence the noise, and help us make room for God. Choose what fits you and your family. Our faith lives are all unique, and the traditions and Advent preparations should reflect that. Just be still and invite Christ into your hearts and homes this Advent. Come, Lord Jesus.

# Father Charles Cimpl

Father Chuck Cimpl steps into the spotlight this month. He was ordained on June 1, 1978, and is currently the pastor at Holy Spirit Parish in Sioux Falls. He has served as the vicar general for the diocese since 2004 and is helping transition the role to Father Andy Young, the new vicar general for the diocese. Father Cimpl has a brother who lives in Tabor and a sister who lives in Yankton. Let's learn more about this long-time priest of our diocese.

## Q How did you get your call to the priesthood?

I grew up in Tabor and the Benedictine priests from St. Procopius Abbey in Lisle, Illinois, staffed our parish. Since Tabor had a high Czech population, St. Procopius had priests who could speak Czech. They were often at my grandparent's and parent's homes for dinner. I saw in them such happiness and joy that it influenced me to think about the priesthood. When I was a senior in high school, Father James Bream asked me if I ever thought of being a priest. His suggestion triggered me to pursue entering the seminary.

## Q What did you do before the priesthood? (other jobs, college major, etc.)

My family had a grocery store and butcher shop in Tabor; I worked in the store and assisted with the butchering. I also worked summers at Cimpl Meats in Yankton and did various jobs in the packing plant.

## Q Is there a particular part of Catholicism that really fascinates you? (liturgy, history, spirituality)

The Benedictine monks and Benedictine sisters from Sacred Heart Monastery were so instrumental in assisting the parish during the renewal of the Mass after Vatican II. They did such a wonderful job of teaching us, and it was so exciting to finally understand the Mass and participate in the Liturgy. Their influence, I know, has been pivotal in my understanding of the Liturgy.

## Q Who was most influential in your life?

My mom, dad and grandparents were truly the most influential people in my life. I can honestly say for all of them that their Catholic faith was the most important aspect of their lives. They truly were an example to me of having Christ at the center of their lives.

## Q What's your favorite part of being a priest?

I love the weekend Masses and the gathering of the people. I enjoy seeing young and old coming to Mass and praying with them. It sets the whole week off to a great start for me.

## Q What's the most challenging thing?

I wish more could experience the joy of living a life of faith. I am especially concerned about our younger people. As I meet with moms and dads, they relate to me that their children no longer practice their faith. I would like them to see and feel the wonderful treasures we have in our faith and how it can be so helpful to us, especially when we experience difficulties.

## Q Who is your go-to saint? Why?

I turn to a couple of saints for intercessory help. St. Therese of Lisieux was my mother's favorite saint, so when things are looking a bit tough, I call upon St. Therese for assistance. Since my sister was diagnosed with cancer a few years ago, I pray daily the prayer to St. Peregrine and ask his intercessory assistance to keep her in remission, along with others who have been diagnosed with cancer.

## Q What do you do in your spare time?

I enjoy reading and most of my exercise involves taking a nice walk.

## Q What is something most people don't know about you?

I played football for Notre Dame. (However it was Notre Dame High School in Mitchell.)

## Q How can your parishioners and people of the diocese best help you be a great priest?

In my early years in ministry I learned a lot about being a priest from high school and college students, since I taught for 11 years at O'Gorman and was the director of the Newman Center at SDSU. As my ministry progressed, I have always attempted to listen to my parishioners to gain insights from them on how I could be a better priest.

## Q If you could have supper with anyone from history (besides Jesus), who would it be and why?

I would probably like to have a dinner conversation with King David. He was multitalented—a warrior, song writer, musician—but also one who made some terrible decisions in his life, but eventually repented and turned things around. It would be fascinating to me to learn how he dealt with crisis and how he stayed connected to God.

Curious about a particular religious vocation? Visit [sfcatholic.org/vocations](http://sfcatholic.org/vocations) to learn more about discerning God's call for your life.



## Your parish needs you!

Speak to your pastor, parish director of religious education or youth director about opportunities to serve your parish.

# Discovering and sharing gifts has no age requirement

By Laura Melius

*Let no one have contempt for your youth, but set an example for those who believe, in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity.*

1 Timothy 4:12

The youth of the Diocese of Sioux Falls are responding to the call to be lifelong Catholic missionary disciples, using their God-given gifts as they grow in faith and serve their parishes and communities. No matter the size of the parish or the age of the parishioner, God is counting on *all* of us to share the gifts he has given.

## ▼ Know your gifts

The first step in sharing gifts is to identify them. Caleb Honner, parishioner at St. Katharine Drexel Parish in Sioux Falls, suggests one of the best ways to do this is to serve others. Through serving on retreats, Caleb recognized two specific gifts in himself: the gift of joyful service and the gift of understanding difficult teachings.

“I first found my gift for serving others when I started to help on retreats, like SEARCH retreats, here in Sioux Falls,” Caleb said. “I identified it when I started to find a joy of serving God by helping others get to know him. I found my gift for understanding difficult teachings from many of my friends. There would be this hard teaching that they would have trouble understanding, and I would be able to understand the teaching and what it taught.”

Jessica Boekelheide, parishioner at All Saints Parish in Mellette, discovered one of her gifts when she started serving as a lector at children’s Masses in fourth grade. She later became a parish lector in junior high, which she continues today.

“My parents encouraged me to start lectoring when I was younger, and this has increased my involvement in the parish,” Jessica said. “I would urge youth to try a variety of things and see where the Lord is calling them.”

As Jessica grew older, more gifts became evident, which led to another opportunity to serve.

“When my mom noticed my eagerness to share the faith and my patience with others, she encouraged me to help teach religious education at my parish,” she recalled. “I have learned so much from the religious education teachers whom I have helped, and God’s gifts continue to grow in me.”

Youth groups and other faith-filled groups can be another way for youth to identify their gifts. The adults who lead these groups can offer invaluable support.

“Our high school youth program [at O’Gorman High School] is very encouraging of continuing a relationship with Christ,” Caleb said. “I remember when I started to follow Christ at the start of freshman year, I relied only on my friends and my own will.”

As he looks back, Caleb said he now realizes that the spiritual life was sometimes more difficult than he had anticipated. He could have benefited from the extra support from his parish, which he did eventually seek.

“I wish I would’ve done it sooner. Having a spiritual mentor within the staff at my parish is something that has helped me to grow and to stay encouraged, even when I feel like I want to give up,” he said.

## ▼ Taking the initiative



Jessica Boekelheide, member of TLC (Teens Loving Christ) at All Saints Parish, Mellette

Once we recognize our gifts, we should take action to use them to grow in faith and encourage others. A group that formed two years ago at All Saints Parish has been a great source of encouragement for Jessica and her peers.

“Our post-confirmation class, which we named TLC for Teens Loving Christ, meets to learn about Catholicism and to grow in prayer,” Jessica said. “Currently, we are studying apologetics. This study has increased

my love for Christ and my trust in Christ.”

Denise Clemens, leader of TLC, was their former confirmation teacher.

“The inspiration came from the youth themselves. Knowing they were ‘finished’ after confirmation just did not seem right,” Denise explained. “Father Tom Anderson advised wisely that when we have saints in our midst, we need to do all that we can to help them grow in their faith. Creating a post-confirmation group was inspired by the Holy Spirit, created by faith-filled youth and developed by a supporting parish family.”

The TLC youth soon discovered ways they wanted to serve their parish through new events and more opportunities for prayer. Events such as an annual Rosary Walk (pictured opposite page), monthly 12-hour adoration, and leading the Rosary before Mass have all been warmly supported by parishioners.

Jessica has especially appreciated her time spent at adoration.

“My parish’s overnight Saturday adoration has brought me closer to the Lord through prayer and silence,” she shared.

Parishioners of all ages have participated by signing up to pray for an hour through the first Saturday night of each month.

“If the event fails, it fails, but if it flourishes, the whole parish benefits,” Denise said. “The faith of our youth is an inspiration for me to do what I can to help foster that faith. The individual gifts of our youth are a treasure that is encouraged and utilized.”

## ▼ Inspiring each other

By supporting older youth, the faith lives of younger students who look up to them is also bolstered, providing a strong future for our parishes. As a younger student, Caleb noticed the joy experienced in his parish’s youth group.

“I could see this joy in these youths that were just being themselves. Just being themselves, not what they want their friends to think of them, but their true authentic self is a gift to our parishes,” he said.

Now, as a high school student, Caleb learns from the youngest members of his parish.

“Younger kids especially have the energy and joy to show small little things, these little gifts, that could be meaningless to many, but it brings out the gifts in others,” he said.

Jessica agreed, as she has learned from the young children at All Saints through her years of assisting in teaching religious education.

“Although youth may be limited in physical ways, they can serve the Church,” Jessica said. “Their vibrancy and playfulness are true gifts to be cherished. Hopefully, children can remind us of our child-like dependency on God. The faith of the youth is a great gift to parishes, especially as the youth lift the Church in prayer.”

Additionally, the size of the parish should never determine a young person’s ability to identify their gifts or to share them.

“It doesn’t matter how many youth a parish may have, all have something to give,” Caleb said. “When youth are together, a parish is more lively. This is a gift from God that I hope every parish may have. I know for parishes in smaller towns there may not be as many youth as the bigger towns, but the youth are still a gift no matter how many there are. They are loved by God and have many gifts to share with others around them.”

## ▼ Ask God for help

What if, despite exploring these options, it’s still difficult for youth to identify their unique gifts? Jessica recognizes it may be difficult to recognize God-given gifts in middle or high school.

“I would encourage youth to ask the Lord for gifts and to ask him to reveal those gifts to them,” she said. “Gifts often don’t appear overnight. Instead, we grow into them as they become part of our personality. The Lord wants to give us great graces, but we must ask and be ready to receive.”

Caleb also encourages youth to look at the areas they are passionate about.

“God wants you to be happy, and usually where your heart is drawn toward passionately, the Lord will give gifts,” he said. “Even if you don’t see a gift within you, someone else who knows you knows that you have a gift. Some may have similar gifts to you, but the gift for you is totally unique. You may not know why right away, but over time, it will be revealed to you.”

No matter what gifts are revealed in our youth, they are all given by God to show his unfailing love to the world.

“A gift that everyone receives is God’s love,” Caleb said. “We sometimes reject this amazing gift, myself included. This is a gift that God will never take away from us. Use his gift of love to love others where it might be hard.”

As our youth continue to find and share their gifts, we can all support and encourage them in their faith journeys. The result will be a stronger parish of lifelong missionary disciples from which all will benefit.

# Why should I care about learning about my faith?

**Q** I've been reading your columns, and I find them informative, but when I try to talk with other Catholics about them, I struggle to help them see the importance of this information. Can you offer any advice?

**A** One of the great frustrations we can face when we become awakened to and fascinated by our Catholic faith is that others don't share our enthusiasm, and try as we might, we can't seem to get them as excited as we are. How, then, might we respond in these situations?

First, it's worth confirming your own sense: this information is indeed informative, in the most literal sense of the word it "in-forms," or "forms inwardly"; it forms us within ourselves. Let me explain.

The truths of our Catholic faith are not mere faith facts or bits of religious trivia that those of us who are theology geeks collect in our minds simply to increase our knowledge. Certainly, knowing these truths does in fact increase our knowledge, but it does—or ought to do—so much more than that: it is meant to not merely "inform" us in the everyday sense of the word, but to "form us from within"...to transform us.

For these truths indeed have the ability to change our lives...the more deeply we know them and the more fully we live them, the more we are changed, transformed, sanctified. In other words, the holier we become. Or just as importantly, the more we are able to love God and our neighbor and the more we are able to receive God's love.

This is worth emphasizing because too often we see knowledge of our faith as a merely academic thing, as something for those who like to study things, but not for those who aren't as inclined to pick up a book. Here it's helpful to recognize that knowledge of the faith isn't really knowledge about something as it is knowledge about someone: God, and what he has revealed to us. So growing in knowledge and understanding of our faith isn't so much about getting smarter as it is about getting to know someone better. And as we get to know this particular person better, we become more like him—we are changed.

A second point: this is true for everyone who comes to know and live the Catholic faith. It isn't for a select few who are invited to receive this transformative knowledge; it's intended for everyone, for all people. Everyone who has



the ability to know—no matter how great or little that ability—is invited to come to know the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent (John 17:3), and in order to know God, one must know about God, and hence, the importance of knowing our Catholic faith.

And this is where our question this month becomes relevant: most of us do not immediately grasp the power and importance of growing in knowledge and understanding of our faith. It can be easy to see someone else's passion for growing in faith knowledge as their own particular hobby. Just as some people are fascinated by, say, stamps, sports or celebrities, others are fascinated by their faith.

But this is where the point we just made is relevant; this kind of knowledge is for *everyone*. Faith knowledge isn't so much like stamp collecting as it is like eating or breathing—it's something necessary for life. Now, obviously we don't literally die if we don't grow in faith knowledge, but we do live a more impoverished life than we would otherwise.

Again, though, most people do not recognize this immediately. And if our motivation is pure and if our desire to help them come to know the faith more deeply is driven by our love for them and for God, then this can be incredibly frustrating. We are offering them something that is of real value to them, something they cannot receive in any other way, and they are uninterested.

What, then, do we do? Here are a few things to consider in situations like this. First, continue to deepen your own faith, in both knowledge and life. Doing so demonstrates the importance that it has for you, but even more importantly, it will result in your continued transformation, and *that* is a powerful witness to those around you. As they see that you are different, the

likelihood of them inquiring about the source of your change—and their openness to hearing your answer—will increase.

Second, pray for them, that the Lord would give them a hunger and thirst to know him and to know about him just as he has for you. We, too, often neglect this crucial step, but to the detriment of our desire to help others come to know the God who loves both them and us.

Third, recognize you may not be the one who is meant to verbally share the Gospel with them. Certainly, we should all always be ready to give an explanation for our own faith (1 Peter 3:15), but until they ask or the Lord prompts us to speak, we should persevere in living our faith as mentioned above, recognizing that someone else in that person's life might have the task of sharing the faith in word as you have shared it in witness.

As we celebrate this Advent season, may we quietly contemplate the God who loves us so much that he became one of us, and may we, by our witness and our word, lead others ever closer to him.

Be sure to check out the additional resources at [sfcatholic.org/answer](http://sfcatholic.org/answer).

If you have a question you need an answer to, email [rkrantz@sfcatholic.org](mailto:rkrantz@sfcatholic.org).

Chris Burgwald holds a doctorate in theology and is the director of discipleship formation for the Diocese of Sioux Falls.





# Annual report for the Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls

The Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls is pleased to present the annual report for the year ended June 30, 2021. As life has slowly returned to normal, financially, the diocese has experienced an increase in net assets of \$1,768,810. While contributions remain even from the prior year, a significant increase was the result of decreased costs related to the lay health insurance program.

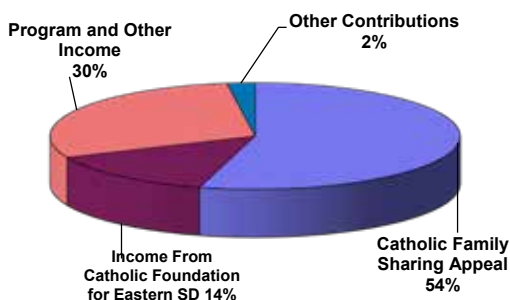
The Catholic Family Sharing Appeal was slightly down from the previous year, but continues to be the primary source of funding for the diocese, resulting in 54 percent of the total revenue. Endowment revenue provided through the Catholic Community Foundation for Eastern South Dakota continues to grow and is now providing 14 percent of the total funding. Program and other income continue to provide an important source of operating revenue.

Total assets of the diocese increased to \$17.4 million, up almost \$1.3 million as cash and investments continue to grow as a result of total revenue up approximately \$1 million from last year.

Even as life resumes after a trying year, diocesan programs are continually evaluated and adjusted to align with current realities and future needs in order to use our resources wisely.

A copy of the audited financial statements is available through the Financial Administration Office of the Catholic Chancery Office.

## 2021 OPERATING REVENUE AND SUPPORT



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SIOUX FALLS STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION JUNE 30, 2021 AND 2020				
	2021		2020	
<b>Assets</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$	2,699,923	\$	1,396,726
Cash and cash equivalents-non operating		2,877,247		2,128,284
Receivables		681,115		1,534,798
Other assets		211,522		130,926
Loans receivable		188,515		195,148
Assets held by others		1,466,953		1,138,967
Equity in insurance cooperative		540,901		488,295
Property and equipment		8,807,754		9,206,040
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>17,473,930</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>16,219,184</b>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>				
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$	719,624	\$	755,848
Custodial funds		341,360		292,942
Contributions payable		941,880		504,784
Notes payable		110,000		1,073,354
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>2,112,864</b>		<b>2,626,928</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>				
Without donor restrictions		10,322,262		8,660,532
With donor restrictions		5,038,804		4,931,724
<b>Total Net Assets</b>		<b>15,361,066</b>		<b>13,592,256</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>17,473,930</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>16,219,184</b>

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SIOUX FALLS STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2021 AND 2020				
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total	Total
	2021			2020
<b>Revenue and Support</b>				
Catholic family sharing appeal	\$ -	4,148,886	4,148,886	\$ 4,241,854
Income from Catholic Foundation for Eastern SD				
Contributions and events	77,442	223,521	300,963	242,289
Income from endowments	-	857,661	857,661	826,027
Loan and investment income	3,792	-	3,792	20,751
Clergy insurance program	862,176	-	862,176	847,235
Lay health insurance program	5,066,045	-	5,066,045	5,008,967
Program and other income	1,930,911	314,168	2,245,079	1,327,997
Other contributions	169,803	-	169,803	158,882
Gain(loss) on disposal of property	-	-	-	-
Net assets released from restrictions	5,437,156	(5,437,156)	-	-
<b>Total Revenue and Support</b>	<b>13,547,325</b>	<b>107,080</b>	<b>13,654,405</b>	<b>12,674,002</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Ministries and programs	2,777,333	-	2,777,333	3,508,874
Clergy benefits and health program	1,001,876	-	1,001,876	696,728
Lay health insurance program	4,292,597	-	4,292,597	4,786,358
Seminarian and other education	864,531	-	864,531	786,957
Interest paid to parishes and others	13,942	-	13,942	32,873
Pastoral services	1,268,157	-	1,268,157	670,979
Administrative	1,212,138	-	1,212,138	1,210,893
Depreciation	455,021	-	455,021	437,229
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>11,885,595</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11,885,595</b>	<b>12,130,891</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>1,661,730</b>	<b>107,080</b>	<b>1,768,810</b>	<b>543,111</b>
<b>Net Assets-Beginning</b>	<b>8,660,532</b>	<b>4,931,724</b>	<b>13,592,256</b>	<b>13,049,145</b>
<b>Net Assets-Ending</b>	<b>\$ 10,322,262</b>	<b>5,038,804</b>	<b>15,361,066</b>	<b>\$ 13,592,256</b>



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## UPCOMING RETREATS

BROOM TREE  
RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

**SILENT RETREATS**

**DAY OF RECOLLECTION**

**Men's Silent Retreats**  
February 17-20    September 15-18  
March 17-20    November 17-20

*Broom Tree Days of Recollection begin at 10 a.m. and consist of conferences, time for Adoration, Mass, and an opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The day ends in mid-afternoon. Because lunch is also served, we ask that you please register. A prayerful donation is requested.*

**Women's Silent Retreats**  
February 3-6    June 16-19  
March 3-6    October 6-9  
March 31-April 3    November 3-6

**December 14, 2021**  
"St. Bridget of Sweden:  
An Introduction to her Life,  
Revelations & Prayers"  
- directed by Dr. Teresa Kemmer

**Save the Dates 2022**  
January 18, February 15, March 22

**SPECIAL RETREATS**

**Couples Retreat**  
**November 11-13, 2022**  
- directed by Ed & Jen Hogan

**Healing Retreats**  
**February 25-27, 2022**  
- directed by Fr. Scott Traynor

**October 14-16, 2022**  
- directed by Fr. Scott Traynor

123 Saint Raphael Circle, Irene, SD 57037  
605-263-1040 | [broomtree@sfcatholic.org](mailto:broomtree@sfcatholic.org)

REGISTER FOR  
RETREATS ONLINE **broom-tree.org**



**ABERDEEN** – Joseph and Kathleen Axtmann will celebrate their 50th anniversary on December 28. They have 3 children (2 deceased), 2 grandchildren and are members of St. Mary Parish.



**BIG STONE** – David and Denise Muldoon celebrated their 50th anniversary on November 26. They have 2 children, 1 grandchild and are members of St. Charles Borromeo Parish.



**GETTYSBURG** – Thad and Michelle Beringer will celebrate their 25th anniversary on December 27. They have 2 children and are members of Sacred Heart Parish.



**GROTON** – David and Tammy Dohman celebrated their 30th anniversary on November 15. They have 5 children, 4 grandchildren and are members of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish.



**HARTFORD** – Doug and Shelly Peterson will celebrate their 45th anniversary on December 18. They have 3 children, 10 grandchildren and are members of St. George Parish.



**HUNTIMER** – Rodney and Joyce Smith will celebrate their 50th anniversary on December 27. They have 9 children, 22 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren and are members of St. Joseph the Workman Parish.



**HURON** – Jerry and Kathy Gilbert will celebrate their 50th anniversary on December 27. They have 3 children, 12 grandchildren and are members of Holy Trinity Parish.



**MADISON** – Ken and Betty Bauman will celebrate their 60th anniversary on December 27. They have 4 children, 11 grandchildren and are members of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish.



**MITCHELL** – Tim and Dixie Herl celebrated their 25th anniversary on November 15. They have 3 children, 4 grandchildren and are members of Holy Spirit Parish.



**MITCHELL** – Fred and Joan DeRouche will celebrate their 50th anniversary on December 28. They have 3 children, 8 grandchildren and are members of Holy Spirit Parish.



**MOBRIDGE** – Darrel and Carol Badure will celebrate their 55th anniversary on December 28. They have 2 children, 2 grandchildren and are members of St. Joseph Parish.



**PARKER** – Mike and Linda Schaffer will celebrate their 50th anniversary on December 17. They have 2 children, 5 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren and are members of St. Christina Parish.



**PIERRE** – Orville and Mary Jo Gran will celebrate their 65th anniversary on December 1. They have 6 children, 21 grandchildren and 22 great-grandchildren and are members of Ss. Peter and Paul Parish.



**REVILLO** – Kevin and Cindy Krakow will celebrate their 35th anniversary on December 20. They have 2 children, 6 grandchildren and are members of Annunciation Parish.



**SIOUX FALLS** – John and Cathy Moneke will celebrate their 50th anniversary on December 28. They have 4 children, 8 grandchildren and are members of Cathedral of Saint Joseph Parish.



**SIOUX FALLS** – Pat and Paulette Klein will celebrate their 50th anniversary on December 4. They have 5 children, 9 grandchildren and are members of Holy Spirit Parish.



**SISSETON** – Doug and Gloria Langager will celebrate their 50th anniversary on December 31. They have 3 children, 12 grandchildren and are members of St. Peter Parish.



**TEA** – Fran and Janette Krier will celebrate their 60th anniversary on December 30. They have 5 children, 16 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren and are members of St. Nicholas Parish.



**WATERTOWN** – Roger and Jane Skatvold will celebrate their 50th anniversary on December 18. They have 1 child, 3 grandchildren and are members of Holy Name of Jesus Parish.



**YANKTON** – Calvin and Lynn Starzl will celebrate their 50th anniversary on December 31. They have 8 children, 34 grandchildren (2 deceased) and 7 great-grandchildren and are members of St. Benedict Parish.

# Ideas to make Advent a season of anticipation

It's Advent! Many of us miss out on the power and anticipation of the Advent season because of the busyness of preparing for Christmas. It doesn't have to be that way. Following are ideas to help you make the most of Advent.

- Don't put the figurines in the stable of your Nativity scene right away. Have the Magi, shepherds, Mary and Joseph travel through your home to the stable, and move them closer each week. Add the infant Jesus on Christmas morning. This will help build the anticipation of Christ's birth.
- Listen to Advent songs instead of Christmas songs. Examples include: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, People Look East, O Come, Divine Messiah, and Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus.
- Hang a stocking for Jesus. Fill it with notes and prayer intentions during Advent.
- Teach your children to be generous. Have them pick one of their gifts to give away, or have them shop for a gift to give away.
- Find ways as a family to be generous by baking, giving and doing things for others together.
- Write letters of appreciation to put in people's stockings or Christmas cards.
- Get/make a Jesse tree and ornaments and pray the daily devotions.
- Learn about saints whose feasts are during Advent and celebrate them.
- Read Advent readings, reflections and Bible stories.
- Get an Advent wreath. Light it each week and pray around it.

Once you get to Christmas, do not open gifts until you have prayed and thanked God the Father for the gift of Jesus. Thank Joseph for taking care of the Holy Family, and thank Mary for her yes to God.



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## ANNIVERSARY SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

We accept anniversary submissions for the following anniversary years: 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, and 70. We include them in the issue of the month of the anniversary or the following month's issue. Submissions received for later issues will not be included.

Send a color photo, your anniversary information and a self-addressed, stamped envelope by **December 14** for inclusion in the January 2022 edition to:

The Bishop's Bulletin  
523 North Duluth Avenue  
Sioux Falls, SD 57104  
or e-mail to: [rkrantz@sfcatholic.org](mailto:rkrantz@sfcatholic.org).

## THE PC PROMISE

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# Four men on the path to the diaconate




Four men of the diocese were recently admitted to candidacy for the permanent diaconate at a Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph. Pictured left to right: Ed Mitzel, Brad Weimann, Bishop DeGroot, Deacon John Devlin, Phil Carlson and David Halter.

**HE IS STABLE**  
A Night for Grieving Hearts to Find Rest in His Peace

**Thursday, December 9th from 6:30-8:00 pm**  
St. Therese Catholic Church, Sioux Falls

**Featured Presenters:**  
**Father Kevin O'Dell and Amber Kolousek**

 The evening will include presentations about how to find the light of Christ in the midst of our darkest times from grief due to the death of a loved one. Warm your heart and soul with a candlelit ceremony, hot chocolate and the anticipation of Christmas. Children are welcome!

**Catholic Family Services**

**MORE INFORMATION OR TO SIGN UP** [cfs@sfatholic.org](mailto:cfs@sfatholic.org) [605-988-3775](tel:605-988-3775)

Wishing You  
and  
Your Family  
a very  
Blessed Christmas



**Cole Heisey**  
Sioux Falls  
605-740-0273  
cole.heisey@kofc.org



**Jeff Gillen**  
Sioux Falls  
605-759-7204  
jeff.gillen@kofc.org



**Tom Bechen**  
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# Priests eagerly prep for next Last Collar Standing

What happens when you pit priests against each other in a friendly Survivor-style competition? Mayhem and laughs!

Last Collar Standing will return January 16 for the third time, putting 12 priests in the hot seat to compete for the ultimate prize: the Champion Staff and ultimately, bragging rights.

Twelve priests will gather by Zoom during a livestreamed competition to answer trivia questions, complete physical challenges and test their willpower to see who will be the Last Collar Standing.

This is a great way to see priests in a new light, having fun and revealing a new side many of us have never seen.

“I can’t wait! It’s an amazing experience, even for priests to see other priests in this kind of environment,” Father John Rutten said. “You get to



know each other in a new way. This year everyone’s gunning for me because I won the most Facebook likes last year. But it’ll be fun!”

This fun and hilarious competition is a fundraiser for Lumen Christi, a ministry of the diocese that sends

missionaries to parishes year round to help form and disciple youth.

Visit [www.sfcatholic.org/lastcollar](http://www.sfcatholic.org/lastcollar) as the date approaches for tips on hosting a watch party either in your home or at your parish. Don’t miss this family-friendly event!

## Save the Date

Regenerative Agriculture Discussion

Thursday, January 27, 2022  
Aberdeen, SD

FAQS



*Hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.  
Laudato Si' 49*

## Presentation Sisters



The gift you have received, give as a gift. Mt 10:8

**Recitation of the rosary**

**Friday, December 3** - The rosary is recited for the faithful departed on the first Friday of the month at 10 a.m. in St. Michael Cemetery in Sioux Falls.

**Women at the Well Retreat**

**December 4** - St. Michael Parish, Sioux Falls, Women at the Well Renewal Retreat. 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Retreat begins with 8:15 a.m. Mass, then speakers, Sunday scripture study, music and fellowship. Renewal retreat is open to all women from all parishes and denominations. Registration is not required and there is no fee. Contact Paula Jones at [pjkeeper@sio.midco.net](mailto:pjkeeper@sio.midco.net) or 605-214-4951 for more information.

**Cookie parade at Risen Savior, Brandon**

**December 5** - Risen Savior Cookie Parade and Luncheon. Homemade Christmas cookies and candies will be for sale starting Sunday at 9:15 a.m. Warm soups and turkey croissants will be served in the Risen Savior Parish Hall in Brandon immediately following the 10:30 a.m. Mass. St. Nicholas will also be making a visit. For more information, call the parish office at 605-582-6902 or email [parishlife@risensaviorbrandon.com](mailto:parishlife@risensaviorbrandon.com).

**Cookie Fair in Beresford**

**December 11** - Annual Cookie Fair at St. Teresa of Avila Parish in Beresford. 9-10:30 a.m. Cookies and candy sold by the pound. Rosettes sold by the plate. A little sugar, a lot of fun!

**Search for Christian Maturity Retreat**

**March 4-6** - Registration is now open for the March Search for Christian Maturity Retreat held at Holy Spirit Church in Sioux Falls. Search is a student-led, Roman Catholic retreat. The weekend features talks, skits, music and opportunities to encounter Christ in the sacraments. All high school, college-

age students, and adults are welcome and encouraged to attend. Please contact us by phone 605-371-1478 or by email [Sioux-FallsSearch@gmail.com](mailto:Sioux-FallsSearch@gmail.com). Visit the Search website for more information and to register. [www.siouxfallssearch.org](http://www.siouxfallssearch.org)

**Pray at Planned Parenthood with the Jericho Wall group**

**Tuesdays** - In Joshua 1:14 fighting-age men are called to go to Jericho's wall to fight for the women and children. Today we are called to step out for our faith. Men are meeting on Tuesday nights at 7 p.m. at our wall of Planned Parenthood to pray the rosary for our women and children. We are asking for men to join us. If you have questions, call Paul at 605-201-5428. Women are welcome.

**Catholic Family Services****Catholic Family Services Counseling**

Are you dealing with difficult events in your life? We have professional, caring counselors available to provide individual, marriage, and family counseling. Please call us at 605-988-3775 to schedule an appointment.

**Holiday Grief Program**

Catholic Family Services is honored to host: "*He is Stable*" - *A Night for Grieving Hearts to Find Rest in His Peace* on December 9 at St. Therese Parish in Sioux Falls. The evening will include presentations from individuals who have experienced grief along with a beautiful candle lighting ceremony. Christmas cookies and hot chocolate to follow. Children welcome! Register by calling 605-988-3775 or emailing [cfs@sfcatholic.org](mailto:cfs@sfcatholic.org).

**Sacred Heart Monastery**

**December 3** - Online Lectio Divina, Fridays, December 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31 10-10:45 a.m. Meet online for Lectio Divina, a time for praying with the Gospel of the following Sunday. To register any time, contact group leader, S. Penny Bingham OSB at [pbingham@yanktonbenedictines.org](mailto:pbingham@yanktonbenedictines.org)/605-668-6023. Include your email address.

**December 2** - Registration deadline for our Advent Retreat, "Prepare the Way of the Lord: Being Prophetic in a World of Trouble." This on-line retreat, presented by the Benedictine Peace Center staff, will be held Saturday, December 4, 9:30-11:45 a.m. The morning will include short presentations, quiet reflection time, sharing and prayer. Go to [www.yanktonbenedictines.org/advent-retreat](http://www.yanktonbenedictines.org/advent-retreat) for more information and to register or call 605-668-6292.

**December 18** - Monthly Contemplative Mornings. Meeting usually the third Saturday of the month, 9-11:15 a.m. Contact S. Doris at [doberembt@yanktonbenedictines.org](mailto:doberembt@yanktonbenedictines.org)/605-668-6022. [yanktonbenedictines.org/retreats-contemplative-mornings](http://yanktonbenedictines.org/retreats-contemplative-mornings).

**Silent personal retreats** - We are currently accepting fully vaccinated residential retreatants at the Peace Center on a very limited basis. You are welcome to contact us for reservations at 605-668-6292.

**Spiritual direction** - Share your experience of God with an experienced companion-guide and intensify your spiritual journey. Scheduling is flexible, typically meeting once a month. Contact us to visit about online or in-person options at [BenedictinePeaceCtr@yanktonbenedictines.org](mailto:BenedictinePeaceCtr@yanktonbenedictines.org) or 605-668-6292.

**ADDITIONS TO NOVEMBER'S NECROLOGY OF THE DIOCESE OF SIOUX FALLS**

The following Necrology listings were inadvertently left out of the November issue of The Bishop's Bulletin:

**Assumption, Dante**  
Francis Beeson- Jul. 4

**St. Mary, Dell Rapids**  
Helen Hattervig- Oct. 9; Betty Brown-

Nov. 22; Judi Klein- Nov. 23; Donald Mairose- Nov. 23; Melvin Penning- Dec. 3; William Huntimer- Dec. 31; Kenneth Heinemann- Jan. 6; Laurie Matheny- Feb. 14; Lucille Anderson- Apr. 16; Avor Boeve- May 27; Thomas Klein- Jun. 22; Art Krier- Jun. 26; Julia Blue- Aug. 1; Richard Gannon- Sept. 16; Sharon Gannon- Sept. 22

**St. Christina, Parker**  
Florence Ringen- Jul. 8; John Cink- Jul. 12; Ron Muller- Aug. 1; Kevin Leber- Aug. 11; Melissa Leber- Sept. 30

**St. Agnes, Vermillion**  
Richard Brown- Sept. 14



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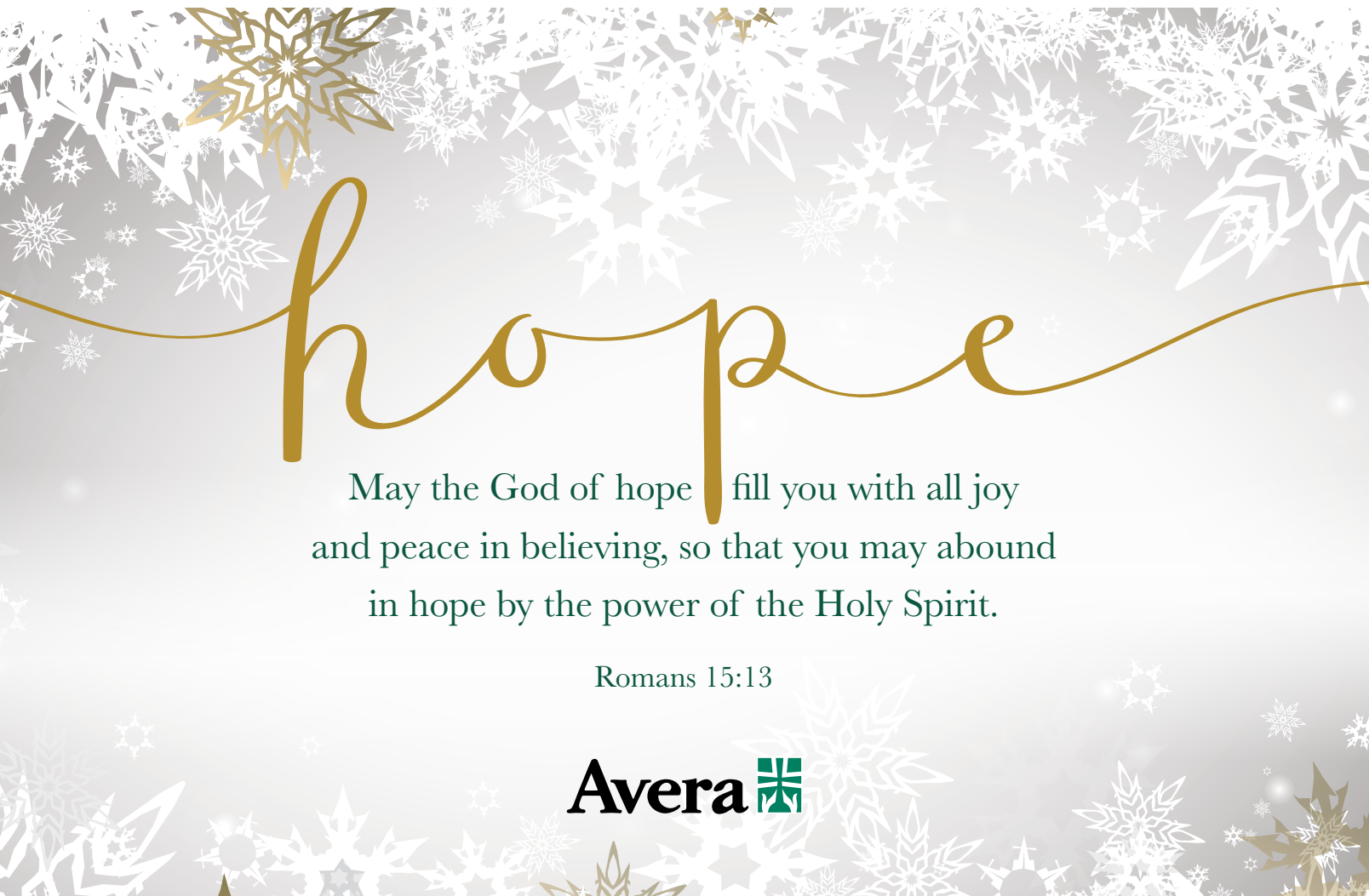
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THE BISHOP'S  
**BULLETIN**  
Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls



*hope*

May the God of hope fill you with all joy  
and peace in believing, so that you may abound  
in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

**Avera**