

WYOMING CATHOLIC REGISTER

Volume 60 | Issue 4 | December 2021



Jessica M. O'Brien Photo

On September 14, 2021, Bishop Steven Biegler ordained six permanent deacons at St. Patrick Church in Casper. Pictured above, from left to right, are: Charles "Chuck" Ruwart (Saint Patrick, Wheatland); Steve Lucas (Saint Patrick, Wheatland); Steve Cox (Cathedral of Saint Mary, Cheyenne); Bishop Steven Biegler; Greg Marino, M.D. (Holy Name, Sheridan); Matthew "Matt" Ostdiek (Our Lady of the Mountains, Jackson); Tom Caudle (Saint Anthony, Cody).

Journeying Together

Bishop Steven Biegler

Christmas never loses its power to touch our hearts. The scene of Jesus lying in a manger is a simple yet striking gesture of God's closeness to humanity. He is Emmanuel, which means "God with us" (Mt 1:23). Jesus took on human flesh to share our poverty and raise us to new life. He walked the earth to heal the sick, eat with sinners, and proclaim good news to the poor.

How well are we witnessing to the mystery of Christ? As his Church, are we walking with others in poverty, extending healing to the sick and mercy to sinners, visiting prisoners and welcoming the stranger? He said, "Whatever you did for one of these least brothers or sisters of mine, you did for me" (Mt. 25:40). Are we imitating the way Jesus walked on earth?

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In the Synod, we are asked to recall how Jesus journeyed with people, then to ask: How is this “journeying together” happening today in your local Church? What steps does the Spirit invite us to take to grow in our “journeying together?” These are the fundamental questions that Pope Francis put before us when he

convoked a Synod for the Church, which opened in Rome on October 9-10, 2021.

The Pope reminds us that Jesus was constantly reaching out to people on the margins. In the *Preparatory Document* for the Synod, he wrote, “the work of evangelization and the message of salvation would not be comprehensible without Jesus’ constant openness to the widest possible audience, which the Gospels refer to as the *crowd*, that is, all the people who follow him along the path, and at times even pursue him in the hope of a sign and a word of salvation... The proclamation of the Gospel is not addressed only to an enlightened or chosen few. Jesus’ interlocutor is the “people” of ordinary life, the “everyone” of the human condition, whom he puts directly in contact with God’s gift and the call to salvation...” (*Preparatory Document*, 18).

Listening to the Crowd

We need to constantly reflect on our fidelity to the mission of Christ. The Synodal Process calls us to step back and ask: Are we proclaiming the gospel to the widest possible audience? Are we journeying together with the people of ordinary life, like Jesus who attended to lepers, the blind, the crippled, and the poor? He told the parable of the Good Samaritan because he did not want us to leave anyone alone on the side of the road.

Therefore, Pope Francis is asking us to hold gatherings for every facet of society. He is inviting all the baptized to participate in the Synodal Process, but he also wants us to listen to the “crowd,” including people who have left the practice of the faith, people of other faith traditions, or of no religious belief.

Instructions for the synod state that this consultation is addressed to the Priests, Deacons, consecrated Religious, and lay Faithful. This should happen both in parish gatherings and in groups like pastoral councils. We should be mindful of including those who may risk exclusion: women, the handicapped, refugees, migrants, the elderly, people who live in poverty, etc. Creative methods also should be used to involve children and youth.

In the Diocese of Cheyenne, the Synod will occur in two phases, which we are calling “In-reach” and “Outreach.” Phase One: In-reach is for Catholics already participating in the life of the Church; it began in late November 2021. Phase Two: Outreach is intended for all others, and it will begin in January 2022.

Listening to the Spirit

Bringing the right attitude to the Synod is crucial. The Synodal Process is first and foremost a *spiritual* process. It is not a series of debates; it is not a democratic process but one of discernment. We must exercise communal discernment, while listening to each other, to our faith tradition, and to the signs of the times to discern what God, through the Holy Spirit, is saying to all of us. The guiding document for the Synod lists the following attitudes to enable genuine listening and dialogue in the Synodal Process (*Vademecum*, 2.3).

Humility in listening must correspond to courage in speaking:

Everyone has the right to be heard, just as everyone has the right to speak. Synodal dialogue depends on courage both in speaking and in listening. It is not about engaging in a debate to convince others. Rather, it is welcoming what others say as a way by which the Holy Spirit can speak for the good of all (1 Cor 12:7).

Openness to conversion and change: We must be willing to change our viewpoint based on what we have heard from others. We can often be resistant to what the Holy Spirit is trying to inspire us to undertake. We are called to abandon complacency and comfort that lead us to make decisions purely based on how things have been done in the past.

Every baptized person is co-responsible: The Church is the Body of Christ filled with different charisms, and each member of the body has a unique role to play. Thus, the power of the Holy Spirit is manifested in manifold ways in and through the entire People of God. Everyone listens to one another out of love, in a spirit of communion and our common mission.

Synods are an ecclesial process in discernment: Discernment is based on the conviction that God is at work in the world, and we are called to listen to what the Spirit suggests to us.

Communion, Participation, Mission

The goal of the Synod is not to produce a document, but to strengthen communion, participation, and mission. All the baptized share a communion rooted in the love and unity of the Trinity, which unites us with each other in the Holy Spirit. Through the Synod we will seek to deepen our communion.

Participation is a call for the involvement of all who belong to the People of God – laity, consecrated, and ordained – to engage in the exercise of respectful listening to one another. The whole community is called together to pray, listen, dialogue, discern and offer suggestions on making pastoral decisions which correspond as closely as possible to God’s will.

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JOURNEYING TOGETHER, CONTINUED...

Mission: The Church exists to evangelize, to witness to the love of God in the midst of the whole human family. This Synodal Process is intended to enable the Church to better witness to the Gospel, especially with those who live on the margins.

The goal of the Synod is to grow in our “walking together” with all people to proclaim God’s salvation, just as Jesus did from the moment that he was laid in a manger to be with shepherds living in the fields until his crucifixion between two thieves. I urge you to participate in the Synodal Process of consultation and to encourage others to participate. Please pray for the grace of the Holy Spirit to guide us. ✚

Viajando Juntos

Obispo Steven Biegler

La Navidad nunca pierde su poder de tocar nuestros corazones. La escena de Jesús acostado en un pesebre es un gesto simple pero llamativa de la cercanía de Dios a la humanidad. Es Emmanuel, que significa “*Dios con nosotros*” (Mt 1:23). Jesús tomó carne humana para compartir nuestra pobreza y levantarnos a una nueva vida. Caminó por la tierra para curar a los enfermos, comer con los pecadores y proclamar las buenas nuevas a los pobres.

¿Qué tan bien estamos dando testimonio del ministerio de Cristo? Como su Iglesia, ¿caminamos con otros en la pobreza, extendiendo la curación a los enfermos y la misericordia a los pecadores, visitando a los prisioneros y acogiendo al extraño? Él dijo: “*Todo lo que hiciste por uno de estos hermanos míos más pequeños, lo hiciste por mí*” (Mt. 25:40). ¿Estamos imitando la forma en que Jesús caminó sobre la tierra?

En el Sínodo, se nos pide que recordemos cómo Jesús viajó con la gente, luego preguntar: ¿Cómo está sucediendo este “caminar juntos” hoy en su Iglesia local? ¿Qué pasos nos invita a dar el Espíritu para crecer en nuestro “caminar juntos?” Estas son las preguntas fundamentales que nos planteó el Papa Francisco cuando convocó un Sínodo para la Iglesia, que se inauguró en Roma del 9 al 10 de octubre de 2021.

El Papa nos recuerda que Jesús estaba constantemente acercándose a las personas marginadas. En el *Documento Preparatorio* del Sínodo, escribió, “la obra de evangelización y el mensaje de salvación no serían comprensibles sin la constante apertura de Jesús’ a la audiencia más amplia posible, al que los Evangelios se refieren como la *multitud*, es decir, todas las personas que lo siguen por el camino, y en ocasiones incluso lo persiguen con la esperanza de un signo y una palabra de salvación ... El anuncio del Evangelio no se dirige sólo a unos pocos ilustrados o elegidos. El interlocutor de Jesús’ es el “pueblo” de la vida ordinaria, el “todos” de la condición humana, a quien pone en contacto directo con el don de Dios y la llamada a la salvación...” (*Documento Preparatorio*, 18).

Escuchando a la multitud

Necesitamos reflexionar constantemente sobre nuestra fidelidad a la misión de Cristo. El Proceso Sinodal nos llama a dar un paso atrás y preguntar: ¿Estamos proclamando el evangelio a la audiencia más amplia posible? ¿Caminamos junto a la gente de la vida cotidiana, como Jesús, que atendió a los leprosos, los ciegos, los lisiados y los pobres? Contó la parábola del buen samaritano porque no quería que dejáramos a nadie solo a un lado del camino.

Por lo tanto, el Papa Francisco nos pide que celebremos reuniones para todas las facetas de la sociedad. Él está invitando a todos los bautizados a participar en el Proceso Sinodal, pero también quiere que escuchemos a la “multitud,” incluidas las personas que han abandonado la práctica de la fe, personas de otras tradiciones religiosas o sin creencias religiosas.

Las instrucciones para el sínodo establecen que esta consulta esta dirigida a los Sacerdotes, Diáconos, religiosos consagrados y fieles laicos. Esto debería suceder tanto en reuniones parroquiales, en grupos como consejos pastorales. Debemos tener en cuenta la inclusión de quienes pueden correr el riesgo de exclusión: mujeres, discapacitados, refugiados, migrantes, ancianos, personas que viven en la pobreza, etc. También se deben utilizar medios creativos para involucrar a niños y jóvenes.

En la Diócesis de Cheyenne, el Sínodo ocurrirá en dos fases, que llamamos “Alcance interno” y “Iglesia en salida.” Fase uno: Alcance interno es para los católicos que ya participan la vida de la Iglesia; comenzó a fines de noviembre de 2021. Fase dos: Iglesia en salida esta destinado a todos los demás y comenzará en enero de 2022.

Escuchando al Espíritu

Llevar la actitud correcta al Sínodo es crucial. El proceso Sinodal es ante todo un proceso *Espiritual*. No es una serie de debates; no es un proceso democrático sino de discernimiento. Debemos ejercitar el discernimiento comunitario, escuchándonos unos a otros, a nuestra tradición de fe, ya los signos de los tiempos para discernir lo que Dios, a través del Espíritu Santo, nos está diciendo a todos. El documento de orientación del Sínodo enumera las siguientes actitudes para permitir una escucha y un diálogo genuinos en el Proceso Sinodal. (*Vademécum*, 2.3).

La humildad en la escucha debe corresponder a la valentía al hablar: Todos tienen derecho a ser escuchados, así como todos tienen derecho a hablar. El diálogo Sinodal depende de la valentía tanto para hablar como para escuchar. No se trata de entablar un debate para convencer a otros. Más bien, es acoger lo que otros dicen como una forma en que el Espíritu Santo puede hablar por el bien de todos (1 Cor 12:7).

Apertura a la conversión y al cambio: Debemos estar dispuestos a cambiar nuestro punto de vista en función de lo que hemos escuchado de los demás. A menudo podemos resistirnos a lo que el Espíritu Santo está tratando de inspirarnos a emprender.

CONTINÚA EN LA PÁGINA 4...

VIENE DE LA PÁGINA 3...



Estamos llamados a abandonar la complacencia y la comodidad que nos llevan a tomar decisiones basadas puramente en cómo se han hecho las cosas en el pasado.

Cada bautizado es corresponsable: La Iglesia es el Cuerpo de Cristo lleno de diferentes carismas, y cada miembro del cuerpo tiene un papel único que desempeñar. Por tanto, el poder del Espíritu Santo se manifiesta

de múltiples formas en todo el Pueblo de Dios y a través de él. Todos nos escuchamos por amor, con espíritu de comunión y de nuestra misión común.

Los sínodos son un discernimiento eclesial: El discernimiento se basa en la convicción de que Dios actúa en el mundo, y estamos llamados a escuchar lo que el Espíritu nos sugiere.

Comunión, Participación, Misión

El objetivo del Sínodo no es producir un documento, sino fortalecer la comunión, la participación y la misión. Todos los bautizados comparten una comunión arraigada en el amor y la unidad de la Trinidad, que nos une en el Espíritu Santo. A través del Sínodo buscaremos profundizar nuestra comunión.

La participación es un llamado a la implicación de todos los que pertenecen al Pueblo de Dios, –laicos, consagrados, y ordenados – para que se comprometan en el ejercicio de la escucha respetuosa de los demás. Toda la comunidad está llamada a orar, escuchar, dialogar, discernir y ofrecer sugerencias para la toma de decisiones pastorales que se correspondan lo más posible con la voluntad de Dios.

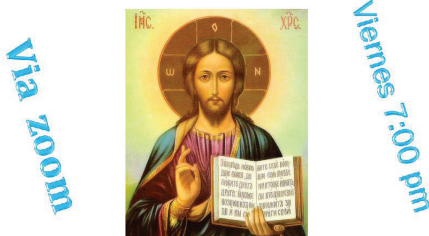
Misión: La Iglesia existe para evangelizar, para dar testimonio del amor de Dios en medio de toda la familia humana. Este Proceso sinodal tiene como objetivo permitir a la Iglesia dar un mejor testimonio del Evangelio, especialmente con aquellos que viven en los márgenes.

El objetivo del Sínodo es crecer en nuestro “caminar juntos” con todas las personas para proclamar la salvación de Dios, tal como lo hizo Jesús desde el momento en que fue puesto en un pesebre para estar con los pastores que vivían en el campo hasta su crucifixión entre dos ladrones. Les insisto a participar en el Proceso Sinodal de consulta y animar a otros a participar. Ore por la gracia del Espíritu Santo para que nos guíe. ✝

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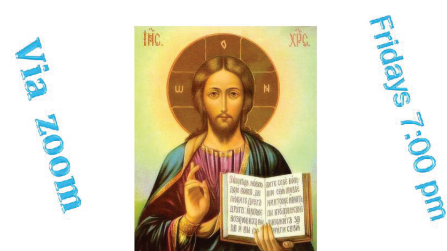
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Wyoming Catholic Register is the official newspaper of the Diocese of Cheyenne. Periodical postage is paid at Cheyenne, WY, and additional offices (USPS 696-960 ISSN 076-5580).

Please send address changes to: Wyoming Catholic Register
2121 Capitol Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82001

Managing Editor: Diana Marie Waggner
Diocese of Cheyenne
P.O. Box 1468
Cheyenne, WY 82003
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Catholic Social Teaching: Antidote to Extremism

Deacon Mike Leman, Legislative Liaison, Diocese of Cheyenne

Recently, my wife and I met a new friend at a social gathering. Upon introduction, we exchanged the usual pleasantries. When she learned that I work for the Diocese of Cheyenne as the legislative liaison in the Office of Catholic Social Teaching she replied, “Catholic Social Teaching is just the Church’s way of pushing socialism on us.”

I hear this often. When I asked her where she had gotten that idea, it became clear that she had never actually read a papal encyclical or anything that explains the Church’s social teachings. Our new friend simply was repeating what she had heard from someone else.

The greatest challenge to responding to the claim that Catholic Social Teaching promotes socialism is deciding where to begin. Perhaps no other institution in the world has been more openly critical of socialism than the Catholic Church. While the intentions of many who put their hope in socialism may be good, the means through which socialism tries to achieve those ends are, according to Catholic Social Teaching, unacceptable.

We need to understand that Catholics live within every kind of political system in the world; we also need to understand that the Catholic Church has outlasted many political systems. Important to note is that the Church does not promote any particular political system, nor does it support one particular political party in the United States. The Church highlights the good that She sees wherever She sees it, and the Church names problems She sees wherever She sees them. For emphasis, and in the interest of brevity, I will share some of the more strongly worded condemnations against socialism that popes have made, but many more have been written.

First, I’d like to share a quote from Pope Leo XIII’s 1901 encyclical, *Graves De Communi Re* (On Christian Democracy), where he teaches that Catholics cannot pursue justice for the purpose of promoting a particular government, “The laws of nature and of the Gospel...are necessarily independent of all particular forms of civil government, while at the same time

they are in harmony with everything that is not repugnant to morality and justice. They are, therefore, and they must remain absolutely free from the passions and the vicissitudes of parties, so that, under whatever political constitution, the citizens may and ought to abide by those laws which command them to love God above all things, and their neighbors as themselves. This always has been the policy of the Church. The Roman Pontiffs acted upon this principle, whenever they dealt with different countries, no matter the character of their governments. **Hence, the mind and the action of Catholics devoted to promoting the welfare of the working classes can never be actuated with the purpose of favoring and introducing one government in place of another**” (n. 7).

In *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), Pope Pius XI wrote, “If Socialism, like all errors, contains some truth (which, moreover, the Supreme Pontiffs have never denied), it is based nevertheless on a theory of human society peculiar to itself and irreconcilable with true Christianity” (n. 120). He continued, “And so...having surveyed the present economic system, we have found it laboring under the gravest of evils. We have also summoned Communism and Socialism again to judgment and have found all their forms, even the most modified, to wander far from the precepts of the Gospel” (n. 128).

In 1961, St. John XXIII referenced Pope Pius’ encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* in *Mater et Magistra*. “Pope Pius XI further emphasized the fundamental opposition between Communism and Christianity and made it clear that no Catholic could subscribe even to moderate Socialism. The reason is that Socialism is founded on a doctrine of human society which is bounded by time and takes no account of any objective other than that of material well-being. Since, therefore, it proposes a form of social organization which aims solely at production, it places too severe a restraint on human liberty, at the same time flouting the true notion of social authority” (n. 34).

Do these criticisms of socialism mean that the Church is against all state and



federal social programs? No, it does not. The principle of subsidiarity indicates that “larger institutions in society should not overwhelm or interfere with smaller or local institutions, yet larger institutions have essential responsibilities when the more local institutions cannot adequately protect human dignity, meet human needs, and advance the common good” (*Centesimus Annus*, n. 48; *Dignitatis Humanae*, nos. 4-6).

In other words, if the intention behind creating a government-funded social program is to establish citizen dependence on the government and take the country one step closer to socialism, that is not acceptable. In the same way, ignoring human dignity until we can fix the “smaller, local institution” (most notably the family) is not acceptable either. Letting the poor and vulnerable perish until we figure out how to protect them with non-governmental means is not an acceptable solution through the lens of Catholic Social Teaching.

For 2000 years, the Catholic Church has manifested a special concern for the poor and the vulnerable. This is a central tenet of our faith. While some Catholics do not want to hear about how creating government dependence threatens to put us on a slippery slope toward the evils of socialism, other Catholics do not want to see the poor and vulnerable in their communities

or hear how local institutions are failing them. Catholics should not consider the care for those in need with an “either or” mentality.

We live in a state that is trending more libertarian than traditional conservative, and, in many circles, the suggestion that government programs are necessary is viewed as heresy. Government is necessary, however, even in a free market society. We need infrastructure; we cannot do everything at the state level; we need checks and balances to ensure fairness.

Think about large corporations that are forcing political ideologies onto small businesses. Think about how some of them are impacting state sovereignty by boycotting states that pass prolife bills like the heartbeat bill in Texas.

The above statements are not examples of big government; they are examples of “unbridled capitalism” of which Catholic Social Teaching also is very critical. Some of those corporations spend millions of dollars to lobby against government oversight, which sounds like a very libertarian approach, but then they turn right around and force states and individuals to bow under their financial pressure.

St. John Paul II spoke of unbridled capitalism when he said, “[Capitalism] seeks to defeat Marxism on the level of pure

materialism by showing how a free-market society can achieve a greater satisfaction of material human needs than Communism, while equally excluding spiritual values. In reality, while on the one hand it is true that this social model shows the failure of Marxism to contribute to a humane and better society, on the other hand, insofar as it denies an autonomous existence and value to morality, law, culture and religion, it agrees with Marxism, in the sense that it totally reduces man to the sphere of economics and the satisfaction of material needs.”

I have seen the denial of “value to morality, law, culture and religion” and the reduction of “man to the sphere of economics” in Wyoming with the push for “sin taxes” like online sports betting and the effort to legalize recreational marijuana.

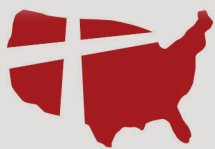
The arguments for passing such laws at the Wyoming Legislature follow a similar trend. They often begin by acknowledging that the idea itself is morally questionable followed by a personal disclaimer such as, “I personally don’t gamble, but...”

Next, liberty is described with such sacred terms that a mere inquiry about how such a law could impact social responsibility seems sacrilegious. “Even though I would never do it, far be it from me to say what someone else should or should not do.”

Then, just when the room is mesmerized by the thought of absolute autonomy, we hear, “Then, we could tax it.” There is the hook. Remember, we’ve said we won’t all be contributing to these particular taxes because we don’t all gamble. So, the “plan” is to balance the budget with other people’s money, which is one of the tenants of socialism that many people detest. In the name of liberty, we say it is ok to pass bills that knowingly put vulnerable families (“the smaller, local institution” that is best situated to meet the needs of individual members) under greater duress.

This is one example of how looking through the lens of Catholic Social Teaching brings clarity to a situation.

I don’t know if I was able to convince our new friend that her perception of Catholic Social Teaching is a misperception. In truth, Catholic Social Teaching is a treasure-trove of wisdom gained by the Church throughout the ages and gifted to us today. But it shouldn’t surprise us that the spiritual enemy of Christ and His Church would create fear by portraying the antidote to our social problems as a poison. If this article has done nothing else, I hope it inspires you to visit my webpage and read the papal encyclicals for yourselves. (<https://dioceseofcheyenne.org/catholic-social-teaching>)



CATHOLIC EXTENSION

Our Mission

Catholic Extension works in solidarity with people in America’s poorest regions to build up vibrant and transformative Catholic faith communities.

Our Vision

We seek to deepen and expand our commitment to Catholic faith communities by providing resources to develop leaders, ministries and facilities, while inviting more people across our country to invest in this work.

Catholic Extension Support Summary to the Diocese of Cheyenne

Ten Year Funding Total: \$2.4M

Ten Year Additional Impact Revenue: \$341.1K

(Impact Revenue refers to additional funds that dioceses are able to generate or receive when Catholic Extension strategically positions its grants.)

Complete Catholic Extension Funding History

Number of Grants: 810

Total Church Building Grants: 132

Total Funding: \$11.5M

Total Funding Adjusted for Inflation: \$21.7M

First Catholic Extension Grant: Friday, October 1, 1909

Synod 2021 - 2023 in the Diocese of Cheyenne

Diana Marie Waggener, Director of Communications, Diocese of Cheyenne

The Catholic Church throughout the world is participating in Synod 2021 – 2023. Pope Francis has called the entire People of God to journey together—that means you and me! We also are called to listen to those who have walked away from or been hurt by the Church. And, because we are co-responsible for the Mission of Jesus, we are asked to listen to our sisters and brothers who practice different faiths, and especially those who live on the margins—the poor and the vulnerable.

What's the Plan?

The Diocese of Cheyenne, under the direction of Bishop Steven, ordered the Synod in two phases. **Phase One: In-reach** begins during Advent 2021 through February 2022, and **Phase Two: Out-reach** will be conducted during January, February, and March 2022. Using the principle of subsidiarity, parishes, where relationships are formed and nurtured, is the setting in which these **Phase One: In-reach** gatherings will occur.

Who is in Charge of this Synod in the Diocese of Cheyenne?

The correct answer to that question is: The Holy Spirit. Pope Francis has said that without the Spirit, there is no synod. He also recently noted, “Discernment is what lights the way and guides the synod, preventing it from becoming a church convention, a study group or a political congress, but rather a grace-filled event, a process of healing guided by the Holy Spirit.”

Co-leaders for the Synod in the Diocese of Cheyenne are Deacon Mike Leman and me. In addition, we have a small, but dedicated, Diocesan Synod Team and Special Consultants who are journeying with us throughout this awesome process. Already, in your local parish, synod coordinators have been named by your pastor, and those of us on the Diocesan Synod Team have been preparing them to lead, in consultation with your pastors, local gatherings.

What Will These Gatherings Involve?

The General Format for all gatherings, whether they are large or small, conducted by parish councils or committees, done within the context of faith formation, practiced in spontaneous small groups, is the same. They always begin with a brief review of how to listen actively, without judgment, to our sisters and brothers; how to responsibly speak; and an agreement of the ground rules for all gatherings (documents that explain ground rules can be found at <https://dioceseofcheyenne.org/synod-2021-2023>).

Once everyone is ready to begin, the group will pray the *Adsumus, Sancte Spiritus*, a shortened version of a prayer that has been historically used at Councils, Synods, and other Church gatherings for hundreds of years, and is attributed to Saint Isidore of Seville (c. 560 - 4 April 636). Every session of the Second Vatican Council began with the prayer *Adsumus Sancte Spiritus*, the first word of the Latin original meaning, “We stand before You, Holy Spirit.” As we are called to embrace this synodal path of the Synod 2021 - 2023, this prayer invites the Holy Spirit to operate within us so that we may be a community and a people of grace.

Next, the facilitator of your gathering will read from Holy Scripture, followed by a



brief silent reflection of the scripture passage, as well as the two-part question and/or ten themes that have been placed before us to discern. The image that Pope Francis has asked us to keep before us is that of Jesus, the crowd in its diversity, and the apostles. This reflection and the mystery that must be constantly contemplated and explored in depth will guide our thoughts, so that we will be animated by the Holy Spirit to share how the Church has journeyed together and how it may journey together moving forward. (The two-part questions and ten themes can be found at <https://dioceseofcheyenne.org/synod-2021-2023>).

After some time to reflect, you will be invited to:

- **Recall your experiences** of journeying together in your local Church.
- **Explore those experiences in greater depth.** What joys did they bring? What difficulties and obstacles have they led to? What wounds did they reveal? What insights have they elicited?
- **Gather the fruits to share.** Where in these experiences does the voice of the Holy Spirit resound? What is the Spirit asking of us? What are the points to be confirmed, the prospects for change, the steps to be taken? Where do we register a consensus? What paths are opening for our local Church? (*Vademecum*, n. 5.3)

These three steps can happen in a variety of ways, so just sit back and trust your facilitator to lead you through this journey; listen to one another in love; and when it is time to “gather the fruits” of your conversations, listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit, for that is the voice that will lead us forward on our journey as Church.

Why Are We Doing This?

We are praying, listening, and dialoguing together so that we can hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. The purpose of this journeying together is not to create a new vision or to set goals and strategies. Rather, the purpose of our journeying together is to be present with one another, to listen and learn with each other, and to grow in holiness.

Possible consequences of these gatherings are: activation of energy and creativity for all who participate in the journey; leaders who have the gifts needed to conduct outreach consultations will reveal themselves; and, possibly most important, our communion with one another will be strengthened.

Synod 2021 – 2023 continues the renewal of the Church, proposed by the Second Vatican Council. By listening to one another with love and reflecting together on the Church’s journey, the Church will learn how to strengthen our communion, achieve participation, to open all to mission. By journeying together in this way, we effectively enact and manifest the nature of the Church as the pilgrim and missionary People of God.

What is a Synod on Synodality?

Synod comes from the Greek, *syn* (with or together) and *hodos* (path, way, or journey). Synod and synodality signify walking together with others or, more broadly, a journey of companions evidenced by fellowship and sharing. In ecclesial terms, this corresponds to the image of the Church as a pilgrim people traveling through the centuries on the way to the final fulfillment of all things in Christ.

Journeying together in a synod is an ancient Christian practice. In the Acts of the Apostles, Peter and Paul are “welcomed by the church, as well as by the apostles and the presbyters” (Acts 15: 4) to listen, discuss, and discern together how to reconcile Jewish and Gentile religious practices. After deep listening and discussion and allowing for prayerful silence to listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit, the early Church discerned how to proclaim the Gospel to all people.

Several Church Fathers wrote about synodality in the early Church (c. 30 AD- c. 500 AD), including St. John Chrysostom. Local Churches gathered together with their bishops to discuss issues related to their local situation throughout the first millennium. This local practice grew to provincial (regional) and universal (ecu-

menical) councils that would gather bishops, clergy, religious, and laity together. The practice of Synodality continued into the second millennium, even as decision-making was reserved more and more to bishops and the Holy See.

The Second Vatican Council, an ecumenical council, emphasized the communion of the Church and reclaimed the image of the Church as the Pilgrim People of God journeying together toward holiness. “... there is but one People of God, which takes its citizens from every race, making them citizens of a kingdom which is of a heavenly and not an earthly nature. For all the faithful scattered throughout the world are in communion with each other in the Holy Spirit...” (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 13).

St. Pope Paul VI created the modern structure of the Synod of Bishops in 1965 after the close of the Second Vatican Council because he wanted to ensure that collaboration and dialogue between bishops, theologians, religious, and the lay Faithful continued after the Second Vatican Council. Since 1967, the Church has held a Synod of Bishops approximately every two to three years to examine an issue affecting the Church.

At each of these Synods since 1967, bishops have consulted with members of the clergy, religious, and the lay Faithful. While voting in the Synod of Bishops is limited to bishops present at the synod gathering, at these synods, priests, deacons, religious, and laity have been present and addressed the bishops and Pope.

Be not afraid and trust in the Holy Spirit as we, in the Diocese of Cheyenne, journey together, and let us remember the words of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians, “Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good” (1 Thess. 5:19-21).

For more information, visit the Diocese of Cheyenne website, or send email to Deacon Mike Leman or Diana Marie Waggener:

mleman@dioceseofcheyenne.org

dwaggener@dioceseofcheyenne.org

To praise, reverence, and serve

Joseph Wotawa, Director of Pastoral Formation: Adult and Youth, Diocese of Cheyenne

The word “discernment” often leaves people with more confusion than clarity. This reality contains quite a bit of sad irony, as the word itself connotes a process that *leads* to clarity.

For example, I have heard people remark about “discerning what color sweater to wear” and “needing to discern which road to take.” The impulse to use the word in this way is reasonable: people have decisions to make, and they want to be thoughtful.

Discernment, especially in a Catholic context, refers to a specific method of decision-making. Not only that, but discernment also provides an avenue to identify how the Spirit of God moves in our lives as we prepare for significant life choices that affect how we will serve God.

So, while picking the right road in a Wyoming winter *is* an important decision, it does not require discernment – just good knowledge of the weather and where you can find cell service if you need it!

Even within the Church, different traditions of discernment exist. One of the most prominent traditions comes from St. Ignatius of Loyola, who himself synthesized the traditions he had received as he sought to serve God in his own time and place.

At the beginning of his retreat manual, *The Spiritual Exercises*, St. Ignatius includes the “First Principle and Foundation.” As you read the words below, pay close attention to what does not change – God and God’s call to all humans – and what *does* change – namely, the means by which we serve God in the Church.

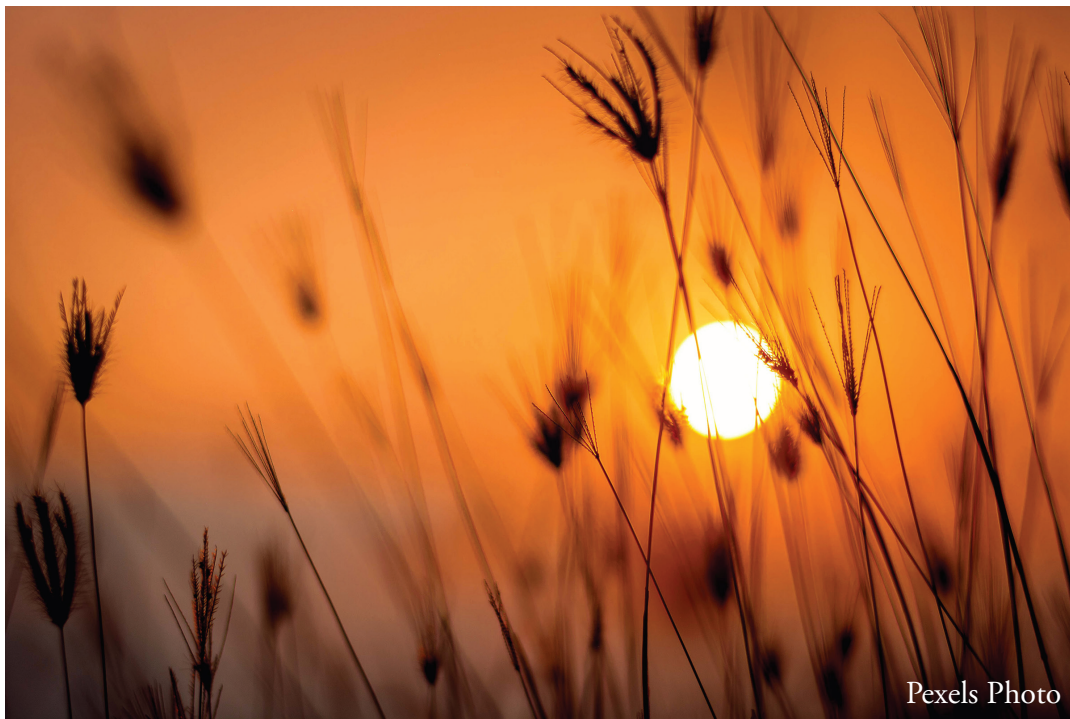
"God created human beings to praise, reverence, and serve God, and by doing this, to save their souls.

God created all other things on the face of the earth to help fulfill this purpose.

From this it follows that we are to use the things of this world only to the extent that they help us to this end, and we ought to rid ourselves of the things of this world to the extent that they get in the way of this end.

For this it is necessary to make ourselves indifferent to all created things as much as we are able, so that we do not necessarily want health rather than sickness, riches rather than poverty, honor rather than dishonor, a long rather than a short life, and so in all the rest, so that we ultimately desire and choose only what is most conducive for us to the end for which God created us."

(*SpEx* 23, translation from Boston College)



Pexels Photo

Ignatius’ great concern arises in the goal: to praise, reverence, and serve God. The created things that we find can help us, but they only have importance to the extent that they help us praise, reverence, and serve.

The final paragraph of the First Principle and Foundation has tremendous application in Ignatius’ own understanding of ministry. While he did not have a plan to found a religious institute after his conversion, he and his close friends eventually discerned that the means of seeking approval from the Vatican to found an order would serve the end of serving God. Quickly, the Society of Jesus helped form some of the most famous missionaries and teachers in the Church.

Despite the great successes that the Society brought to the Church’s mission of proclaiming Christ and attracting people to him through the Church, Ignatius always maintained a spirit of detachment from this means to the end for which God created him.

Popular history maintains that, when a young Jesuit asked Ignatius how he would respond if the Vatican decided to suppress the Society of Jesus, he responded that he would only need fifteen minutes to pray and ask God for guidance on how to continue to serve.

The structure of the Society – as much as Ignatius loved it and contributed to it through writing its *Constitutions* when he desired to serve as a missionary – had importance to Ignatius because it allows a great number of people to encounter the God who loves us.

To value the institution or structure for itself would have drawn Ignatius away from the God whom he so dearly loved, and that closeness to God created the freedom and generosity he and his brothers to this day need to serve with the zeal that they do.

I share this story of Ignatius to present several key themes of discernment in this tradition.

First, discernment requires closeness with Christ. Without this relationship, a person has no reason to discern. Christ desires all to gather with him because of who he is. Once a person encounters the life-changing love of Christ, their subsequent decisions always maintain Christ as the reference-point.

Second, this closeness to Christ yields a desire to serve. Authentic encounters with Christ change us to the extent that we cannot imagine remaining passive, with arms crossed, waiting for God and the Church to respond to us.

This desire to serve then raises the need for discernment. A person will encounter many good avenues to accomplish the end of praise, reverence, and service, so discernment represents a process of following the Spirit of God to make a choice among goods to serve God and God's people. If a decision would cause harm or isolation, it does not come from God and does not require discernment.

This discernment also demands freedom.

For example, Sandra and I both required freedom to discern whether we had the call to marriage and whether we shared the call to marry each other. This freedom required from us knowledge of God, of each other, and how each of us desires to serve. Now that we are married, we continue to discern how Christ calls us to serve, not only as individuals but now as a family.

So, with closeness to Christ, a desire to serve arises, which requires the freedom to discern. This discernment happens within the body of the Church and leads back to the end for which God created us: to praise, reverence, and serve.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

HIGH SCHOOL PILGRIMAGE | AUGUST 1-13, 2022

LOCATIONS

- **Part 1: Mexico**
 - ◊ Basílica of Our Lady of Guadalupe
 - ◊ Tomb of Blessed Miguel Agustín Pro, who suffered martyrdom for his ministry after the Revolution
 - ◊ Cultural sites in Mexico City, including the National Palace
- **Part 2: El Salvador**
 - ◊ Tomb of St. Óscar Romero and the location of his martyrdom
 - ◊ Hear the history of the martyrs whom the Church will beatify Jan. 22, including Fr. Rutilio Grande and Fr. Cosma Spessotto
 - ◊ Immersion in rural Catholic communities to learn
 - How they survived the civil war
 - How they faithfully worship with fewer priests than in our Diocese

DETAILS

- **Dates: August 1-13**
 - ◊ Dates are tentative
 - ◊ Based on interest
- **Express Interest to Joe by January 9, 2022**
 - ◊ Cost based on level of interest
 - ◊ Diocesan Office of Pastoral Formation will offset portion of costs based on available funding
- **Purpose**
 - ◊ Learn about and pray with the Universal Church
 - ◊ Experience the faith of local communities and through Holy Sites
 - ◊ Learn how Catholic Communities persist during persecution
 - ◊ Pilgrims share their formation with Diocese upon return

MARQUE SU CALENDARIO

PEREGRINACIÓN DE HIGH SCHOOL | 1-13 de AGOSTO, 2022

LUGARES

- **Primera Parte: México**
 - ◊ Basílica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe
 - ◊ Tumba del Beato Miguel Agustín Pro, quien sufrió martirio por su ministerio después de la revolución
 - ◊ Sitios culturales en Ciudad de México, incluyendo el palacio nacional
- **Segunda Parte: El Salvador**
 - ◊ Tumba de San Óscar Romero y el sitio de su martirio
 - ◊ Escuche la historia de los mártires a quienes la Iglesia beatificará el 22 de enero, incluido el P. Rutilio Grande y el P. Cosma Spessotto
 - ◊ Inmersión en comunidades católicas rurales para aprender
 - Cómo sobrevivieron a la guerra civil
 - Cómo adoran fielmente con menos sacerdotes que en nuestra Diócesis

DETALLES

- **Fechas: 1-13 de agosto.**
 - ◊ Las fechas son tentativas
 - ◊ Basado en intereses
- **Notifique a Joe de su interés antes del 9 de enero de 2022**
 - ◊ Precio basado en la cantidad de interés
 - ◊ La Oficina Diocesana de Formación Pastoral compensará una parte del precio según los fondos disponibles.
- **Intención:**
 - ◊ Conoce y ora con la Iglesia universal
 - ◊ Experimente la fe de las comunidades locales y a través de lugares sagrados.
 - ◊ Aprenda cómo las comunidades católicas persisten durante la persecución.
 - ◊ Los peregrinos comparten su formación con la Diócesis al regresar.

The Diocese of Cheyenne is offering an upcoming pilgrimage for high school youth! To express interest, please complete the form at <https://forms.office.com/r/MCG478Bgt6>. For ongoing information, please visit <https://dioceseofcheyenne.org/youth-ministry>.

¡La Diócesis de Cheyenne ha anunciado una peregrinación para jóvenes que están estudiantes en high school! Para expresar interés, complete el formulario que se encuentra en <https://forms.office.com/r/MCG478Bgt6>. Para obtener información continua, visite <https://dioceseofcheyenne.org/youth-ministry>.

WCMF is poised to enhance Catholic philanthropy in Wyoming

The Wyoming Catholic Ministries Foundation (WCMF) is a nonprofit founded in 1998 at the behest of a comprehensive study by the Diocese of Cheyenne aimed at bringing Catholic development and fund-raising into the modern era. Its mission is to work with Christ's guidance to bring together a community of philanthropic organizations and individuals across the state of Wyoming and to connect them to parishes, schools, and ministries who address the long-term needs of the state's Catholic community. After 23 years of working to financially perpetuate Wyoming's Catholic institutions, 2021 finds WCMF blessed with a new board of directors and staff who are inspired by their faith to expand and improve how Catholic philanthropy operates in Wyoming, bringing the foundation model forward to the challenges and needs of our present moment while supporting the state's oldest and most far-reaching Catholic institutions.

The new board is led by President Gay Woodhouse, a lawyer now practicing in Cheyenne who was raised in Torrington and who served as Wyoming's first female attorney general from 1998-2001. Woodhouse sees big opportunities for WCMF in the months and years ahead.

"We are on the brink of marshaling talents and substantial resources to fund our Partners in Christ, our local Parishes, and Catholic Schools," says Woodhouse. "I am excited to be a part of what I believe will be an innovative way to garner the resources we need for these worthy goals."

Woodhouse is joined by a formidable team of Wyoming's

business and community leaders: Tom Botts, former Shell executive vice president and current chair of the University of Wyoming Foundation; Rita Meyer, Desert Storm veteran and former chief of staff to Governor Geringer; Mike Easley, Powder River Energy CEO; Jeff Marsh, chairman of the University of Wyoming Board of Trustees; Robert Grady, political adviser and venture capitalist; and Very Reverend Gary Ruzicka, veteran Wyoming pastor.

The spiritual guidepost for WCMF's re-invigoration is the Diocese of Cheyenne's *Vision 2030* pastoral planning, spearheaded by Bishop Steven Biegler (who is a non-voting member of the WCMF board).

Bishop Biegler thoughtfully quotes Pope Francis, who says "Jesus expects us to stop looking for those personal or communal niches which shelter us from the maelstrom of human misfortune, and instead to enter into the reality of other people's lives and to know the power of tenderness" (*Amoris Laetitia*, 308). This sentiment reveals the heart of Bishop Biegler's vision to bring every corner of the state together in a shared attitude of understanding, solidarity, and faithful stewardship.

WCMF is one of the most crucial parts of bringing *Vision 2030* to fruition. WCMF's structure is simultaneously that of an umbrella organization that collects gifts from philanthropic entities across the state and distributes them to their intended recipients and as a joint partner that takes a hands-on approach to developing parochial and diocesan ministries. WCMF is currently expanding its development services. With that in mind,

WCMF has established contractual agreements to be the fundraising arm for the following entities: St. Joseph's Children's Home, St. Paul's Newman Center, the Diocese of Cheyenne, Catholic Charities of Wyoming, and St. Joseph's Society (the clergy retirement fund).

To tackle this endeavor, WCMF recently hired Executive Director Margaret Slawin. She has more than two decades of experience in Catholic development, starting at the parish level in Austin, Texas, before expanding her development work to parishes in need across the country, and most recently working for the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis as director of stewardship and development. Her dedication and passion for Catholic development is a blessing for WCMF, and she eagerly expects big developments in the Wyoming Catholic community.

"I feel honored to be associated with the Foundation as we work to have our Catholic partners thrive financially and ministerially," says Slawin.

Serving as Development Director is Peg Louiselle, who brings 19 years of experience and a great love and respect for the people of Wyoming from her most recent role as director of development at Catholic Rural Life, a national organization that promotes Catholic life in rural America.

Louiselle notes, "The WCMF is truly a wonderful opportunity to connect generous and loyal men and women to the works of the Church that inspire them."

Also added to the WCMF team is a new Administrative Assistant Erica Turk. A native of Cheyenne, Turk brings a dedication to the future of the faith in Wyoming.

Some of the new opportunities WCMF plans to implement are improved online giving, easier access to grant application for clergy health care and clergy ongoing education, and a new deadline for grant applications (the current round's deadline is now April 15, 2022). Donors have a wide range of options—they can establish new funds, give directly through WCMF to the Catholic organization of their choice, or contribute to the WCMF endowment to be applied at the foundation's discretion. In addition to cash gifts, stocks, retirement funds, real estate, many other assets may be bequeathed to the foundation.

The new WCMF is excited and ready to enhance the way that Catholic philanthropy is done in Wyoming, and the board and staff ask for your prayers and support as they labor to bring our state's Catholic community together as One Body in Christ. Those who are interested in getting to know the WCMF staff and board or keeping up with their activities may find information on the website: www.wycmf.org



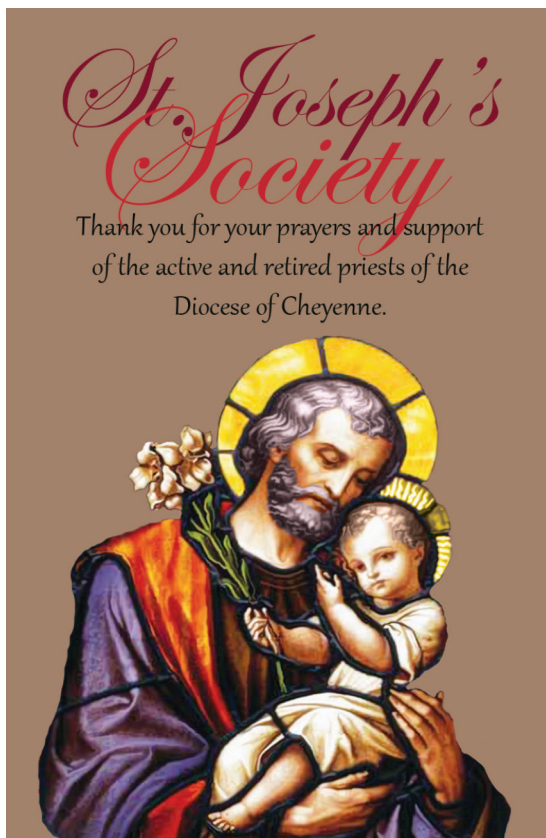
St. Joseph's Society December Appeal is underway

Reverend Thomas E. Cronkleton, Jr., President of the St. Joseph's Society

On behalf of the incardinated priests of the Diocese of Cheyenne, I wish you and your family a most blessed Christmas. Please know of our prayers for you and our gratitude for your prayers and support.

I have the distinct honor of serving as President of the St. Joseph's Society. The Society is the retirement fund for the retired priests and bishops incardinated into our diocese. The St. Joseph's Society is a qualified, non-electing, defined benefit church plan and is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Donations made to the Society are tax deductible. Founded on June 7, 1961, by Bishop Hubert Newell, the Society currently provides benefits for 14 retired members and for two former members.

Currently, there are 39 active members (38 priests and Bishop Steven). The youngest, Father Andrew Kinstetter, is 32 and the oldest, Father Sam Hayes, is 69. The average age is 54 and the median is 57. They range in years of service from just ordained this spring to 38 years. Of the 14 retirees, the average and median ages are 79, and the youngest, Father August Koeune, is 70 and the oldest, Father Malcolm Reid, is 93. The retirement age to receive benefits is 70.



Each month, the Society provides a total of \$29,703 in retirement benefits, which are based on the years of service as a priest, so they range from \$798 per month to \$2,679. The average years of service before retirement is 36, the median is 41, the least years of service is 14, and the most is 47.

A retiree receives \$57 per month per years of service. Our current retirement provides 87.7 percent of the salary of a priest with 40 years of service. Our goal is 100 percent. The Society has approximately \$9 million in assets, and to reach the goal, another \$1 million is needed, presuming the stock and bond markets are stable. The investments are under professional management, diversified, and invested according to Catholic socially responsible investing principles.

One of the benefits that active priests receive is room and board from the parish to which they are assigned. Once they retire, priests must provide for their own housing, meals, and household expenses, so a priest's living expenses increase dramatically in retirement. Retired priests receive Social Security, a benefit from the St. Joseph's Society, and income from personal retirement savings. Since 1996, they have been encouraged to participate in a 403(b) retirement savings program where if the priest contributes 4 percent of his salary, the parish contributes 2 percent.

Would you consider, this year, giving a donation to the St. Joseph's Society? Thank you again for your support of and prayers for the priests of the Diocese of Cheyenne.

The Memorare of Saint Joseph



Remember, most pure spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, my protector, Saint Joseph, that no one has ever had recourse to your protection or implored your assistance without obtaining relief.

Confident in your goodness, I come to you and humbly ask you to hear my petitions, gentle foster father of the Redeemer. In your love, hear and answer me.
Amen

To make an online gift to the St. Joseph Society, go to:

<https://dioceseofcheyenne.org/give-to-the-diocese-of-cheyenne>

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Welcome new employees to the diocese



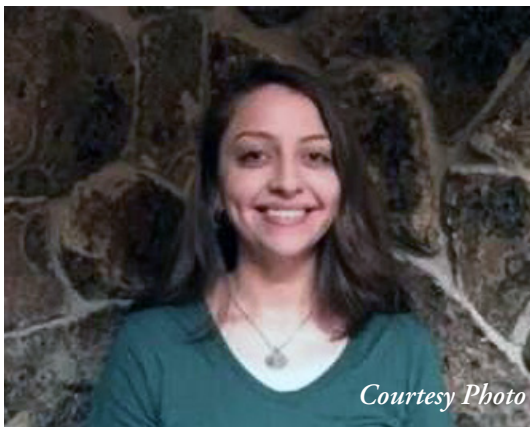
Courtesy Photo

**Wyoming Catholic Ministries Foundation
Director of Development Peg Louiselle**

Peg Louiselle is the most recent addition to the WCMF team. She has 19 years of experience connecting people with the missions and impact that inspires them most. After starting a non-profit to serve adults and children with developmental disabilities, she moved on to work in the educational realm for a 7- to 12-grade independent Christian school and then for the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota. She was most recently with a national non-profit dedicated to promoting Catholic life in rural America.

Her love for the Church and, in particular, those who live in the rural countryside, have brought her to the WCMF. She considers it a privilege to serve the independent, courageous, and loyal men and women of Wyoming. She brings a passion for her Catholic faith and a sincere appreciation for the beautiful Wyoming countryside.

Peg and her husband, Dave, have four adult children and are expecting their first grandchild in January. They are active parishioners and volunteers at St. Gerard Majella in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota.



Courtesy Photo

**Wyoming Catholic Ministries Foundation
Administrative Assistant Erica Turk**

Erica Turk, the new administrative assistant for the Wyoming Catholic Ministries Foundation since August 2, 2021, is a Wyoming native who grew up in Cheyenne as a member of the Cathedral of St. Mary.

She has worked in restaurant and retail management for 10 years and has always been dedicated to ensuring the successful development of her teams by providing strong leadership, calm mentorship, and a passion for organizing. After a few years of traveling through different states across the country, Erica decided it was time to settle down, come home to Wyoming, and plant some roots.

She now calls Casper home and is a member of St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church. Being a faithful servant for Christ is what drives Erica every day, and she is happy to assist the mission of the Catholic Church by joining the Wyoming Catholic Ministries Foundation team.



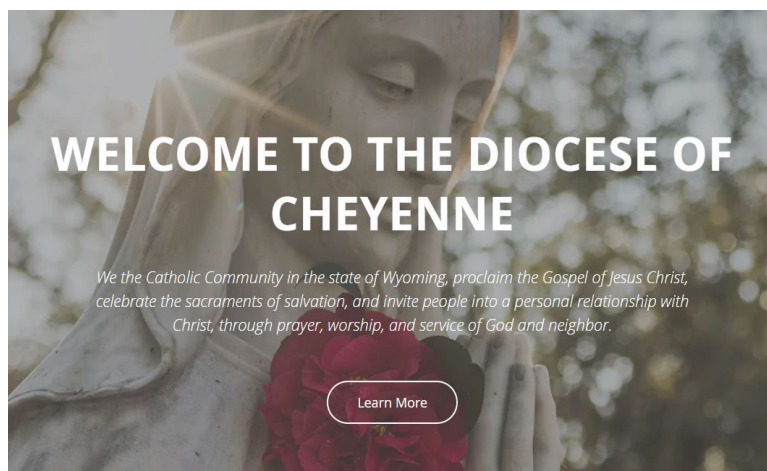
Courtesy Photo

**Associate Director of Pastoral Formation
Theresa J. Meuer**

Theresa J. Meuer began her new position as associate director of Pastoral Formation October 1, 2021. She has a strong love for Christ and his Church and a heart that beats especially strong for service of youth and all vocations. She has been married to her high school sweetheart, Tim, for 11 years (with 6 “Bonus Years” of dating,) and they work as a team in all aspects of life. Though they don’t yet have any biological babies, they claim hundreds of spiritual children through their nine years of devotion to youth ministry in Wyoming. When they are not immersed in ministry, you will often find them hiking, playing board games, or exercising.

Theresa served as the director of Youth Ministry at St. Matthew in Gillette for the past four years and delighted in setting the bar high for young people and watching them reach it.

Growing in knowledge has always been important to Theresa. You’ll often find her tearing through books to learn and grow, and she will complete her education to be a Certified Spiritual Director in 2022.



Visit the Diocese of Cheyenne website at:

<https://dioceseofcheyenne.org/>

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NEWS

U.S. Bishops' Secretariat for Child and Youth Protection Releases Annual Report

November 9, 2021

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection has released the 2020 Annual Report – Findings and Recommendations on the Implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. The report is based on the audit findings of StoneBridge Business Partners, a specialty consulting firm headquartered in Rochester, New York, which provides forensic, internal, and compliance audit services to leading organizations nationwide. A survey on allegations conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) is also included as part of the report.

This is the eighteenth such report since 2002 when the U.S. bishops established and adopted the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People a comprehensive set of procedures to address allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy and made a promise to protect and a pledge to heal. The report, which is typically released in June each year, was delayed due to the health and safety restrictions as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. A mid-cycle adjustment was made to extend the time frame of the audit process to accommodate diocesan

offices which had closed, diocesan staff who had transitioned to remote work, and for the elements of on-site audits to go virtual. This adjustment did not alter data collected or information garnered from the audit process.

The 2020 report for audit year July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020, states that 3,924 adults came forward with 4,228 allegations. The number of allegations is slightly less than that reported in 2019. As noted in the 2019 Annual Report, the number of allegations increased significantly in large part due to allegations received in connection with lawsuits, compensation programs, and bankruptcies.

During this audit year, 22 allegations were made by current minors, six of which were substantiated, two were unsubstantiated, three were unable to be proven, seven were still under investigation, and four were categorized as "other."

The report notes the ongoing work of the Church in continuing the call to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults. In 2020, the Church's investment in protective services increased by 15 percent. This included over 2.5 million background checks conducted on clergy, employees, and volunteers. In addition, in 2020 over 2.5 million adults and 3.1 million children and youth were trained on

how to identify the warning signs of abuse and how to report those signs. The Church also continues to provide outreach and support to 2,458 victim survivors and their families in the form of counseling, spiritual assistance, and other social services.

The USCCB's Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People and the National Review Board continue to emphasize that the audit and continued application of zero-tolerance policies are two important tools in the Church's broader program of creating a culture of protection and healing that exceeds the requirements of the Charter.

The full Annual Report, and all previously published Annual Reports, may be found on the Secretariat's audit page at: <https://www.usccb.org/offices/child-and-youth-protection/audits>.

The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People may be found at: <https://www.usccb.org/offices/child-and-youth-protection/charter-protection-children-and-young-people>.

Additional information on diocesan requirements for the protection of children and young people may be found at: <http://www.usccb.org/about/communications/bishops-resources/upload/cyp-norms-bulletin-insert.pdf>.



Thank you to those who have made their gift to the Diocese of Cheyenne 2021 Annual Appeal!

If you have not yet given, please consider making an end-of-year gift.

Give online at:

<https://dioceseofcheyenne.org/living-and-giving-in-christ>

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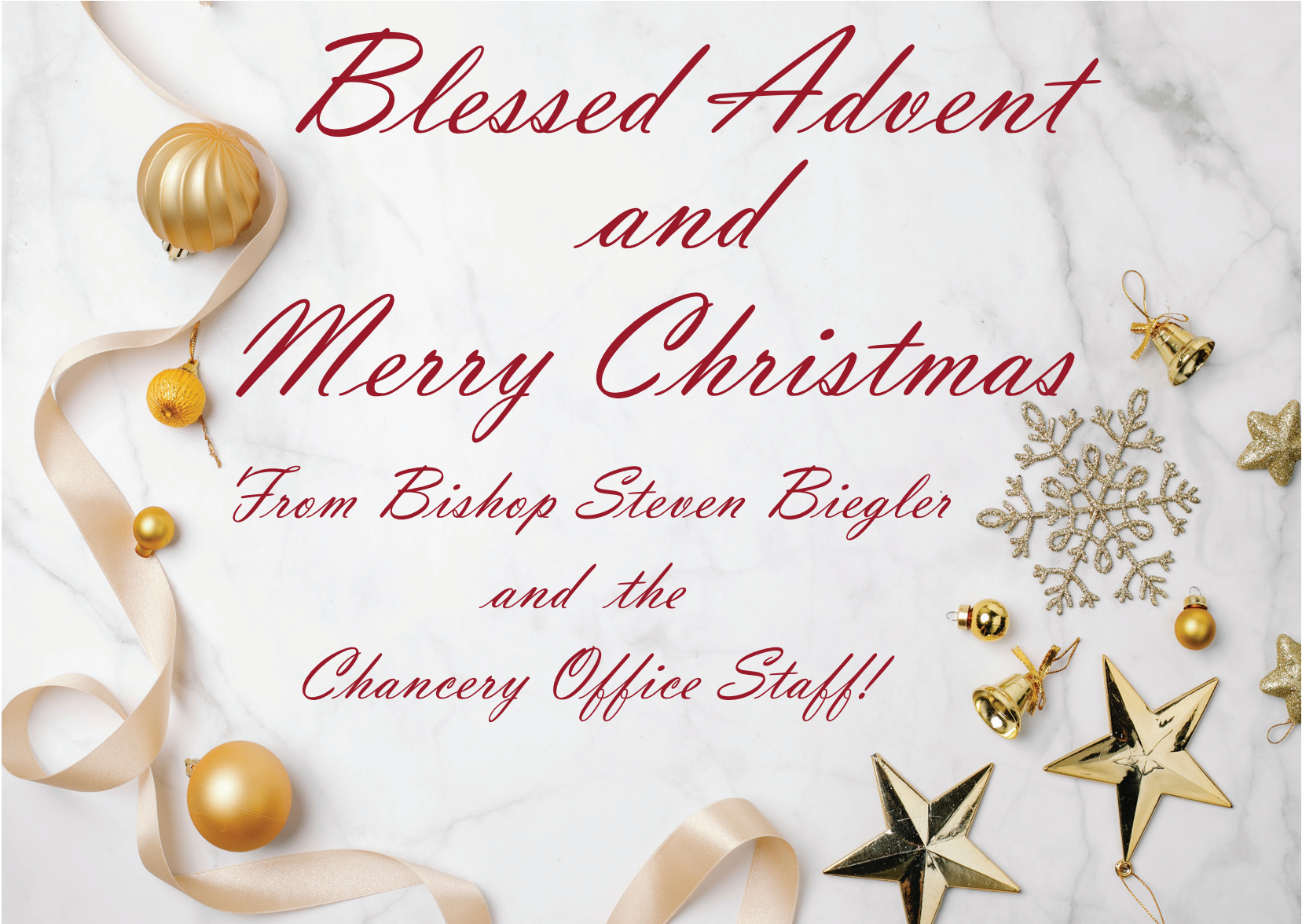
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Blessed Advent and Merry Christmas

*From Bishop Steven Biegler
and the
Chancery Office Staff!*

Diocese of Cheyenne Prayer for Vision 2030 Pastoral Planning

Loving Father, we praise you for sending your Son as the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep.
By the Light of your Holy Spirit, guide our pastoral planning. Open our minds to your vision and mission.

Refresh us with the spirit of wisdom, understanding, right judgement, courage, knowledge, reverence, and fear of the Lord.

May the fire of your Spirit enflame the hearts of the disciples in the Diocese of Cheyenne.

Help us to be shepherds after the heart of Jesus, who came to seek out and save the lost.

May your Spirit impel us to make disciples of all nations.

As we recall how the Risen Lord commissioned Peter to “tend my sheep,” may we be mindful of the least brothers and sisters of Jesus; the hungry and homeless, the sick and sinners, prisoners, and immigrants.

Show us how to be a field hospital for those on the margins, like your Son who was sent “to bring glad tidings to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free” (Luke 4:18).

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

