

OFFICE OF SPIRITUALITY &
FORMATION FOR MINISTRY

ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022

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charlestdiocese.org/
formation-for-ministry



OFFICE OF SPIRITUALITY & FORMATION

Mission Statement

To engage all parish staff, diocesan personnel, and spiritual directors in the New Evangelization through education in faith, worship, and witness.

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PRESENT STATE

COVID-19, specifically the Delta and Omicron variants, affected my ability to minister person-to-person again this year. Many parishes and schools were hesitant to have in-person sessions for various spiritual offerings. The diocesan, parish staff and Catholic Charities seminars were delivered in person during Fall of 2021. Two deaneries, Charleston and Columbia, were offered abbreviated Zoom sessions in January and February, and all CDC guidelines were honored for any in-person meetings.

I continued to meet with spiritual directees during the past year and supervised three in their second year of Spiritual Direction practicum class, bringing my total meetings to 15 per month. I either have in-person or virtual sessions with directees.

I collaborated with the Office of Ethnic Ministries (now the Office of Black Catholics and Native Americans) who worked with me to present the seventh year of formation. Since the formation topic this year was on *Prophets, Biblical and Modern Day* and the issue of racism, I needed to ascertain the expertise of this department before writing the curriculum, which began in May of 2021.

A new responsibility this year was being the diocesan coordinator of the Synod on Synodality. This work took much organization, many meetings with the team and creative ways to get our people enthused with the project (*see pages 4-6*).

New partnerships continued with the help of donations

During the past year, I worked on continuing the partnerships with Spring Hill College and the University of Dayton. In the fall of 2021, my office became the contact for diaconal and lay formation for spiritual direction and supported financially, through the generous support of two donors, a few people in their pursuit to become spiritual directors. I continue to help deacons in the program with budget responsibilities and work with the professor who teaches market and budgetary issues. We will have 16 people graduate from our second cohort this fall. We began marketing this spring for a third cohort to begin studying in September. I also applied for a grant from our diocesan capital campaign. I worked on its committee and knew spiritual direction training was one of the case elements for the project. I believe my office received \$11,000 to aid lay persons in this cohort.

Second, I applied for a grant from the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community of Faith Formation last year and was awarded a second grant. This year we had one youth minister attain Certification for Youth Ministry and a couple from the Upstate received Certifications in Adult Faith Formation and Leadership. The value of the two grants totaled \$6,000. From the generosity of a family foundation and a donation from a parish staffer, I was able to offer grants from a restricted fund for individuals to pursue courses through the university for a very reasonable amount, usually \$50 per course. In 2021, I was able to extend this offer to volunteers in parishes.



FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH

COMMUNION | PARTICIPATION | MISSION

Synod on Synodality *July 2021 — June 2022*

In July of 2021, Bishop Robert E. Guglielmone tasked me with coordinating the Diocese of Charleston's synodal journey. I was required to assist the bishop and vicars general, clergy and lay-people to discern carefully together what the Spirit was saying to the Church and agree on common goals and actions for the coming years.

The process began by organizing a team to help facilitate the Synod throughout our state. The first meeting was held August 5, 2021. A timeline was presented, and diocesan website pages were designed by the Office of Multimedia. Committee members were given the Holy Father's book, *Let Us Dream the Path to a Better Future* so that each would understand his vision for the future of the Church. Some items that were addressed by the committee for the coordinator were to:

- enthuse, inspire and motivate Catholics in the Diocese of Charleston in their preparation, participation, and implementation of the Synod;
- work collaboratively with key stakeholders and partners in developing and fulfilling Synod responsibilities by providing support and putting mechanisms in place to keep participants encouraged in their work, especially when meeting deadlines;
- facilitate and be the main contact for Synod inquiries, responding appropriately and referring queries where appropriate to the committee (*Since our team got an early start, I began to get questions from dioceses in Africa, North Carolina and California*);
- be an active member of the Synod working committee, preparing agendas, attending meetings, and contributing ideas to facilitate each of the stages over the three-year period;
- organize events to include the booking of venues, guest speakers, equipment, and refreshments in partnership with various parishes;
- identify listening strategies and establish a network of listening sessions in conjunction with the committee;
- manage the data via Google Forms and other data sent to my office to keep abreast of what parishioners were stating;
- be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Synod (*preparation and implementation*) to include responding to enquires from members;
- acquire knowledge of communication strategy for the Synod and where necessary, prepare and distribute resource materials in partnership

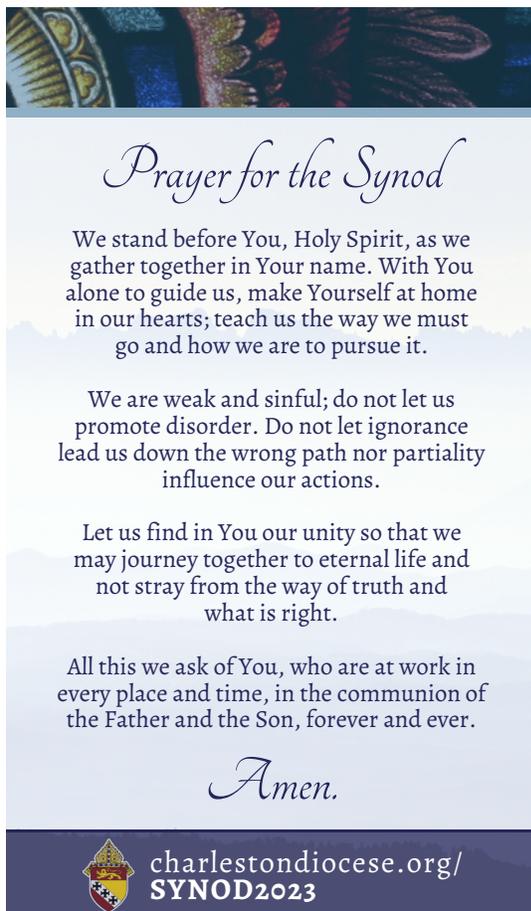
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- with the diocesan Secretariat of Communications & Public Affairs;
- liaise with Synod members to ensure they were adequately and appropriately equipped for their role, providing them with materials and other resources to assist them where necessary;
- liaise with various Chancery offices, theological advisers and external speakers who provided training and formation during the Synodal process;

- attend, support and contribute to in-house and external training programs to aid continuous individual development where necessary;
- act in a professional and appropriate manner and actively promote the ethos of the diocese;
- undertake such other duties as was reasonably required that were commensurate with my level of responsibility and experience.

Work began on organizing state-wide events, and the first was planning for the opening liturgy, which took place October 17, 2021. All parishes in the seven deaneries were asked to hold Masses to kick off the synodal journey.

A prayer card was designed in English and Spanish and sent to all parishes which planned to host listening sessions.



Prayer for the Synod

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name. With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts; teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.

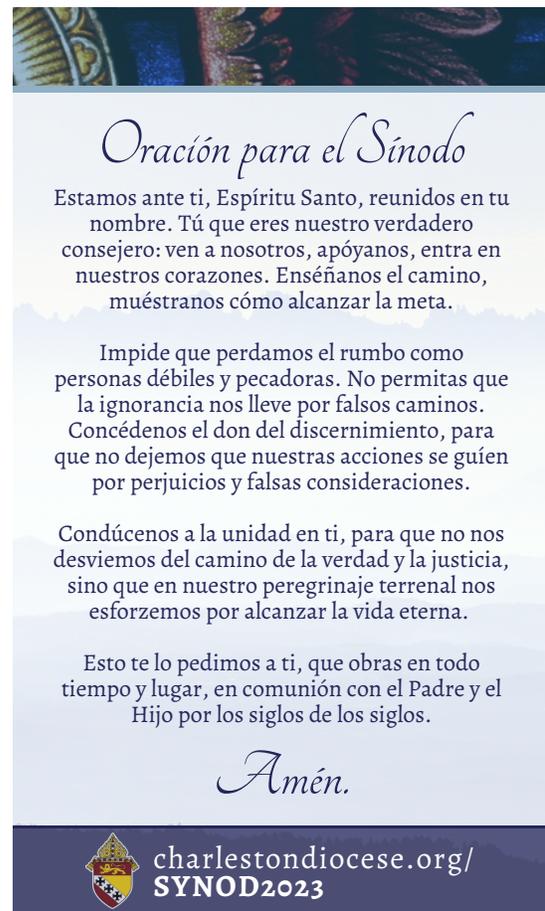
We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder. Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever.

Amen.

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Oración para el Sínodo

Estamos ante ti, Espíritu Santo, reunidos en tu nombre. Tú que eres nuestro verdadero consejero: ven a nosotros, apóyanos, entra en nuestros corazones. Enséñanos el camino, muéstranos cómo alcanzar la meta.

Impide que perdamos el rumbo como personas débiles y pecadoras. No permitas que la ignorancia nos lleve por falsos caminos. Concédenos el don del discernimiento, para que no dejemos que nuestras acciones se guíen por prejuicios y falsas consideraciones.

Condúcenos a la unidad en ti, para que no nos desviemos del camino de la verdad y la justicia, sino que en nuestro peregrinaje terrenal nos esforcemos por alcanzar la vida eterna.

Esto te lo pedimos a ti, que obras en todo tiempo y lugar, en comunión con el Padre y el Hijo por los siglos de los siglos.

Amén.

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Also, part of our prayer experience was a six-week small-group study on the Sunday Scriptures from October through November. Parishioners were asked to keep the success of the Synod in their prayers as they met and to remember the Synod during personal prayer and adoration. This prolonged prayer time was to serve as the foundation of our diocesan Synod. All resources for the Synod were posted on our website, coordination for which I was responsible.

By October 2021, I completed a PowerPoint presentation for all listening sessions, specifically for facilitators; training for table leaders was done online; surveys and listening-session questions were developed by the committee; and I worked with the Archdioceses of Newark and Baltimore and the Diocese of Austin to shared ideas about the process that would be meaningful for all involved. It was a pleasure to work with this national team, and because of our work, the diocese was noted in the Leadership Roundtable Group.

Members of the Synod Executive Committee were asked to establish the listening process of the synodal journey, including preparation, assistance in facilitation, collation of data, and participation in the discernment process leading to the emergence of key themes. A writing committee met to develop survey and listening questions for state-wide gatherings.

Almost 4,000 individuals took the online and paper survey, including a small number of youth and young adults, and all questions were done in English and Spanish, with options for Vietnamese and Filipino. Over 85 listening sessions were held across the state.

The final stage was supporting the recommendations across the diocese. Many committee members hosted listening sessions at their parishes, and some held multiple sessions which assisted in ascertaining comments from parishioners on the margins.

Bishop Guglielmone presided over Mass in May of 2022 and a luncheon was held to thank the 10 Executive Committee members for the countless hours they spent to fulfill the requirements of the Synod. Certificates of Participation were also given to each of the members.

The next task will be implementing the suggestions that the faithful in the Diocese of Charleston gave during the process of the listening sessions and surveys.



POR UNA IGLESIA SÍNODAL
COMUNIÓN | PARTICIPACIÓN | MISIÓN

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Formation for Mission and Ministry *Seminar Year VII: Intellectual Formation*

GOALS

1. To review the four pillars of formation and key points from years one through six of Formation for Mission and Ministry.
2. To explain the purpose of Year VII Formation Program: *Prophets Yesterday, Prophets Today*.
3. To define key terms such as Torah, Pentateuch, covenant, prophets, racism, systemic racism, pastoral letters.
4. To identify key characteristics of biblical prophets and discuss which are needed today, as part of the nature of the prophetic experience.
5. To explain the difference of professional and biblical (*individual*) prophets.
6. To identify the role of Baptism in becoming a prophet of today.
7. To explain how we share in Jesus' divine life by becoming priest, prophet and king as prophets today.
8. To identify the seven key principles of Catholic social teaching, specifically the dignity of the human person.
9. To address the issue of racism as a key issue regarding the first and most important social justice teaching of our day: the dignity of the human person as being created in God's image and likeness.

OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:

1. identify the four key pillars of formation.
2. explain the purpose of discussing biblical, modern-day prophets and apply to the issue of racism.
3. define key terms such as Torah, Pentateuch, covenant, prophets, racism, systemic racism, pastoral letters.
4. explain key characteristics of biblical prophets and discuss which are needed today.
5. distinguish between professional and individual (*biblical*) prophets.
6. explain the key role the sacrament of Baptism plays in the life of a believer.
7. list how each of the baptized participate in the life of Christ as priest, prophet and king.
8. recall the seven key principles of Catholic social teaching and the importance of the first principal — the dignity of the human person.
9. identify racism as a sin, systemic in our society and ways to deal with the issue by looking at the recent pastorals of American bishops.

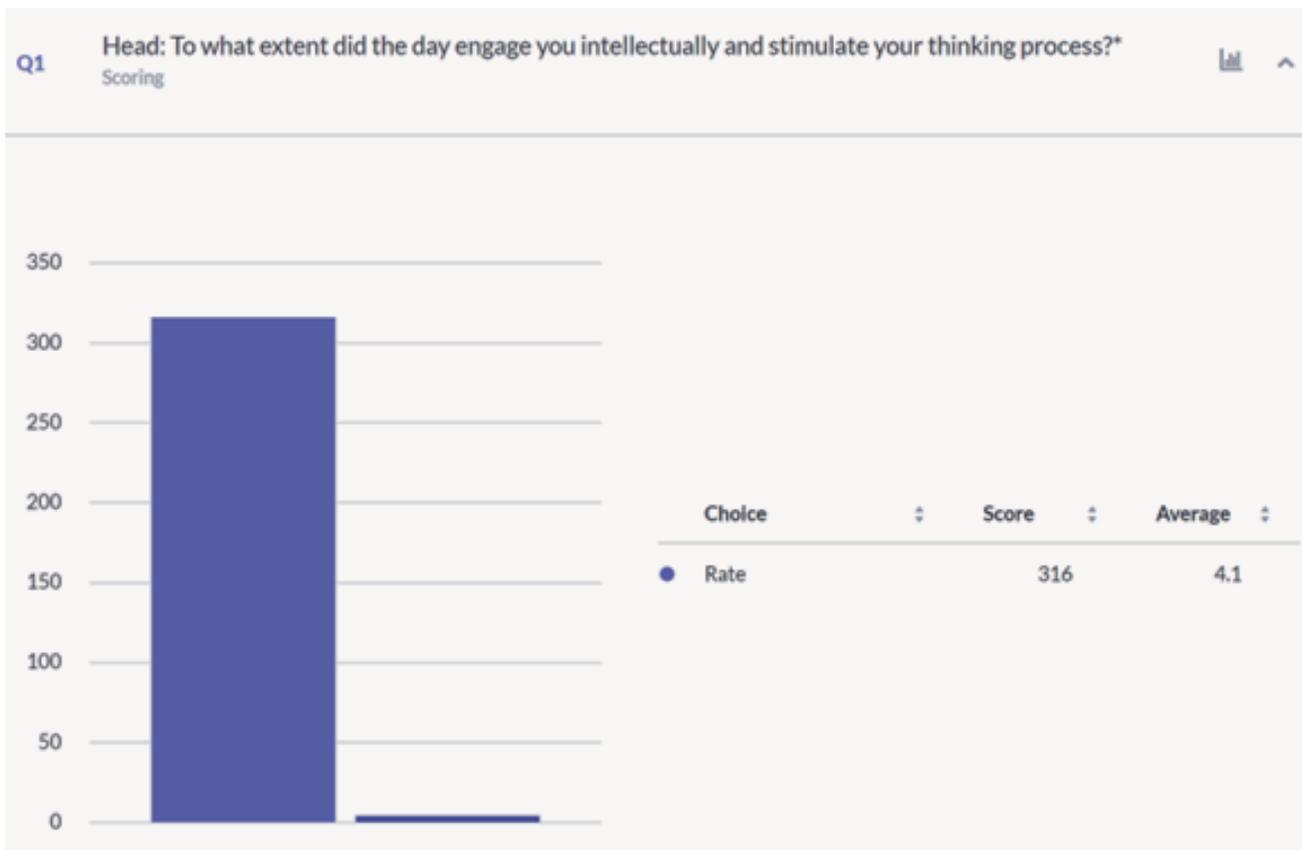
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Evaluations

Seminar Year VII: Evaluations were done online via Survey Planet

This was my most challenging year in doing the Formation seminar for diocesan and parish staff. When I discussed prophets, both Old Testament and Jesus, the Prophet par excellence and ending with an issue that we could apply today: Racism and what the church currently teaches, a few felt I was in the political arena. Nonetheless, many staff supported me, as I felt it was a matter of conscience to address the issue of racism and white privilege.

Three questions were asked as one can see below and roughly a third of participants took the time to answer these questions online.

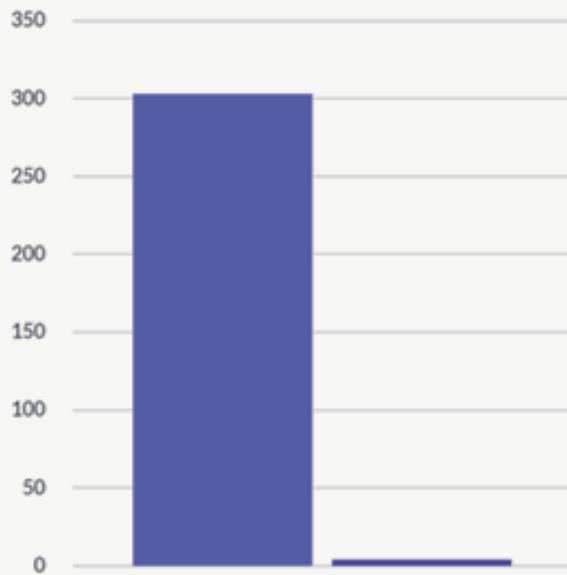


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Q2

Heart: To what extent did the morning extend your understanding of yourself and others?

Scoring

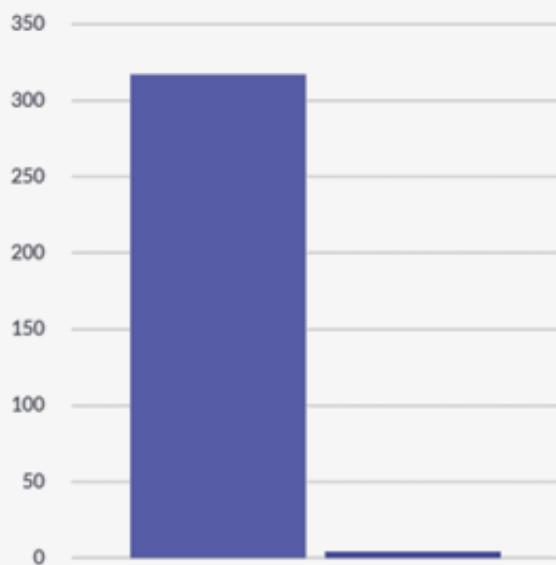


Choice	Score	Average
Rate	303	3.94

Q3

Hand: To what extent did the morning assist you in living in accordance with Church teachings?

Scoring



Choice	Score	Average
Rate	317	4.12

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Top Three

Seminar Year VII: Positive Comments, Opportunities for Improvement

Comments reflecting a 4/5 or above:

1. I found everything very interesting. The social justice discussion/information was very good. I always enjoy whatever Sr. Kathy brings to the discussion, giving me knowledge and encouraging me to think. I very much enjoy these diocesan programs, getting a chance to meet staff from other parishes, hear about how things are going, and learning something about the church and/or myself. Thank you.
2. Having taught leadership and conducting diversity training myself for years in the secular world, I loved hearing it from a Christian point of view! Thank you!
3. The day was a wonderful opportunity for our staff to sit, listen, and discuss. It was very beneficial and well worth the time.

Comments reflecting a score of 3/5 or below:

1. This year seemed to be more of a political persuasion than theological. I have always enjoyed these seminars, but this year's seemed a little too political.
2. This seminar seemed one sided in that not all white people are racist. I was born and raised in the South, and I honestly am tired of the race card being played.
3. I wondered about some of the sources used in the seminar.

General Comments

Categorized by Three Major Themes from Evaluations

1. Sharing experiences of various ethnic groups was most enlightening to our English-speaking attendees; various non-white individuals do experience racism quite often during their lives, even within offices of the institutional church.
2. Although many participants were happy to learn that our American bishops have written about racism in their pastoral letters, many were saddened that the issue is not mentioned from the pulpit. Also, they desired to have parish groups meet to discuss the various forms that inequality takes in our society. This could be done through a book study.
3. Many of the participants appreciated learning about the story of the Old Testament, specifically the characteristics of the major prophets. Many accepted the reality that by one's baptism, one is called to participate in Jesus' priestly, kingly and prophetic ministry.

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Ministry Activities 2021-2022

As was stated previously, in-person activities were limited this year, but I was able to visit parishes first semester; we did zoom second semester because of the rise in Covid. By February, parishes felt comfortable having me visit. I did a faculty retreat, one large retreat for the Myrtle Beach Deanery of South Carolina Council of Catholic Women and two Lenten Missions: Charleston and Sumter (invited by the Adorno Fathers)



Religious women attend Bishop Jacques installation.



Bishop Jacques receives his new vocation as Shepherd of Charleston



Faculty Retreat
Christ Our King /
Stella Maris School

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Spiritual Directors

Presently, we have over 35 certified Catholic spiritual directors ministering in our diocese. This year, we will graduate another 16 (*three deacons and 13 lay people*) through Spring Hill College and others from various programs throughout the country. I contacted directors and took an informal survey of how many individuals are being served with spiritual direction.

The monks of Mepkin Abbey in Moncks Corner and the religious women of the Poor Clares in Traveler's Rest see 55 individuals. Other directors who responded see individuals in their home office or parish space. I am sure more are being served, but some directors did not respond. I have spoken to priests in some deaneries and hope to continue to do so regarding the importance of making people aware of what spiritual direction offers. Also, we place notices about spiritual direction in parish bulletins to educate parishioners. Some deaneries have more directors than others, and I am hoping to address this with our second cohort, which will graduate from Spring Hill College soon.

During this past year, we had several spiritual directors take a new course, Directed Retreat formation. The course helps certified directors learn the tools to direct people in making a Jesuit Annotated Retreat. My office helped to defray the financial costs of some of directors who were in need of aid during the fall of 2021. Prerequisites are required to participate in this program. I would like to be able to help financially for those spiritual directors who may need assistance in learning to offer this retreat in parishes. The program's cost is \$1,000.

One of our spiritual directors facilitated a 12-week retreat, "Finding Christ in the World," through Boston College this past year. It was so successful that the group formed a book study, then Advent and Lenten retreats. This same director accepted my invitation to become the spiritual director for the Association of Catholic Nurses in South Carolina. She facilitated a four-week Advent retreat based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. She also did a seven-week Lenten Retreat with this group.

As diocesan liaison for spiritual direction and with new responsibilities for the Synod on Synodality, I have had to limit my virtual meetings with certified directors. I hope to sponsor meetings again to facilitate continual education and formation and to address concerns of our directors. I hope in the future to have an annual day for directors in Columbia for continuing education and a business meeting.

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Ministry Monthly Newsletter

The Buzz Report

Since our monthly newsletter began in 2018, our readership has steadily increased to over 1,100. This monthly newsletter is an effective way for my office to update staff and parishioners with global, national, and local happenings in the Church. Many staff have shared that some of the information is placed in their bulletins. In the upcoming year, we will begin publishing our newsletter every other month and email it via Flocknote, the diocesan communications system.

Revenue Earned

Bequests for Ministry, Retreats, Missions, Seminars and Spiritual Direction

Bikulege Family Foundation Grant	\$5,000
Grant from a Spiritual Director for the University of Dayton Partnership	<u>\$2,500</u>
Retreats, Missions, Seminars and Spiritual Direction Total Earned Revenue	\$7,500

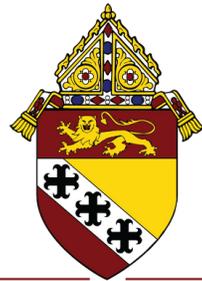
Content of Lay Formation

Vision of the Office of Spirituality and Formation for Ministry

The Office of Spirituality and Formation for Ministry serves the People of God in our diocese through education and formation opportunities to chancery, parish staffs, parishioners, and school personnel.

“Write the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that he who runs past it can read it. For the vision is yet for the appointed time, and it hastens toward the end, and shall not die: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay.”

Habakkuk 2:2-3



ROMAN CATHOLIC
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