

# Impact Report

## Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Dear Faithful in the Diocese of Gaylord,

I am pleased, once again, to introduce the Impact Report for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. With humility, but firm confidence, I can testify to the many ways we do not rest on our laurels in the Diocese of Gaylord. Every day is a new day of grace to live and tell the good news of Jesus Christ as our Savior.

It is a privilege to travel throughout the 21 counties of our diocese and meet the people in our parishes, schools, apostolates, organizations and community groups who walk the talk of our faith. If you need inspiration, all you have to do is look around.

There is plenty of trouble and hurt in our world, and, of course, we, as Christians, are not immune from adversity, but there is also great hope and promise.

I have used the analogy of our Church to a campfire. The big logs in the ring are like the big structures and programs we have in the Church —everything from magnificent cathedrals to worldwide charitable agencies that provide corporal and spiritual works of mercy to millions of people. But those big logs will not catch fire without sufficient kindling.

Kindling for a good campfire is like the stuff you will see in this report:

- The ordination of three men to the permanent diaconate,
- Acceptance of a new seminarian,
- The inaugural *Go to Bat for Vocations* softball game,
- The National Eucharistic Congress pilgrimage to Indianapolis,
- *Pedal and Praise* bike ride in Traverse City,
- The first wedding anniversary Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral,
- March for Life pilgrimage in Lansing,
- World Youth Day pilgrimage in Portugal,
- Catechetical Day of Prayer and Day of Reflection for Liturgical Ministers at the Gaylord Pastoral Center, and
- The launch of our *Daily Prayers and Petitions* viewed by hundreds on social media.

And we're not done yet! Remember, Pentecost is the fire of the Holy Spirit. We need both the kindling and the big logs!

In Christ our Life!



Most Reverend Jeffrey J. Walsh  
Bishop of Gaylord

## THE DIOCESE

### By the Numbers

The Diocese of Gaylord encompasses 11,171 square miles across 21 counties, with the mission to proclaim the saving message of God's love and invite disciples to share that word of hope and charity to a troubled world.

75

Parishes

2

Shrines

67

Cemeteries

17

Schools

1

Chapel

35

Active  
Diocesan Priests



The infiorata created for the Corpus Christi Mass, Holy Rosary in Cedar

6

Priests from Religious Orders or Other Dioceses with Assignments

16

Retired Priests

31

Permanent Deacons

21

Religious Sisters

48

Diocesan Employees (FTEs)

10

Priests Providing Temporary Coverage

5

Seminarians

1

Religious Brothers

6

Directors of Parish Life

1,248

Employees throughout the Diocese





Baptisms, St. Augustine Parish, Boyne Fall



Eucharistic Procession, Sacred Heart Parish, Elk Rapids



Live Nativity with students from St. Mary School, Charlevoix, and St. Michael High School, Petoskey

## Fostering Communities of Faith in Our Parishes

The mission of the Diocese of Gaylord is to *proclaim the saving message of God's love and invite missionary disciples to share that word of hope and charity to a troubled world.*

Our parishes, schools and ministries are the real hands and feet that make this mission come to life in Northern Michigan. The diocese supports the 75 parishes in their missionary mandate through formation and spiritual renewal opportunities for the lay faithful and parish staff.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- Organized a Catechetical Day of Prayer
- Held a Day of Reflection for Liturgical Ministers
- Developed a National Eucharistic Congress Scholarship Program







# Sacraments By the Numbers\*

459

Baptisms

495

First Communion

513

Confirmations

177

Marriages

\*Data from calendar year 2024



"I am very appreciative of the great support that I receive from the Diocese of Gaylord. We have a very active parish, and I often seek guidance and resources from the diocese. Whether it be trainings for OCIA, advice from the Tribunal, Worship and Liturgy or the Faith Formation Office, there is always someone ready to help me meet the needs of our parishioners. I have also received wonderful spiritual support from the Diocese of Gaylord by opportunities offered that I have been able to participate in, such as the National Eucharistic Congress, pilgrimages and other diocesan Masses and conferences. I am so thankful to be part of a diocese that truly supports me as I live out the mission that God has called me to in serving the people of our parish."

**Margo Damoose, parish life coordinator,  
Holy Childhood of Jesus Parish, Harbor Springs**





Ash Wednesday, Immaculate Conception School, Traverse City



Graduates, St. Mary School, Lake Leelanau

## Fostering Communities of Faith at Our Schools

Our 17 Catholic schools prepare students who seek and fulfill God's will for learning and life. With growing enrollment, more families are choosing our schools for both their academic excellence and their commitment to the Gospel. Each day offers students meaningful opportunities to encounter Christ through prayer, sacraments and service.



Dissection lesson, St. Ann School, Cadillac



All Saints Day, Holy Family School, East Tawas

"The culture of the (St. Francis Xavier) school is built on a religious foundation + compassionate staff. We feel so incredibly grateful for our school, the staff and the families we are surrounded by."

Parent of child at St. Francis Xavier, Petoskey



# Our Schools

## By the numbers



### HIGHLIGHTS:

- More than \$120,000 in scholarships are awarded to assist families with tuition.
- 86 percent of our Catholic high school graduates continue their education at a university, college or vocational school.
- Three of our Catholic schools were granted a five-year re-accreditation through the Michigan Nonpublic Schools Accreditation Association, successfully completing the rigorous accreditation process that utilizes National Catholic Education Association's Catholic Standards and Benchmarks. Our schools are accredited on a rotating basis.

17

Schools

3,150

Student Enrollment  
(PreK-12)

268

Lay Teachers

4

Religious sisters  
teaching in Diocese

11:1

Average student  
teacher ratio

\$4,696.31

Average tuition per student

\$8,456.82

Average cost to  
educate a student

Unsplash/Jean-Philippe Delberghe

"I appreciate the development of social skills and character traits that align with the teachings and values of the Catholic Church. My student can get academic support anywhere but having a school community that supports the life lessons we're also trying to teach at home is invaluable to us."

Parent of child at All Saints, Alpena





Inaugural wedding anniversary Mass, St. Mary Cathedral, Gaylord



Fr. Aloysius and Bishop Walsh with the Catholic Human Services team, Mackinac Bridge Walk

## Shepherding God's People

As a spiritual father and faithful steward, Bishop Walsh leads the diocese with humility, wisdom and pastoral care. Traveling across our expansive diocese, he visits parishes and schools to proclaim the Gospel, teach the faith and celebrate the sacraments in unity with clergy and lay leaders. With a deep sense of responsibility and love for the Church, he also oversees diocesan resources, ensuring they are used faithfully to support the mission and serve the people of God.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- Nearly 2,000 people prayed along with Bishop Walsh listening to his special Lenten and Easter video reflection series designed to help deepen the faith of parishioners.
- Bishop Walsh accompanied a busload of faithful to the Michigan March for Life in Lansing to be the voice for those who can't speak.
- Our diocesan Synod Report was incorporated into the Regional, National and Continental Synthesis and submitted to the Vatican for the next phase of the Synod on Synodality, focusing on integrating its conclusions into Church life before an ecclesial assembly at the Vatican in 2028.

"I enjoy the Wednesday online video from Bishop Walsh and the diocese's e-newsletter because it reminds me to keep faith in the forefront of my life midweek."

Kathy Potts, parishioner of St. Anthony of Padua, Mackinaw City

## Bishop on the Move

29,497

Miles Driven

319

Meetings Hosted

187

Masses, Retreats,  
Reconciliation Services,  
Liturgies Celebrated

66

Community and School  
Events Attended



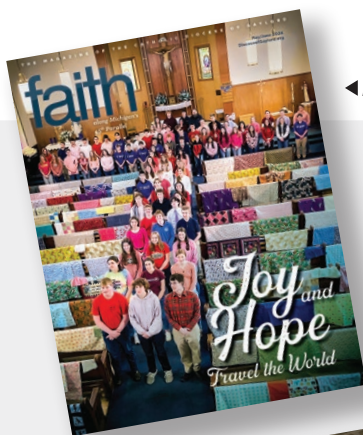
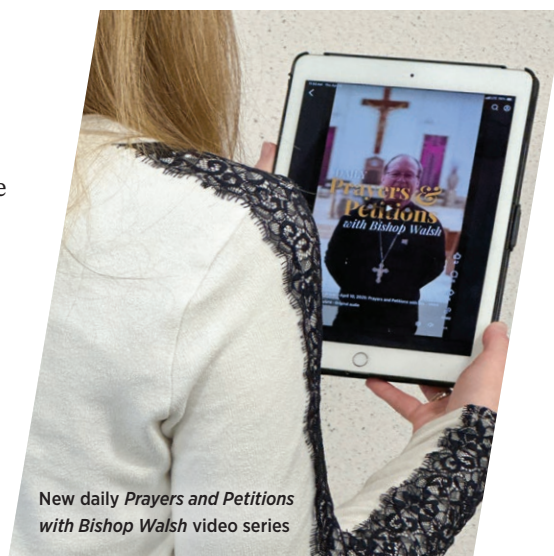


# Spreading the Word

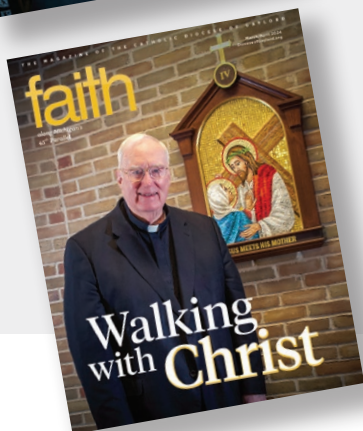
Through a wide variety of communication efforts, the diocese works to inspire and invite thousands to encounter Jesus and strengthen their connection with the faith community.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

- Launched a new daily video series titled *Prayers and Petitions with Bishop Walsh*. Produced 43 videos in this year, with an average of 704 faithful praying daily with the bishop.
- Began publishing a new weekly e-newsletter for nearly 8,500 faithful, with an average open rate of 58 percent — significantly higher than the national average open rate of 21 percent.
- 21,956 households received the bimonthly *Faith* magazine at no cost.
- 2,873 households, on average, viewed the televised Sunday Mass weekly; an additional 360 faithful, on average, viewed the Sunday Mass via livestream.
- 1,696 social media users watched *Checking in with Bishop Walsh* weekly.
- 82,351 YouTube watchers viewed the 203 diocesan videos posted during the year; 121 were Bishop Walsh videos.
- Diocesan Facebook page attracted 40,100 visitors — that's double compared to the prior year.



◀ *Faith*, a bimonthly magazine, available to all parishioners at no cost



"I look forward to reading each publication of *Faith* for its socially relevant, faith-based and engaging articles and interviews. From its visual appeal to its inspiring and informative content, *Faith* fosters a sense of belonging among writers and readers who share similar interests and values, thereby further nurturing our spiritual community. I appreciate all the time and effort that goes into creating such an enjoyable and inspirational reading experience."

Jo Studley May, M.D., a parishioner at Holy Family, East Tawas



# Engaging Young Catholics

Our Youth Ministry continues to expand its opportunities for the youth and young adults to nurture their faith and learn how to grow as disciples of Christ.

## HIGHLIGHT:

- 10 young adults traveled to Lisbon, Portugal, with Bishop Walsh, Father Mitchel Roman and a lay leader for the 2023 World Youth Day. Our pilgrims joined 1.5 million young Catholics who gathered to adore and worship Jesus, hear amazing speakers and share faith stories with others from around the world — all helping to deepen their relationship with Christ.
- Numerous parishes led active youth groups, giving adolescents opportunities to share and live out their faith. Some of the activities included a summer mission trip to help needy communities, a pilgrimage to the 2024 National Eucharistic Congress, live Stations of the Cross, Nativity enactments and an overnight stay at “cardboard city” to help them understand the difficulties and challenges of homelessness.



World Youth Day, Portugal



Boyer Valley Catholic Community youth group,  
mission trip, Lansing



Roscommon's St. Michael Parish youth group,  
National Eucharistic Congress, Indianapolis

“Two highlights of World Youth Day were seeing the Gospel come to life and witnessing the supernatural joy everyone carried with them. I saw over a million people testifying that Christ’s mission to spread the Gospel to every corner of the world is true and alive today. I learned that I can do hard things joyfully when I am walking alongside Jesus and his disciples who uplift me.”

**Emily Engel, a North Central Michigan College student and attendee of young adult ministry events**

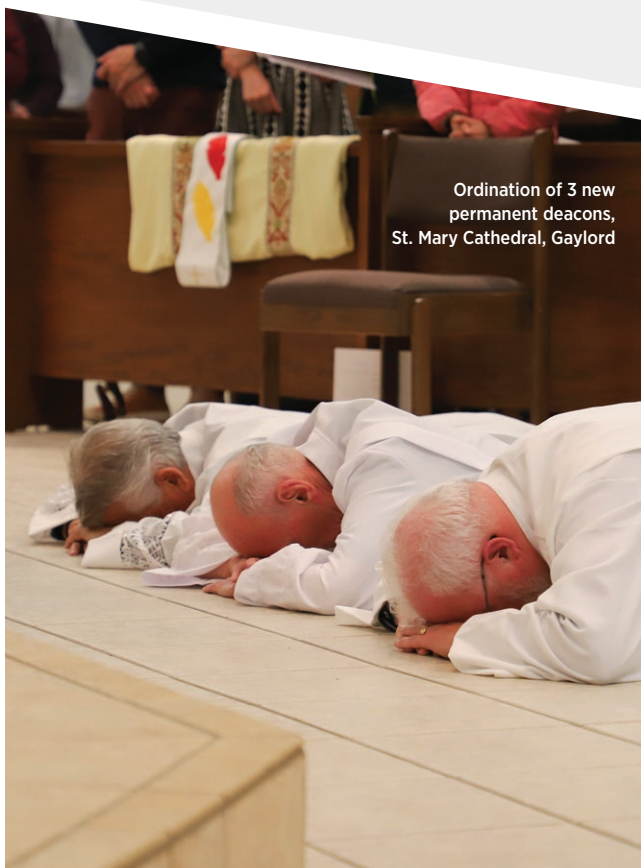


# Responding to God's Invitation

The call to a vocation is an invitation from the Lord — an invitation to trust, to listen and to respond with an open heart.

The Office of Vocations walks closely with men as they discern God's will for their lives, offering spiritual guidance, support and opportunities for fraternity. Seminary remains a vital place for deep discernment. In addition to seminary visits, the vocations team organizes various discernment gatherings to give men the chance to grow in prayer, community and clarity of purpose.

The diaconate leaders likewise support men through their five- to six-year journey of formation and provide ongoing spiritual enrichment for those already ordained. As of this year, the Diocese of Gaylord is blessed with 31 active permanent deacons and 8 men in formation.



Ordination of 3 new permanent deacons, St. Mary Cathedral, Gaylord



Diocese of Gaylord's seminarians, Spring 2024



Opening procession, Go to Bat for Vocations softball game

## HIGHLIGHTS:

- In spring 2024, the diocese ordained 3 permanent deacons into ministry — ready to serve Christ and his Church with humility and love at 12 clustered parishes within the diocese.
- Provided support and education to five seminarians who were actively in priestly formation in the 2023-2024 year, along with a sixth seminarian who was starting in fall '24.
- Visited 17 Catholic schools to help more than 3,100 students discern their calling from God.
- Hosted two seminary visits to help the men in early discernment stages.
- Held a variety of events to promote vocations, including *Go to Bat for Vocations* softball game, *Quo Vadis* summer camp and the *St. Andrew Luncheon*.



Livestreamed bilingual Masses, Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel, Traverse City



## Caring for God's Children

### SUPPORTING OUR APOSTOLATES

In recognizing the Church's call to honor the dignity of every culture, the Diocese of Gaylord continues to accompany and serve the Latino and Native American communities through two dedicated apostolates.

This year, the Hispanic Ministry expanded its evangelizing outreach by launching a Facebook page for Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel. Through the regular livestreaming of bilingual holy Masses, the ministry is now bringing the eucharistic celebration to Spanish-speaking faithful across the diocese, strengthening their connection to the Church and fostering deeper communion with Christ.

As part of the Native American Ministry, the diocese published *The Students of Holy Childhood School – Harbor Springs, Michigan, 1885-1988* — a 340-page tribute to the children who attended Holy Childhood of Jesus School and its predecessor, St. Peter School. In an act of remembrance, copies of the book were gifted to all seven Native American tribes of Northern Michigan, honoring the memory of these students and acknowledging their stories in a way that invites both healing and respect for cultural traditions.

Presentation of *The Students of Holy Childhood of Jesus School* book to Bruce Hamlin, chairman of the Burt Lake Band of Ottawa and Chippewa



## HELPING CATHOLIC HUMAN SERVICES EXPAND ACCESSIBILITY

Catholic Human Services (CHS) brings hope and healing to thousands in the Diocese of Gaylord by offering compassionate social, emotional and spiritual support during life's most difficult moments.

With the generous support of the Catholic Services Appeal (CSA), CHS extends its outreach to every corner of Northern Michigan — especially to rural and underserved communities. CSA funding supports adoption services, helps with essential administrative needs, and most importantly, ensures that counseling is accessible to all, regardless of financial circumstances. In 2024 alone, CSA contributions made nearly 700 clinical services possible for individuals and families in need.

Answering Pope Francis' call to accompany those on the margins, CHS offers a wide range of vital services — including counseling, substance abuse treatment, prevention education, adoption, youth mentoring and senior outreach — touching thousands of lives each year with Christ's love and care.

Catholic Human Services support both youths and adults



Getty Images/miodrag Ignjatovic



Special collections for missions around the world

## NATIONAL/SPECIAL COLLECTION STATISTICS

In a struggling world, our diocese helps support those in need locally and internationally. Through special collections held throughout the year, we extend Christ's compassion to those in need. While most national collections are supported through the Catholic Services Appeal (CSA), the collections listed below were taken up independently from CSA.

- CRS Rice Bowl • **\$32,299**
- Catholic Relief Services • **\$80,688**
- World Mission Sunday • **\$101,886**
- Retirement Fund for the Religious • **\$166,743**
- Aid to Ukraine • **\$17,404**



# Celebrating Christ in the Eucharist

In 2021, the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops launched the National Eucharistic Revival movement, a grass-roots response to be united once again around the source and summit of our faith in the celebration of the Eucharist. This movement culminated in 2024 with the first National Eucharistic Congress in nearly 100 years in Indianapolis.

Throughout our diocese at our local parishes, the faith-filled people also gathered in praise, worship and fellowship to celebrate our Eucharistic Lord.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

- 17 parishes offered eucharistic-revival-related activities to inspire a deeper faith and understanding of our Church's belief in the real presence.
- 12 full-ride scholarships to the National Eucharistic Congress were awarded, thanks to a grant from Catholic Home Missions. Two scholarship recipients were chosen from each vicariate to attend the Congress and share what they experienced as eucharistic missionaries in their parishes.
- Each vicariate hosted an Adoration and Witness event where Bishop Walsh presided over a Holy Hour and Congress participants shared their personal witness stories from the National Eucharistic Congress.

Father Mike Schmitz,  
presenter, National  
Eucharistic Congress 2024



An explosion of joy and gratitude  
during praise and worship,  
National Eucharistic Congress





“The sheer volume of Catholics who were in love with the Eucharistic Jesus and hungry to grow in their commitment was overwhelming. There was a unity, joy and gift of giving from all the pilgrims. We all came together for one reason: to honor, bless and praise Jesus in the Eucharist.”

**Jean Rooyakker, parishioner of St. Mary Cathedral, Gaylord**



More than 200 bishops and cardinals concelebrated the opening Mass, National Eucharistic Congress 2024

Bishop Cozzens and 60,000 faithful filled with awe and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, National Eucharistic Congress



Pilgrims from diocese, National Eucharistic Congress 2024 pilgrimage

“The homily of Cardinal Luis Tagle truly resonated with me. The gift of Jesus’ presence in the Eucharist and his love for us will be our gift to people. We are called to GO and share Jesus’ tender love with the poor, the homeless, the weary, the hungry, the suffering, the confused and the weak. We are called to share the gift of forgiveness and peace with those who are divided.”

**Catherine Taylor, St. Helen Parish, St. Helen**



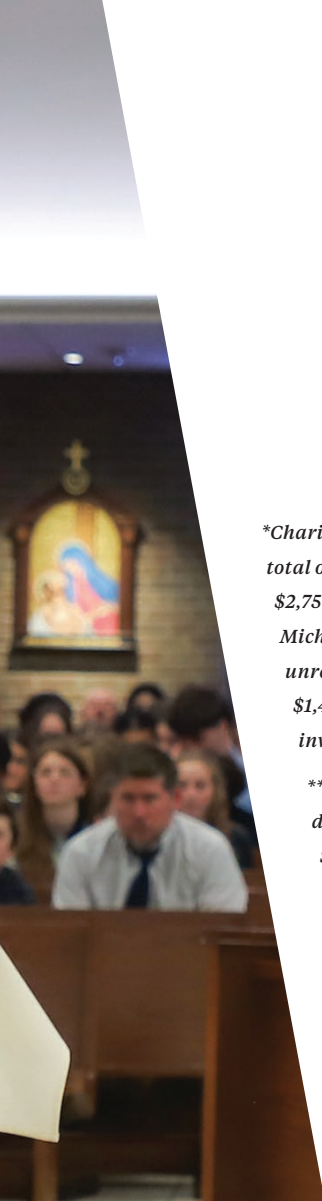


Bishop Walsh blows the Holy Spirit into the Chrism oils, Chrism Mass, St. Mary Cathedral, Gaylord

## Financial Breakdown

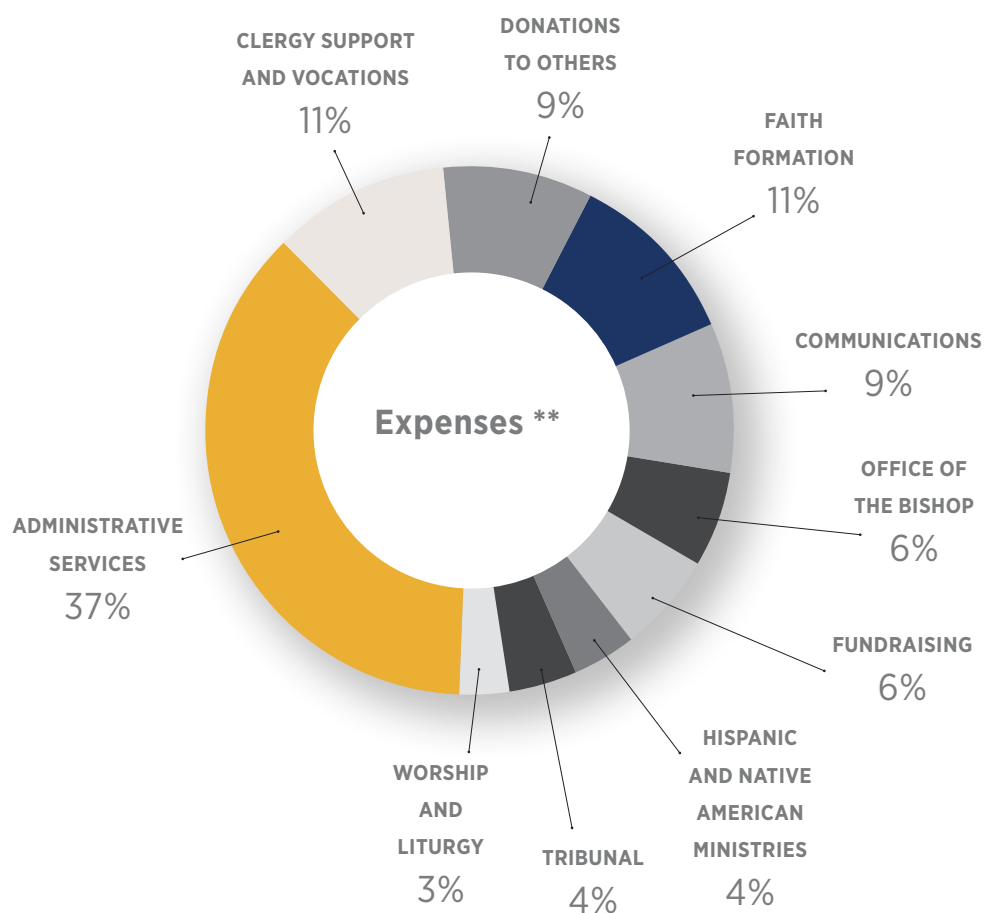
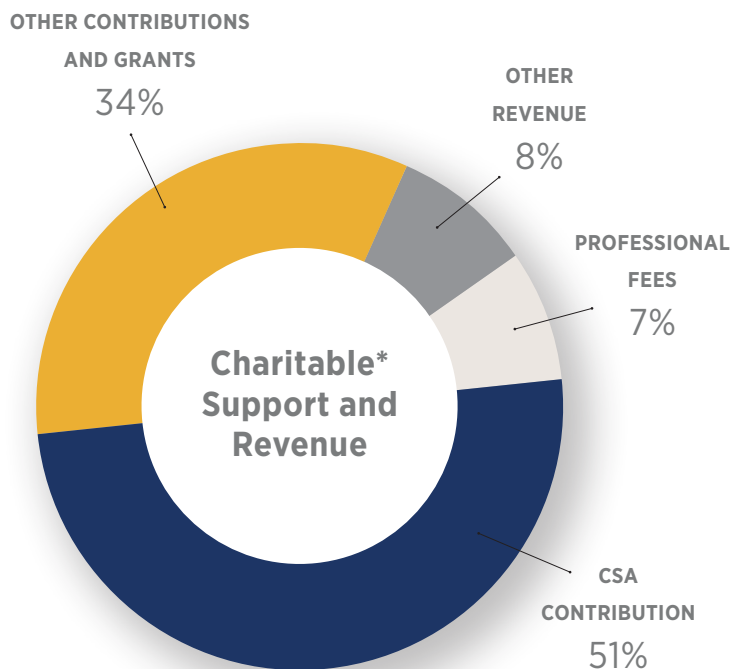
The financial breakdown is a summary of the Diocese of Gaylord's audited statement, compiled annually by Dennis Gartland & Niergath, a public accounting firm. The full report is available on the diocesan website. The diocese strives to be an excellent steward of your gifts and to maintain the highest levels of fiscal responsibility.





*\*Charitable support and revenue total of \$12,820,151 includes \$2,758,900 in excess reserves from Michigan Catholic Conference, unrealized gain investments of \$1,472,872 and a net gain on investments of \$664,600.*

*\*\*Total expenses include depreciation of \$260,798 and \$2 million invested in the Northern Michigan Catholic Foundation.*





Thank You!

CSA donor gratitude event, Mackinaw City



The late Dorothy and Alan Caron, who made a \$1.49 million legacy gift to vocations



## Stewarding Gifts to Advance the Mission

The Office of Development advances the mission of the Church by inspiring generosity and faithful stewardship. Through fundraising, donor engagement and grant solicitations, the office helps sustain Catholic education, clergy formation, diocesan ministries and charitable outreach — ensuring the needs of our faith community are met across the Diocese of Gaylord.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- Secured 16 grants totaling \$202,000 to support diocesan ministries.
- Raised \$476,000 for the Seminarian Education Fund, securing 2,556 gifts from generous parishioners and clergy.
- Added a \$1.49 million legacy gift from the late Dorothy and Alan Caron estate to the Seminarian Education Fund; this fund provides perpetual support for diocesan seminarians' education expenses.
- More than 400 faithful gathered at Turtle Creek Stadium in Traverse City for the first annual *Go to Bat for Vocations* event — a spirited softball game between student athletes and the clergy. The event raised \$6,100 to promote vocations and help young men discern God's call to the priesthood.
- Led the 2023-2024 Catholic Services Appeal, exceeding the goal by over \$500,000, with surplus funds returned to parishes to further local mission and ministry.

# CSA Frequently Asked Questions

## WHY DOES THE DIOCESE OF GAYLORD CONDUCT THE ANNUAL CATHOLIC SERVICES APPEAL (CSA)?

The annual Catholic Services Appeal is our opportunity to extend our support beyond our parishes and contribute to the mission of the Church across Northern Michigan. The CSA helps to fund approximately 68 percent of the diocese's annual operating budget which is used to support vital programs and ministries as well as the pastoral vision of the bishop.

## WHY DO I NEED TO GIVE TO THE CSA?

Unlike individual parishes, the diocese does not receive a weekly offertory to sustain its mission. The CSA provides essential funding for ministries, programs and services that strengthen parish life but are often beyond a parish's capacity to administer or finance alone — such as the offices of Catholic Schools, Faith Formation, Vocations, Communications, Development, Worship and Liturgy, Tribunal, Finance and Human Resources. The CSA is a powerful reminder that we are united as one Catholic family.

## WHAT IMPACT DOES MY GIFT HAVE?

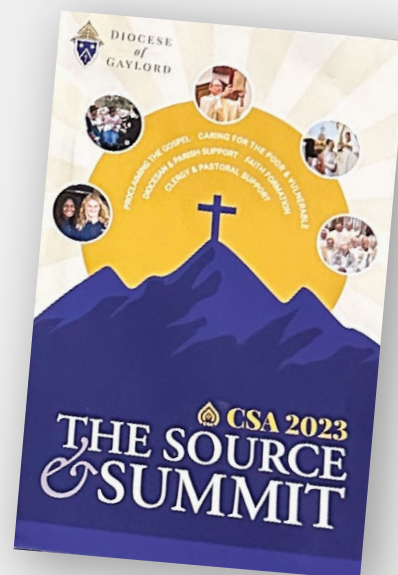
Your gift to the annual CSA impacts the lives of nearly 44,000 Catholics who reside in the northernmost 21 counties of the Lower Peninsula, which makes up the boundary of our diocese. Gifts to the CSA help fulfill our Catholic mission by allowing us to provide diocesan and parish support, clergy and pastoral support, proclaim the Gospel, provide faith formation and care for the poor and vulnerable. Without your generous support, none of this would be possible.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF MY PARISH RAISES MORE THAN ITS GOAL?

100 percent of funds raised above and beyond a parish's goal are returned to the parish and can be used wherever it is needed most.

## I ALREADY GIVE TO MY PARISH, DO I NEED TO GIVE TO CSA, TOO?

The Catholic Services Appeal enables the diocese to carry out its ministry while strengthening parishes in theirs. Through the CSA, the diocese provides charitable outreach, educational programs and evangelization efforts — such as *Faith* Magazine and the televised Mass—that individual parishes could not financially support alone. Parishes also benefit from access to diocesan resources and skilled professional staff, helping them thrive in their mission.



## CSA 2023-24 By the Numbers

**\$3,598,051**

Goal

**\$4,127,904**

Raised

**\$518,000**

Refunds to Parishes

**13,195**

Gifts Made

**\$308**

Average Gift