

Impact Report

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Dear Faithful in the Diocese of Gaylord,

How shall we measure our Jubilee Year 2025 graces?
Let me count the ways...

We have been blessed in the Diocese of Gaylord with love beyond all telling. This Impact Report is thorough but can only tell part of the story.

As the “One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church,” we move through history as Pilgrims of Hope toward our destiny: heaven. What we do on earth matters. God demands an account of our discipleship.

Let us pray, as Mother St. Teresa of Calcutta once said, “God does not require that we be *successful*, *only* that we be *faithful*.”

This Jubilee Year 2025 began with Pope Francis and will conclude with Pope Leo. Jesus built his Church on the rock of Peter’s faith, and so we journey onward.

Two diocesan pilgrimages (Our Lady of Champion, Wisconsin, and Rome, Italy); nine jubilee celebrations with Mass and fellowship; six vicariate pastoral planning meetings; numerous parish- and school-level observations; and innumerable events posted on social media from around the world will make this a truly memorable year of grace.

Let me take this opportunity to say, “Thank You.”

Well into my third year as bishop of this wonderful diocese, I have come to know well the many ways the Church impacts lives. Our commitment to the Gospel ensures the four pillars of Word, Worship, Service and Community will continue to flourish in our 21 counties.

From shore to shore, with all the beautiful farmland and towns in between, it is people like you, our faithful parishioners, who will continue to be the salt, light and leaven in our world. Let us go and make more disciples for the Lord!

In Christ our Life!



Most Reverend Jeffrey J. Walsh
Bishop of Gaylord



Bishop Walsh, Amelia Martin, Ann-Marie and Burr Awrey carry a statue of Mary on the Walk to Mary Pilgrimage in May.



Priests and Bishop Walsh gather for the annual fall convocation.



Father Patrick Maher, Deacon Curtis Chambers, Bishop Walsh, Father Henry Sands and Father Michael Carson celebrate Mass at the 2024 Native American Conference.



Seminarian Andrew Feister leads prayer at the annual seminarian gathering.



Diocese by the Numbers

73
Parishes

1
Chapels

7
Priests providing temp coverage

8
Seminarians

2
Shrines

32
Active diocesan priests

31
Permanent deacons

6
Directors of Parish Life

68
Cemeteries

12
Extern Priests

1
Brothers

1,291
Employees throughout the diocese

16
Schools

25
Retired priests

25
Religious sisters

45
Diocesan FTEs

The Church is Alive in Our Parishes

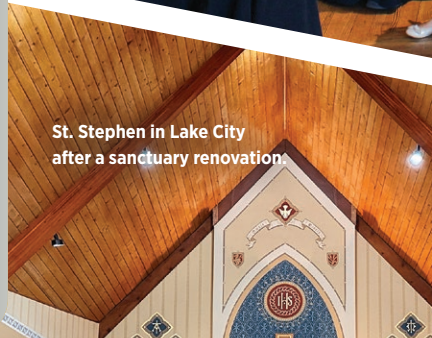
The Holy Eucharist is the source and summit of our Catholic faith. It both energizes our missionary zeal and is the aim of our every evangelistic effort. At our parishes, the faithful are invited to gather for worship and are called to “go forth” to spread the Gospel and serve as Jesus’ hands and feet in their communities. The Diocese of Gaylord seeks to support the good work of our parishes through presence, formation and counsel.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Hosted an Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) Formation Day to help parishes grow their catechumenal ministries.
- Offered 12 diocesan extraordinary minister of holy Communion certifications to prepare lay people for this privileged ministry.
- Invited parish and school leaders to a Catechist Day to equip them with tools to effectively share the deposit of faith with our children.
- Approved 14 proposals to improve parish worship spaces.



Fr. Roman and the children honor our Blessed Mother with a May Crowning at Holy Childhood of Jesus, Harbor Springs



St. Stephen in Lake City after a sanctuary renovation



Before renovation



"Assistance from our diocesan staff was critical for our successful 2025 Sanctuary Renovation Project at St. Stephen in Lake City. The diocese help included offering contractor suggestions, writing General Conditions Agreements, guidance from the liturgical and presbyteral councils and preparations for Bishop Walsh's Mass and consecration of our new altar. Without the professional services of our diocesan staff, the project would not have gone as smoothly as it did. I offer my huge thank you to all diocesan staff, for their ongoing support."

Jeanne Johnson, Business Manager, St. Stephen-Lake City and St. Theresa-Manton

Parishes by the Numbers*



St. Francis, Lewiston, opened its doors during the ice storm to provide shelter and food for the community.



First Communion at Christ the King, Acme



Father Siler leads the Eucharistic Procession before St. Augustine parish festival in Hillman.



Father Jarvis leads parishioners during Adoration at Sacred Heart in Elk Rapids.



Father Lingaur and students from St. Francis High School in Traverse City march for life in Washington, D.C.



Parishioners from Our Lady of the Lake in Prudenville on pilgrimage to the the tomb of Blessed Solanus Casey in Detroit.

459

Baptisms

495

First Communion

513

Confirmations

177

Marriages

847

Adoration hours, average/week

149

Confession hours, average/week

298

Masses, average/week

*data reported below from 2024 calendar year

Our Schools: Forming Faithful Leaders

Across the diocese, in each of our 16 Catholic schools, a powerful theme resonates: *Our students are prepared to lead*. Whether they attend one of our three Catholic high schools or transition into local public schools, the results speak for themselves.

In communities where our schools feed into public districts, Catholic school alumni consistently stand out — earning titles like valedictorian and salutatorian and achieving

top scores on ACT and SAT exams. Ask local public-school educators, and they'll tell you: Students from [Insert School Name] Catholic School are polite, respectful, diligent and possess strong study skills and a remarkable work ethic.

Those who continue their education in our Catholic high schools are equally well-equipped to lead — academically, spiritually and socially — no matter where life takes them.



Preschoolers learn the rosary, St. Mary School, Lake Leelanau

I went from having teachers to having mentors. With the small class sizes, I was not only known but seen. Teachers were able to recognize my strengths and identify my weaknesses. The attention to detail of Catholic schools has built a strong academic foundation I will forever be grateful for.

Avery, 11th grade, former St. Francis Xavier student, now a junior at Harbor Springs High School



Running for the end zone, St. Mary Cathedral School, Gaylord

Graduates' After-School Plans

107
college/university

1
seminary/religious life

6
Military

3
entering the workforce

11
trade school/
apprenticeship program

Schools

by the Numbers*

16 Schools
4 Religious sisters teaching
12:1 Average student/teacher ratio

242 Lay teachers
2,980 Student enrollment (preK-12)

\$4,318.91
 Average tuition

\$8,456.82
 Average cost to educate student

* based on 2024-25 school year



Participating in Mass at St. Mary School, Charlevoix



Praying for Pope Francis' peaceful repose, St. Ann School, Cadillac



Christmas play, Bishop Baraga School, Cheboygan



5th grade camp, St. Joseph School, West Branch



Robotics team, All Saints Catholic School, Alpena



Handing out donuts, St. Francis High School, Traverse City

Choosing All Saints has been one of the best decisions we've made for our children. My children are challenged academically while also being guided to grow in compassion, responsibility and respect...my kids aren't just learning facts — they're learning who they are in Christ. The teachers care about their souls as much as their grades, and that makes all the difference...The joy and confidence I see in my children each day are proof that Catholic education is worth every sacrifice.



Dr. Jeffrey Costain, All Saints Catholic School parent

Leading in Faith, Serving with Love

Driven by a deep love for Christ and a commitment to being a faithful steward, Bishop Walsh helps ensure that diocesan resources are used wisely to strengthen our mission and serve the Diocese of Gaylord. His leadership is marked by humility, pastoral care and a collaborative spirit as he works alongside both clergy and lay persons. Each year, he travels across our wide-reaching diocese — visiting parishes and schools, celebrating Mass, teaching the faith and proclaiming the Gospel — and brings a visible and unifying presence to the faithful throughout our diocese.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Hosted the 2024 Baraga Days in Gaylord, attracting hundreds of people to learn more about Bishop Baraga’s legacy and pray for his canonization.
- Established initial outreach programs to unite people from all walks of life, including our farming communities, Native Americans and those with disabilities and their caregivers. Celebrated two new Masses — the Farm Mass and Awareness Mass — which will become annual events.
- Organized six synodal sessions for pastoral planning, sharing information and gaining insights from the pastors, finance and pastoral councils at every parish in the diocese. The information shared will help create the strategic plan that will position the diocese to adapt to the communities’ demographic shifts, to maximize resource utilization to meet sacramental needs and to carry out the mission of Christ in 2026 and beyond.



Bishop’s Journeys

31,055

Miles driven

381

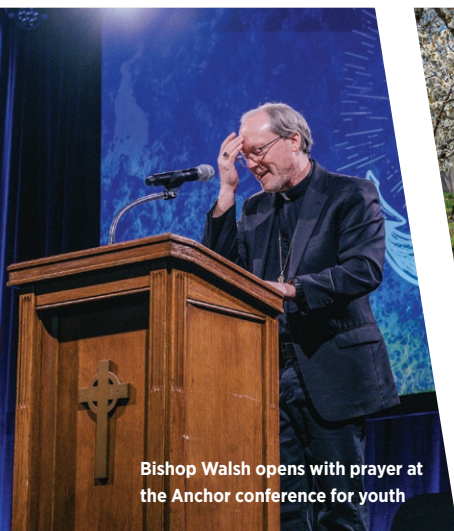
Meetings

120

Masses, retreats, etc.

85

Community/school events



Bishop Walsh opens with prayer at the Anchor conference for youth



Blessing of the blossoms at St. Joseph, Mapleton



Monsignor Anton Jamnik (Auxiliary Bishop of Ljubljana, Slovenia), Bishop John Doerfler of the Diocese of Marquette and Bishop Walsh at the 2024 Baraga Days, hosted by the Diocese of Gaylord



“*Faith* magazine opens the doors to our beautiful Catholic community. We can see Jesus’ hands and feet in loving action in so many people and charities who are featured in this great magazine.”

Susan Roache, parishioner of Holy Childhood of Jesus, Harbor Springs

Broadcasting the Light of the Gospel

We are called to evangelize, sharing the love, truth and hope of Jesus Christ. Our communications team harnesses the power of digital and print media to broadcast the light of Christ to homes, hearts and communities across the diocese and beyond.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Received over 30,000 likes, comments and shares on our Facebook posts, an increase of 185 percent in engagement with posts compared to the previous year.
- An average of 3,344 faithful pray daily with Bishop Walsh via his Daily Prayers & Petitions — a 375 percent increase to the prior year.
- Delivered the weekly e-newsletter, *Up North Catholic*, *News Along Michigan’s 45th Parallel*, to 9,281 email recipients — subscribers increased nearly 10 percent over last year.
- 23,018 households received the free bimonthly *Faith* magazine, an increase in subscribers of nearly 5 percent compared to the prior year.
- 2,640 households, on average, watched the televised Sunday Mass each week, with an additional 266, on average, watching via livestream.



Bringing Disciples Together

Rooted in our quest to form disciples and evangelize, our Faith Formation focuses on uniting people from all walks of life in a shared journey of faith, learning and community.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- The Offices of Faith Formation and Catholic Schools joined efforts to offer a two-day Catechist Foundations program for Catholic school staff and parish faith formation leaders and catechists; 30 attended, representing 16 parishes/parish clusters
- All ages of the faithful came together with fellow Gaylord residents to stand up and support life at all stages during a Respect Life Rally through downtown Gaylord to City Hall in January.
- Bishop Walsh presided at the Diocesan Wedding Anniversary Mass, celebrating with 40+ couples who were celebrating 10, 25, 50, 55 or 60+ years of matrimony.



2nd Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass, St. Mary Cathedral, Gaylord



Diocese of Gaylord middle schoolers at Anchor Conference, Grand Rapids

EMPOWERING YOUNG CATHOLICS

Our Youth Ministry seeks to empower young Catholics to deepen their faith, embrace their identity in Christ and live as bold witnesses to the Gospel.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- At the To Encounter Christ Retreat (TEC), 10 high school upperclassmen/college students and 22 team members from across the diocese came together for a weekend of faith, focusing on the paschal mystery of Jesus through Mass, confession, prayer and fellowship.
- All the dioceses in Michigan partnered to offer the Michigan Young Adult Hiking and Rafting Pilgrimage within the beautiful nature of our diocese. The Diocese of Gaylord had five young adults attend.
- In March, 39 youth and their chaperones from our diocese joined together with the dioceses from Michigan's lower peninsula to host Anchor, a middle schoolers conference in Grand Rapids. The event helped engage hundreds of youth with their Catholic faith through speakers, interactive sessions, music, confession and prayer.



To Encounter Christ (TEC) retreat for young adults, Camp Daggett, Walloon Lake



WELCOMING ALL INTO CHRIST'S EMBRACE

Embracing the dignity of every person made in the image of God, we joyfully welcome those with disabilities into the heart of the Church, where all are called to share in Christ's love and grace.

HIGHLIGHT:

- The diocese held the first Awareness Mass, celebrating persons with special needs and their caregivers. Over 100 people came from across the diocese to celebrate the gifts those with special needs can share with the Catholic Church.



"I like to be a part of Mass. It makes me feel special and I like to be included."

Awareness Mass Altar Server Christine Cole



First annual Mass of Awareness, St. Mary Cathedral, Gaylord

ACCOMPANYING OUR FARMING FAMILIES

Our diocese walks alongside our farming families, honoring their labor, faith and vital role in sustaining our community.

HIGHLIGHT:

- Inaugural Farm Mass was held at the Godfrey Family Farm in Hillman, where over 200 faithful from across the diocese gave thanks to God for all of his blessings followed by a delicious lunch and fellowship.



Deacon Scott Landane, Bishop Walsh and Father James Siler at the inaugural Farm Mass, Godfrey Family Farm, Hillman



"The Catholic Church is a big part of our life, and so is farming. It brings together two of the biggest things in our life, and it's a good time to get to meet some other farmers and friends. Any time you spend time in prayer worshiping God, it benefits everyone."

Farm Mass Attendee Carey Bragg



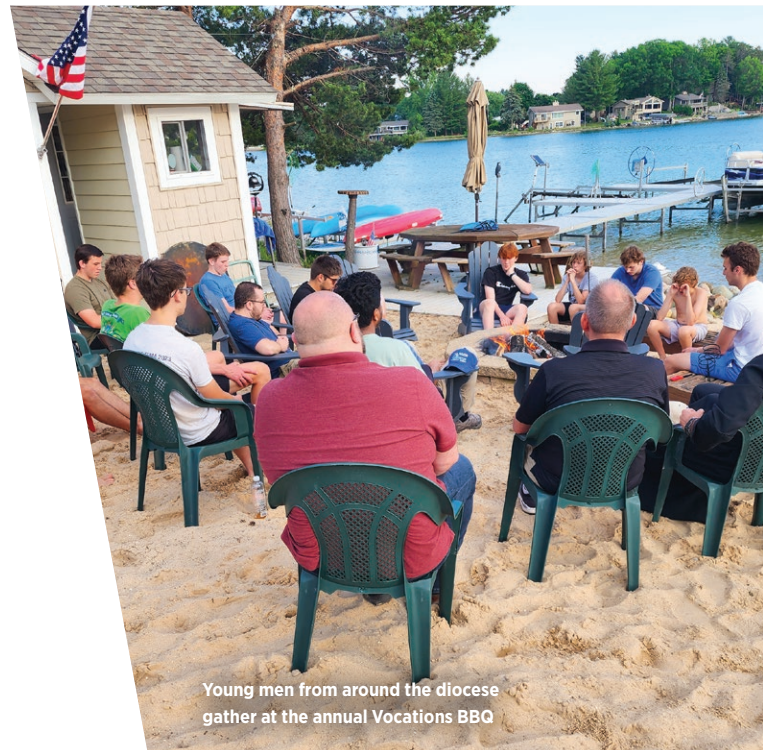
The Go to Bat for Vocations softball game helped raise funds for vocations



Seeking Shepherds for God's People

The Office of Vocations walks with men and women as they grow closer to our Lord and discern a possible call to the priesthood, consecrated life or religious life. School and seminary visits, along with special events throughout the year, aid in the discernment process and help create a culture of vocations in the diocese.

As the Office of Vocations continues to grow, we implore the lay faithful to continue to pray and beg the Lord for holy priests, religious and consecrated women to serve the diocese and the Catholic Church. The Lord will not be outdone in generosity.



Young men from around the diocese gather at the annual Vocations BBO

HIGHLIGHTS OF WOMEN'S VOCATIONS:

- Hosted monthly formation meetings for two women in the diocesan Consecrated Virginity program.
- Provided guidance to several women who are discerning religious life or consecrated life.
- Expanded content for the Consecrated Virginity webpages.
- Added interactive discernment tools for women on our website.



Clergy and religious gather before "hitting it out of the park" at Go to Bat for Vocations



Enjoying God's beauty and fellowship at the annual seminarian gatherings



HIGHLIGHTS OF MEN'S VOCATIONS:

- Visited nine diocesan Catholic schools and held six vocation events to increase awareness of priestly vocations and help in the discernment process.
- Partnered with Vianney Vocations in implementing their effective strategic plan called Vocation Pathway to increase seminarian candidates.
- Accepted two new seminarians whose formation began in the 2025-2026 school year.
- Hosted the second annual Go to Bat for Vocations softball game, raising nearly \$6,500 for vocation programs.
- Launched a new vocations website (gaylordvocations.org) with interactive content to help men discern.

Honoring Cultures, Healing Hearts and Proclaiming Christ

Guided by our mission of evangelization, our special apostolates — Hispanic Ministry, Native American Ministry and Deliverance Ministry — seek to share God’s love while honoring the dignity of every culture and walk of life.



New interpretation devices allow Hispanics not fluent in English to attend and participate in Mass and special liturgies

New video equipment at Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel in Traverse City enables livestreaming of the bilingual Mass

HISPANIC MINISTRY

The Hispanic Ministry provides spiritual outreach, emotional support and advocacy for many Spanish-speaking faithful around the diocese. During a year of strengthening and restructuring to be a missionary Church, the Hispanic Ministry added many new ways to reach and serve Spanish speakers around the diocese, despite challenges such as distance, language and the lack of priests who can preside at celebrations in Spanish.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Every Sunday, a bilingual (Spanish and English) Mass is celebrated at noon at Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel in Traverse City.
- The updated Guadalupe Chapel Google listing — used by more than 10,000 people in the last year — attracted Hispanic visitors from Central and South America, as well as pilgrims who come to pray before the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, a replica of the original image from Mexico is in the chapel.
- New equipment, thanks to a donor, was installed for livestreaming Spanish Mass on social media, allowing Hispanics throughout the entire diocese to participate in the weekly liturgy.
- Sixty interpretation devices were purchased to help Hispanics who are not fluent in English to experience diocesan events and liturgies in their own language.
- Guadalupe Chapel’s catechetical formation plan was restructured for bilingual catechumens to prepare for sacraments, including five candidates for baptism, three for confirmations and first Communion, two couples for marriage and two 15-year-old girls for the special celebration of *quinceañera*.

NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRY

The Native American Apostolate brings the love and mercy of Christ to Native American communities while growing in mutual love and respect for the rich indigenous traditions and culture.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Hosted the fourth Native American Conference, *Walking the Red Road: Recognizing Ourselves as Individuals and Part of the Whole*, providing an opportunity for 92 Native Americans and guests to dialogue with the Church and journey together to God on the path of healing, understanding and prayer.
- Organized a special celebration for the feast of St. Kateri Tekakwitha on July 14 at St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish in Peshawbestown with an outdoor Mass, incorporating various Native American traditions such as sage smudging, blessings of the four directions and drumming.



Incorporating Native American traditions at Mass celebrating St. Kateri Tekakwitha



Father James Siler and Laura Cherry of the Deliverance Ministry team

DELIVERANCE AND HEALING MINISTRY

Through the generous donation of a benefactor, the Deliverance and Healing Ministry team is provided with the highest level of ongoing deliverance training and education. The generous benefactor also provides all the spiritual, psychological and physical resources needed that provide ongoing optimal liberation and healing to the suffering and afflicted.

The healing process provided requires a firm commitment to follow Christ. Freedom does not typically come all at once but comes in stages. Healing from past wounds occurs, as well as overcoming tendencies toward sinful behaviors and unhealthy thinking patterns that are often influenced by the demonic.

Rooted in the Church's teaching, the ministry is focused on healing wounds of the body, mind and spirit, liberation and deliverance from spiritual bondage through prayer, and the return to a sacramental state of grace.

Central to these ministries is the understanding that God is the true source of healing and liberation, while the role of the mandated exorcist, prayer team and board-certified psychologist are to support the process with discernment and loving care.

Sustaining Mission Through Stewardship

In addition to leading the Catholic Services Appeal (CSA), the Development Office assists parishes with establishing endowments, securing grants, processing major gifts, overseeing special collections and creating fundraising campaigns — all to advance the mission of the Church while being faithful stewards of God’s gifts.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Secured over \$160,000 in grants for our parishes, schools and diocesan work.
- Nominated Christina Kihn for the Catholic Extension Society’s Lumen Christi Award for her work at the Center for Charity, a mission of All Saints Parish in Alpena; Christina was selected as a finalist and was awarded \$15,000 to support her work at the Center for Charity.
- Assisted St. Ann in Frankfort in establishing a \$750,000 endowment.
- Created a natural disaster relief fund, raising more than \$80,000 after the local ice storm to help purchase large generators for five affected parishes who requested assistance.



Karl Knauf, a senior companion volunteer through Catholic Human Services, went fishing with a resident from Meadowbrook Medical Care Facility in Bellaire.



Special collections help various missions throughout the world.





Rosalie Ehl, a senior companion volunteer through Catholic Human Services, enjoys activities and lunch with her client Patricia Croy, at the Kalkaska Commission on Aging.



Events like Go to Bat for Vocations help our Development team raise funds for vocations.



Down branches at Holy Cross, Cross Village, after the spring ice storm

AIDING CATHOLIC HUMAN SERVICES FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Catholic Human Services (CHS), supported in part by the annual Catholic Services Appeal (CSA) campaign, strives to uplift people during challenging times, seeking to walk with them on their journey to a better tomorrow regardless of faith, income, race or ethnicity. Providing vital services to families in all 21 counties of the diocese, CHS brings hope to individuals, families and communities through programs like drug and alcohol recovery, counseling, adoption services, family support and senior services.

SUPPORTING SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

In a world facing many challenges, our diocese holds special collections that continue to bring hope and support to those in need — both locally and around the world. Throughout the year, we hold special collections that allow us to respond with the love of Christ to those experiencing hardship. While many national efforts are funded through the Catholic Services Appeal (CSA), the collections listed below are gathered separately from CSA.

- CRS Rice Bowl: \$28,550
- Catholic Relief Services: \$55,939
- World Mission Sunday: \$114,996
- Retirement Fund for the Religious: \$178,636
- Maiduguri Flood Relief: \$11,472

Oct. 2025: Elevation of the Blessed Sacrament at the Jubilee Mass, Holy Cross, Cross Village



Deb and Michael Haydell, of East Jordan, who attended every Jubilee event

Jubilee Year: A Holy Year of Hope and Pilgrimage

The 2025 Jubilee “Year of Hope” began in Rome on the vigil of the Lord’s Nativity on Dec. 24, 2024, with the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica, and in our diocese on the Vigil of the Epiphany on Jan. 4, 2025. It will conclude in our diocese on the Vigil of the Epiphany on Jan. 3, 2026, and in Rome on the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord, Jan. 6, 2026, with the closing of the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica.

Pope Francis proclaimed this jubilee would be “marked by the hope that does not fade, our hope in God.” Coming from the Hebrew word *yobel*, which refers to the ram’s horn used to announce a jubilee in the Old Testament, this past year has provided an opportunity of celebration as well as a year of conversion and the forgiveness of sins.



Jan. 2025: Opening Mass for the Jubilee Year, St. Mary Cathedral, Gaylord



Mar. 2025: Stations of the Cross and Mass, Divine Mercy, Manistee



Apr. 2025: Fellowship after Jubilee Mass, St. Mary, Lake Leelanau

During the *Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy*, we had the opportunity to pray the Angelus with Pope Francis in St. Peter's Square in January 2016. This experience encouraged us to participate in the next jubilee. In April 2024, we were going through some family life-changing events. So, in need of a distraction, when Pope Francis announced this would be the *Pilgrims of Hope Jubilee Year*, we began planning to participate in the diocese's jubilee events. Attending these special liturgies gave us an opportunity to travel and attend Mass at other Catholic churches. The Jubilee Year celebrations have also given us the chance to meet with other pilgrims, share our journeys of hope and pray together. While planning, attending and performing the works required for an indulgence, there is a feeling of peace and, yes, even accomplishment once you finish. These feelings of peace and accomplishment have been helpful to us in our faith to look to the future with hope.

Deb and Michael Haydell, of East Jordan, parishioners of St. Luke the Evangelist in Bellaire



DIOCESAN JUBILEE YEAR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Nine special jubilee liturgies were celebrated throughout the year at eight parishes in the diocese.
- Two pilgrimages were organized to holy sites. Nearly 100 pilgrims trekked to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in Wisconsin with Bishop Walsh in May. More than 80 faithful are flying to Rome and Assisi, Italy, with Fathers Matthew Wigton and Matthew Furgiuele in November.
- Three local pilgrimage sites were designated within the diocese, attracting thousands of people: St. Mary, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral, Gaylord; Cross in the Woods Catholic Shrine, Indian River; Our Lady of the Woods Shrine, Mio.



Sept. 2025: Mass celebrating the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, Cross in the Woods Catholic Shrine, Indian River



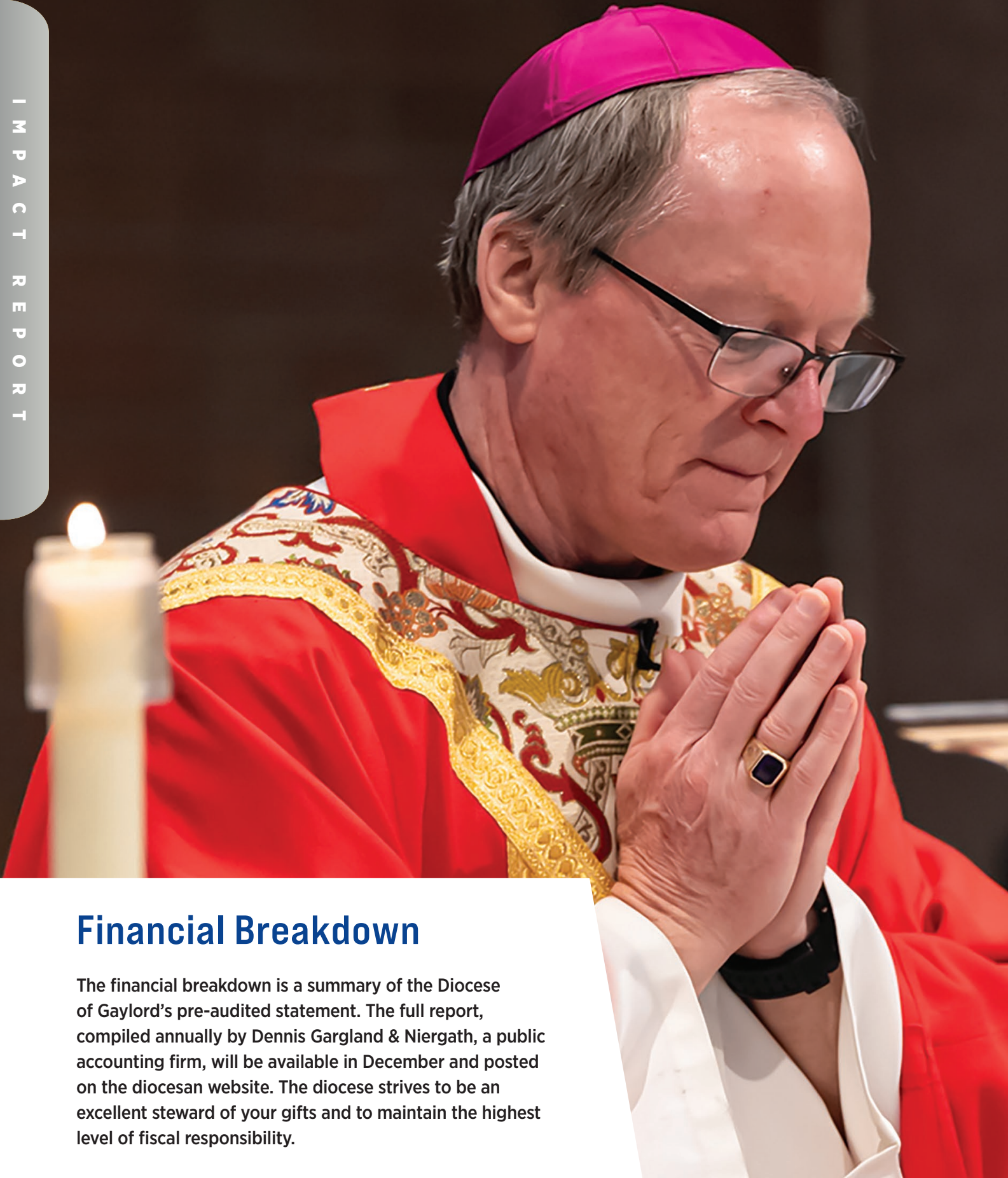
June 2025: Deacons Brent Hemker and Thomas Anderson, Fathers Basil Lek and Gerald Okoli celebrate Votive Mass of the Sacred Heart, Sacred Heart, Oscoda



July 2025: Jubilee Mass, St. Augustine, Hillman



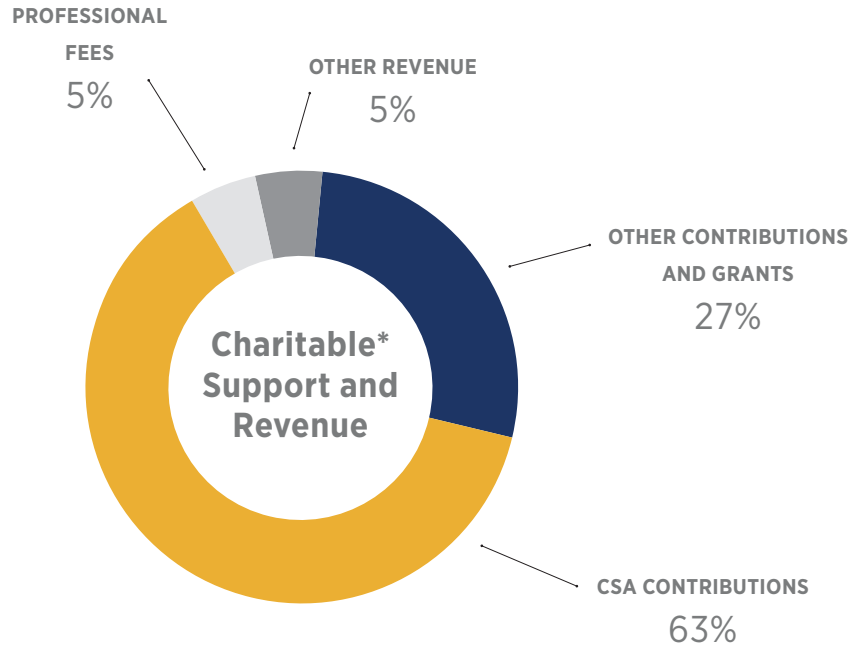
Aug. 2025: Parishioners listen to Bishop Walsh's homily, celebrating the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary, Our Lady of the Woods Shrine, Mio



Financial Breakdown

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

***Charitable support and revenue:**
 The percentages noted exclude interest and dividend income net of fees \$740,565; gain on investments \$490,655; and unrealized gain on investments 1,755,753.



****Expenses:**
 The percentages noted exclude contribution to Northern Michigan Catholic Foundation of \$1,989,350 and depreciation expense of \$262,431.

