



BISHOP'S LETTER

A CLEAN HEART CREATE FOR ME, O GOD; GIVE ME BACK THE JOY OF YOUR SALVATION (PSALM 51).

My Beloved Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord! I am grateful to God for your faithfulness as I remember you constantly in my prayers, night and day. St. Paul reminds each one of us to stir into flame the gift of God! For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power, love, and self-control.

Today is my 75th birthday, and according to Canon 401 §1, I wrote a letter to our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, offering my retirement. I have served you, God's holy people, as bishop of the Diocese of Orlando since December 2010, and as auxiliary in Miami since 2005. I pray rejoicing to God for my priestly ministry since the Sacrament of Holy Orders was conferred upon me in 1983, and I ask always for His blessing to lead His people that the bond of heaven flourish upon this earth.

[READ MORE](#)

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ANNUAL FORM

Due **June 1, 2026**: Start scheduling those meetings with your pastors.

CHRISM MASS

Chrism Mass is on March 30, 2026, beginning at 11:00 A.M. at Holy Family Catholic Church. If you plan to attend and vest, please click the link below to register for the Chrism Mass. This registration link will remain active until March 23, 2026.

[Register for Chrism Mass](#)

DEANERIES

The Central Deanery is now comprised of three sections: **Central North, Central, and Central South**. Welcome Deacon Richard Ferris as our New Central Deanery Deacon Lead. We look forward to his collaboration with Father Leo Hodges.

ORDINATIONS-MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Priest Ordination: May 23, 2026. Deacon Dan Bassile and Deacon Sinclair Cushman will be ordained into the Priesthood. This Ordination Mass will take place at St. James Cathedral at 10:00 am

Diaconate Ordination: Nine men will be ordained at the Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe at 10:00 A.M. on June 6, 2026. We will be sending a registration form for you to complete after Easter. Remember your wives are welcome. There should be plenty of seating.



TOPIC SUGGESTIONS

Is there a topic you want more information on for our next newsletter, if so, please email **Jennifer Kuhn**. We will do our best to have your suggestion in our next newsletter.

DISCERNMENT PROCESSING

Discernment Team is hard at work processing. The team will be reviewing around 52 applications in the next weeks. In April, they will decide which couples they want to interview in May. Right after the week of interviews, they will decide who will invited into their Discernment year. Please pray for these couples and the committee.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

ANNUAL DEACON COUPLE RETREATS

March 20-22, 2026: God Needs Storytellers!

Led by Deacon Rick Wagner

God is constantly tapping us on the shoulder, letting us know He is actively engaged in our lives. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, many people do not recognize God's presence.

That is where we come in – God needs storytellers! By virtue of our Baptism, we - all Christians – have an obligation to proclaim the Gospel. “Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

This retreat experience will explore our role as storytellers, answering questions such as:

- What do we mean by storytelling?
- Why is it important – especially now?
- What types of stories should we be telling?
- We must walk the walk and talk the talk.

Retreat includes presentations, small group discussion, and some large group sharing.

Registration for this retreat ends March 13, 2026.

April 17-19, 2026: Spanish Language Retreat

Led by Father Carlos Agudelo

Reverend Carlos A. Agudelo is the pastor of St. Leon Church in Corona, New York, where he also serves as Area Dean and a member of the Presbyteral Council for Pastoral Practice Affairs. Ordained a priest in 1998 in Medellín, Colombia, he has served in the Diocese of Brooklyn since 2010 and was incardinated in 2016. With 27 years of priestly ministry, he exercises comprehensive pastoral and faith leadership for his parish community. Additionally, he has taught for several years in the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program and for one year at the Josephinum Institute.

Registration for this retreat ends April 10, 2026



PARISHES STILL IN NEED OF DEACONS

Several pastors have requested additional deacons be assigned to their parishes. If you feel God may be calling you to one of these parishes, or that God may be letting you know it is time to change parishes, please contact **Deacon Dave** to discuss one or more of these opportunities:

ST. ANDREW PARISH

801 N. Hastings St., Orlando | Needs a bilingual English/Spanish deacon.

Pastor: Father Leo Hodges

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH (WINTER HAVEN)

532 Ave. M, NW, Winter Haven | Needs a bilingual English/Spanish deacon.

Parochial Administrator: Father Glenn Lopez

BLESSED TRINITY PARISH

4545 Anderson Rd., Orlando | Needs a bilingual English/Spanish deacon.

Pastor: Father Phil 'Skip' Negley

ST. PAUL PARISH AND SCHOOL

1330 Sunshine Ave., Leesburg | Needs a deacon (bilingual Spanish/English preferred).

Parochial Administrator: Father Joseph Tran

ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

1136 Seminole Drive, Rockledge | Needs a bilingual English/Spanish deacon.

Pastor: Father Joseph Shaute

As we approach our next Diaconate Ordination, we will begin to review parishes with an abundant number of deacons and thus reassignments will be made. As you can see, several parishes need help. We are ordained to serve the needs of the people of the entire diocese.



MINISTRIES

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF CENTRAL FLORIDA, PATHWAYS TO CARE

Pathways to Care always welcomes volunteers and projects. Some of our volunteers provide on-site activities and games for our residents or assist with food preparation and service, building and grounds maintenance, and clerical support. Please fill out the inquiry form [here](#) or for more information about how you can help, please call **(407) 388-0245**.

TOURISM

Serving at the **Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe** continues to be a deeply rewarding ministry. The beauty of the liturgy, our collaboration with the Diaconate Formation Program, and the opportunity to accompany pilgrims in prayer and conversation make this service especially meaningful.

As visitation grows, we need more assistance covering all scheduled Mass times. We invite deacons to consider volunteering—even once per quarter—to support this important ministry to the thousands who visit the Basilica.

If you would like to be included in the rotation, please contact **Deacon Joe Gassman**.

DIVINE MERCY/FIRST FRIDAYS

Looking for deacon couples to lead the Divine Mercy Chaplet on First Fridays at the Basilica. For more information, contact **Deacon Joe Gassman**.

MINISTRY TO THE INCARCERATED

If you want to learn more about this ministry, reach out to Deacon Jimmy Avellan. If you know of prisons or jails that are underserved, please let us know.

LITURGY UPDATES

- [Click here](#) to see the Office of Worship Liturgy Advisory for Lent and Easter.
- [Click here](#) to find the annual preparation aids for Lent–Triduum–Easter in both English and Spanish.
- [Click here](#) to access the resources from Planning the Seasons: The Sacred Paschal Triduum, a workshop held by the Office of Worship this past January.

FDLC UPDATES:

THE ORDER OF CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

The USCCB Secretariat of Divine Worship, in collaboration with the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC), has prepared a national survey on the Order of Christian Funerals. This survey will assist the bishops of the Committee on Divine Worship as they review the ICEL Green Book translation. The feedback received will play a critical role as the Committee reviews the rites and texts which have no equivalent in the Latin editio typica.

We kindly ask that you distribute the link to this survey through your network of contacts, especially to anyone involved in ministry to the dead and bereaved.

[Click here to register.](#)

We will accept responses to the survey from now until the end of April.

Please accept the gratitude of the Committee on Divine Worship in advance for your participation with this important consultation. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your assistance and for your work in sacred ministry.

THE ORDER OF CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

The Diocesan Choir began rehearsals this past Monday in preparation for the **Chrism Mass**, which will be celebrated at **Holy Family Catholic Church** on **Monday, March 30th, 2026 at 11am**.

If you would like more information about joining the Diocesan Choir for future liturgies, please email **David McIntyre**.

2025 EMHC WORKSHOPS

EMHC Coordinators or Liturgy Directors ONLY:

Please fill out our [EMHC Formation Workshop Host Application](#) to schedule a workshop for the Spring 2026 season.

Please note these workshops are for new EMHCs and are open to the whole deanery.

Those looking to become an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion can apply this Fall. EMHC Candidates must register for a workshop online via Eventbrite. A completed Petition for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion with the pastor's signature must be sent to the Office of Liturgy. **Please visit the [EMHC webpage](#) for more information.**

Resurrection, Lakeland (W)

March 7th, 2026

English & Spanish

Our Saviour, Cocoa Beach (S)

March 14th, 2026

St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Cloud (S)

March 21st, 2026

English & Spanish

Epiphany, Port Orange (E)

March 21st, 2026

St. Vincent de Paul, Wildwood (N)

March 28th, 2026

St. James Cathedral, Orlando (CS)

May 2nd, 2026

English & Spanish

St. Clare, Deltona (E)

May 16th, 2026

English & Spanish

Immaculate Heart of Mary, Candler (N)

May 23rd, 2026

NEW RITUAL BOOKS

Beginning Easter Sunday, April 5th, 2026, the new English translation of The Order of the Anointing of the Sick and of Their Pastoral Care (2026) is mandated to be used in the Dioceses of the United States. This includes the Ritual de la Uncion de los Enfermos y de Su Atencion Pastoral, Traduccion a lespanol de acuerdo a la edicion tipica para el uso en las diocesis de los eastos unidos de american. Aprobado por la conferencia de obispos catholicos de los estados unidos y confirmado por la sede apostolica (2026).

[Click here to access the order links from our February newsletter.](#)

CONFERENCES, EDUCATION, & OPPORTUNITIES

FDLC: ANNOINTING OF THE SICK

The final session of the webinar series on The Order of the Anointing of the Sick and Their Pastoral Care continues this week. All registered participants will receive a link to join the live webinar, along with access to downloadable handouts. After the live webinar concludes, participants will also receive a link to the recording. If you have a scheduling conflict, you may view the webinar later at your convenience.

[Click here to register.](#)

Part Three: Wednesday, March 4 Pastoral Issues

*featuring Ms. Tish O'Hagan (Diocese of Boise) and
Mgr. Rick Hilgartner (Archdiocese of Baltimore)*

A look at some practical matters of visiting the sick -- including visiting a sick child, a sick adult, home visits, hospital visits, and nursing homes. Who are the proper ministers of the rites? What can a Deacon do? What can a lay person do? What can only a Priest do?

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PASTORAL MUSICIANS

Join us for the 50th anniversary of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians in 2026! This year's theme, "Forever We Will Sing," takes its inspiration from Psalm 89. NPM's work to foster

the art of musical liturgy has shaped Catholic worship since the Second Vatican Council – and our work is not done yet.

Join us on July 19th-24th at Catholic University of America for 4 days of:

- Plenum Addresses – Breakouts
- Networking Opportunities – Community
- Special Events – National Awards – Exhibits

[Click here to register.](#)

PARISH GRANTS PROGRAM FROM OREGON CATHOLIC PRESS

The Parish Grants Program is open to all Roman Catholic parishes and campus ministries in the United States and U.S. territories. Awarded grants must be used for liturgical and/or musical purposes that strengthen parish worship. Typical uses include purchasing new music and worship resources; repairing or replacing musical instruments; supporting the formation of musicians and liturgical ministers; enhancing multicultural ministries through training and the purchases of bilingual or multilingual resources. Funds may also be applied to other music-related needs that directly support the liturgy. **For more information and to apply [click here.](#)**

Happy Birthday

DEACON JACK MARTIN 89

DEACON NICK VARSALONA 87

DEACON SERGIO COLON 84

DEACON EDDIE BERRIOS 83

DEACON MIKLOS BERECSZASZI 82



IN REMEMBRANCE

PRAY FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED

ETERNAL REST GRANT UNTO THEM, O LORD, AND MAY PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON THEM. MAY THEIR SOULS AND THE SOULS OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED THROUGH THE MERCY OF GOD REST IN PEACE.

AMEN.



Memorial Mass

SPANISH - FRIDAY, MARCH 20TH, 8:15 A.M.

ENGLISH - FRIDAY, MARCH 27TH, 8:15 A.M.

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD CHAPEL
SAN PEDRO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

DIOCESAN CALENDAR

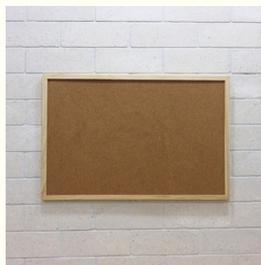
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LITURGICAL CORNER



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