



# CONFERENCE '21

*The Body of Christ - Joyfully Gathered - Gratefully Serving*  
*El Cuerpo de Cristo - Reunidos con Gozo - Sirviendo con Gratiitud*

Training and Renewal for Lectors •  
EMHCs • Ministers of Care • Music Ministers  
Art & Environment • RCIA • Clergy

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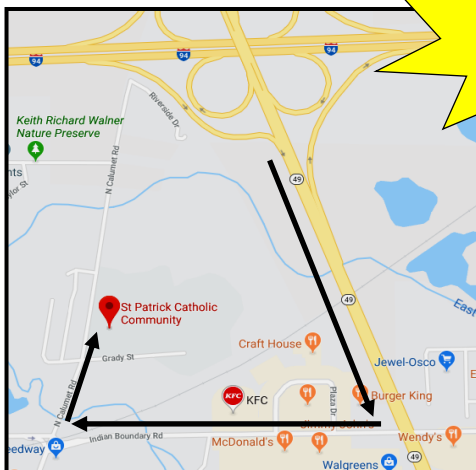
**November 12-13**

St. Patrick Parish • 638 N Calumet Road • Chesterton, IN 46304



**DIOCESE OF GARY**  
Offices of Worship and Intercultural Ministry

**CONFERENCE '21**  
9292 Broadway  
Merrillville, IN 46410



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by  
**NOVEMBER 1**

**Directions to St. Patrick Parish, Chesterton:**

Take I-94 to Rte. 49 South, exit #26A  
Take Rte. 49 South to the first stoplight. Turn right  
(west) on Indian Boundary Road. Proceed .3 miles  
to stoplight. Turn sharp right (north) on N. Calumet  
Road. Proceed .2 miles to the Parish on the right (east).

**SHARE THIS  
BY E-MAIL  
WITH  
A FRIEND  
IN  
LITURGICAL  
MINISTRY!**

**¡COMPARTE  
ESTE CORREO  
CON ALGUIEN  
EN UN  
MINISTERIO  
LITÚRGICO!**

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

### FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12

- 5:00p Registration Opens
- 6:00p **EVENING PRAYER WITH REFLECTION BY BISHOP McCLORY & BENEDICTION**
- 7:00p **LITURGICAL PROCESSION & AGAPE MEAL**

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13

- 7:00a Registration, Exhibits/Vendors  
Continental Breakfast
- 8:15a Intro to Liturgy of the Hours  
[ *optional learning session* ]
- 8:30a Morning Prayer [ *optional* ]
- 9:00a **KEYNOTE PRESENTATION STEVEN JANCO, M.C.M., D.Min.**
- 10:00a **RENEWAL / TRAINING SESSIONS**
- 11:45a Lunch  
(included in registration)
- 12:30p **RENEWAL / TRAINING SESSIONS**
- 2:15p Evaluations, Exhibits/Vendors,  
Hospitality

## THE BODY OF CHRIST JOYFULLY GATHERED - GRATEFULLY SERVING

There is always much to be thankful for in our lives. This might seem a strange statement after a year and half of COVID-19 and numbing unrest. Many have experienced this illness first hand and many have also experienced the tragedy it has caused as we mourn the loss of loved ones. In addition, the unrest fueled by the sin of prejudice, which still haunts, has caused many to despair and anger. Yet, we are still called to be thankful because what ever has happened or will happen we know that in the end God has healed us from the most tragic sickness, death itself.

Even in the less secure reality of the day we now find ourselves in, we still seek to offer thanks and praise to the God who has saved us from eternal death. The God who can heal us in ways the art of medicine cannot. Gathering this year for CONFERENCE '21 we come together in thanksgiving for the brave men and women who have cared for us in this difficult time. Nurses, doctors, EMTs, priests, deacons, medical researchers, community activists, public servants, teachers and the many family members and friends who help many of us to pass through the last 18 months.

We begin our time together this year in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, the very fruit of our Sunday thanksgiving, the Eucharist. Singing His praise in Evening Prayer gathered around our Bishop. Our thanksgiving does not end there it flows out from the Presence of Christ to join us together at a table of praise and thanks for the love God shows us in calling us each to the ministry we practice in His Name.

A wonder-filled, safe, evening of fellowship with food and drink, prayer and praise, song and Word awaits CONFERENCE '21 participants. Patterned after those early Christian gatherings that celebrated the body of Christ gathered as one people, participants will be fed both with food for the body and the spirit.

Saturday morning, we celebrate the new day with Morning Prayer and a chance to reflect upon the fantastic experience from the night before. Dr. Steven Janco will lead us in a joint reflection, a mystagogy, unpacking our experience from the previous evening. The day will continue with the anticipated renewal sessions for various lay liturgical ministries, deacons and priests. In addition, for those new to a particular lay liturgical ministry, Saturday morning and afternoon will be filled with training sessions.

In all of this the underlying theme is thankfulness even as we still experience the tribulation of disease and unrest. Thankful for God's mercy and for his continued grace to live and serve Him in our brothers and sisters gathered around His Table, His Altar of praise.



## EL CUERPO DE CRISTO - REUNIDOS CON GOZO - SIRVIENDO CON GRATITUD

¡Siempre hay mucho que agradecer en nuestras vidas! Esto puede parecer una declaración extraña después de un año y medio de COVID-19 y un descontento paralizante. Muchos han experimentado esta enfermedad de primera mano y muchos también han experimentado la tragedia que ha causado mientras lamentamos la pérdida de seres queridos. Además, la inquietud alimentada por el pecado del prejuicio, que aún acecha, ha provocado la desesperación y la ira de muchos. Sin embargo, todavía estamos llamados a ser agradecidos porque lo que haya sucedido o sucederá, sabemos que al final Dios nos ha sanado de la enfermedad más trágica, la muerte misma.

Incluso en la realidad menos segura del día en que nos encontramos ahora, todavía buscamos dar gracias y alabanzas al Dios que nos ha salvado de la muerte eterna. El Dios que puede curarnos de una manera que el arte de la medicina no puede. Este año para la CONFERENCIA '21, nos reunimos en acción de gracias por los valientes hombres y mujeres que nos han cuidado en este momento difícil. Enfermeras, médicos, técnicos de emergencias médicas, sacerdotes, diáconos, investigadores médicos, activistas comunitarios, servidores públicos, maestros y los muchos familiares y amigos que nos ayudaron a muchos de nosotros a superar los últimos 18 meses.

Comenzamos nuestro tiempo juntos este año en presencia del Santísimo Sacramento, el fruto mismo de nuestra acción de gracias dominical, la Eucaristía. Cantando su alabanza en la oración vespertina reunidos alrededor de nuestro obispo. Nuestra acción de gracias no termina ahí, fluye de la Presencia de Cristo para unirnos en una mesa de alabanza y agradecimiento por el amor que Dios nos muestra al llamarnos a cada uno al ministerio que practicamos en Su Nombre.

Una velada llena de maravillas, segura, momento de compartír con comida y bebida, oración y alabanza, canción y la Palabra, espera a los participantes de la CONFERENCIA '21. Siguiendo el modelo de esas primeras reuniones cristianas que celebraban el cuerpo de Cristo reunido como un solo pueblo, los participantes serán nutridos con alimentos para el cuerpo como para el espíritu.

El sábado por la mañana, celebramos el nuevo día con la oración de la mañana y la oportunidad de reflexionar sobre la fantástica experiencia de la noche anterior. El Dr. Steven Janco nos guíara en una reflexión conjunta, una mitogogía, desempaquetando nuestra experiencia de la noche anterior. El día continuara con las sesiones anticipadas de renovación para varios ministerios litúrgicos laicos, diáconos y sacerdotes. Además, para los nuevos en un ministerio litúrgico laico en particular, el sábado por la mañana y la tarde estarán llenos de sesiones de capacitación.

En todo esto, el tema subyacente es el agradecimiento incluso cuando todavía experimentamos la tribulación de la enfermedad y el malestar. Agradecidos por la misericordia de Dios y por su continua gracia para vivir y servirle en nuestros hermanos y hermanas reunidos alrededor de Su Mesa, Su Altar de alabanza.



FOOD FOR THE SOUL AND BODY  
ALIMENTO PARA EL ALMA Y EL CUERPO

## EL HORARIO DE LA CONFERENCIA

VIERNES, 12 DE NOVIEMBRE

- 5:00p Se Abre el Registro
- 6:00p ORACIÓN DE LA NOCHE CON REFLEXIÓN DEL OBISPO McCLORY Y BENDICIÓN
- 7:00p PROCESIÓN LITÚRGICA Y COMIDA AGAPE

SÁBADO, 13 DE NOVIEMBRE

- 7:00a Registro, Exposiciones / Vendedores Desayuno Continental
- 8:15a Introducción a la Liturgia de las Horas [ sesión de aprendizaje opcional ]
- 8:30a Oración de la mañana [ *opcional* ]
- 9:00a PRESENTADOR PRINCIPAL STEVEN JANCO, M.C.M., D.Min.
- 10:00a SESIONES DE RENOVACION /ENTRENAMIENTO
- 11:45a Almuerzo (incluido en el registro)
- 12:30p SESIONES DE RENOVACION /ENTRENAMIENTO
- 2:15p Evaluaciones, Exposiciones / Vendedores, Hospitalidad



**KEYNOTE PRESENTER / PRESENTADOR PRINCIPAL  
& RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS  
STEVEN JANCO, M.C.M., D.MIN.**

**THE ART OF EUCHARISTIC LIVING**

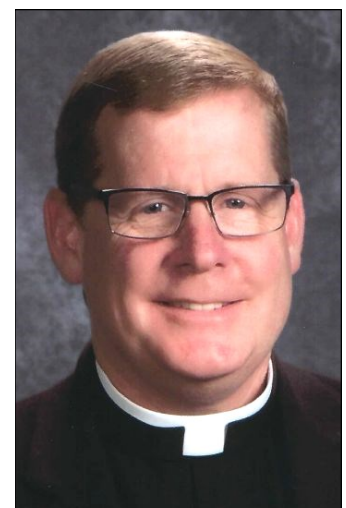
Jesus taught us that faith comes to life when it is shared—when it is lived in community. Faith is not simply taught, it is caught by living it with others. Jesus said, “Come and see.” Mystagogical catechesis teaches us what it means to be in intimate communion with God in relationship with His people. This foundation of the RCIA process can help even cradle and “seasoned” Catholics see more deeply into the mystery and graces of our life as the Body of Christ. Dr. Steven Janco, in our morning keynote, will “unpack” our experience of prayer and community from Friday evening and, following, will facilitate training and renewal for those serving in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults journey.

**EL ARTE DE UNA VIDA EUCARISTICA**

Jesús nos enseñó que la fe cobra vida cuando se comparte, cuando se vive en comunidad. La fe no se enseña simplemente, se adquiere al vivirla con los demás. Jesús dijo: “Ven y mira”. La catequesis mitológica nos enseña lo que significa estar en íntima comunión con Dios en relación con su pueblo. Esta base del proceso de RICA puede ayudar incluso a los católicos de cuna y “experimentados” a ver más profundamente el misterio y las gracias de nuestra vida como el Cuerpo de Cristo. El Dr. Steven Janco, en nuestro discurso de apertura matutino, “desempacará” nuestra experiencia de oración y comunidad a partir del viernes por la noche y, a continuación, facilitará el entrenamiento y la renovación para aquellos que sirven en la jornada del Rito de Iniciación Cristiana de Adultos.

**NEW! CLERGY PREACHING TRACK  
REV. KEVIN HUBER  
10:00A-11:45A**

If a homily is preached in a church and no one is listening, does it make a difference? The homily is supposed to provide insight into the meaning of the scripture and relate it to the lives of the Body of Christ. But if we’re honest, we’ve all had the experience (hopefully very few times!) of being part of “the frozen chosen” — of our eyes glazing over, checking our watch, and fighting off “resting in the Lord!” How can our priests and deacons melt our hearts and set them on fire with the Good News of the Word of God? Fr. Kevin is passionate about leadership, empowerment, and preaching and wants to help his confreres set the world ablaze—one homily at a time!



**IF YOU ARE TRAINING FOR A MINISTRY YOU MUST ATTEND BOTH THE MORNING AND AFTERNOON SESSION FOR THAT MINISTRY**

**TRAINING SESSIONS**

**LECTORS**

PETRA STEELE

**EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS  
OF HOLY COMMUNION**

FR. JON PLAVCAN

**MUSIC MINISTERS**

DAVID HERR, TINA O'DROBINAK  
CLAUDIA PIENTA, ALISON POWELL

**MINISTERS OF CARE**

JANICE GATONS

**RCIA  
TRAINING / RENEWAL**

DR. STEVEN JANCO

**SESIONES DE ENTRENAMIENTO**

**LECTORES**

PADRE DAVID KIME

**MINISTROS EXTRAORDINARIOS  
DE LA SANTA COMUNIÓN**

PADRE LEO GAJARDO

**MINISTROS DE MÚSICA**

MICHELLE ALEXANDER

**MINISTROS DE CUIDADO  
FORMACIÓN / RENOVACIÓN**

DEACON JIM CARISTI

If you have never been formally trained as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, or a Lector (reader) or as a Minister of Care or a Cantor these multi-part training sessions are for you. If you are new to any of these ministries these training sessions are a necessity. In addition to practical knowledge one needs to properly carry out these ministries there is both a spiritual and theological knowledge that is necessary. Each session deals with a particular aspect of the ministry for which you are being trained. Thus, the lay minister may be properly equipped to carry out the ministry entrusted to them. Each session builds on the one before. Taking on one of the ministries mentioned is not simply doing a job, it is an invitation to enter more deeply in relationship with Christ who is the "prime" minister. Christ imparts the gifts needed to engage in these ministries. Thus, a lay minister needs to know the depth and breadth of the ministry they assume. Theological, historical, spiritual and practical knowledge is needed and will be provided in the CONFERENCE Training Sessions.

Si nunca has sido formalmente entrenado como Ministro Extraordinario de la Sagrada Comunión, o de Lector o de Ministro de Cuidado o de Cantor, estas sesiones de varias partes son para ti. Si eres nuevo en alguno de estos ministerios estas sesiones de entrenamiento son una necesidad. Además de conocimientos prácticos para llevar a cabo estos ministerios existe un conocimiento espiritual y teológico necesario. Cada sesión se trata de algún aspecto particular del ministerio del que se está entrenando. Así, el ministro laico puede estar equipado propiamente para llevar a cabo su ministerio. Cada sesión aumenta sobre la anterior. Tomar uno de los ministerios mencionados no es simplemente cumplir con un trabajo, es una invitación de entrar profundamente en una relación con Jesucristo, quien es el "primer" ministro. Cristo imparte los dones necesarios para participar en estos ministerios. Así el ministro laico tiene que conocer la profundidad y amplitud del ministerio que asume. El conocimiento teológico, histórico y práctico es necesario y se proporciona en las Sesiones de entrenamiento de la CONFERENCIA.

**MORNING SESSION: 10:00A-11:45A**

**RENEWAL FOR EXTRAORDINARY  
MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION  
REV. GREGORY BIM-MERLE**

As Eucharistic Ministers we distribute the Body and Blood of our Lord to God's People. What an awesome and tremendous call and responsibility! This renewal session will help EMHC to reflect on the importance and significance of their ministry. The spirituality of an EMHC will be discussed and deepened. There will also be time for sharing of graces received in this ministry

**TRAINING / RENEWAL FOR  
MINISTERS OF ART & ENVIRONMENT  
REV. MARTIN DOBRZYNSKI**

Environment and art in the worship space is more than just the placement of flowers and seasonal décor. The sanctuary needs to be treated very differently than how a living room is decorated for Easter or Christmas. Participants will be invited to reflect upon the primary symbols of the main seasons and feasts of the liturgical year. Reviewing the flow of the liturgical year will enable those who minister in this area to place the appropriate emphasis on each season and feast.

**RENOVACIÓN PARA MINISTROS  
EXTRAORDINARIOS DE LA SANTA  
COMUNIÓN  
PADRE NESTOR VARON**

Como Ministros de la Eucaristía, distribuimos el Cuerpo y la Sangre de nuestro Señor al Pueblo de Dios. ¡Qué asombrosa y tremenda llamada y responsabilidad! Esta sesión de renovación ayudará a la EMHC a reflexionar sobre la importancia y el significado de su ministerio. Se discutirá y profundizará la espiritualidad de un EMHC. También habrá tiempo para compartir las gracias recibidas en este ministerio.

**FORMACIÓN / RENOVACIÓN PARA  
MINISTROS DE ARTE Y MEDIO  
AMBIENTE  
[ PRESENTADOR SERÁ ANUNCIADO ]**

El medio ambiente y el arte en el espacio de adoración es más que solo la colocación de flores y la decoración de temporada. El santuario debe tratarse de manera muy diferente a cómo se decora una sala de estar para Pascua o Navidad. Se invitará a los participantes a reflexionar sobre los símbolos principales de las principales temporadas y fiestas del año litúrgico. Revisar el flujo del año litúrgico permitirá a aquellos que ministran en esta área poner el énfasis apropiado en cada temporada y fiesta.

**AFTERNOON SESSION: 12:30P-2:15P**

**RENEWAL FOR LECTORS  
DEACON DANIEL LOWERY**

This session will focus on experiencing a spiritual journey through the Eucharist, and how the liturgical minister has to be transformed to transform others. The workshop will also discuss the spiritual practices that allow the Eucharistic Minister to be renewed as a minister of Jesus Christ.

**RENEWAL FOR MINISTERS OF CARE  
DEACON MICHAEL HALAS**

As the Body of Christ continues to return to Mass, how can we, as Ministers of Care, help to bridge the disconnect between the sick and the homebound of the Body of Christ with those present at Mass? The ministry of "presence" is both selfless and life giving to the sick, homebound and the Minister of Care.

**RENOVACIÓN PARA LECTORES  
PADRE NATHANIEL EDQUIST**

Esta sesión se enfocará en experimentar un viaje espiritual a través de la Eucaristía, y cómo el ministro litúrgico tiene que ser transformado para transformar a otros. El taller también discutirá las prácticas espirituales que permiten que el Ministro Eucarístico se renueve como ministro de Jesucristo.

**RENOVACIÓN PARA MINISTROS  
DE CUIDADO  
DIÁCONO JIM CARISTI**

Mientras el Cuerpo de Cristo continúa regresando a la Misa, ¿cómo podemos nosotros, como Ministros de Cuidado, ayudar a salvar la desconexión entre los enfermos y los confinados en el hogar del Cuerpo de Cristo con los presentes en la Misa? El ministerio de "presencia" es desinteresado y da vida a los enfermos, a los confinados en casa y al Ministro de Cuidado.

## PRESENTER PROFILES

**THE MOST REV. ROBERT J. MCCLORY, B.A., M.P.A., J.D., S.T.B., J.C.L., D.D.**, was ordained as the fifth bishop for the Diocese of Gary on Feb. 11, 2020, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Born in Detroit, he is the youngest of four children of James and Ann McClory (both deceased).

Prior to his ordination, then-Monsignor McClory served as the pastor and rector of the National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica in Royal Oak, MI. In a previous assignment, Bishop McClory served as the vicar general and moderator of the curia of the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Bishop McClory studied philosophy at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit. He was then sent to the Pontifical North American College in Rome, where he earned a bachelor's degree in sacred theology in 1998 from the Pontifical Gregorian University. He completed his license in canon law at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Rome in 2000.

Bishop McClory was ordained a deacon by Cardinal Edmund Szoka in Saint Peter's Basilica, Rome, on Oct. 8, 1998. He was ordained a priest by Cardinal Maida at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral in Detroit, on May 22, 1999. He was given the title of Monsignor and made chaplain to His Holiness by Pope Benedict XVI on May 20, 2005.

Prior to entering the seminary, Bishop McClory earned a bachelor's degree in political science and communications from Oakland University, a master's degree in public policy and administration from Columbia University and a juris doctor degree from the University of Michigan Law School.

He is a member of the Canon Law Society of America and served as a member of the Committee on Civil and Canon Law. He has been a Priest-Observer, Region VI, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. He is a Knight of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem and a third degree Knight of Columbus.

Bishop McClory's episcopal motto is "Iesum Dominum Praedicamus" ("We Proclaim Jesus as Lord"). It reminds us of the humility with which all Christians should approach their mission as disciples.

**STEVEN R. JANCO, M.C.M., D.MIN.** is Liturgy Resources Specialist at World Library Publications. He served as Director of Liturgy and Music at St. Alphonsus Liguori Church in Prospect Heights, IL from 1995 to 2005, and currently serves part-time as Director of Liturgy and Music at St. Eulalia Parish in Maywood, IL. From 2006 – 2017 he served as Director of the Rensselaer Program of Church Music and Liturgy at Saint Joseph's College in Rensselaer and is now Music and Liturgy Program Director at Alverno College in Milwaukee, WI. He has been an institute faculty member for the North American Forum on the Catechumenate since 1998 and serves on the music staff of the Chicago Office for Divine Worship. He is a clinician at conferences and workshops around the country. Steven is an active composer, perhaps known best for three widely used Mass settings. He is the author of numerous journal articles and has contributed to several recent books. He is also the convener of the Liturgical Music Seminar of the North American Academy of Liturgy. He earned his Master of Church Music degree in composition from Concordia University in River Forest, IL, and his Doctor of Ministry degree in liturgy from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. He lives in Forest Park, IL.

**MICHELLE ALEXANDER, LCSW** is the Chapter Director for the Diocese of Gary National Pastoral Musicians, and the choir director for treble and adult choirs at several churches in the Gary Diocese and is a member of the CONFERENCE planning committee. Pianist, classical guitarist, cantor and choral conductor. Michelle has also completed bel canto vocal studies with the Fine Arts Studio of Chicago. Additional ministries include counselor in private practice, music instructor in private music studio, and social justice activist through the arts. She holds a BA in Government and International Studies from Notre Dame and a MSW from Loyola University of Chicago.

**REV. GREGORY BIM-MERLE** was born and raised in Michigan City, IN. He became a seminarian for the Diocese of Gary in 2009 and began his studies at Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary in Winona Minnesota and later finished this seminary training at the University of St. Mary of the Lake: Mundelein Seminary. He was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Gary in 2017. Fr. Gregory has a bachelors in Philosophy and two theology degrees: M.Div. and STB. Fr. Gregory has served as the associate pastor at St. Michael the Archangel in Schererville, and Our Lady of Grace and St. James the Less in Highland IN. Beginning July of this year, Fr. Gregory became administrator of St. James the Less. Fr. Gregory's hobbies and personal interests include performing music, playing board games, reading, hiking, kayaking, fishing, and video games.

**DIÁCONO JIM CARISTI** fue ordenado diaconado en junio de 2007. Él y su esposa Martha tienen dos hijos y dos nietos. Desde 1980 es profesor de informática y matemáticas en la Universidad de Valparaíso. El diácono Jim está muy involucrado en el ministerio hispano, la formación de adultos en la fe, la preparación matrimonial, el ministerio hospitalario y el ministerio a personas que sufren de Alzheimer. También es un jugador de raquetbol de torneos y espera convertirse en el campeón mundial en su grupo de edad.

**FR. MARTIN J. DOBRZYNSKI** is Pastor at St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Schererville, as well as Director of the Office of Worship for the Diocese of Gary since 1992. He initiated the first diocesan liturgical lay ministry CONFERENCE in 1987 and continues on the CONFERENCE planning committee. Under the tutelage of the Capuchin Franciscans he attended St. Lawrence Seminary in Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin. He was ordained in 1984 after earning a BA in History from St. Meinrad College (1980) and an M.Div. from St. Meinrad School of Theology. In 1991 Fr. Dobrzynski received an MA in Liturgical Studies at the University of Notre Dame. In addition to his duties here in the diocese, he also served on the National Board of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions from 1997-2011.

**PADRE NATHANIEL EDQUIST** es actualmente el Pastor Asociado en el Sacred Heart/St. Joseph/St. Peter cluster en LaPorte, IN. La ciudad natal del Padre Nate es LaPorte y fue feligrés de St. Peter en LaPorte. Padre Nate fue ordenado sacerdote en 2017 después de completar sus estudios de seminario en la Universidad de St. Mary of the Lake: Mundelein Seminary.

**PADRE LEONARDO GAJARDO** había estado sirviendo recientemente en la facultad del Colegio Teológico de la Universidad Católica de América en Washington, DC y ha regresado a la Diócesis de Gary como Pastor Asociado de la Comunidad Católica St. Paul en Valparaíso. Fue ordenado sacerdote en 2006. Padre nació en Santiago, Chile, y emigró con su familia a los Estados Unidos en 1990. Hizo sus estudios de pregrado en el Seminario Mayor del Sagrado Corazón en Detroit, MI y completó su formación en el seminario en la Universidad Católica de América. Tiene títulos avanzados en derecho canónico y liturgia.

## PRESENTER PROFILES

**JANICE GATONS** has been ministering as a Minister of Care since 2000. She is a registered nurse and received her BSPA from St. Joseph's College in Maine. As part of the staff at St. Michael Community in Schererville she became certified as a Parish Nurse in 2004 and received her MA in Pastoral Theology in 2006, also from St. Joseph's College of Maine. Janice trains and coordinates the Ministers of Care in her parish as well giving support to other parishes. She has worked in the Diocese of Gary as a resource for this ministry as well as other ministries. Janice has also instructed future nurses at Purdue Calumet on ministering to the homebound and the frail of the community as part of their education. She is a member of the CONFERENCE planning committee.

**DEACON MICHAEL W. HALAS** is a Chaplain at St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago. He was ordained to the Diaconate in 2007 and serves at St. James the Less Parish, Highland, where he is a catechist in the Faith Formation Program and directs the Liturgy and RCIA. He serves as Master of Ceremonies to the Bishop and assists at diocesan liturgies at Holy Angels Cathedral. He also serves on the Diocesan Liturgical Commission, Sacraments/Prayer and Worship Think Tank, is a member of the CONFERENCE planning committee and a member of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains. Deacon is a 2003 graduate of the Diocesan Lay Ministry Formation Program and has two units of Clinical Pastoral Education. He holds an MA in Liturgy from Catholic Theological Union, Chicago.

**DAVID HERR** is the Executive Secretary for the Office of Divine Worship for the Diocese of Gary, and has been involved in music ministry in the Diocese for over 20 years. David helps to plan and coordinate all Diocesan liturgies and leads the Diocesan choir for those liturgies. David is a member of the CONFERENCE planning committee, is the Music Director of St. Edward Catholic Church in Lowell, IN and the Choir Director at Bishop Noll Institute from 2012-2018.

**FR. KEVIN HUBER** was Ordained to the Priesthood in 1991. Fr. Kevin has spent 30 years working in a variety of ministerial assignments, ranging from campus ministry to parish ministry, to vocation ministry. In the meantime, he earned a Doctor of Ministry Degree in Preaching from Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis, Missouri. Fr. Kevin is currently the Pastor of St. Mary Parish in Crown Point, IN and is passionate about leadership, empowerment, and preaching. .

**PADRE DAVID KIME** es el menor de nueve hijos de padres inmigrantes que vinieron aquí poco después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, y fueron brillantes ejemplos de amor generoso, que inspiraron su vocación al sacerdocio. Después de la escuela secundaria, el Padre ingresó al seminario y se graduó del Seminario del Inmaculado Corazón de María en Winona, MN. Además hizo sus estudios teológicos en el Seminario Mayor del Sagrado Corazón en Detroit, MI. El padre fue ordenado al sacerdocio en 1997. Sus asignaciones han incluido a St. Mary en East Chicago, St. Bridget Hobart, St. Joseph LaPorte y, más recientemente, St. Francis en Lake Station. Padre enseñó en la escuela secundaria católica durante 7 años y completó una maestría en Educación durante ese tiempo. El padre ha sido sacerdote durante 24 años y considera que el llamado al sacerdocio es uno de los mayores dones de Dios en su vida.

**DEACON DANIEL LOWERY** serves as a deacon in the Diocese of Gary. Prior to retirement, he served as a professor, academic dean, and president of Calumet College of Saint Joseph. He now directs the Diocese of Gary's Lay Ecclesial Ministry Program. Deacon Dan is a member of the CONFERENCE planning committee.

**TINA O'DROBINAK** served as the long-time Director of Liturgy and Music at St. John the Evangelist Church in St. John, IN before a recent career change as an officer of a pediatric education company. In addition to a BA in Theology, she brings over 40 years of pastoral experience at parish and diocesan levels. She is a

member of the CONFERENCE planning committee, the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, the Gary Diocesan Liturgical Commission and Diocesan Music Committee, and contributes to the implementation of the Diocese of Gary Synod in the areas of Sacraments, Prayer and Worship. She sings with the Diocesan Choir and is a cantor at several parishes and for diocesan liturgies.

**CLAUDIA PIENTA** has been committed to worship and praise in the music ministry of the Catholic Church since 1986. Sharing her talent in the roles of music director, organist and pianist accompanist, as well as vocalist, have been a key contributor to her success. Her great sense of humor, enthusiastic attitude and out-going personality have been foundational in the development of the music ministry programs she has served. She loves working with children, developing their vocal skills, building their confidence, and teaching their role as a cantor while giving them the experience of singing awesome praises to our Lord. She has been the Music Director at Our Lady of Consolation Church in Merrillville, IN since 2004. Claudia is a member of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, is Virtus certified, and has served on the committee from the Gary Diocese's Office of Intercultural Ministry with Asian Unity Day and Simbang Gabi Asian liturgies.

**FR. JON PLAVCAN** was ordained in June of 1994. He has served in many positions with the Diocese of Gary over the years, including Administrative Assistant to the Bishop and Vicar for Clergy. He is currently Pastor of Saint Patrick Catholic Community in Chesterton, IN. Father received his Masters in Liturgical Arts from the University of Notre Dame in 2000. He has served in the following parishes: St. Mary, Griffith, Cathedral of Holy Angels, St. Mark, Gary, St. John, St. John, St. Michael, Schererville, Our Lady of Grace, Highland, St. Thomas More, Munster, Assumption, New Chicago, St. Joan of Arc, Merrillville, Ss. Peter and Paul, Merrillville, St. Francis, Lake Station and Holy Rosary, Gary. Father brings much to our CONFERENCE, as he has been a past presenter for many years.

**ALISON POWELL** is the Director of Music at St. John the Evangelist parish in St. John, IN. Under her direction the program includes a praise and worship band, Praise Choir, Teen Choir, Youth Choir and traditional Sanctus Schola. She is also the Choir Director at Marian Catholic High School in Chicago Heights, IL.. Alison strongly believes in a community driven choir approach that reflects St. Augustine's quote, "To sing is to pray twice." Ms. Powell has also notably been a member of the Northwest Indiana Symphony Chorus and the acclaimed University Choir at Millikin University where she studied Vocal Music Education. She is thrilled to be back to her roots and home parish in NW Indiana, sharing her joy of singing with others.

**PETRA STEELE** has been a member of St. Mary parish in Crown Point for 50 years, where she is an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion and a Lector. She and her husband Charles have raised four sons. She also taught English, Speech and Journalism at Andean High School for 23 years. Her longest and most rewarding ministry has been in the training and scheduling of the parish lectors. Over a period of several years, Petra was nurtured under the instruction of Fr. Lawrence Mick, who came to the parish to work with the lectors. The skill and commitment of over 50 parish lectors, ranging in age from 15 to 75, has made working with the individuals a grace-filled joy.

**PADRE NESTOR VARON, AIC** pertenece a la Asociación de la Inmaculada Concepción. Nació en Bogota, Colombia y fue ordenado Sacerdote el 24 de Junio de 2006. Antes de servir en la Diócesis de Gary, fue misionero en la Republica Dominicana y en varios lugares de los Estados Unidos. Actualmente es párroco en la parroquia Santa María en East Chicago y Administrador de San Patricio y Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en East Chicago.