

CONFERENCE '25

Diocese of Gary
Offices of Worship and Intercultural Ministry



Heaven Wed To Earth: Celebrating Hope
Se Une El Cielo Con La Tierra: Celebrando La Esperanza

Training and Renewal for Lectors • OCIA
EMHCs • Ministers of Care • Music Ministers
Art & Environment • Hospitality/Greeters • Sacristans

REGISTER NOW!
¡REGISTRATE AHORA!

>> dcgary.org/event/conference-25 <<



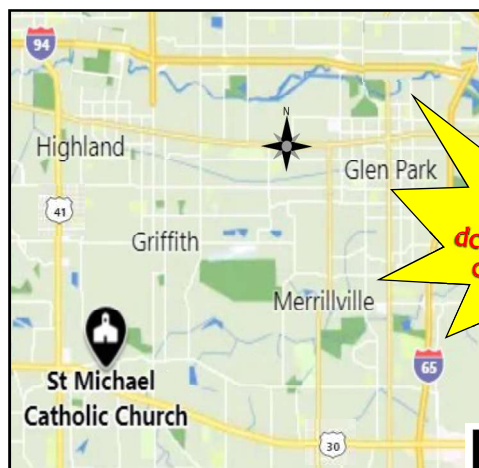
November 14-15

St. Michael the Archangel Parish • 1 E. Wilhelm Street • Schererville, IN 46375



DIOCESE OF GARY
Offices of Worship and Intercultural Ministry

CONFERENCE '25
9292 Broadway
Merrillville, IN 46410



Directions to St. Michael Parish, Schererville:

Take I-94 to Rte. 41 South (Indianapolis Blvd),
Take Rte. 41 South to Rte. 30 East. Approximately
1/2 mile, St. Michael Parish is the left (north).

Take I-65 to Rte. 30 West (West Lincoln Hwy),
Take Rte. 30 West approximately 7 miles.
St. Michael Parish is the right (north).



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

**¡POR FAVOR
COMPARTAN
CON PERSONAS
SIRVIENDO EN
ALGUN
MINISTERIO
LITURGICO!**

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14

- 5:30p** Registration Opens
- 6:30p** Welcome
Bishop McClory
- 7:00p** KEYNOTE:
DR. STEVEN JANCO
- NIGHT PRAYER WITH
SERVICE OF LIGHT
(Lucernarium)
Rev. Marty Dobrzynski, Presider
- Fellowship

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15

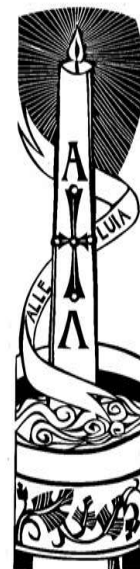
- 7:00a** Registration, Exhibits/Vendors
- 7:30a** Morning Weekday Mass
[*optional*]
- 8:30a** Continental Breakfast
Exhibits/Vendors
- 9:00a** KEYNOTE REFLECTION
DR. STEVEN JANCO
- 10:00a** RENEWAL / TRAINING
SESSIONS
- 11:45a** Lunch
(included in registration)
- 12:30p** RENEWAL / TRAINING
SESSIONS
- 2:15p** Evaluations, Exhibits/Vendors

HEAVEN WED TO EARTH: CELEBRATING HOPE

As we conclude this Jubilee Year of Hope it is good for us to reconsider the nourishment of our Hope that comes to us in the sacraments of the Church. Hope that is alive and maturing needs to be nourished regularly with God's Word and Sacrament. In the Church's pinnacle liturgy, the Easter Vigil, we see the model for this nourishment. From the very start, as we are bathed in the Light of Christ, we are reminded of the source of our Hope; our ultimate union with the God who loves us more deeply than we can know. We are wed to God so that what was two can become One. It is God who does this. Our Hope is stoked even further when we hear the words that proclaim, that "heaven is wed to earth." All that was decay is now wed to that which is vibrant life. Decay no longer has the upper hand. Now, at this moment and ever since the Angel Gabriel heard the Blessed Mother's "Fiat," her "yes" the reality of this world, this universe, is no longer ruled by decay and death. The realization of this Hope, borne from the womb of Mary, is the reason we do not give up and give in to the old world of decay and death. We carry the Light, divided among us but not diminished. Gathering as ministers of this Hope we look to renew our love for the prayer of the Church stoking our light with the fuel of the Holy Spirit. Going forth, through our various ministries, to enlighten those we serve and by our service to truly be missionary disciples.

NIGHT PRAYER WITH SERVICE OF LIGHT

You won't want to miss this beautiful experience of prayer to bring our Friday evening to a close! Night Prayer, also known as "Compline" in the Liturgy of the Hours, may be one of the more difficult hours to pray, because we are tired at the end of our day and just want to go to sleep. However, that is precisely WHY we pray this hour: a personal and intimate prayer that helps close the day in the presence of God, with gratitude for everything we encountered (the blessings AND the challenges), an examination of our conscience, and trust in a peaceful rest. The Lucernarium, or service of light, is most commonly experienced with Evening Prayer, or Vespers, as the light of day fades. The Paschal candle takes pride of place, symbolizing Christ as the "Light of the world." We will pair this service of light with our day-end prayer as the Church Militant on earth... trusting that no matter how difficult the day has been, or how dark the times seem, that God will give us a new tomorrow, always centered on, and renewed in, Christ our Hope!



SE UNE EL CIELO CON LA TIERRA: CELEBRANDO LA ESPERANZA

Al concluir este Año Jubilar de la Esperanza, es bueno que reconsideremos el alimento que nos brindan los Sacramentos de la Iglesia para nuestra esperanza. Una esperanza viva y madura necesita ser alimentada regularmente con la Palabra y los Sacramentos de Dios. En la liturgia cumbre de la Iglesia, la Vigilia Pascual, vemos el modelo de este alimento. Desde el principio, cuando estamos bañados por la Luz de Cristo, recordamos la fuente de nuestra Esperanza; nuestra unión definitiva con Dios que nos ama más profundamente de lo que podemos saber. Nos casamos con Dios para que lo que era dos pueda convertirse en Uno. Es Dios quien hace esto. Nuestra Esperanza se aviva aún más cuando escuchamos las palabras que proclaman que "el cielo está casado con la tierra". Todo lo que era decadencia ahora está casado con lo que es vida vibrante. La decadencia ya no tiene la sartén por el mango. Ahora, en este momento y desde que el Ángel Gabriel escuchó el "Fiat" de la Santísima Madre, su "sí", la realidad de este mundo, este universo, ya no está gobernado por la decadencia y la muerte. La realización de esta Esperanza, nacida del vientre de María, es la razón por la que no nos rendimos ni nos rendimos al viejo mundo de decadencia y muerte. Llevamos la Luz, dividida entre nosotros, pero no disminuida. Reunidos como ministros de esta Esperanza, buscamos renovar nuestro amor por la oración de la Iglesia avivando nuestra luz con el combustible del Espíritu Santo. Saliendo, a través de nuestros diversos ministerios, para iluminar a aquellos a quienes servimos y por nuestro servicio ser verdaderamente discípulos misioneros.

¡No te pierdas esta hermosa experiencia de oración para cerrar nuestra noche de viernes! La Oración de la Noche, también conocida como "Completas" en la Liturgia de las Horas, puede ser una de las horas más difíciles de rezar, porque al final del día estamos cansados y solo queremos dormir. Sin embargo, es precisamente por eso que rezamos esta hora: una

oración personal e íntima que nos ayuda a cerrar el día en la presencia de Dios, con gratitud por todo lo que encontramos (las bendiciones y los desafíos), un examen de conciencia y la confianza en un descanso tranquilo. El Lucernario, o servicio de la luz, se vive más comúnmente con la Oración de la Noche o Vísperas, al desvanecerse la luz del día. El cirio pascual ocupa un lugar destacado, simbolizando a Cristo como la "Luz del mundo." ¡Combinaremos este servicio de la luz con nuestra oración de fin de día como Iglesia Militante en la tierra... confiando en que no importa cuán difícil haya sido el día o cuán oscuros parezcan los tiempos, Dios nos dará un nuevo mañana, siempre centrados y renovados en Cristo nuestra Esperanza!



EL HORARIO DE LA CONFERENCIA

VIERNES, 14 DE NOVIEMBRE

- 5:30p** Se Abre el Registro
- 6:30p** Bienvenido
Señor Obispo McClory
- 7:00p** PRESENTACIÓN PRINCIPAL
DR. WILLIAM BECERRA
- ORACIÓN DE LA NOCHE
CON SERVICIO DE LUZ
(Lucernario)
Rev. Marty Dobrzynski,
Presidente Litúrgico
- Compañerismo

SÁBADO, 15 DE NOVIEMBRE

- 7:00a** Registro,
Exposiciones / Vendedores
- 7:30a** Misa Matutina Entre Semana
[*opcional*]
- 8:30a** Desayuno Continental
Exposiciones / Vendedores
- 9:00a** PRESENTACIÓN PRINCIPAL
REFLEXIÓN
DRA. CLAUDIA SADOWSKI
- 10:00a** SESIONES DE RENOVACION
/ENTRENAMIENTO
- 11:45a** Almuerzo
(incluido en el registro)
- 12:30p** SESIONES DE RENOVACION
/ENTRENAMIENTO
- 2:15p** Evaluaciones, Exposiciones /
Vendedores



KEYNOTE PRESENTER

DR. STEVEN R. JANCO, M.C.M., D.MIN

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

The promise of the Risen Christ to be with us always, to the very end, is a source of comfort ...and an even greater source of hope. The great Easter hymn reminds us that Jesus Christ is risen today, this very day, every day of our lives... and is present in our midst whenever we gather in his name. In the sacramental life of the Church, the unseen is made visible; earthly things become sacred signs; ordinary people are transformed by Heavenly Bread.

Christ our Light sends us forth to be become bread broken for the hungry, beacons of hope for the outcast. As “practicing Catholics,”

we are nourished and changed by the presence of Christ in our liturgical celebrating—Sunday after Sunday, season after season. How can we not help but live as pilgrims of hope and light for the world?

***DR. STEVE JANCO, M.C.M., D.MIN.** is Director of Liturgy and Music at Siena Center, home of the Dominican Sisters of Racine, Wisconsin. A well-known composer, he is the former director of the master's program in music and at Alverno College in Milwaukee and former director of the Rensselaer Program of Church Music and Liturgy at Saint Joseph's College. A frequent presenter at our fall conferences, Steve earned his Doctor of Ministry degree at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. He lives in Milwaukee.*

PRESENTADOR PRINCIPAL
DR. WILLIAM BECERRA, D.MIN

Del Altar al Mundo: Sacramentos que Encienden Esperanza

El Dr. Becerra explorará cómo los sacramentos nutren una esperanza que transforma comunidades. Basándose en la riqueza de nuestras tradiciones litúrgicas, examinará cómo la Luz de Cristo recibida en la celebración sacramental forma discípulos misioneros comprometidos con el servicio. Esta charla demostrará cómo el “cielo unido con la tierra” se manifiesta cuando vivimos plenamente nuestra vida sacramental, respondiendo naturalmente al llamado de servir a los más necesitados. Los participantes descubrirán estrategias concretas para integrar la oración litúrgica con el ministerio pastoral. Porque la verdadera adoración siempre nos envía: de la mesa del altar a la mesa del mundo.



***EL DR. WILLIAM BECERRA, D.MIN.** es un académico y practicante experimentado que conecta la investigación académica con el ministerio en el mundo real. Su trabajo se centra en entender y empoderar a las comunidades hispanas/latinas mediante la integración de competencias culturales, liderazgo pastoral y la Doctrina Social de la Iglesia, con el objetivo de abordar los complejos desafíos teopastorales y sociales. Con una amplia experiencia internacional y un liderazgo comprobado a nivel diocesano y nacional, el Dr. Becerra traduce conocimientos académicos en soluciones prácticas que promueven comunidades de fe culturalmente receptivas. Su enfoque matizado hacia la fe, las dinámicas sociales y el desarrollo comunitario refleja un profundo compromiso con el empoderamiento de las comunidades hispanas/latinas en los Estados Unidos.*

TRAINING SESSIONS

LECTORS

REV. BILL STENZEL

**EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS
OF HOLY COMMUNION**

REV. STEVEN CARAHER

MINISTERS OF CARE

DEACON MICHAEL HALAS

**MUSIC MINISTERS
TRAINING / RENEWAL**

ALAN HOMMERDING, KATE WILLIAMS

**ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION
TRAINING / RENEWAL**

DR. MICHAEL PORADEK

**MINISTERS OF ART & ENVIRONMENT
TRAINING / RENEWAL**

REV. PETER MUHA

**SACRISTANS
TRAINING / RENEWAL**

LISA MACIEJEWSKI

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.

SESIONES DE ENTRENAMIENTO

LECTORES

PADRE ED SHEA, OFM

**MINISTROS EXTRAORDINARIOS
DE LA SANTA COMUNIÓN**

PADRE LEO GAJARDO

**MINISTROS DE CUIDADO
FORMACIÓN / RENOVACIÓN**

DIÁCONO JIM CARISTI

**MINISTROS DE MÚSICA
FORMACIÓN / RENOVACIÓN**

MICHELLE ALEXANDER

**LA ORDEN DE INICIACIÓN CRISTIANA
FORMACIÓN / RENOVACIÓN**

FELICITAS Y SANTOS REYES

"In the earthly liturgy we take part in a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem."

-Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy #8

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.

RENEWAL FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION ANNE MCGOWAN

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are called not only to reverence Christ's Body in the liturgy but also to become living witnesses of Christ's presence in daily life. They carry the hope of the Eucharist into homes, hospitals, and the wider world and embody the Church's communion in Christ. Come be renewed in mission, equipped to serve with confidence, and strengthened as a Eucharistic people of hope.

RENEWAL FOR LECTORS DEACON RON PYLE

As we conclude this Jubilee Year of Hope it is good for us to reconsider the nourishment of our Hope that comes to us in the Word of God in Sacred Scripture. Hope that is alive and maturing needs to be nourished regularly with God's Word. We will explore how God's written Word enhances the Lector's faith life and ministry. Proclaiming the Word should also enhance our prayer life. Come for practical exercises and readings with interactive discussions!

RENEWAL FOR MINISTERS OF CARE REV. JERRY SCHWEITZER

At the Second Vatican Council, Pope St. John XXIII indicated in his address that the church needs to be "the medicine of mercy" to everyone. As a minister of care, you take on the responsibility of soothing and healing people's lives by bringing to them the medicine of peace, love and mercy, in the name of Christ Jesus. Because of this, individuals and families find Hope in Christ through your service to them.

TRAINING / RENEWAL FOR MINISTERS OF ART & ENVIRONMENT REV. PETER MUHA

The Liturgy is the source and summit of our hope. Art and environment are important channels for shaping our experience of the Mass and other liturgical rites. We will explore the principles we use to make artistic choices in preparing for such sacred celebrations.

TRAINING / RENEWAL FOR ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION TEAMS DR. MICHAEL PORADEK

The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) is the Church's primary process of discipleship formation, not only for parish candidates and catechumens but annually for all the baptized. Whether you have been involved in initiation ministry for years or are new, this workshop provides the opportunity to review and renew our understanding of this dynamic process. We'll explore the OCIA's terminology, rites, unique periods, steps and ministries, as well as discuss best practices to enable you to embrace, or re-embrace, this vital ministry for your parish.

TRAINING / RENEWAL FOR MUSIC MINISTERS ALAN HOMMERDING, KATE WILLIAMS

Singing the Journey of Hope: "Sing as pilgrims do on their journey" St. Augustine writes. As the Pilgrim Church adds new members at the Vigil, we strengthen and renew the hope-filled song that guides our every step. Come and join in the song!

RENEWAL FOR HOSPITALITY / GREETERS JOHN KYLER

Successful hospitality ministry requires more than one-off programs and happenstance interactions with parishioners. Instead, building a parish culture of hospitality takes commitment and intentionally from all members of the community. We must extend hospitality ministry beyond door greeters and after-Mass donuts — as important as those are! As ministers of Hope, we trust in the light of Christ that brightens even the darkest corners of our world.

RENOVACIÓN PARA MINISTROS EXTRAORDINARIOS DE LA SANTA COMUNIÓN PADRE IVAN ALATORRE

El Año Jubilar es un año especial de gracia y renovación en la Iglesia Católica. Como ministros eucarísticos de la Sagrada Comunión, es fácil ver el ministerio simplemente como algo rutinario. Al explorar la esperanza como virtud y la misión del Año Jubilar, esta presentación invita a los ministros a redescubrir la belleza de su ministerio a la luz de Cristo, quien nos da la esperanza de vivir como discípulos misioneros.

RENOVACIÓN PARA LECTORES PADRE NATE EDQUIST

En este Año Jubilar de la Esperanza, la Iglesia celebra el paso por las puertas santas. Jesús incluso se llama a sí mismo la «puerta» por la que sus ovejas pueden entrar y encontrar pastos. En esta sesión, exploraremos cómo la Palabra de Dios es una puerta para entrar en la vida de Dios. Como lectores, la Palabra de Dios debe estar constantemente en nuestro corazón y en nuestros labios para que proclamemos a Cristo digna y adecuadamente.

FORMACIÓN / 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.

FORMACIÓN / RENOVACIÓN PARA LOS EQUIPOS DE INICIACIÓN CRISTIANA DE LA ORDEN FELICITAS Y SANTOS REYES

La Orden de Iniciación Cristiana de Adultos nos ayuda a ver que la auténtica catequesis catecumenal implica un aprendizaje en el camino de vida cristiana. Esta sesión profundiza en cuatro facetas de la formación encontradas en el párrafo 75 del OCIA: catequesis doctrinal, práctica de la vida cristiana, ritos litúrgicos y vida apostólica, que resuenan con el modelo de vida cristiana de Hechos 2, 42. Esta sesión desafiará a los ministros de iniciación a ir más allá de un modelo de catequesis basado en un programa y proporcionará consejos prácticos para adoptar el enfoque más holístico de la catequesis que se prevé en el OCIA.

FORMACIÓN / RENOVACIÓN PARA MINISTROS DE MÚSICA MICHELLE ALEXANDER

Este taller de renovación para conjuntos músicos litúrgicos ofrece un espacio para fortalecer la unidad del ministerio musical al servicio de la asamblea. A través del repaso del Ordinario de la Misa y el aprendizaje de cantos nuevos seleccionados, los participantes ensayarán técnicas de conjunto, balance de voces e integración instrumental. La sesión invita a redescubrir la música como nuestra misión pastoral, animando la celebración con alegría, esperanza y espíritu de servicio.

FORMATION / RENEWAL FOR SACRISTANS LISA MACIEJEWSKI

Inconspicuous, but always present before, during, and after the Mass, the sacristan not only keeps eye, ear, and heart focused on God, but also the needs of the liturgy itself and the various other liturgical ministers. Beyond preparing vessels and ritual books, liturgical calendars and vestment colors, clean ups and set ups, the sacristan's heart is one of attentive and generous service. In a ministry where you take care of the needs of everyone else, come take time to renew yourself!

PRESENTER PROFILES

PADRE IVAN ALATORRE es el Vicario Pastoral de la parroquia San Juan Bosco y el co-capellán de Bishop Noll Institute en Hammond, IN. El Padre Ivan creció en Lake Station, donde fue feligrés de San Marcos y después San José Obrero, en Gary, IN. Fue ordenado sacerdote en junio de 2025 después de terminar sus estudios de seminario en Sacred Heart Major Seminary en Detroit, Michigan.

MICHELLE ALEXANDER, LCSW es ministra católica de música litúrgica, compositora e instrumentista, dedicada a fomentar un culto lleno de oración y vitalidad desde 1995. Con una pasión de toda la vida por la música sacra, aporta riqueza multilingüe e intercultural y sensibilidad pastoral a su ministerio. Con 30 años de experiencia como directora de coro, cantora y educadora, Michelle ha guiado conjuntos musicales para unir voz y espíritu en la celebración de la Eucaristía. Directora del Capítulo de la Diócesis de Gary de NPM, miembro de la Asociación Nacional de Profesores de Música y miembro de la Comisión Litúrgica de la Diócesis de Gary.

REV. STEVEN CARAHER is the oldest of 4 children from a loving Catholic family in Munster, IN, having attended St. Thomas More school where he was first attracted to the priesthood through altar serving and hearing the stories of heroic priests like St. Maximilian Kolbe. He has a bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Computer Science from Indiana University. During his years at IU, Fr. Steven experienced a deep conversion of heart and conviction that the Lord was calling him to enter seminary, and after graduation he applied to study for the priesthood for the Diocese of Gary. After seminary studies at Mundelein Seminary in Chicago, and Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, MI, he was ordained a priest in June 2024. He is currently assigned to Our Lady of Consolation and Holy Martyrs parishes in Merrillville, IN, and is also the chaplain for Andrean High School.

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.

REV. 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 el párroco de la parroquia Holy Family (Sagrada Familia) en LaPorte y ha servido a la comunidad de LaPorte desde el año 2020. Padre Nate fue ordenado sacerdote en 2017 después de que se graduó de la University of St. Mary of the Lake: Mundelein Seminary. Después de su ordenación, prestó servicio durante tres años como pastor asociado de St. Patrick en Chesterton. Además de sus funciones como pastor de Holy Family, Padre Nate es director de vocaciones de la diócesis, supervisando la formación de los seminaristas y aceptando nuevos candidatos para los estudios sacerdotales.

PADRE LEONARDO GAJARDO nació en Santiago, Chile, y emigró con su familia a los Estados Unidos en 1990. Hizo sus estudios de seminario en el Seminario Mayor del Sagrado Corazón en Detroit, MI y completó su formación en el seminario en la Universidad Católica de América. Él fue ordenado presbítero de la Diócesis de Gary en 2006 y sirvió en Hammond y Valparaíso. Desde el 2011 hasta el 2014, él sirvió en como miembro de la facultad del Seminario Mayor de Santa María en Baltimore, MD y desde el 2018 hasta el 2021 del Colegio Teológico de la Universidad Católica de América en Washington, DC. Actualmente, Padre Leonardo es el párroco de la iglesias de Santa María Goretti y de San José en Dyer y el Director del Programa de Formación Diaconal de la Diócesis de Gary. Él es licenciado de derecho canónico y doctor de teología litúrgica.

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 Our Lady of Grace Parish, Highland, where he is a catechist in the Religious Education Program and directs the Liturgy. 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.

ALAN HOMMERDING is Liturgical Publications Editor for the WLP (World Library Publications) division of GIA; he has been with WLP since 1991. A well-known hymnwriter, Alan also stays active as a pastoral musician in the Chicago area.

JOHN T. KYLER is a Catholic author, composer, educator, and speaker whose work focuses on the intersection of liturgy, justice, and healthy vulnerability in pastoral ministry. In addition to experience working in parish faith formation and high school and collegiate campus ministry, John is an instructor in the Emmaus Institute for Ministry Formation and a regular contributor to several pastoral magazines and journals, including U.S. Catholic and GIA Quarterly. He holds a Master of Education from the University of Notre Dame and a Master of Theological Studies from Saint John's School of Theology and Seminary. He is the author of several books, including *Welcome All as Christ: Reimagining Parish Hospitality* (Liturgical Press, 2022) and co-author of *Christ Our Center: An Introduction to the Liturgical Year* (LTP, 2025).

LISA MACIEJEWSKI has been a member of St. John the Evangelist parish for 27 years and has been blessed to be a sacristan for the last 10 years. Additionally, Lisa participates in OCIA, hosts a small faith sharing group, and assists with her entire extended family in the parish food pantry collection. She has been married for 33 years, has two boys, and a sweet little grandson.

REV. PETER MUHA is a priest for the Diocese of Gary, and he completed his education at St. Meinrad Seminary in southern Indiana. After college, he went to Rome to complete his studies for the priesthood. He was ordained a deacon in Rome at the Basilica of St. Peter in Vatican City. He has since served as a priest at St. Paul in Valparaíso, St. Michael in Schererville, Our Lady of Grace in Highland, St. John Bosco in Hammond. He has served as pastor of St. Edward in Lowell, Our Lady of Consolation in Merrillville, St. Joseph in Dyer, and most recently became the pastor of St. Mary Parish in Crown Point in 2025.

PRESENTER PROFILES

ANNE MCGOWAN, M.T.S., PH.D. is an Associate Professor of Liturgy at Catholic Theological Union (Chicago). Before joining the faculty at CTU in 2016, Anne was the inaugural postdoctoral associate in liturgical studies at the Yale Institute of Sacred Music (2011–2012), a postdoctoral teaching scholar in the department of theology at the University of Notre Dame, and an adjunct professor of theology teaching in the area of liturgical studies at St. John's School of Theology and Seminary in Collegeville, Minnesota. Her professional memberships include the North American Academy of Liturgy, the Catholic Academy of Liturgy, the Catholic Theological Society of America, and the American Academy of Religion. She is the author of *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern* (2014) and co-author (with Paul Bradshaw) of *The Pilgrimage of Egeria* (2018), both published by Liturgical Press.

DR. MICHAEL PORADEK, PH.D. is an Administrator, educator, and life-long learner. Having recently completed his Ph.D. in Leadership with research in mission-based leadership development, he serves as Vice President for Mission Integration at the University of St. Francis in Joliet, IL. He has been a member of our Gary Diocesan Liturgical Commission since 2019, and was past Vice Chair of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions where he continues to serve as a consultant. Michael has served in multiple liturgical ministries at both the parish and diocesan levels in Wisconsin.

FELICITAS Y SANTOS REYES son originarios de Michoacán, México— ambos provienen de familias numerosas y son higienista dental y remodelador de casas de profesión. Se casaron en la parroquia St. Joseph en LaPorte (ahora Sagrada Familia), donde han sido feligreses durante 25 años con sus dos hijos. Han participado en varios ministerios durante más de 15 años. Somos la primera generación de graduados del programa de Ministros Eclesiales laicos en Español de nuestra Diócesis. Y actualmente estamos impartiendo clases de OCIA en nuestra parroquia.

DEACON RON PYLE has been a parishioner at St. Michael the Archangel Church since 1984. He served in various liturgical ministries, including Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion and Lector before entering the Diaconate Formation Program, being ordained in June 2011. Deacon Ron continues to work with liturgical ministers, including his role as coordinator of parish altar servers. He is also a member of the Deacon Formation Board for the diocese.

LA DRA. CLAUDIA SADOWSKI es de origen mexicano. Predicadora católica y conferencista internacional. Tiene dos licenciaturas de Saint Joseph's College, una maestría y un doctorado de Purdue University, con una tesis galardonada sobre la identidad y diversidad lingüística y cultural de los hispanos en Estados Unidos. Recibió además un Doctorado Honoris Causa del Claustro Doctoral Iberoamericano, el premio más honorífico que destaca a personas que, quienes, con su contribución humanista han apoyado el progreso de su país. Los estudios de la Dra. Sadowski se han enfocado sobre el fenómeno multicultural de las comunidades hispanas dentro de los Estados Unidos. La Dra. Sadowski ha explorado la intersección del idioma, la cultura y la fe, enfocándose en la identidad de los hispanos en los Estados Unidos. La Dra. Sadowski facilita varios eventos transformadores, como retiros, talleres y conferencias, alentando a los participantes a abrazar su herencia cultural. Desde el 2004 se dedica a actividades de evangelización y promoción de comunidades hispanas en diferentes Diócesis. Ha recibido varios reconocimientos, entre otros, el Martin Luther King Award. Actualmente trabaja como Coordinadora del Ministerio Intercultural para la Diócesis de Gary, IN. Ha estado felizmente casada durante 32 años y junto con su esposo Jim, viven una vida de misión y servicio. Tienen 3 hijas y 7 nietos.

REV. JERRY SCHWEITZER is a priest for the Diocese of Gary. He was born and raised in Hammond IN, attending Our Lady of Perpetual Help Grade School. He further attended St. Lawrence Seminary High School in Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin, Illinois Benedictine College in Lisle, Illinois, and St. Meinrad Seminary, in St. Meinrad, Indiana. Fr. Jerry was ordained a priest on August 28, 1971 and has served in various parishes as Associate Pastor: St. Joseph (Hammond), SS Peter & Paul, St. Patrick (Chesterton) and as Pastor of St. Stephen, Martyr, St. Matthias, Sacred Heart, St. Martin and St. Mary (Otis), along with other positions in the Diocese of Gary. He is a teacher of Biblical Studies as well as a Director of Spiritual Retreats and Conferences. Since 2015, Fr. Jerry has been a "Senior Priest," but continues to be active in ministry assisting with liturgies in the Archdiocese of Chicago and Diocese of Gary.

PADRE ED SHEA, OFM es un verdadero seguidor de San Francisco y encuentra razones para regocijarse a menudo en la bondad de la presencia de Dios en nuestro mundo. Proveniente de Oak Park, IL y graduado de la Universidad de Notre Dame, el padre Ed se unió a los franciscanos en 1980 y fue ordenado sacerdote en 1987. El padre ha dedicado la mayor parte de su sacerdocio al trabajo parroquial en Illinois. El Padre Ed ha servido en su Consejo Provincial y como Director de Vocaciones y Formación para los Franciscanos de la Provincia del Sagrado Corazón y ha estado involucrado en el ministerio bilingüe en el área de Chicago y más allá. Actualmente está en misión con la comunidad franciscana sirviendo a las parroquias agrupadas de Gary, IN. Al padre le encanta cantar y contar historias, pero más que nada, le encanta celebrar los sacramentos de la Iglesia.

REV. BILL STENZEL is a priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago. He was ordained in 1975 and retired from full-time parish ministry in 2014. He was an active member of the Newman Club as an undergraduate in college, and his calling coincided with the early years of Church Renewal following the Second Vatican Council. As a parish priest in Chicago, Father Bill participated in facilitating the call to lay ministry to the people of many parishes. For over 40 years he helped build training programs for calling and forming men and women to ministry.

KATE WILLIAMS is the Vice President of Sacred Music at GIA Publications, Inc. She holds a Bachelor of Music Composition degree from DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois as well as a Masters of Arts in Liturgical Studies degree from Catholic Theological Union in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Chicago where it was her privilege to study as a distinguished Bernardin Scholar. Kate is the editor of *Gather—Fourth Edition*, the latest edition of the nation's most well-known hard-bound hymnal, as well as the editor of *Of Womb and Tomb: Prayer in Time of Infertility, Miscarriage, and Stillbirth*. Most recently, Kate was a co-editor of *The Fire This Time: A Black Catholic Sourcebook*. She serves as workshop leader, consultant, and musician in the Archdiocese of Chicago and abroad, following a passion to serve in multicultural, multigenerational communities, while mentoring young voices and building bridges through music ministry.

CONFERENCE '25 PLANNING COMMITTEE

FR. MARTIN DOBRZYNSKI (CHAIR)
MICHELLE ALEXANDER
FR. LEO GAJARDO
JANICE GATONS
DEACON MICHAEL HALAS

DAVID HERR
TINA O'DROBINAK
DR. MICHAEL PORADEK
DR. CLAUDIA SADOWSKI
ADELINE TORRES