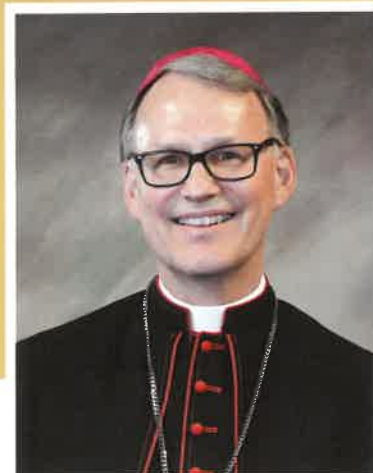


Hearts of MERCY *Agents of Compassion*



In every parish, in every pew, in every ministry across our diocese, the call of Christ is the same: to be agents of compassion, to walk with one another in accompaniment and to open our hearts in mercy. This year, the 2026 Bishop's Annual Appeal invites us to see formation not as a program, but as a way of life – shaping disciples who reflect the love of Jesus in all they do.

Ministries supported by the Bishop's Annual Appeal seek to ignite faith by serving more than 125,000 Catholics across the Diocese of Saint Cloud.



+PATRICK M. NEARY, C.S.C.
Diocese of Saint Cloud

HEARTS OF MERCY...

FORMING PASTORAL LEADERS.



"Go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature." – Mark 16:15

Pastoral leaders dedicate themselves to equipping parishes, schools and ministries with the tools they need to grow in faith. From catechist training to youth ministry support to adult faith formation, they are agents of compassion – ensuring that leaders are prepared to accompany the faithful with wisdom and mercy.

Sara Michaelson, diocesan superintendent of schools, walks alongside principals through accreditation as well as the daily joys and challenges of school leadership. Pictured with Kristie Harren, principal of Sacred Heart School in Freeport, Sara regularly visits educators in Catholic schools across the diocese to offer guidance, encouragement and support.

HEARTS OF MERCY...

FORMING MISSIONARY DISCIPLES.



"All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization." — Pope Francis, The Joy of the Gospel

Formation does not stop with staff. It lives in the pews, in the daily lives of ordinary disciples. Parents teaching their children to pray. Parishioners visiting the homebound. Volunteers serving meals to the hungry. Each act of mercy, each moment of accompaniment, is a witness to Christ's compassion. Together, diocesan staff and parishioners form one body, one mission, one Church, living out the Gospel in word and deed.

The Diocese of Saint Cloud works with local, regional and national Catholic experts to support strong leadership and faith formation. By training local leaders, these programs help people in the pews grow confident in sharing their faith in daily life. Events like the one shown here in Sauk Rapids with national family consultant Denise Utter give ministers, teachers, and families practical strategies they can use and

adapt to meet the unique needs of their faith communities.

HEARTS OF MERCY...

FORMING AGENTS OF COMPASSION.

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

— 1 Peter 4:10

This Annual Appeal is more than a request for support. It is an invitation to join in the mission of compassion. Your gift strengthens formation programs, supports ministries and empowers both diocesan staff and parishioners to be agents of mercy in a world that longs for hope. When we give, we form hearts. When we form hearts, we transform lives.

When donors and the faithful in the pews support the formation of pastoral leaders, they themselves become agents of compassion. Your generosity equips priests, deacons, seminarians and lay ministers to accompany others with mercy, ensuring that Christ's love shines in every parish and community. Here, Deacon Dan Dullinger ministers to the elderly through his work as a chaplain.



As we look to the future, let us walk together as agents of compassion and accompaniment, with hearts of mercy. With your prayer, your generosity and your witness, the love of Christ will continue to shine in every corner of our diocese.

To learn more about how your gifts change lives, use your smartphone to view our video.



To give to Bishop's Annual Appeal visit:

www.stcdo.org/annualappeal