

from the

Office of Communication
DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO

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News Release

Diocese announces new Diocesan Office and other appointments to Diocesan Administrative Offices

KALAMAZOO, MI (August 7, 2024): Bishop Edward M. Lohse has created a new diocesan office to enhance the Christian formation of youth, has restructured some other offices, and has appointed new individuals in diocesan administration.

Office of the Episcopal Delegate for Christian Formation

Bishop Edward M. Lohse has appointed the **Reverend John Fleckenstein** to the newly created position of **Episcopal Delegate for Christian Formation**. Bishop Lohse created this office to more effectively develop and coordinate a shared vision for the Christian formation of youth and young adults among the various ministries engaged in that work. The Episcopal Delegate will bring together leaders in Catholic schools, youth ministry, young adult ministry, religious education programs, homeschool cooperative programs, and other homeschool initiatives to develop a common diocesan vision for the formation of youth and to promote resource sharing and mutual support among these groups.

The position of Episcopal Delegate does not have governing authority, but rather Bishop Lohse's vision is to bring leaders of the various youth formation ministries to the same table to work together for the betterment of all. These include traditional ministries such as Catholic schools, religious education programs, and youth ministry and also newer initiatives such as parent homeschool cooperative programs. The newest of these cooperative programs (the Knights of Our Lady) will begin operating this fall in the former Saint Margaret School in Otsego with the hope of developing eventually into a fully accredited high school. Several other such cooperative programs are already operating in the diocese.

"The creation of this new position is critical in our developing a shared vision of the Christian formation of the whole person as understood in the Catholic tradition," states Bishop Lohse, "not only in terms of a solid understanding and commitment to Catholic doctrine and sacramental practice but also growth in virtue, a generous commitment to service, moral uprightness, and missionary discipleship." The role of the Episcopal Delegate is part-time, and Father Fleckenstein will remain as Pastor of St. Joseph Parish in St. Joseph, St. Joseph Parish in Watervliet, and SS. John&Bernard Parish in Benton Harbor.

Superintendent for Catholic Schools

Bishop Lohse has appointed **Dr. Jillian Kellough** as **Superintendent for Catholic Schools**. Dr. Kellough was most recently Associate Superintendent, a position she held since 2018. She brings a wealth of experience to her role in the areas of curriculum and Catholic school education. Dr. Kellough is encouraged by the bishop's call to develop a shared vision for the Christian formation of youth solidly rooted in the Catholic tradition. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from Aquinas College and her PhD in education from Trinity College, Dublin. The previous Superintendent, Margaret Erich, retired on June 30, 2024.

Chief Finance Office

Ms. Tammi Wachterhauser has been appointed **Chief Finance Officer**. Ms. Wachterhauser was most recently named interim Chief Finance Officer. She had been serving also as the HR/IT Director and Business Office Accountant. In her new role, she will oversee diocesan finances, continue as Director of IT and serve as Director of the Business Office. Ms. Wachterhauser began her work with the diocese in 2007. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration with a concentration in management from Siena Heights University. The previous Chief Finance Officer, Tim Meeker, retired on June 30, 2024.

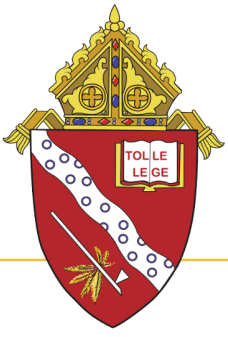
Office for the Protection of Children and Youth

The Very Reverend Fabio Garzon, Vicar General, has been appointed as **Director of the Office for the Protection of Children and Youth** (newly renamed by Bishop Lohse; the office was previously called The Office of Safe Environment). This position, which in most dioceses is held by the Vicar General, has been vacant for some time in the Diocese of Kalamazoo. Ms. Marina Hentz will continue to serve as Associate Director with the same duties as before, a role she has been doing since 2016. The office monitors compliance in child and youth protection policies and promotes safe environments for children and youth.

With the recent appointments of Father Garzon to the vacant position of Director and of Deacon David Krajewski as Victim Assistance Coordinator, together with the continued ministry of Ms. Hentz, the Diocese of Kalamazoo once again has a full complement of persons working in the Office for the Protection of Children and Youth.

Office of Worship

Bishop Lohse has appointed **Mr. Jamin Herold** as **Director of the Office of Worship**. In this role, he will oversee the preparation of and will assist with the celebration of diocesan and episcopal liturgies. Mr. Herold will continue in his role as Executive Director of Parish Life and Lay Leadership ministry offices. The Reverend Jeffrey Hanley concludes his appointment as Director of the Office of Worship while remaining as Vice-Chancellor and as Pastor, St. Rose of Lima and St Cyril Parishes.



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Hispanic Ministry and Outreach and Sanctity of the Human Person

Two ministry areas that moved under the umbrella of Catholic Charities Diocese of Kalamazoo in 2021 have returned to the Diocesan Administrative Offices, effective July 1, 2024. The first of these ministries is **Hispanic Ministry and Outreach** and the second is **Sanctity of the Human Person**. These two ministries will come under the Office for Parish Life and Lay Leadership under the direction of Mr. Jamin Herold as Executive Director. **Mrs. Veronica Rodriguez** has rejoined the Diocesan Administrative Offices as Associate Director of Hispanic Ministry and Outreach. Additionally, **Mrs. Maggie Salas** joins as part-time administration for this ministry office. Ms. Lisa Irwin, who had previously led the Sanctity of the Human Person ministry, retired from Catholic Charities on August 2, 2024. **Mrs. Socorro Truchan**, Associate Director, Marriage and Family, will add pro-life ministries to her responsibilities.

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The Catholic Diocese of Kalamazoo was founded in 1971. It encompasses 5,337 square miles of nine counties in southwest Michigan: Allegan, Barry, Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph and Branch and includes 59 parishes and missions as well as 20 Catholic schools.
www.diokzoo.org.