

Bishop's Letter

I have chosen you from the world, says the Lord, to go and bear fruit that will remain

My Beloved Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

We are chosen by God for God. He created us; we are His. He asks that we bring forth His goodness in all that we are; with all our mind, heart, spirit and strength to allow His covenant to flourish across the land. As we celebrate the twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, October 4, we recall a cherished saint, Francis of Assisi, whose feast day is October 4. Pope Leo XIV proclaimed a special Jubilee Year of Saint Francis which began January 10 and ends January 10, 2027; commemorating the 800th anniversary of the death of Saint Francis of Assisi.

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2027 Diaconate Convocation

Mark your Calendars

Next Convocation will be October 2, 2027. Location TBD.

Couples Retreats

We have the dates for 2027 couples retreats at San Pedro Spiritual Development Center.

"Consuming Love: The Eucharist and Spousal Intimacy"

Led by Fr. Greg Cleveland, OMV | January 22-24

The Eucharistic banquet is the wedding feast of the Lamb. Our union with Jesus in the Eucharist is most truly and fully a marriage which transcends marriage on a human level since God is divine and we as humans are "divinized" by his grace. Since the Eucharist is a wedding feast, the Song of Songs, which portrays a Bridegroom King and his bride queen on their wedding day, becomes the perfect language of love to describe our bond with Christ our Bridegroom.



Fr. Greg Cleveland, OMV, is a native of Chicago and graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in business administration. After working as a marketing manager for a Midwestern railroad company, he followed God's call to priesthood in 1987, joined the Oblates of the Virgin Mary, and attended Our Lady of Grace Seminary and St. John's School of Theology in Boston.

Fr. Greg then served as executive director of the Lanteri Center for Ignatian Spirituality in Denver, Colorado, where he offered spiritual direction and retreats while teaching training programs in these ministries. Currently, he is the Retreat Master at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Retreat and Spirituality Center in Venice, Florida.

"The Missionary in the Mirror: Lessons on our Ministry from Pope Leo."

Led by Deacon Greg Kandra | February 19-21

This retreat draws on the writings and life of Pope Leo and applies some lessons to our lives as deacons. It looks at how we can reconsider ministry as being, really, a mission — one animated by three important elements: prayer, preaching, and presence. Deacon Kandra offers stories of some well-known missionaries and what we can learn from them.



Deacon Greg Kandra is an author, speaker, blogger, and award-winning journalist who may be best known as the creator of the popular blog The Deacon's Bench. Deacon Greg was ordained a deacon for the Diocese of Brooklyn in 2007. He served for 11 years as a senior writer and editor for Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA), a pontifical agency founded by Pope Pius XI in 1926. Before joining CNEWA, Deacon Greg spent nearly three decades in broadcast journalism, most of that time at CBS News, where he was honored with every major award in broadcasting, including three Peabody Awards, three Emmy Awards and four awards from the Writers Guild of America. Deacon Greg is the author of eight books, including "A Deacon Prays" (Ave Maria Press), which won First Place (Prayer) at the 2022 Catholic Media Book Awards. He and his wife live in Apopka, Florida.

March 5-7 – Speaker TBD

April- 23-25 (Spanish)- Speaker TBD

We are finalizing these retreat masters. As soon as San Pedro is ready to take your reservations, we will send the link to register for one of the 2027 retreats.



Updated Diaconate Personnel Manual

Coming Out Soon

It has been seven years since the last update of our Diaconate Personnel Manual, so it was time for a refresh. The policy should be approved by the Bishop soon, but we wanted to highlight the key most relevant changes for our current deacon community.

Diaconal Status: We have revisited the terms used to define a deacon's status to bring clarity and alignment with the priest status. The primary change is that active deacons 75 years of age or older are now classified as Senior (Active); and those who previously requested "Inactive Status," are now classified as Retired. This more accurately describes the status as many of our Retired deacons are still active in limited capacities in their parish or community.

Please note that Senior Deacon is not a title to be used in ministry, as it can be confused with indicating increased responsibility or authority. Also, the term 'Reverend Mr.' has been reserved for many years for transitional deacons ONLY. The only title to be used by a Permanent Deacons is "Deacon."

Parish Employment: It remains the normative policy of the Diocese of Orlando that neither a Deacon nor his wife may be employed at the same parish as the Deacon's ministerial assignment. The policy further clarifies that only the bishop may make an exception to the policy which must be granted based on the needs of the diocese and the unique skills of the individual to be hired prior to employment.

If a deacon wishes to apply for a job with a parish or another diocesan entity he is obligated to inform the hiring authority of this policy and should notify the Office of Permanent Deacons prior to applying to ensure there are no impediments or conflicts.

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.
Pastor: Father Glenn Lopez

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 Dr., Rockledge | Needs a bilingual English/Spanish deacon.
Parochial Administrator: Father Joseph Shaute

St. Mary Magdalen Catholic Church
861 Maitland Ave., Altamonte Springs
Pastor: Father Ralph DuWell

St. John Neumann Catholic Church
501 East Carter Rd. Lakeland, FL
Parochial Administrator: Father Juan Montoya

Ministry Opportunities

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF CENTRAL FLORIDA, PATHWAYS TO CARE

Learn how to volunteer.

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 are having trouble 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

We are looking for deacon couples to lead the Divine Mercy Chaplet on First Fridays at the Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe. For more information, contact **Deacon Joe Gassman.**

MINISTRY TO THE INCARCERATED

". . . in prison and you visited me." (MT 25:36)

For those interested in volunteering at any of the Florida Department of Correction sites:

Click here to learn more and apply

If you want to learn more about this ministry, especially about the good work already being done at the Central Florida Reception Center (CFRC) in Orlando, please reach out to **Deacon Jimmy Avellan**. If you know of prisons or jails that are underserved, please let us know.

Good News

Congratulations to all those who received the Rite of Lector

USCCB

A Portrait of the Permanent Diaconate

Use this link to read the annual report put out by the USCCB.

More than a Cemetery

A sacred place where faith, family and remembrance continue

Choosing Queen of Angels or Our Lady of the Holy Rosary is more than planning for the future. It is an act of stewardship that supports the Church's mission and helps fund ministries that bring comfort, healing, and hope to families throughout Central Florida.

At Queen of Angels every purchase helps support diocesan ministries such as Kingdom of Heaven and Peace in Christ, extending Christ's love, comfort, and hope to others.

Ordained Deacons Incardinated to the Diocese of Orlando, active and retired, receive a discount of fifteen percent (15%) of the total value of all burial rights purchased for the benefit of the Ordained Deacon, the deacon's spouse and the deacon's minor children.

Both cemeteries offer ground burial for full casket and cremated remains, additional columbarium niches for cremated remains, with options that allow spouses and family members to be placed together. Family estates and private mausoleum lots are also available.

Zero-interest payment plans are available to lessen the financial burden. Appointments to meet with one of our counselors are available, **Monday through Friday from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.** and **Saturdays from 10 A.M. to 1 P.M.**

Queen of Angels

1901 Queen of Angels Drive, Winter Park, FL 32792
Phone: *(407) 848-4057*

Our Lady of the Holy Rosary

5010 Holy Rosary Loop, Oxford, FL 34484
Phone: *(352) 306-0123*

SAN PEDRO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

San Damiano Senior Day- The Word and the Bread: St. Francis' Love for Christ with Fr. Francisco Arredondo, OFM Cap.

Thursday, October 8, 2026 | 9 A.M. - 3 P.M.

In honor of the Jubilee Year of St. Francis, this talk will explore St. Francis of Assisi's profound love and reverence for Christ in both the Eucharist and the Word of God, where he recognized the humility and loving presence of Jesus.

View Event

VIVET- Youth and Young Adult Formation & Adoration

Wednesday, October 21, 2026 | 7:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.

All youth and young adults are invited to join the Servants of the Pierced Heartz of Jesus and Mary for Adoration, Praise, Worship and Prayer!

View Event

Fill Your Cup: Stretch and Reflect for Peace with Dawn Marie

Thursday, October 22, 2026 | 7:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.

Join us for gentle stretching, prayer, and reflection inspired by the Peace Prayer and the Franciscan call to become instruments of God's peace.

View Event

Come to the Fountain Healing Prayer

Wednesday, November 4, 2026 | 7:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.

All are invited to join the Servants of the Pierced Hearts of Jesus and Mary to pray the Rosary and other prayers to our Blessed Mother.

View Event

Eucharistic Cenacle

Friday, November 6, 2026 | 7:30 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.

Join the Servants of the Pierced Hearts of Jesus and Mary for Mass, Adoration Praise and Worship and Prayer!

View Event



Liturgical Updates

2027 liturgical Calendar

The 2027 USCCB Liturgical Calendar for the Dioceses of the United States of America is available for download **here**.

2028 Liturgical Calendar

The 2028 USCCB Liturgical Calendar for the Dioceses of the United States of America is available for download **here.**

World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

Resources can be found **here**.

FDLC

Two publishers have been chosen to print the four volumes of the Liturgy of the Hours – Ascension Press and Word on Fire.

- The volumes will be released gradually.
- The first volume to ship will be Volume II – Lent and Easter seasons.
- Each volume will be shipped approximately one month before its permitted first use date.
- It is anticipated that digital and one volume editions will be available by **the first Sunday of Advent 2028**.
- Mandatory use for the revised translation of the Liturgy of the Hours is **the first Sunday of Advent 2028**.

2026-2027 Diocesan Choir

Add your voice to the Diocesan Choir and join a group of singers who share their love for sacred music and inspire one another to enrich the liturgical music at their parishes. The Diocesan Choir sings for diocesan celebrations and special events throughout the year and represents singers from all parishes in the diocese. If you would like more information about joining the Diocesan Choir for future liturgies, please email David McIntyre or call at **(407) 246-4862**.

Fauré Requiem

Must have attended one of the following rehearsals to participate:

Sunday, September 20, 2026 | 2 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. | Our Lady of Lourdes, Melbourne
Sunday, October 11, 2026 | 2 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. | Queen of Peace, Ocala

Sitzprobe:

Sunday, November 1 | 7 P.M. - 8:30 P.M. | San Pedro Spiritual Development Center

Performance:

Sunday, November 8 | 7 P.M. (5:30 Choir Warm Up) | San Pedro Spiritual Development Center

Reserve your tickets here.

Cantor Workshop

October 3rd, 2026 | 9 A.M. - 1 P.M. | Church of the Epiphany, Port Orange

STEP Online Courses

The McGrath Institute for Church Life registration for the 2026-2027 STEP Online Courses is now available.
Online courses range between four and eight weeks long, with most being six weeks in length. Students read texts and watch video lessons before posting weekly assignments, sharing reflections in discussion forums, and participating in real-time online discussions with classmates. **Space is limited. Register early to guarantee enrollment.**

View the STEP Comprehensive Calendar of Courses.

The Essentials of Catholic Liturgy

Registration for The Essentials of Catholic Liturgy + Music Ministry Leadership Certificate Track now open.

Music Directors of all levels are invited to join us for The Essentials of Catholic Liturgy (ECL), an interactive online course by the NPM and LTP (Liturgy Training Publications.) Designed for music and liturgical ministers, it provides foundational worship knowledge, practical skills, and guided feedback required for NPM certification.

Restructured for 2026, the program features live, recorded sessions, assigned readings, and a new Music Ministry Leadership Track.

Click here to learn more and register today.

*NPM members receive an exclusive $50 discount when registering for the **Music Ministry Leadership Certification**; use code **ECL50OFF** when registering.*

Save the Date

Liturgical Boot Camp

October 17, 2026 | Annunciation Catholic Church, Altamonte Springs
For coordinators, directors, and liturgical planners.

Lector Institute

Saturday, October 31 | St. John the Evangelist Catholic Community, Melbourne, FL
Come join us for a lector workshop with Lydia Britton, sponsored by the Office of Worship. Open to parishes in the Diocese, this workshop explores the role of Lectors and their relationship to all the ministers participating in the Mass, as well as the spiritual, theological, and practical components of the ministry. **RSVP here**.

Planning the Seasons

November 7, 2026 | St. Mary Magdalen Catholic Church, Altamonte Springs
Art and environment for Lent. **RSVP here**.

Planning the Seasons

January 16, 2027 | St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, St. Cloud
Proclaiming the Palm Sunday and Good Friday Passions. **RSVP here**.



2026 EMHC Workshops

EMHC Coordinators or Liturgy Directors ONLY:

Please fill out our EMHC Formation Workshop Host Application to schedule a workshop for the Spring 2027 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 Worship. **Click here to visit EMHC webpage and register.**

Nativity, Longwood (CN)
October 10, 2026 (English & Spanish)

St. Theresa, Belleview (N)
October 10, 2026

Divine Mercy, Merritt Island (S)
October 24, 2026

Resurrection, Lakeland (W)
October 24, 2026

St. Stephen, Winter Springs (CN)
November 7, 2026

Happy Birthday

Deacon Bruno Wiencek	89
Deacon Elizer Maldonado	85
Deacon Mike Pettit	82
Deacon Sam Knight	82
Deacon Dan Miller	81
Deacon Antero Santos	81
Deacon Bill O'Brien	80



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

English - Friday, October 30th

Mary, Mother of God Chapel
San Pedro Spiritual Development Center

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DIOCESAN CALENDAR



CLICK TO VIEW DIOCESAN CALENDAR

LITURGICAL CORNER



DIOCESAN LITURGICAL CALENDAR



DIOCESAN BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS



CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE



ANUNCIO DEL BOLETÍN DIOCESANO



MARRIAGE PREPARATION



DIRECTOR'S NOTES FOR DEACONS
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