



# State of the Diocese of Fall River Report

2020-2024



Cover image: 2024 Diocesan Eucharistic Encounter  
Photo by M.J. McDonald for The National Catholic Register

Dear Sisters and Brothers of the Diocese of Fall River,

As I reflect on the past ten years, I am filled with gratitude for the continued faithfulness, resilience, and dedication of our diocesan family. It has now been ten years since I first became the Bishop of Fall River, and since that time, we have journeyed together through periods of challenge, renewal, and transformation.

We have witnessed the continued evolution of our world, facing new uncertainties, and yet, through the grace of God, have remained united in faith. The global pandemic, which so deeply impacted our lives, is now behind us, but the lessons it taught us about solidarity, compassion, and the value of community continue to shape our mission. Additionally, we have worked tirelessly to respond to ongoing social challenges, ensuring that our Diocese stands as a beacon of justice and care for all of God's children.

Over the past ten years, we have expanded and deepened our engagement in several key areas:

**Clergy Support:** More formal efforts to support the health and wellness of our priests were introduced, offering personal and professional growth and development of clergy serving in the Diocese. This ministry is conceived to be holistic in approach, encompassing the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual components of the lives of our clergy.

**Diocese and Parish Evangelization:** We have grown our youth, young adult, and adult programs, recognizing the vital importance of nurturing the faith for current and future generations. We have also supported several parishes that have undergone revitalization efforts, and our ongoing focus on evangelization has borne fruit, with renewed interest in faith formation and parish life across the Diocese. What a joy it was for me to witness more than 1200 faithful participate in our Diocese Eucharistic Revival on September 7, 2024.

**Vocational Development:** Our vocational outreach has been met with increased interest, and I am heartened by the young people answering God's call to serve in the priesthood, religious life, and lay ministry.

**Catholic Charities:** Our social services arm has become even more critical in addressing the needs of the most vulnerable. Whether through food distribution, housing assistance, mental health support, and support for the increasing migrant population, we continue to live out the Gospel call to love our neighbor, especially in times of crisis.

**Catholic Education:** Our Catholic schools are a vital part of the Church's mission to form the next generation of faithful, engaged leaders. Our schools provide an education rooted in faith, moral values, and service, helping students grow into compassionate, responsible citizens. I'm proud of the steps we've taken to maintain our commitment to academic excellence and recognize the importance of a supportive, faith-filled community.

As we enter this next phase, I recognize that while we have achieved much together, there is still much more to be done. The challenges we face are not just administrative or financial but deeply spiritual. We are called to be a Church that listens, a Church that heals, and a Church that continually seeks to reflect the love of Christ to a world in need.

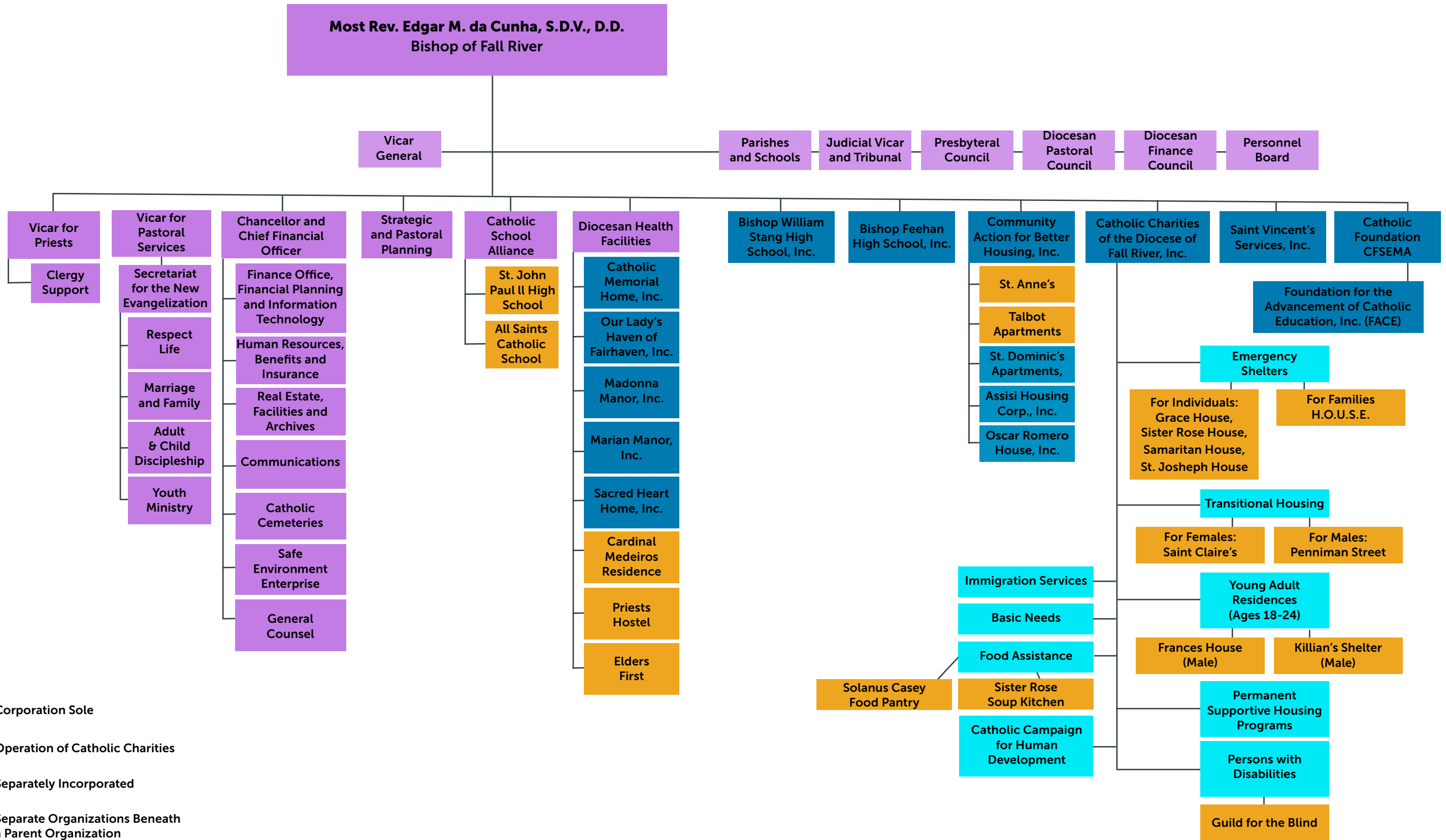
I ask for your continued prayers and support as we build on the foundation we have laid. Our journey is far from over, and your contributions of time, talent, and treasure will remain essential in helping us carry out our mission in the coming years. As always, I welcome your feedback and questions, and I encourage you to reach out to the Chancellor's Office at 508-675-1311 with any inquiries about this latest report.

May we continue to walk together in faith, trust, and love, always striving to fulfill Christ's mission here in the Diocese of Fall River. May Our Lady of the Assumption intercede for us, and may God bless you and your families.

In Christ's Peace,

Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D.  
Bishop of Fall River

# Diocese of Fall River Organization Chart



- Corporation Sole
- Operation of Catholic Charities
- Separately Incorporated
- Separate Organizations Beneath a Parent Organization
- Other Diocesan Ministries included on page 47

# Leadership

Guided by Faith, Leading with Integrity



**Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D.**  
Bishop of Fall River



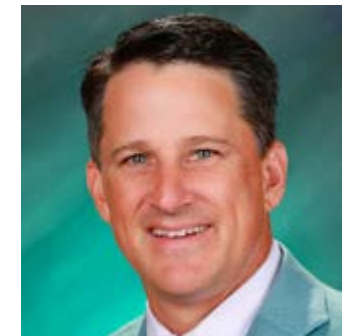
**Very Reverend David C. Frederici**  
Vicar General



**Reverend Timothy P. Reis**  
Vicar for Priests



**Kristen L. Dutra**  
CEO, Saint Vincent's Services



**Timothy Sullivan, Jr.**  
President, Bishop Feehan High School



**James P. Benson**  
President, Bishop Stang High School



**Reverend Monsignor Stephen J. Avila**  
Vicar for Pastoral Services



**Very Reverend Jeffrey Cabral, J.C.L.**  
Judicial Vicar



**Kevin R. Kiley**  
Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer



**Jeff Sherman**  
Executive Director, Community Action for Better Housing



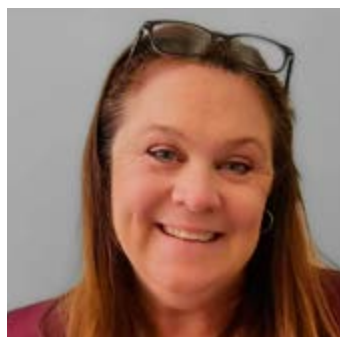
**Joseph Harrington**  
Vice Chancellor for Administration



**Peter Powers**  
Executive Director for Human Resources and Administration



**Miriam Sherman**  
CEO, The Catholic Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts



**Laura M. Carrillo**  
Director of Strategic and Pastoral Planning



**Daniel S. Roy**  
Superintendent of Schools



**Carolyn Shipp**  
Director of Safe Environment and Victim Assistance



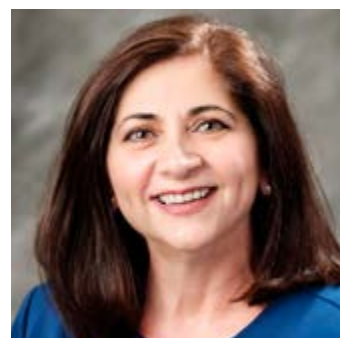
**Michael W. Carroll**  
General Counsel and Chief Legal Officer



**Matthew Robinson**  
Director of Clergy Support



**David G. Carvalho**  
Secretary for the New Evangelization



**Susan Mazzarella**  
CEO, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fall River



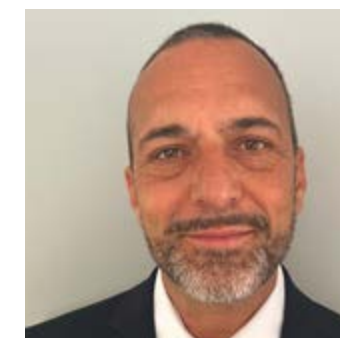
**Joanne M. Roque**  
CEO, Diocesan Health Facilities



**John Kearns**  
Director of Communications



**Paul Brooks**  
Director of Real Estate and Development



**David Raposa**  
Director of Catholic Cemeteries

# Secretariat for the New Evangelization



## MISSION

Our mission is to serve parishes, college campuses, and affiliates in evangelizing and forming engaged disciples for Christ in our Diocese.

## HISTORY

New Evangelization, introduced by Pope St. John Paul II, aims at first reengaging Catholics, with a focus on fallen away Catholics.

In 2021, after the diocesan commission's work on youth and young adults, Bishop da Cunha established the Secretariat for the New Evangelization to bring together the work of the former Faith Formation, Campus Ministry, and Pro-Life offices to work for continual revival in evangelization — aiding people with encountering and proclaiming Jesus Christ — with greater impact.

## PERTINENT BACKGROUND

Over the past three years, the Secretariat for the New Evangelization has focused growth in four key areas:

- Partnering with parishes in evangelization and catechesis through on-demand consultations and direct services. In 2023, the Secretariat provided services to 76% of parishes, an increase of 34% over three years.
- Offering support to parish leaders ranging from formation, to coaching, to more frequent and enhanced communications.



Catholic Youth Day 2023

In 2023, the Secretariat provided direct services to 76% of parishes, an increase of **34%** over three years.

- Providing Adult Sacramental Preparation for over 387 adults for Marriage and Confirmation, with an increase in the number of parishes utilizing better means of marriage preparation, such as the FOCCUS marriage inventory.
- Offering at-large evangelization opportunities in the Diocese, which in 2023 garnered 3,483 individuals for in-person attendance, a 300% increase over three years.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Serving parish leaders through:

- The Annual Parish Leader Convocation with Bishop da Cunha, which serves as commencement and development for parish, ministry, and catechetical leaders and volunteers ahead of Catechetical Sunday.
- Formation experiences, such as The Peak Planning Summit, which aid parish leaders to evaluate and set the course for the future in parish catechesis and evangelization.
- Cohorts and Coaching groups, providing networking and development for leaders in the areas of catechesis, youth ministry, RCIA, and family formation.
- Weekly "In the Know" e-updates with resources and pertinent evangelization and catechesis information in the Diocese.
- An online community platform, providing a central location for resources, online courses, interviews with experts, discussion and forums, as well as a YouTube Channel, with over 24 hours of evangelization training and content.
- "The Catechist Lab" training series for parish catechists and volunteers.
- One-on-one consultations and planning for parish catechetical programs, volunteer recruitment, parish evangelization, hospitality, and outreach.

### Serving marriages through:

- "At the Table" Marriage Preparation for engaged couples.

- Remarriage Preparation, including working with the Tribunal when necessary.
- Implementation, processing and training of clergy in the FOCCUS premarital inventory, to aid in marriage preparation and counseling at the parish level.
- The Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass with Bishop da Cunha on World Marriage Sunday, 2024 saw over 90 couples and over 3,000 years of marriage collectively among all the couples.
- Natural, Family Planning awareness education and formation.
- Ongoing marriage enrichment resources and referrals.

### Serving young people through:

- The Annual Catholic Youth Day, the Diocese version of the Church's World Youth Day, celebrated a 40% attendance increase from 2022-2023.
- Four annual Regional Confirmation retreats, and coordinated Parish-specific retreats.
- The Annual YES! Retreat for post-Confirmation youth.
- The Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) that boasts over 400 youth on 50 basketball teams, connecting faith with sports.
- The RNow Youth Discipleship Institute that trains and forms post-Confirmation youth to equip the next generation in parishes.
- The Annual Diocesan trip to the Steubenville Youth Conference, which saw a 50% increase from 2023-2024.

- The Annual St. Pius X Youth Awards to honor young people in parishes.
- “EPIC” youth ministry training to aid parishes forming teams to better serve young people, and launch youth ministries.

### Serving young adults through:

- The diocesan trip to World Youth Day, including most recently to World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon.
- The Newman Catholic Center in Dartmouth - Masses, Sacraments, small groups, social opportunities, and RCIA preparation.
- The UMass Dartmouth Catholic Campus Ministry, which provides Mass and Sacraments on campus, a formation series, and experiences to evangelize the campus.
- Young Adult Peer Leaders, NOVUS, and First-Year 5 initiatives to support Catholic college students on the UMass Dartmouth campus.
- Young Adult Fall and Spring Retreats for

young adults and college students, including a national conference (SEEK).

### Serving adults through:

- The Annual Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion with Bishop da Cunha for adults entering the Catholic Church.
- The Annual RCIA Retreat for catechumens, candidates, and RCIA teams.
- Adult Confirmation Preparation courses and Liturgies for the Diocese.
- Men’s Ministries in every deanery.
- The Annual Men’s Meat N’ Greet to help evangelize men, boasting well over 50lbs of bacon and meat, outdoor activities and Catholic speaker.
- The Annual Advent Women’s Retreat to help women encounter the Lord.
- RCIA and adult formation trainings to establish parish teams.

- Parent formation, including “Family Matters” series.

### Serving Respect Life through:

- The Annual October Respect Life Mass and Conference
- Walking with Mom’s in Need initiative where Catholic parishes provide support to pregnant and parenting women in need.
- Annual Pro-Life Catholic School Essay Contest, with junior division and high school division winners honored at Mass with Bishop da Cunha.
- Assistance in forming and training parish Pro-Life Committees.
- *Project Rachel* post-abortion ministry to provide care and support for those after an abortion.
- Resources, materials, and homily-helpers on Respect Life topics.

## THE SECRETARIAT HAS ALSO WORKED TO STRENGTHEN EVANGELIZATION AND CATECHESIS IN THE DIOCESE BY:

- Partnering with the University of Notre Dame’s McGrath Institute for Church Life’s Echo program, aiding select parishes with pastoral staffing needs with Echo apprentices.
- Creating and promoting media evangelization campaigns, including testimonial and video ads inviting people to their parishes for Christmas and promoting Eucharistic devotion, together garnering over 29,000 views.
- Offering professional development for Catholic school teachers, and student retreats on-demand.

### Coordinating the Diocese of Fall River’s Eucharistic Revival, including:

- Planning and overseeing the Diocesan Eucharistic Encounter in September 2024, with over 1100 faithful attending from across the Diocese.
- Planning of the Revival Launch Mass and Eucharistic Procession in June 2022.
- Organizing Diocesan Eucharistic Formation with Dr. Edward Sri, Dr. Timothy O’Malley, and Sr. Alicia Torres, F.E.
- Facilitating Diocesan Eucharistic Nights and Relics Tour, featuring the relics of Blessed Carlo Acutis and St. Manuel Gonzalez Garcia, as well as Eucharistic Preacher Fr. Roger Landry, who reached 1,900 people in one week in person.
- Partnering with the “I AM HERE” campaign and the ArchDiocese of Detroit to make Eucharistic testimonies, free materials from Hallow App, and Adoration times available to the public.
- Overseeing the Diocesan Eucharistic Miracle Exhibit, which has visited parishes and schools throughout the Diocese.
- Supporting parishes with Eucharistic formation, working with parish leaders to foster Eucharistic Revival.

### CONTACT:

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2024 Diocesan Eucharistic Encounter

Photo by M.J. McDonald for The National Catholic Register



# Diocese of Fall River Catholic Schools Office



Our mission is to work in a spirit of collaboration, community, and focus on continuous improvement to support the needs of Catholic school leaders, teachers, staff, pastors, and students in our care. We ensure that our Catholic schools are rooted in a strong Catholic identity, are financially sustainable and academically rigorous. We partner with other diocesan entities so that our Catholic schools have access to all resources, guidance, and support necessary to achieve their goals and remain thriving, Christ-centered academic communities.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**Our Catholic Foundation Team helped us steward the Flatley Foundation Grant to accomplish the following:**

- Empower principals as instructional leaders.
- Attract, retain, and grow the teacher pipeline.
- Drive data informed decision making.

**Leveraged Workforce Grant and State DPH Health Grant to:**

- Hire a school nurse manager and adjustment counselors.
- Provide school nurses professional development and bonuses.
- Acquire needed health equipment and resources for schools.
- Engaged in deeper partnership with Boston College's Roche Center and Lynch Leadership Academy to assist in the professional development of school leaders.

- Established a model of partnership between the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) and parish schools using a collaborative process that describes the roles and responsibilities of the pastor, principal, and CSO.
- Advanced special education programs through the partnership and support of the SEAL Foundation and guided schools in the effective use of Title funds.
- Piloted and implemented new ARK faith formation assessment across all elementary schools.
- Implemented a comprehensive professional development program that focused on using MAP data to inform instructional practice.
- Merged St. James-St. John and Holy Family-Holy Name schools to form St. Teresa of Calcutta School in renovated facilities.
- Developed a centralized hub of data and created benchmarks to ensure operational vitality of schools.



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# Clergy Support



## MISSION

Our mission is to support the clergy of the Diocese of Fall River through individual, programmatic, and organizational initiatives that promote health, holiness, and pastoral effectiveness.

## HISTORY

In 2021, the Office of Clergy Support was established under the leadership of the Bishop to support our clergy given the mounting challenges being faced, including the secularization of many parts of our society, declining attendance and financial trends within the Church, continued fallout from the sexual abuse crisis, clergy shortages, and other human factors.

Consequently, the Office of Clergy Support, which functions under the auspices of the Bishop and Vicar for Priests, serves areas that pertain to the personal and professional flourishing of clergy in the Diocese. This ministry was conceived to be holistic in approach, encompassing the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual components of our clergy's lives.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**Professional development and programmatic initiatives for priests with a focus on continuing education, mentorship, and accountability, including:**

- Pastoral Synthesis Program for Newly ordained: a three-year program of continuing education, mentorship, professional development, and accountability.
- New Parish Administrator and Pastor Program: a one-year program with educational, mentorship, and accountability components designed to better prepare priests to assume leadership roles in parishes.
- Priest Mentoring Program: a group of newly trained and experienced priests who mentor other priests in four key areas (i.e., mentorship of newly ordained, mentorship of new parish administrators or pastors, mentorship of priests transitioning into retirement, and mentorship of struggling priests).
- 360 Reviews of Priests: a new process for newly ordained priests and new pastors, which includes survey collection, executive coaching, and the development of a Priesthood Enhancement Plan.
- Virtual Speaker Series for Priests: monthly or bi-monthly webinars for priests highlighting experts in various areas of priestly life and ministry.

## Spiritual Support for Priests

- A diocesan-wide monthly day of prayer and fasting for the priests of Fall River.
- An annual novena for priests that takes place on the nine days leading up to their renewal of vows at the Chrism Mass.

- Spiritual Mothers of Priests Group of 27 women from across the Diocese who pray and fast on a daily basis for their "priest-sons" whom they have spiritually adopted.

## Pastoral Care of Priests

- Routine pastoral visits to sick and aging priests as well as to priests grieving the loss of a family member or friend.
- Monthly support group for priests to gather and support one another through prayer and fraternity.
- Providing an "outside confessor" each month to hear priest confessions at different locations throughout the Diocese, giving priests a less time-consuming way to go to Sacramental Confession.
- Holiday meals for priests who do not have a place to go are now offered at Cardinal Medeiros home on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter.
- Annual days of recollection to enhance priests' spiritual life during important liturgical seasons.
- Weekly gatherings of priests for an hour of prayer and fraternity.
- Monthly gatherings of priests for spiritual renewal through Adoration, Confession, and spiritual conferences.
- Routine pastoral care and team-driven wellness support for priests struggling or unable to exercise public ministry.
- Diocesan Ministerial Care Team: a crisis response group of experts in various disciplines who support priests and parishes in difficult circumstances.

## Physical Health Support for Priests

- Fit From Faith: a 16-week general health and wellness program for priests that focuses on fitness and general wellness within the context of our Catholic faith.

## Care for Retired Priests

- Preparation for Retirement: a new process focusing on priests who turn 65 years old to begin preparing them for their future retirement.
- Newly Retired Priest Orientation: annual workshop for newly retired priests that focuses on the practical, spiritual, physical, vocational, and emotional aspects of retirement.
- Retired Priest Retreat: a new annual retreat offered specifically for retired priests.
- In-home nursing care: a new program offering in-home medical services for retired priests living in private residences throughout the Diocese.

## Organizational Support of Priests

### New Resources for Priests:

- Spiritual Directors: a newly compiled list of local spiritual directors available.
- Outpatient Therapists: a vetted list of experienced mental health providers with Catholic backgrounds available.
- Healing for the Healers: a new healing and deliverance ministry that provides confidential one-on-one healing.
- Local, Regional, and International Ongoing Formation of Priests: Connecting our presbyterate with programs and events for ongoing formation across the region, country, and international community.
- Ministry Relief Services: connecting our priests with various local and regional priests to help fill Parish Sacramental schedules.

- Diocesan Priest Vestment: a new and uniform priest vestment for all diocesan priests to enhance presbyteral identity, fraternity, and unity.



## Communications Updates:

- Newsletter: new monthly newsletter highlighting information and resources from the Clergy Office for our priests.
- Constant Contact: new electronic communications with the presbyterate from the Clergy Office.
- Enhanced Clergy Portal: an electronic storage portal that compiles priestly resources, policies, and initiatives all in one place.
- Celebration of Important Moments: ensuring that our priests are recognized and celebrated on special days in their lives, such as birthdays and ordination anniversaries.
- Our Priests Make a Difference Campaign: a Diocesan-wide initiative where people can submit past, present, and future stories of priests who do a great job. These positive stories are shared with each priest to recognize and celebrate our priests for all the incredible things they do.

An annual novena  
for priests that  
takes place on the

nine  
days

leading up to  
their renewal of  
vows at the  
Chrism Mass.



### CONTACT:

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# Fall River Vocations



## MISSION STATEMENT

In order to promote a culture of vocations in the Fall River Diocese, we engage with and offer resources and programs to anyone discerning a call to priesthood and religious life. Our particular focus is on developing relationships with men who are considering becoming priests in the Diocese of Fall River to help them through the application process to seminary and support them during their formation.

## HISTORY

Since the 1970s there has been a decrease in the number of men and women entering priesthood and religious life in most Dioceses in the United States. Beginning in the 1990s, Bishop Sean O'Malley and the Vocations Office began inviting seminarians and priests from outside the Diocese to supplement homegrown vocations. Under Bishop Coleman and Bishop da Cunha this practice continues to a lesser extent today.

The Vocations Office is led by a priest vocations director, which was once a standalone role. In recent years, both the director and assistant director now also serve as parish pastors or parochial vicars.

In the last five years, Bishop da Cunha has ordained 11 men to the priesthood of Jesus Christ. Currently, the Diocese of Fall River has a total of five seminarians in formation at various seminaries including Immaculate Conception Seminary in South Orange, NJ, St. John's Seminary in Brighton, MA, Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, MD, and Our Lady of Providence Seminary in Providence, RI.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The heart of the Vocations Office's ministry is direct contact with men who are discerning God's call to the priesthood.

- **The Vocation Pathway:** In 2024, the Fall River Diocese Vocations Office launched a new initiative with Vianney Vocations called The Vocation Pathway. This strategy aims to boost priestly vocations by fostering relationships

between men in discernment and trained priests. It includes forming a vocation team, running the Called By Name promotion, leading discernment groups, and sending seminarians to parishes to raise awareness.

- **Regular meetings:** The vocations director and assistant vocations director regularly meet with men to discuss the journey to priesthood.
- **Seminary visits:** scheduled for discerners to get a firsthand look at formation.
- **Seminary visits:** The vocations director visits the men in seminary each semester to encourage them and check in with the formation team.
- **Rebranding of annual dinner:** In 2023, the vocations dinner was rebranded as The St. Andrew's Dinner. Priests submitted potential priesthood candidates. Bishop da Cunha personally invited each young man and his parents to join the seminarians and their pastors for dinner.
- **Marketing rebranding:** In 2023, the Vocations Office revamped its social media presence, created a new logo, and launched baseball card-themed promotional materials in Catholic schools. The vocations director and assistant director visited schools to promote openness to the priesthood.
- **Quo Vadis Days Camp:** The Vocations Offices from the Catholic Dioceses of Massachusetts work together each summer for the Quo Vadis Days Camp for high school young men.
- **World Youth Day:** In collaboration with the Secretariat of the New Evangelization, the Office of Vocations has also participated in World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon, Portugal, the Basketball Jamboree, Catholic Youth Day, and the Men's Meat and Greet.



## CONTACT:

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# Permanent Diaconate



## MISSION

Our mission is to provide competent, well-educated, spiritually formed and pastorally skilled deacons who will work with the Bishop, priests, and lay pastoral leaders to meet the ministerial and pastoral needs of the people of the Diocese of Fall River.

The Four Pillars of Formation are to develop the human, intellectual, spiritual, and pastoral dimensions of all the deacons.

## HISTORY

On June 18, 1967, in the spirit of Vatican II, Pope Paul VI restored the Order of Deacon as a permanent ministry in the Church. In August of 1968, the American Bishops obtained permission to restore this ministry in the United States. In 1977, Bishop Daniel A. Cronin began a deacon formation Program in the Diocese of Fall River. The first class of deacons was ordained in 1980.

Subsequently, the Diocese of Fall River has had 10 classes of permanent deacons ordained for ministry. In 2023, 15 men were ordained, and we currently have 11 candidates in formation for the Class of 2027.

Deacons are members of the clergy, ministering in three dimensions: liturgy, word, and service. At the liturgy, deacons assist the Bishop and priests. At the Mass, the deacon may proclaim the Gospel, preach the homily, and assist at the altar. Deacons may also baptize, witness, and bless marriages, as well as preside at funerals, among many other duties.

## OFFICE OF THE PERMANENT DIACONATE

The organization of the Office of Permanent Diaconate is based solely on the Directory for the Life and Ministry of Deacons. It is used in conjunction with the National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States.

We have a four-year formation period after one year of Aspirancy using the suggested curriculum from the directory. Courses are taught by priests, deacons, and laypeople (all of whom have advanced degrees).

There is a summer internship program offered in years two and three of formation.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Invested in technology to broadcast and record formation classes, allowing candidates to view missed sessions. These classes are also accessible to deacons and their wives for ongoing formation.
- Coordinated an annual Deacon Retreat, with a husbands and wives retreat every third year. The most recent couples retreat is in the fall 2024.
- Celebrated an annual convocation that allows for education and fellowship among all Diocesan deacons.
- Attended the annual Region One Convention of the National Association of Deacon Directors.
- Offered additional days of prayer and study throughout the year. All active deacons are required to complete 30 CEU hours annually.
- Involved the wives of married deacons in varying programs including one specifically designed for them. Wives are required to attend all Aspirancy sessions, and encouraged, but not required, to participate in formation classes. A Wives' Council also meets regularly to discuss opportunities to improve the support of deacon's wives and widows.
- Conducted monthly Deacon Council meetings, with output including a published Deacon Manual. Engaged in ongoing discussion for the betterment of the program in our Diocese and for the ministry of deacons.

To learn more about the Permanent Diaconate go to [www.frpermanentdiaconate.com](http://www.frpermanentdiaconate.com)



In 2023,  
**15**  
men were ordained  
deacons.

### CONTACT:

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# The Catholic Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts (CFSEMA)



## MISSION

### Our mission is to:

- Invite great generosity, safeguard all gifts entrusted to our care, and enable our parishes, schools, and ministries to advance the mission of our Church throughout the Diocese of Fall River.
- Grow in our personal, living relationship with Christ, and commit to strengthening our parishes, schools, and life-changing ministries.
- Lead the Church to a new experience of holiness and abundant life in Christ.
- Share God's love for all people, giving of our time, talent, and treasure in a spirit of love for the Lord.

## HISTORY

Founded in 2018 by Bishop Edgar da Cunha and a group of faithful, committed, and industrious individuals from the Diocese, The Catholic Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts serves the Diocese of Fall River's fundraising needs. Rooted in Catholic faith and tradition, CFSEMA exists to be of service to the Diocese, which includes working with Bishop da Cunha; the agencies, ministries, and programs of the Diocese; our Catholic schools; seminarians, active priests, and retired clergy; individual parishes; Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fall River; the Foundation to Advance Catholic Education (FACE); and one-on-one with individual donors and parishioners.

CFSEMA is incorporated as a separate 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, fully endorsed by the Diocese and the Bishop, Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V. This legal structure ensures that all gifts will be used for their intended purposes and provides a level of

efficiency, accountability, and transparency that earns the respect and confidence of donors as well as the pastors/parishes, schools, and ministries it serves.

All stewardship, development functions, and fundraising within the Diocese fall under the purview of the Foundation.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Catholic Foundation has raised over \$50M in the last five years to support the Diocese of Fall River. CFSEMA executes and sustains traditional areas of support for the Diocese such as the Annual Catholic Appeal and The Foundation to Advance Catholic Education (FACE)—but the Foundation is also cultivating funding for new initiatives such as Planned Giving and the Serving the Shepherds Fund for clergy support, expanding endowments, and garnering support for Cathedral renovations. CFSEMA works closely with Catholic Schools in the Diocese to support, strengthen, and sustain them. CFSEMA collaborates with Bishop da Cunha, the Diocesan Communications Office, and The Anchor Newspaper to enhance communications about these initiatives. CFSEMA has modernized and implemented technology and systems to increase both the efficiency and effectiveness of fundraising efforts across the Diocese.
- CFSEMA provides unmatched knowledge of the Diocese, its parishes, ministries, and culture and is well-acquainted with the faithful and the broader community. CFSEMA is committed to fostering lasting growth in all areas of the Diocese.
- The Foundation has centralized the annual Catholic Appeal and works with every pastor in the Diocese on this annual

initiative. In 2021, CFSEMA began a Grand Annual Program designed for parishes, which has grown by 500% in dollars raised and 250% in parish participation. In 2023 CFSEMA helped parishes raise over \$1M to fund parish initiatives.

The Foundation helps parishes stay true to their mission while providing professional fundraising and communication support. Efforts provide pastoral support across the fundraising spectrum to fundraise "beyond the basket." CFSEMA shares knowledge and resources to support the parishes and countless ministries across the Diocese — including planned and retirement gifts, pledges, major or restricted gifts, capital initiatives, and foundation grants.

## RENEW THE FACE OF THE EARTH



Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth.



83<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL  
DIOCESE OF FALL RIVER

## THE CATHOLIC FOUNDATION BOARD

Bishop Edgar da Cunha

Patrick Carney, Co-Chair

Nick Christ, Co-Chair

George Agostini

Rev. Marcel Bouchard

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Christiine Long

Robert Long

Maryellen Sullivan Hughes

Joe Ciffolillo,  
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Miriam Finn Sherman,  
Chief Executive Officer

## CONTACT:

Miriam Sherman  
Chief Executive Officer  
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catholicfoundationsema.org

# Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fall River (CCFR)



## MISSION

Anchored in faith, our mission is to embrace the dignity of every individual by fostering empowerment, resilience, opportunity, and hope.

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fall River (CCFR) provides support, services, and resources to individuals and families who are navigating a range of challenges such as poverty, homelessness, addiction, mental health, immigration status, and food insecurity. Through acts of charity, advocacy, and community solidarity, CCFR promotes compassion and human dignity. Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fall River embodies *service anchored in faith* — faith in God and faith in the human spirit to overcome challenges and thrive.

## HISTORY

As the human services extension of the Diocese, CCFR has proudly served the community for 100 years, and annually supports more than 27,000 households in the Spirit of God's universal love to advance human dignity, hope, and resilience.

Originally an adoption and welfare agency, CCFR has expanded its scope of services to meet the many changing and diverse needs of society. The core programs are guided by the corporal works of mercy: CCFR feeds the hungry through the Solanus Casey Food Pantry and the Sister Rose Meal Center; welcomes the stranger with an array of immigration and legal services; and shelters the homeless through four individual shelters, family shelter, transitional housing programs for young adults and women re-entering the community from incarceration, and permanent supportive housing.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Identity and Governance

- Rebranded the agency from Catholic Social Services to Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fall River
- Enhanced governance by revising and updating the corporate by-laws; and expanding the Board of Directors to include clergy, chancery members, and laity representing different geographical areas of the Diocese.
- Developed new mission and vision statements, and core values that exemplify the works and the spirit of the organization.
- Hired of key leadership positions in Finance, Operations, Human Resources, and Fundraising.

### COVID-19

- Provided uninterrupted provision of essential services and basic needs throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. When schools and businesses were closed and people were forced to isolate, CCFR's shelters and food pantry remained open and served as a lifeline for resources, support, and connection. CCFR staff bravely ministered to individuals and families each day, providing necessities, information, and comfort.

...annually supports  
more than  
**27,000**  
households in the  
Spirit of God's  
universal love  
to advance human  
dignity, hope,  
and resilience.



### Feeding the hungry

- Sister Rose Meal Center: Expanded operations from five to seven days per week, offering a nutritious hot meal to members of the New Bedford community.
- Solanus Casey Food Pantry: During the pandemic, utilization increased by 168%. On average, 40,000 pounds of food per month passes through the pantry to those struggling with food insecurity, with local Catholic churches donating approximately 5,600 pounds per month of this total. Through donations and foundation grants, the food pantry purchased a new box truck and refrigerated truck to increase the acquisition of perishables that assist in food distribution to individuals who are unable to physically visit the food pantry.

### Sheltering the homeless

- The Executive Office for Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) awarded CCFR the five-year emergency overnight shelter contract to operate the individual shelters in Taunton, New Bedford, and Hyannis, as well as the winter overflow shelter contracts in New Bedford and Hyannis. CCFR has successfully implemented a motel model for cold-weather shelters in these locations.
- In April 2023, the Samaritan shelter in Taunton moved to its new location at 80 Bay St. A former rectory was renovated by the Diocese to accommodate this vital program. Bishop da Cunha offered a special blessing of the shelter's new "home."
- CCFR will be opening a new individual shelter in Attleboro in the fall of 2024, a collaborative effort with legislators and other human service partners to build a facility that will contain an 18-bed shelter on the first floor, and 22 units of permanent supportive housing on the second and third floors. The groundbreaking event for this new cutting-edge facility was in April 2023. (image on page 22)
- EOHLC awarded CCFR the family shelter contract to continue to provide shelter, housing search, case management, and stabilization services to families struggling with homelessness throughout Bristol County. CCFR's "H.O.U.S.E." program (Helping Others Until Self-Empowered) serves 76 families in shelter and ranks number one throughout the Commonwealth for transitioning families from homelessness into their own housing, exceeding its placement goals by over 200%.



- The Executive Office for Health and Human Services awarded a contract for young adults at risk for homelessness that allowed for a model change to scattered site transitional housing — expanding the reach of the program throughout Bristol County, and increasing services to include both young men and women.
- The Chabot Foundation awarded St. Clare's Re-entry and Recovery Transitional Program a generous grant for "Literacy to Lift Lives" — a state-of-the-art computer lab for skill development, training and preparation for successful employment and community re-integration.

### Welcome the stranger

- Expansion of CCFR's Immigration Department with support from community foundations to provide immigrant law education and advocacy; immigrant victim representation; citizen services; immigrant refugee and minority advocacy; and emergency migrant response.
- CCFR's Immigration Department was instrumental in supporting migrant individuals and families from Venezuela when they landed unexpectedly on Martha's Vineyard in 2022.

### New additions

- **Catholic Guild for the Blind:** a service dedicated to the spiritual health and emotional support of those who struggle with blindness and vision loss. The group meets via telephone bi-monthly to pray the Holy Rosary and have discussions about matters of faith and the trials of daily life.
- **Mental Health Ministry:** an accompaniment program of support and acceptance for people with mental health or substance use issues facilitated by a team of volunteer mental health ministers trained by CCFR in mental health, first aid, and companionship.
- **Portuguese Senior Citizen Group:** the regional director for communities from the Azores awarded CCFR \$2,500 to continue this socialization and support group at Santo Cristo Church in Fall River.
- **Volunteers:** Throughout the year, over 200 volunteers donated 9,000 hours of their time and talents to the food pantry, shelters, and immigration department. This is equivalent to approximately \$425,000. A Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon in April 2024 recognized and celebrated their contributions and dedication.

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...over 200 volunteers  
donated

**9,000**

hours of their time  
and talent...

---

#### CONTACT:

Susan Mazzarella,  
M.A., L.S.W.  
Chief Executive Officer  
508-674-4681  
[www.ccfrdioc.org](http://www.ccfrdioc.org)

# Saint Vincent's Services

## MISSION

Our mission is to provide safe, comprehensive care for children, families, and our community through specialized services that build trust, encourage acceptance, and inspire hope.

## HISTORY

Established in 1885 by the Sisters of Mercy as an orphanage, Saint Vincent's Services today is a separately incorporated entity of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fall River and is accredited by the Council on Accreditation. It is a multi-service behavioral health and child welfare trauma treatment organization serving over 1,000 children, youth, and families annually throughout Southeastern Massachusetts and Fall River. Programs and services are continuously refined to meet community needs.

Saint Vincent's Services is comprised of seven residential cottages (residential houses) located on our campus, one community-based group home located in Fall River, one campus-based Young Parent Living Program (YPLP), a Behavioral Health Clinic, supportive youth services (i.e., Life Skills Program and Occupational Therapy), and other administrative buildings. Programs and services include crisis stabilization and diagnostic assessment, outpatient behavioral health, residential treatment programs (congregate care), life skills services, workforce and job development, and aftercare services. We are licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH). Saint Vincent's Services is one of the Commonwealth's largest providers of treatment and care for children and adolescents who cannot remain safely in their homes. Residential programs are staffed 24 hours daily, 365 days per year, for newborns to age 22. Saint Vincent's Services employs 276 staff. Since 2018, Saint Vincent's Services has provided treatment services for over 3,000 clients.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Kristen L. Dutra assumed the role as CEO in April 2022. She is a licensed mental health counselor and has worked at Saint Vincent's Services since February 2000 in several senior management positions, including Clinical Coordinator and Clinical Program Director for the Community-Based Services and Chief Operating Officer.
- In fall 2021, the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) awarded 11 contracts within the Congregate Care Network (residential treatment programs) continuum of service delivery to continue programming and add a new one: the Young Parent Living Program (YPLP) — making Saint Vincent's one of three YPLP programs in Southeastern Massachusetts.
- Established in 2022, YPLP is a collaboration between the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families and the Department of Transitional Assistance to provide independent living services to teen and young adult pregnant and parenting mothers between the ages of 13 and 22 who require temporary supportive housing for themselves and their young children. To date, we have aided 18 families.
- In 2023, Saint Vincent's embarked on a strategic planning process to chart the course for the organization over the next five years, including revising the agency's mission statement and determining alternative revenue streams to better reflect Saint Vincent's Services current services and future direction. The following updated mission statement more accurately encompasses Saint Vincent's Services broad continuum of care today, which includes diverse child- and

family-focused programs: "We are committed to providing safe, comprehensive care for children, families, and our community through specialized services that build trust, encourage acceptance, and inspire hope."

- The Behavioral Health Clinic Expansion Project was completed in fall 2023. The half-million-dollar project added six clinician offices, an expanded waiting room, three family meeting rooms, an administrative wing, a second waiting area on the ground level of the administrative building, and an updated security system. The additional clinician offices will increase the clinic's capacity to serve more outpatient clients.
- In 2023, in partnership with private donors, Saint Vincent's Services completed a \$70,000 Toddler & Preschool Playground Expansion Project for an outdoor playground designed for children ages 2 to 5 for YPLP families.
- The \$20,000 Community Garden Project — including 14 raised garden beds, a storage shed, a greenhouse to supply vegetables year-round, and a two-bin composting system to turn food scraps into nourishing soil — was completed in winter 2024. This project, made possible by special event proceeds and private donors, allows youth to engage in therapeutic activities and hone horticultural skills.

Residential programs are staffed

24 hours daily, 365 days per year, for newborns to age 22.

### CONTACT:

Kristen L. Dutra, MA, LMHC  
Chief Executive Officer  
508-679-8511  
kdutra@stvservices.org



# Diocesan Health Facilities Office



## MISSION

Our mission is to provide extended care to the chronically ill and disabled, with special emphasis on the care of frail elderly.

The Diocesan Health Facilities Office oversees five separately incorporated skilled nursing facilities in Massachusetts within the Diocese of Fall River: Catholic Memorial Home, Fall River; Madonna Manor, North Attleboro; Marian Manor, Taunton; Our Lady's Haven, Fairhaven; and Sacred Heart Home, New Bedford. The Health Facilities Office also includes the EldersFirst program and the management of the Priest Hostel, and the Cardinal Medeiros Residence.

In response to Christ's teachings, facilities include a full spectrum of health care and spiritual care that meets the resident's physical, medical, social, spiritual, and emotional needs that cherishes residents' God-given humanity, dignity, and individuality.

This approach to care — grounded in the religious Sisters who originally staffed our institutions — sets apart our services and compassionate staff from other skilled nursing facilities. We also encourage the involvement of family members and significant others as part of the health care team; collaborate with residents, families, and physicians to create individualized care plans; assist residents in achieving their maximum level of independent living; nurture a home-like atmosphere; and cherish life as a gift that is meaningful — even in its final moments.

We serve residents to the very best of our abilities, both clinically and spiritually, and in accordance with the Religious Directives of the Catholic Church.

## HISTORY

Originally established in 1940, the Diocesan Health Facilities Office provides oversight and management services for the five skilled nursing and rehabilitative care facilities and specialty programs owned and operated by the Diocese of Fall River: Catholic Memorial Home founded in 1939; Sacred Heart Home founded in 1920; Our Lady's Haven of Fairhaven founded in 1945; Madonna Manor founded in 1966; and Marian Manor founded in 1962.

In 1995 the EldersFirst Care Manager program (sponsored by Our Lady's Haven) was started to help older people and their families with senior care and services such as crisis intervention and the coordination of in-home help. The Cardinal Medeiros Residence, a retirement facility for Diocesan priests, expanded from 17 suites to 23 suites in 2010. The Priest Hostel, founded in 1939, provides residence for up to five priests.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Successfully navigated through the turbulence of COVID-19, which greatly impacted the skilled nursing facility industry due to its tragic effect on the residents and families through the three years of increased mandates and precautions. The changes to infection control practices continue through today. Many skilled nursing facilities have been acquired or have shuttered due to the devastating consequences of increased spending on staff, supplies, and

mandates with a decreased census of residents. However, the Diocesan Health Facilities have managed to continue operations while adjusting and pivoting resources to continue our mission to the residents of our facilities and the Diocese.

- Developed new internal policies and procedures regarding finance and human resources.
- Implemented electronic health records which includes the ability to have real-time information of residents' care to improve the quality of care and the safety of residents.

**CONTACT:**  
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www.dhfo.org





# Bishop Feehan High School

## MISSION STATEMENT

Bishop Feehan High School is proudly and enthusiastically a Roman Catholic high school that pursues excellence in Sanctity, Scholarship, and Sportsmanship, represented by our Shamrock. Our school fosters a learning environment — established by the Sisters of Mercy — of faith, compassion, and respect for all. Families and faculty partner to be ministers of the Gospel in both word and action. Bishop Feehan challenges its students to serve their community as disciples of Jesus Christ and to set their hearts “upon things above rather than upon goods of earth” (Col 3:2).

Recent editions of the school’s alumni magazine have featured highly accomplished Shamrocks in Australia, Africa, South America, and across Europe. Lt. General Jonathan Braga (Feehan ’87) — the commanding general of United States Army Special Operations Command — recently returned to the school to share how his Feehan roots have propelled him to a life of service and leadership all across the world.

## HISTORY

Opened in 1961, Bishop Feehan is now well into the school’s seventh decade of educating the young people of the Attleboro area within a rigorous, proudly Catholic, mercy-filled, co-educational, grades 9-12 high school. Today, Feehan serves 1,085 students from more than 70 different cities and towns, spanning three states and five Dioceses.

Feehan’s history can be defined in many ways, including a run through three distinct eras of leadership and governance:

*The Mercy Era:* When Bishop Connolly decided to open a Catholic, diocesan high school for the Attleboro deanery, he invited the Sisters of Mercy to come and staff the school and for several decades, they served as Principal and made up a significant percentage of the faculty.

*Lay Leadership Emerges:* During the 1990s, the first non-Mercy Principal of Feehan was hired and soon after the first lay Principal of Feehan followed. Over time, the faculty became almost entirely lay.. The last Sister of Mercy on staff at Feehan was Sr. Pat Harrington, RSM, who passed away in 2015. This era also saw the emergence of a largely-lay Board of Advisors, formed to assist the school President.

*Separate Incorporation and Board of Limited Jurisdiction* – In 2021, Bishop da Cunha approved the formation of a separately incorporated (though still diocesan and under the faith leadership and oversight of the Bishop) Bishop Feehan High School, Inc. with day-to-day governance in the hands of a newly established Board of Trustees for Bishop Feehan.

## Accomplishments:

- Completed the successful \$13M *Daring to Believe* capital campaign to increase both faculty and staff compensation and financial aid support for students and families.
- Opened the Innovation & Arts Center in 2023, featuring new and rebuilt spaces for the band, chorus and theater programs, and new space for “innovative programs” at Feehan, including robotics, coding, engineering, eSports, and more.
- In 2023, reached a 20-year high in applications.
- Feehan students recorded more than 10,000 service hours in the 2022-2023 academic year.
- Created a new Campus Ministry Student Associate program with hundreds of students applying for leadership positions.

Bishop Feehan’s  
**13,000th**  
graduate received her  
diploma on May 30, 2024

- Comprehensively reworked Feehan’s east athletic fields complex (McGrath Stadium and Beach Field), including two new turf surfaces, lights for the baseball program, and renovated track facility and spectator amenities (completed in summer 2024).
- On May 30, 2024, Bishop Feehan’s 13,000th graduate received her diploma.
- Graduated students who have matriculated to an impressive list of colleges and universities including: Notre Dame, Providence College, Stonehill, Villanova, Harvard, Brown, NYU, and MIT.

**CONTACT:**  
Timothy Sullivan Jr. '87  
President  
tsullivan@bishopheehan.com  
508-226-6223



# Bishop Stang High School

Bishop Stang High School is a Catholic, college-preparatory school called to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ by "making known the goodness of God." We holistically educate a diverse student body in a respectful, nurturing and disciplined environment. Our school family inspires young people to excel in learning and life through growth in faith, integrity, knowledge, and service.

We exist to inspire the growth and development of our students by sharing our passions, faith, and love. We foster talents and ignite voices to encourage students to live out their gifts from God.

## HISTORY

Bishop Stang High School was originally staffed by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur with the mission to educate the poor and serve the needs of others.

It opened in 1959 by Bishop Connolly as the First Coed High School in Diocese of Fall River with a 9th grade class of nearly 200 students.

Dr. Arthur Buckley and Attorney Maurice Downey worked tirelessly to advocate for the opening of a Catholic High School to serve the students of the New Bedford and Dartmouth areas. Dr. Buckley served as the General Chairman of the Campaign Committee, which founded Bishop Stang High School in 1959. The commitment and vision of Dr. Buckley inspired donors to make gifts based on the idea that building Bishop Stang would benefit the entire community. This idea and the funds raised are quite literally the foundation of our school. Attorney Downey worked behind the scenes to raise funds and was involved in advising Bishop Stang for over five decades, and his work continues to influence the success of Bishop Stang today. In addition, he and his wife Anne sent their six children to Bishop Stang and influenced the enrollment of dozens more nieces, nephews, grandchildren, neighbors, and friends who have joined them in supporting the school for generations.

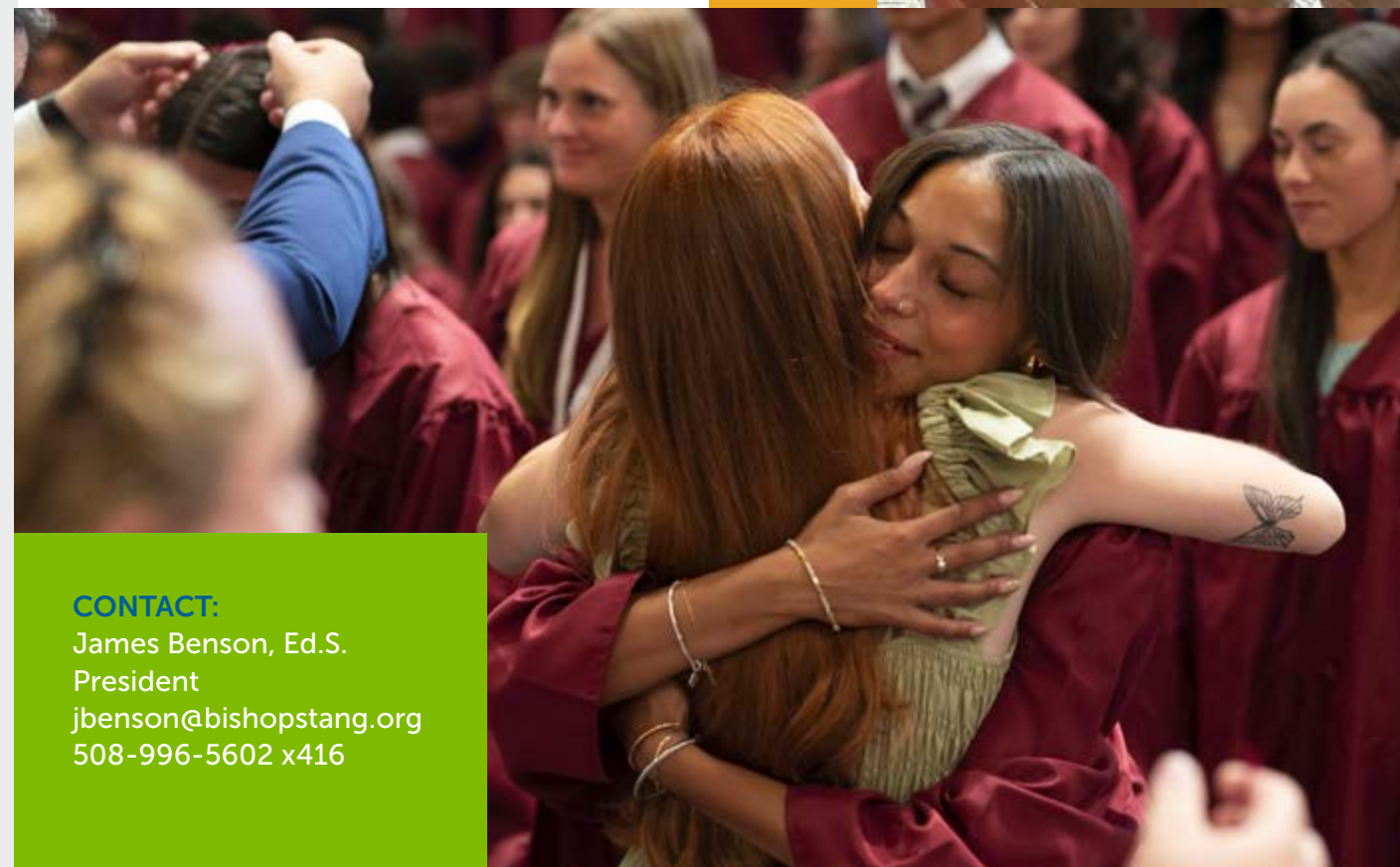
In 2024, Bishop da Cunha approved the formation of a separately incorporated (though still diocesan and under the faith leadership and oversight of the Bishop) Bishop William Stang High School Inc. with day-to-day governance in the hands of a newly established Board of Trustees for Bishop Stang.

## ACOMPLISHMENTS

- About 40% of students receive financial aid.
- The school currently has an endowment of \$4.2M.
- Over 11,000 alumni around the world.
- The school develops critical and creative thinkers, unafraid to express their ideas, adept at navigating complex issues, and prepared to lead a global society.
- All juniors and seniors participate in the Christian Service Program, F.I.A.T. (Faith In Action Together) as part of their graduation requirement. Students are required to complete all components of their chosen F.I.A.T. program. The three required components of each project are education, service performance, and reflection.
- Pathways Approach Program: offers small group and one-on-one support to provide students with the tools to access the curriculum, classroom accommodations and modifications of the curriculum, and access to an Orton-Gillingham trained teacher for reading support. This is a premier program in the Diocese meeting the needs of a variety of students with various learning needs.
- Longstanding mission: The school's goal has remained constant for over 60 years: to inspire young people to excel in learning and in life. Catholic traditions are interwoven throughout the rigorous college preparatory curriculum and extracurricular programs and are taught

by a dedicated faculty and staff in a family-oriented environment.

- The Class of 2024 earned over \$29M in college scholarships; 98% of the class of 172 students have matriculated to college.
- The Catholic Schools Office hired a new President for Bishop Stang in 2022. With the support of Bishop da Cunha the school has transitioned the leadership model to one of President/Principal.
- Since 2020 the school has made over \$5M in capital improvements including a new turf field which opened in the spring of 2022. The school also recently replaced four roofs and added 571 solar panels to meet Pope Francis' call of "ecological spirituality" that he writes of in his encyclical Laudato Si in 2015. These panels will produce enough electricity to power 14M smartphones and eliminate the carbon dioxide emissions equivalent to driving a gas-powered car 542,000 miles. The school is finalizing planning for a new boiler system while embarking on a design for a new Computer Science and Engineering space.



## CONTACT:

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508-996-5602 x416

# Community Action for Better Housing (CABH)

Our mission is to provide human, charitable, and social services in faithfulness to the Gospel through administering affordable housing programs that follow the social teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

## HISTORY

Incorporated in 1995, Community Action for Better Housing is a non-profit affiliated corporation of the Diocese of Fall River with a proven track record of providing housing to some of the most vulnerable members of the Fall River and New Bedford communities.

CABH currently provides approximately 200 rental units ranging from low-income housing for homeless veterans, elderly housing, and male and female transitional housing. We also partner with the Department of Mental Health to provide accommodations for their clients.

CABH continues to address ongoing challenges that include lack of public funds for the creation of affordable housing and the need to combine affordable housing with the provision of supportive services to create stable living conditions for low-income individuals.

## PROJECTS UNDER DEVELOPMENT

### Talbot Apartments repair and renovation

Listed on the State Register of Historic Places, Talbot Apartments (formerly The Hotel Waverly) is in New Bedford, Massachusetts, at the northeast corner of Acushnet Avenue — the main thoroughfare of retail and commercial activity in the North End. Erected in 1901, the building is significant for its association with the area's residential and commercial development and remains one of the area's most well-preserved examples of early 19th-century Queen Anne architecture. A three-alarm fire in November 2022 rendered the Talbot Apartments completely uninhabitable, taking its 26 rental units out of the City's inventory — including units rented to very-low and low-income residents.

The Talbot Apartments renovation project combines historic restoration with the continued stabilization of existing affordable housing. Upon completion in March 2025, the newly preserved 26-unit building will increase the supply of affordable housing to low and very low-income persons by providing mixed-income single-residence occupancy units.

...the newly  
preserved  
**26-unit**  
building will  
increase the supply  
of affordable  
housing to  
low-and very  
low-income  
persons...



#### CONTACT:

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508-997-0130

# Office of the Tribunal and Canonical Services



## MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Office of the Tribunal and Canonical Services, under the guidance of our Bishop, is to reflect and experience Jesus Christ in the ministry of justice through the compassionate and equitable application of Church law and to protect the rights and dignity of each person without discrimination and to provide an opportunity for healing.

In recent years, some unexpected changes in personnel have impacted Tribunal operations, as they would in any Diocese. We recognize that stability and continuity are important for any Tribunal and are pleased to report that the office is now on a firmer footing.

## HISTORY

According to Church law, every Diocese is required to have a Tribunal. It is through the Tribunal that the diocesan bishop exercises his judicial power in the Diocese. Although the diocesan bishop is the chief judge of the Diocese, it is not possible for him to personally adjudicate each and every case. Under the direction of the Judicial Vicar, a staff of specially trained priests and laypeople carries out the ministry of the Tribunal. They also provide canonical advice to the diocesan bishop, members of the diocesan curia, clerics, and the faithful of the Diocese.

The Tribunal is, first and foremost, an official ecclesiastical court of the Roman Catholic Church. Most of the caseload involves parties who have petitioned for an examination of marriages for a possible declaration of nullity, commonly referred to as annulments. The Tribunal also grants permissions and dispensations for marriages, prosecutes or vindicates the rights of physical or juridic persons, and can impose or declare penalties for offenses against Church law.

Currently, the Very Rev. Jeffrey Cabral, JCL, is the Judicial Vicar and Ms. E. Magdalen Ross, JCL, is the Director for Canonical Services.

## HISTORY OF JUDICIAL VICARS/OFFICIALS

Dates Served	Name
12/15/1967 – 03/02/1971	Very Rev. William A. Galvin, J.C.D.
03/03/1971 – 06/30/1989	Rev. Msgr. Henry T. Munroe, P.A.
07/01/1989 – 06/30/2001	Rev. Jay T. Maddock, J.C.L.
07/01/2001 – 09/18/2013	Rev. Paul F. Robinson, O.Carm., J.C.D.
09/19/2013 – present	Very Rev. Jeffrey Cabral, J.C.L.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Implemented the changes to processing marriage nullity cases according to the 2015 *motu proprio* of Pope Francis

- Over the last ten years (2014-2023), the Diocesan Tribunal has:
  - Received 489 cases for nullity in the ordinary process.
  - Decided on 396 cases for nullity in the ordinary process.
  - Decided on 10 cases for nullity in the briefer (bishop's) process.
  - Received and granted 445 cases for nullity due to lack of canonical form.
  - Received 29 other cases for nullity for other special processes.
- Hired a lay canonist as the Director of Canonical Services and Judge in 2023.
- Hired two new secretaries who also serve as Ecclesiastical Notaries (1 full-time and 1 part-time).
- Offered canonical assistance to the Bishop, priests, deacons, and staff of diocesan, parochial and school offices.



**CONTACT:**  
Very Rev. Jeffrey Cabral, J.C.L.  
Judicial Vicar  
jac@dioc-fr.org  
508-675-7150

# Strategic and Pastoral Planning



Our mission is to engage all members of the faith community, inviting them to express their Baptismal call by building up the Church through prayer, discernment, and actions that address community needs today and in the future.

In 2021 Bishop da Cunha published *Journeying Together with Joy on the Path of Faith and Hope* to share his vision for continuing our journey following the significant impacts of the COVID pandemic. Engaging in our past and moving forward aligns with three goals we originally established: renewing our parishes, renewing the ministries of the Diocese, and strengthening support for the clergy.

The Strategic and Pastoral Planning office exists to facilitate strategic planning efforts as well as strengthen the number of vibrant, and mission-driven parishes in the Diocese.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Strategic and Pastoral Planning Office continues to oversee commission recommendations presented by 400 faithful who worked on the six-month planning process in 2019. Over 45 of the approximately 60 recommendations are completed, with current updates at [www.fallriverplanning.org](http://www.fallriverplanning.org).

We have evolved into a proactive resource focused on helping our clergy and parishes through change, and meeting with pastors to share trends and parish statistics, and meeting with parish leaders about the future of the parish and the community. Outcomes of this work include:

- Facilitating mission and vision statement workshops.
- Advising on Parish Council roles and statutes.
- Guiding Strategic Planning in alignment with the Church's synodal process.
- Educating clergy and lay leaders on the process of unifying local parishes.

Since 2019, we have guided 17 parishes across the Diocese from independent parishes or collaborative groupings to unified parishes often with more than one church. Most U.S. Dioceses are moving in the direction of unification to enable more effective use of church buildings, provide better support for clergy, strengthen ministries, and improve administrative efficiency. The process renews our faith as a full community and often leads to worship in fuller churches.

The office is also the primary keeper of Diocesan statistics — including Mass attendance, sacraments, clergy, parishes, and schools — that are reported annually for inclusion in The Official Catholic Directory and to develop Parish Profiles for pastors.

Deanery or Regional Profiles are posted publicly at [www.fallriverplanning.org](http://www.fallriverplanning.org).

The Diocesan Pastoral Council, reformed in 2019, remains active, meeting with the Bishop and staff regularly to discuss and advise on pastoral issues across our Diocese.



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We have evolved into a proactive resource focused on helping our clergy and parishes through change, meeting with pastors to share trends and parish statistics, meeting with parish leaders about the future of the parish and the community.

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### CONTACT:

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Pastoral Planning  
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508-617-5304

To the Catholic Community of the  
Diocese of Fall River,

This second *State of the Diocese Report* is published in conjunction with the tenth anniversary of Bishop da Cunha's installation as Bishop, and in celebration of our Diocese's 120th Anniversary. This report highlights the many accomplishments from our first State of the Diocese Report in 2020, as well as additional achievements over the past decade. It provides valuable insight into the mission, administrative, and financial aspects of our Diocesan organization.

The Chancery Services Team remains dedicated to our mission of ***"Pastorally serving and expertly guiding our parishes, schools, ministries and affiliates so as to foster Christ's work on earth."*** Under the leadership of Bishop da Cunha, we have been able to fulfill many critical priorities regarding the sustainability of the Diocese including:

1. Committing to a culture of service.
2. Providing more support to parishes and schools.
3. Ongoing financial transparency.
4. Publishing an annual audit by a national accounting firm.
5. Acquiring top employee and volunteer talent.
6. Stabilizing the lay pension fund.
7. Guiding parishes, schools, and ministries through the pandemic.
8. Building a culture of child protection.
9. Enhancing efforts in Human Resources, Legal Affairs, and IT.
10. Achieving a multitude of cost savings.

Our commitment to a culture of service means being empathetic and responsive when addressing the needs of our constituents. In past decades, parishes and schools operated in a simpler environment with more parishioners, more students, and fewer regulations. Today, the landscape has changed dramatically, with fewer parishioners and students, more regulations,

and greater financial challenges. Despite these obstacles, our Chancery Services Team stands ready to provide support, and to offer expertise and guidance at any time. Parishes and schools see us more as a trusted partner with every matter or question that gets resolved.

The first audit of the Diocese of Fall River's Chancery Operations was completed in 2017, and are now embarking on the eighth annual audit for Fiscal Year 2024. The most recent audit, for the period ending June 30, 2023, was completed late last year, and the financial highlights are included in this report. All audits are conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS) and have consistently received unmodified, or clean, opinions. Our partnership with the nationally recognized audit firm Grant Thornton, LLP, continues to strengthen our financial integrity. Past audits are available on our website at [www.fallriverdiocese.org](http://www.fallriverdiocese.org).

The Diocese is blessed with a dedicated Chancery Services Team, which oversees finance, information technology, human resources, benefits, payroll, facilities and real estate, safe environment, communications, legal affairs, investigations, cemetery management, and archives. With only a 5% turnover rate over the past five years, our staff's dedication to the mission is remarkable. However, challenges remain. The size and complexity of the Diocese rival those of large corporations, yet we operate with fewer resources and personnel. With staffing growing minimally over the past decade, we remain focused on professional development and continuous improvement. We also benefit from the expertise of numerous lay volunteers who contribute significantly to our mission.

The Diocese was experiencing significant budget deficits over the years requiring the implementation of a parish assessment back in 2016. We continue to identify ways to reduce costs in some areas while investing in others. Our revamped Diocesan investment strategy has considerably lowered fees and increased returns

since 2017. While our Chancery Operations budget is currently sustainable through targeted real estate sales and investment appreciation, further efforts are needed to ensure long-term sustainability. More detailed information regarding the budget is available in the financial highlights section of this report. The Bishop continues to be advised by an extraordinarily talented Diocesan Finance Council charged with the approval and ongoing monitoring of the Chancery Operation budget, Vice-chaired by retired banking executive E. Dennis Kelly, Jr.

Regarding the lay pension plan, the Task Force assembled in 2017 to address the plan's unfunded liability has made extraordinary progress. The plan is now 75% funded, an improvement of 30% since 2017. Earlier this year, we offered participants the option of a lump sum buyout, allowing them control over their retirement assets without negatively affecting the plan's funded status.

Although the pandemic is behind us, its challenges highlighted our team's resilience. Throughout that period, we provided guidance on re-opening churches and schools, safety standards, mass attendance, financial assistance, and federal and state guidelines, helping our parishes and schools navigate in unprecedented times.

Over the past decade, our Safe Environment Enterprise has been organized around two key pillars: prevention and response. There have been various reforms such as adding professional staff, strengthening protocols for handling allegations and responding to victim-survivors, publishing a list of clergy against whom a credible allegation of abuse of a minor was made, requiring all personnel to undergo a background check, agree to a code of conduct and a Safe Environment Training Program, creating a new Ministerial Review Board with an expanded mandate and offering an annual Diocesan Healing Service to pray for and remember victim-survivors.

Our Human Resources Department which includes Payroll and Benefits management provides regular support to our pastors, principals, and

diocesan personnel around employee relations matters, wellness programs, recruiting and hiring, terminations, employee benefits enhancements and offerings, insurance claims, and payroll processing support. Having saved the Diocese millions of dollars in cost savings initiatives over the years, they continue to find ways to obtain the best value from our carriers and vendors.

In-house General Counsel has been a pillar of support to the Bishop and the Diocese regarding governance of our affiliated organizations, complex legal issues at our parishes and schools, reviews of leases and contracts, responding to legal proceedings, etc. Finally, Chancery changed to a new outsourced information technology provider in 2022 after an evaluation of our systems, policies, procedures, and protocols. With the change, a new position was created for more on-site support with copiers, printers, phones and computer/AV equipment.

We rarely celebrate our successes, but this is a suitable time to reflect on all the good that has been and continues to be done in our Diocese every day. The Bishop and Diocese are truly blessed. To our gifted and talented employees, and lay volunteers, Thank you! Without your expertise, there would be no foundation under this very complex organization. To the Presbyterate who work so dutifully and beautifully for Christ in the life of our Diocese, thank you for your Priesthood!

Sincerely,

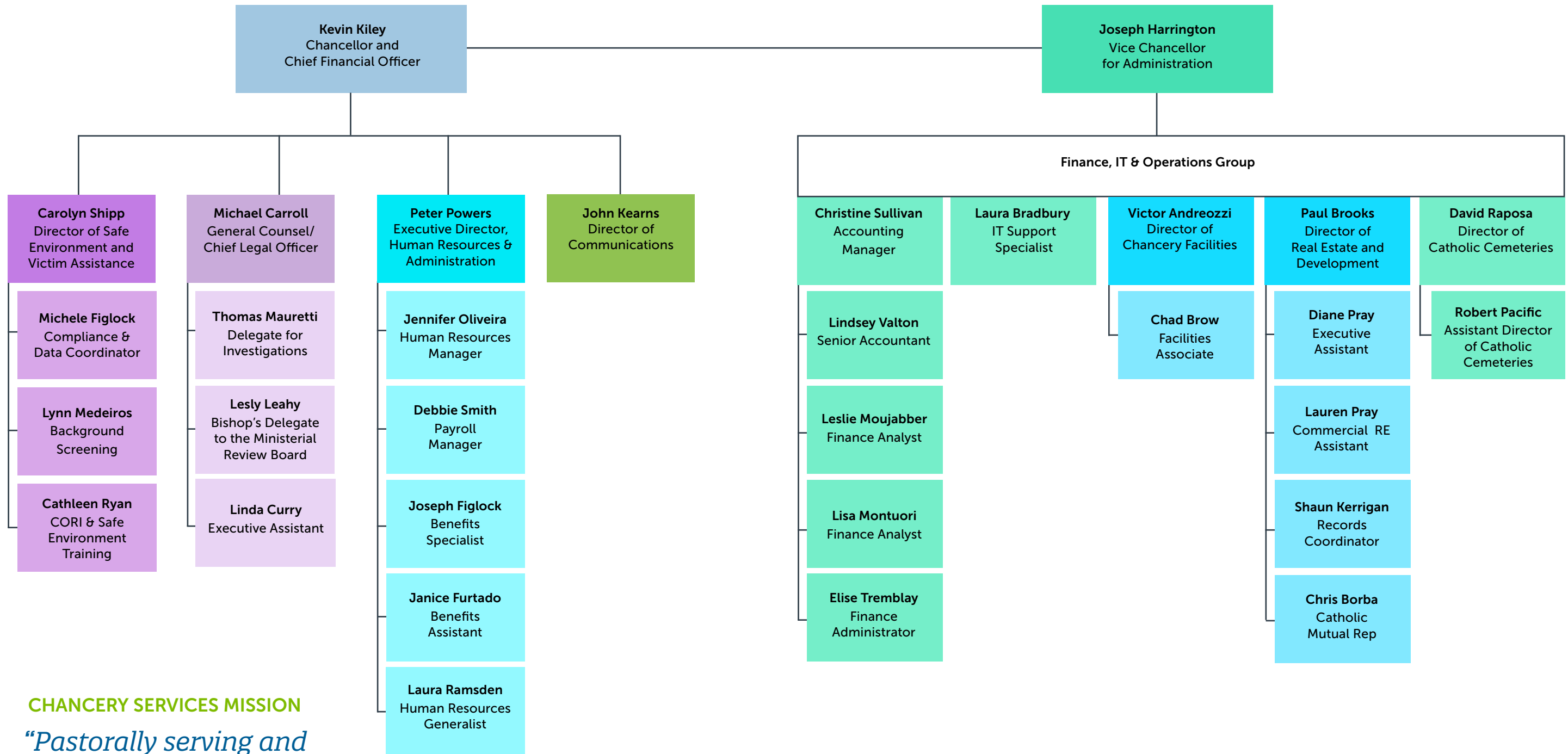


Kevin R. Kiley  
Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer



Office of  
**The Chancellor**

Diocese of Fall River Chancery Operations



**CHANCERY SERVICES MISSION**

*“Pastorally serving and expertly guiding our parishes, schools, ministries, and affiliates so as to foster Christ’s work on earth.”*



## Diocese of Fall River – Additional Diocesan Ministries





# Human Resources



## MISSION

Our mission is to create and implement programs to improve business operations and reduce the Diocese's risk and exposure. We have strengthened Human Resources (HR) and Payroll operations by adding subject matter experts who possess broad knowledge and firsthand skills in all functions of human resources and payroll management.

Competencies include: leadership coaching; labor law/compliance; training and development; process improvement; talent acquisition and retention; compensation; employee benefits; succession planning; policy design and administration; mediation; budget management and forecasting; employee relations; diversity and inclusion; performance management; payroll management; change management; and workplace safety.

## HISTORY

Chancery Operations established its first Human Resources Department in November 2016. The HR Department currently consists of the following six positions: Executive Director of Human Resources and Administration (SHRM Senior Certified Professional); Human Resources Manager (SHRM Senior Certified Professional); Payroll Manager; Benefits Specialist; Benefits Administrator; and Benefits Coordinator.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Manage new Prescription Drug Carve-Out Program that produced a total savings of \$4.4M since being implemented in 2019, with a savings of \$2M in the last two years.
- Implemented SaveOn SP, Manufacturer's Discount Program, saving a total of \$500K since its implementation in 2021.
- Successfully reduced \$1.7M in Massachusetts unemployment penalties for five of our entities down to \$0.
- Assisted the Finance Department in providing information with the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and the Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC), which resulted in \$20M of support for PPP and \$34M of support for ERTC.
- Saved the Diocese hundreds of thousands of dollars each year by leveraging Medicare as our Primary Plan.
- New processing of 22 payrolls for 16 different entities.
- Revised, updated, and distributed four Employee Handbooks in the past 5 years.
- Created, updated, and revised personnel policies and employment contracts for the Catholic Schools Office.
- Developed, revised, and updated personnel policies and procedures within our Diocese.

- Rolled out Annual Employee Service Awards in May 2024, recognizing our employees for attaining milestones in their career, including length of service.
- Developed and annually distributed New Brainshark presentations and a new Employee Benefits Guide for open enrollment and new hires.
- Significantly enhanced our New Hire Orientation through the development of a PowerPoint Presentation, new materials, and a video.
- Developed a training program to educate employees on appropriate and professional conduct, harassment/sexual harassment, bullying, cyber-bullying, hostile work environment and retaliation.
- Formed a new 403(b) Retirement Plan Committee that meets quarterly with our advisor, Gallagher, Inc..
- Engaged in the Wellness Program with participation increasing more than 177%, growing from 44 participants in 2020 to 122 participants in 2024.
- Helped to successfully resolve and/or provide guidance in more than 225 employee relations' matters in the past five5 years.
- Involved with recruiting and hiring more than ninety-eight employees throughout the Diocese the last five years.
- Developed a "Volunteer Package" for our entities to use, including a Volunteer Statement that the volunteer is asked to read, agree and sign prior to any volunteer work being performed.
- Assisted entities with the development of job descriptions and HR/payroll-related forms, and also with the development of job postings.
- Currently offering a lump sum pension buyout to all vested pension participants to allow participants the option of controlling their retirement assets, while strengthening and de-risking the overall status of the plan.

## LONG-TERM GOALS

Long-term goals include standardizing or centralizing as many processes/operations as possible. Significantly improving our communication and relationships with all entities would help ensure that personnel policies and procedures could be as uniform as possible, as it promotes fair and consistent employment practices throughout our Diocese.

It is also a priority to control our employee benefit costs by being creative with plan design changes, cost-sharing when appropriate and other cost-savings programs available to us, so that we can continue to attract top-level talent while being fiscally responsible.

### CONTACT:

Peter Powers, SHRM-SCP  
Executive Director  
ppowers@dioc-fr.org  
508-675-1311

# Office of Finance



## MISSION

Our mission is to support the central administration of the Diocese with accounting, financial planning, accounts payable, billing, accounts receivable, investment management, and information technology support. We assist parishes, schools, and other Diocesan entities with their obligations to be good stewards by building stronger financial systems and assisting with the implementation of best practices.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Assisted parishes, schools, and other Diocesan entities with securing over \$20M in funding from the Payroll Protection Program.
- Assisted parishes, schools, and other Diocesan entities with submitting claims exceeding \$34M related to the Employee Retention Credit.
- Helped parishes, schools, and related entities save \$1.8M in electric bills from participation in our Diocesan energy supply program.
- Partnered with parishes, schools, and related entities on numerous SOLAR installations that will collectively create more than \$10M in economic benefit across entities.
- Implemented a new deposit and loan online tool to allow parishes and schools 24/7 access to depository balances and transactional information.
- Absorbed financial processes related to CYO, Campus Ministry, and Catholic School Offices.
- Creating a new investment option for parishes and schools.
- Created and managed new Diocesan email accounts for all active priests in the Diocese.
- Assisted the Office for Safe Environment with rolling out a new secure interface for parishes, schools, and related entities to submit confidential files.
- Introducing new WEBEX series to assist parishes, schools, and related entities with aligning best practices with Diocesan policies and civil laws.
- Enhanced Chancery data security with the introduction of simulated phishing exercises and multi-factor authentication.
- Through our auditors, Grant Thornton, LLP, annually receive clean opinions for the audits of Chancery Operations, The Catholic Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts, and The Foundation to Advance Catholic Education.

Assisted parishes,  
schools, and other  
Diocesan entities  
with submitting  
claims exceeding  
**\$34M**  
related to the  
Employee  
Retention Credit.



### CONTACT:

Joseph Harrington  
Vice Chancellor  
jharrington@dioc-fr.org  
508-985-6503

Assisted parishes,  
schools, and other  
Diocesan entities with  
securing over \$20M  
in funding from the  
Payroll Protection  
Program.

Improved score  
on the Voice of  
the Faithful Online  
Financial Transparency  
Report from 55 to 92  
points out of 100.

# Facilities and Real Estate



## MISSION

Our mission is to pastorally and expertly steward facilities and land owned by the Diocese of Fall River to advance the mission of the Church. Our goal is to provide support and assistance to the parishes, schools, and ministries of the Diocese and to explore creative ways to maintain buildings and evaluate vacant properties to be both fiscally responsible and in accordance with Catholic teachings and Canon Law. Our Diocesan footprint includes more than 450 individual parcels.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Conducted facilities assessments of all Parochial and Diocesan schools to enable more accurate forecasting for immediate and long-term needs.
- Sought and secured approval from the Holy See for the sale of the former Coyle & Cassidy High School facility and land, in accordance with Canon Law. This was the largest real estate sale in Diocesan history.
- Successfully transitioned several properties previously underutilized, into desperately needed housing and shelters for the homeless.
- Renovated, reorganized, and modernized Diocesan Archives, establishing a more efficient shared space for archived materials and Facilities and Real Estate staff.
- Collaborated with the national conference of facility managers to establish a New England chapter. This resulted in creating a platform where innovative ideas can be shared and fine-tuned for future implementation.
- Continued assessment of the Diocesan Real Estate Portfolio.
- Examined underutilized properties with focus on determining best use (i.e. repurpose, sale or lease),



**CONTACT:**  
Paul F. Brooks, Jr.  
Director of Real Estate  
pbrooks@dioc-fr.org  
508-985-6504  
www.fallriverdiocese.org

# Office of the General Counsel (OGC)



## MISSION

Our mission is to serve as an advocate for, and the chief legal advisor to, the Diocese, to Bishop da Cunha, to all of the parishes, schools, ministries, and various Diocesan entities. Through the use of service level agreements, the OGC also serves in the same role for more than a dozen corporations affiliated with the Roman Catholic Bishop of Fall River, a Corporation Sole.

The OGC is responsible for a wide range of legal matters that protects the Diocese and ensures compliance with federal, state, and local law. Working closely with the Judicial Vicar's office and other qualified canonical advisors, the OGC works to ensure that legal positions taken are consistent and compliant with the Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church.

Diocese in its pastoral, educational, and charitable activities through: faithful legal counsel, protecting the vulnerable, risk management and compliance, stewardship of resources, educational outreach, and pastoral care and support.

## HISTORY

The Diocese of Fall River Office of the General Counsel was formed on December 1, 2019. Prior to that, the Diocese utilized a series of outside law firms to provide legal counsel. Considering the growing complexity of the legal landscape and the need to oversee more specialized outside counsel, Bishop da Cunha felt it was necessary to have a full-time General Counsel dedicated exclusively to representing the Diocese and its affiliated entities.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Updated corporate bylaws for the entities affiliated with the Diocese, to ensure compliance with applicable law as well as clarity and best practices.

- Created and updated policies, in collaboration with the Offices of Safe Environment, Human Resources, Finance, Clergy Support, and others, incorporate Canonical Law, ethical considerations, and feedback from ecclesiastical authorities.
- Analyzed and advised on COVID-19 laws, working closely with Diocesan leadership, to leverage federal COVID-19 relief programs to secure financial support for their operations during the pandemic, ensuring continued services and assistance to their communities.
- Implemented Real Estate Transactions, working closely with the Office of Facilities and Real Estate, to oversee major real estate transactions that support the Diocese's mission and financial health.
- Negotiated and drafted contractual agreements including those that involve construction and rehabilitation of facilities, working with vendors for IT support and, financial audits.
- Handled clergy misconduct cases with sensitivity and integrity, working toward justice and healing for victim-survivors. This responsibility includes being a point of contact with law enforcement authorities, negotiating civil settlements, and conducting internal investigations.
- Regular training of new pastors, school leaders, and others on compliance with Diocesan policies and procedures as well as compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

**CONTACT:**  
Michael W. Carroll  
General Counsel/Chief  
Legal Officer  
508-617-5307  
mcarroll@dioc-fr.org

# Office of Safe Environment (OSE)



## MISSION

Our mission is to create a culture of protection throughout the Diocese by implementing effective policies to prevent abuse and misconduct, to hold perpetrators accountable, and to bring healing to those harmed.

## HISTORY

The Safe Environment Enterprise helps the Diocese of Fall River implement the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, more commonly known as the Dallas Charter. Established by the USCCB in 2002, the Dallas Charter is a comprehensive set of guidelines for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy, preventing future acts of abuse, working toward reconciliation with those harmed by abuse, and establishing accountability for abusers and those with authority in the Church.

The Safe Environment Enterprise is organized around the pillars of prevention and response. To prevent abuse from occurring, we oversee compliance with the "Essential Three" process for all who minister, work, or volunteer within the Diocese. The process includes a criminal background check, safe environment training to recognize signs of abuse, and adherence to a Code of Conduct. In addition, OSE oversees implementation of *Circle of Grace*, the youth safe environment curriculum, in all our schools and parish Faith Formation programs. *Circle of Grace* teaches children important safety skills including recognizing appropriate physical, emotional, and spiritual boundaries; identifying trusted adults; and taking action if boundary violations occur.

The Safe Environment Enterprise provides for the effective response to reports of abuse and misconduct by ensuring implementation of the Diocesan Policy for Protecting the Faithful. This policy outlines procedures for reporting abuse, cooperating with civil authorities on investigations, conducting thorough internal investigations when appropriate, and holding perpetrators accountable. The Director of Safe Environment and Victim Assistance provides pastoral care and outreach to those who report abuse, plans the annual Prayer Service for Healing, and accompanies victims-survivors through and beyond the investigation period. In addition, the Office of Safe Environment completes annual audits, and provides consultation and training to schools and parishes on mandated reporting, boundary violations, and best practices in abuse prevention.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Voice of the Faithful, an independent lay Catholic group focused on ensuring transparency in the Church, ranked the Diocese of Fall River #3 among 177 Dioceses nationwide in its 2023 report, *Measuring Abuse Prevention and Safe Environment Programs as Reported Online in Diocesan Policies and Practices*. The Diocese scored 95 points out of 100 in a review of 10 categories.
- Conducted criminal background checks on and provided safe environment training to more than 35,000 clergy, employees, and volunteers during the past 10 years.
- Trained an average of 15,000 youth per year in *Circle of Grace* youth safe environment curriculum.

- Moved compliance data into CMG Connect, a more modern and intuitive database, allowing for better management of compliance by parish and school safe environment compliance coordinators.
- Conducted ongoing parish visits to assess safe environment compliance and provide assistance and training to pastors and parish staff.
- Researched and implemented a new Incident Management Database *Awareity*.
- Partnered with a vendor to conduct international background checks when appropriate.
- Published list of Credibly Accused Clergy.
- Updated the Diocesan Policy for Protecting the Faithful.
- Assisted in creating a Ministerial Care Team that responds to parishes or schools when a crisis has occurred.
- Developed relationships with colleagues from Dioceses around the country to share ideas and best practices and facilitates quarterly regional meetings.
- Currently working with Office of Vocations to update screening process for seminarians.



Trained an average of  
**15,000**  
youth per year in  
*Circle of Grace*  
youth safe environment curriculum.

**CONTACT:**  
Carolyn Shipp  
Director of Safe Environment and Victim Assistance  
cshipp@dioc-fr.org  
508-985-6508

# Catholic Cemeteries



## MISSION

Our mission is to ensure a proper and respectful Catholic burial in accordance with the precepts of the Roman Catholic Church and in fulfillment of the corporal work of mercy to bury the dead.

Catholic Cemeteries in the Diocese of Fall River carry out the sacred duty of providing a dignified Christian burial for all our beloved faithful departed. Our cemeteries are sacred, holy, and peaceful places of honor and respect for those who have passed before us. They are places for prayer, reflection, hope, and remembrance — and are extensions of our parishes. Just as the faithful have shared and celebrated in the community of the Church, so in death their bodies rest with other deceased members of this community, awaiting the day when God will raise their mortal bodies to glory.

We currently operate and maintain 15 diocesan cemeteries encompassing over 600 acres of land serving the communities of Taunton, Fall River and New Bedford, Massachusetts. Over 245,000 people are currently buried in diocesan cemeteries, and approximately 1,400 internments and entombments are held each year.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

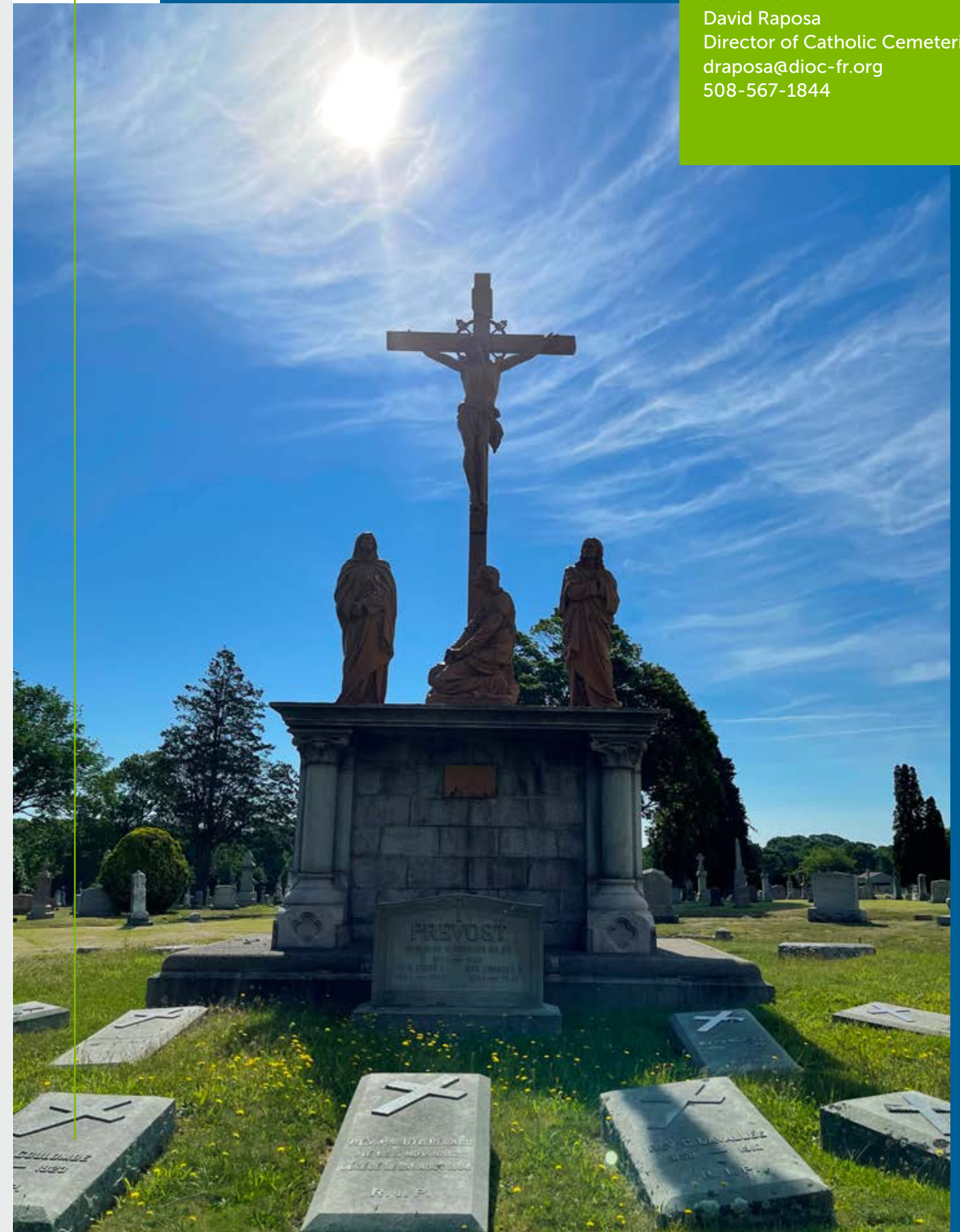
- Completed a review of all administrative tasks and implemented upgrades to bookkeeping and IT processes.
- Implemented new procedures and pricing to ensure that all cemeteries are consistent and compliant.
- Completed important facility upgrades to cemetery maintenance buildings.
- Established a uniform policy for all field employees to create a more professional atmosphere.
- Created new burial spaces in cemeteries that were previously not available.
- Engaged with pastors to expand Diocese support for parish cemeteries.
- Introduced our first website dedicated to diocesan cemeteries:  
[www.fallrivercatholiccemeteries.org](http://www.fallrivercatholiccemeteries.org)

## FUTURE INITIATIVES

- Developing plans to expand mausoleum offerings for the first time in over 20 years.
- Embarking on an effort to form a new cemeteries governance structure.

## CONTACT:

David Raposa  
Director of Catholic Cemeteries  
[draposa@dioc-fr.org](mailto:draposa@dioc-fr.org)  
508-567-1844



# Office of Communications

## MISSION

Our mission is to hear the Gospel and the work of the Diocese of Fall River using communications and technology — specifically through traditional and digital media platforms, media relations, and our Diocesan website. Collectively, these efforts aim to share the vision and voice of Bishop da Cunha to highlight the many ways in which the Catholic faith is lived and celebrated in our parishes, ministries, and schools; and to enhance engagement with the faithful.

## HISTORY

Communications has been critical to the mission of the Diocese of Fall River since its establishment 120 years ago. In the early decades it was done primarily through the written and spoken word until new technologies became affordable and additional media channels available.

*The Anchor* newspaper was launched in 1957 and a weekly television Mass broadcast in 1963. In 1977, the then Priest Editor of *The Anchor* was appointed to the new position of Diocesan director of communications. A few years later, in 1984, an Office of Communications was established, and a layperson brought on staff. The first Diocesan website was launched in 2000 with continual updates. A weekly Bishop's Blog was started in 2019, and in recent years, Diocesan use of social media has steadily grown across multiple platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Launched a new website with a design that fosters improved communication, engagement, and accessibility across multiple devices of several Diocesan entities. Updates were informed by a cross-functional committee that worked with an outside web developer/designer.
- Increased social media presence, with the support of a part-time social media evangelist, by ensuring consistent posts across several platforms. Includes: messages from Bishop da Cunha, special liturgies, and ordinations on The Diocesan YouTube channel.
- Expanded followers and content for Bishop da Cunha's weekly blog, "Building Faith."
- Hired a new editor of *The Anchor* who is a journalist with 25-plus years' experience.
- Continued to share news and events on all available outlets and channels — religious and secular, traditional, and new media.



**CONTACT:**  
John E. Kearns Jr.  
Director of  
Communications  
jkearns@dioc-fr.org  
508-675-1311 ext. 6512

# Recognition of our Talented Lay and Clergy Faithful

## PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Most Reverend Bishop Edgar M da Cunha S.D.V., D.D.

Very Rev. David C. Frederici, *Vicar General*

Rev. Msgr. Stephen J. Avila, *Vicar for Pastoral Services*

Rev. Timothy P. Reis, *Vicar for Priests*

Very Rev. David A. Costa, V.F.

Very Rev. Gregory A. Mathias, V.F.

Very Rev. Riley J. Williams, V.F.

Very Rev. Christopher M. Peschel, V.F.

Very Rev. Neil F. Wack, C.S.C., V.F.

Very Rev. Jeffrey Cabral, J.C.L.

Rev. Jon-Paul Gallant

Rev. Matthew Gill

Rev. Edward J. Healey

Rev. Matthew F. Laird

Rev. Daniel Nunes

Rev. Craig A. Pregana

Rev. John M. Schrader

## PASTORAL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Most Reverend Bishop Edgar M da Cunha S.D.V., D.D.

Very Reverend David Frederici, *Vicar General*

Christopher Fortier

Richard Grace

Deacon Peter Guresh

Rev. Ryan Healy

Virginia Jacques

Peter Marshall

Rev. Juan Carlos Munoz-Montoya

Michael Murray

Joseph O'Keefe

Cheryl Paulo

David Rose

Jennifer Sheytanian

Carrie Smith

Joseph Sollecito

Ellen Sullivan

Nancy Sylvester

Staff: Laura Carrillo, and Deacon Joseph Harrington

## FINANCE COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Most Reverend Bishop Edgar M da Cunha S.D.V., D.D.

Very Reverend David Frederici, *Vicar General*

Cynthia R. Baptiste, CMA

Paula A. Freitas

E. Dennis Kelly Jr.

Dennis F. Leahy, CPA

Jean MacCormack, Ph.D.

Carl Taber

Sandra Sevigney

Staff: Kevin Kiley, Joseph Harrington, Michael Carroll,  
and Paul Brooks

# Report of Independent Certified Public Accountants



**GRANT THORNTON LLP**  
75 State Street, 13th Floor  
Boston, MA 02109-1827

**D** +1 617 723 7900  
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**Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V.**  
**Bishop of Fall River**

## **OPINION**

We have audited the financial statements of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Fall River (A Corporation Sole) - Chancery Office (the "Diocese"), which comprise the statements of financial position as of June 30, 2023 and 2022, and the related statements of activities, cash flows and functional expenses for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements. In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Diocese as of June 30, 2023 and 2022, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

## **BASIS FOR OPINION**

We conducted our audits of the financial statements in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (US GAAS). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Diocese and to meet our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGEMENT FOR THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Diocese's ability to continue as a going concern for one year after the date the financial statements are issued.

## **AUDITOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with US GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with US GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Diocese's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Diocese's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

*Grant Thornton LLP*

December 19, 2023



## A Note on Organizational Structure

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Fall River, a Massachusetts corporation sole, was founded in 1904, and together with the parishes, schools, cemeteries and other affiliated agencies and entities in southeast Massachusetts, operate as the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fall River (the "Diocese"). Refer to [www.fallriverdiocese.org](http://www.fallriverdiocese.org) for a complete list of entities included in the Diocese.

The Chancery Office is an entity within the Diocese that provides administrative services and programmatic and financial support to those Diocesan entities, institutions, and affiliates identified above, each of which operate independently and account for their operations separately.

These financial statements include the assets, liabilities, and net assets of the Chancery Office only. These financial statements do not include the assets, liabilities, and net assets of the parishes, schools, cemeteries and other affiliated agencies and entities of the Diocese.

The fiscal year for the Diocese runs from July 1st to June 30th in the subsequent calendar year. Chancery Office financials are audited after the completion of each fiscal year. A copy of the audit report is presented to the Diocesan Audit Committee by the external auditors and then, upon recommendation of the Audit Committee, accepted by the Diocesan Finance Council. A copy of the report is then posted on the Diocesan website at the following location <https://www.fallriverdiocese.org/directory-offices/office/chancery-finance-office/>, for public review.

In addition to copies of the audited financials included in the appendix of this report, we are pleased to present this "Sources and Uses" report for your review.

## COMBINED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

June 30

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 3,415,114	\$ 4,260,127
Accounts receivable from parishes and other, net	3,172,955	2,988,599
Loans receivable from parishes and others, net	18,409,921	18,305,775
Other receivables, net	3,159,835	2,730,298
Accrued interest, net	506,952	553,165
Prepaid expenses	566,281	1,535,345
Investments	48,898,176	44,607,387
Land, buildings, and equipment, net	10,210,252	8,187,973
<i>Total assets</i>	<u><u>88,339,487</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 83,168,669</u></u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 2,255,976	\$ 2,354,386
Interest payable to parishes and others	65,743	64,490
Other payables	282,500	297,500
Funds on deposit from parishes and others	59,938,075	55,627,099
Agency funds	185,013	159,363
Funds on deposit from cemetery perpetual care	19,800,967	19,215,645
Loans payable	1,431,865	759,521
<i>Total expenses and losses</i>	<u><u>83,960,139</u></u>	<u><u>78,478,004</u></u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Without donor restrictions		
Designated for capital projects	228,173	228,173
Designated for Diocesan Endowment	152,115	152,115
Designated for Canon Law Fund	19,490	16,404
Designated for Bishop's Discretionary Fund	17,559	22,909
Designated for Faith Formation	184,898	160,296
Undesignated	(1,551,649)	(1,313,557)
With donor restrictions	5,328,761	5,424,325
<i>Total net assets</i>	<u><u>4,379,348</u></u>	<u><u>4,690,665</u></u>
<i>Total liabilities and net assets</i>	<u><u>\$ 88,339,487</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 83,168,669</u></u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these combined financial statements.

**COMBINED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES**

Year ended June 30, 2023 (with summarized comparative information for the year ended June 30, 2022)

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total	Total
<b>REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>				
Insurance program fees:				
Medical and dental premiums	\$13,246,570	-	13,246,570	\$ 13,757,810
Other benefits and insurance premiums	3,765,933	-	3,765,933	3,622,307
Contributions and bequests:				
Annual appeal	4,325,150	-	4,325,150	4,271,795
Special collections	502,388	-	502,388	419,013
Bequests and other contributions	419,456	-	419,456	1,216,181
Parish assessment	3,334,206	-	3,334,206	3,385,100
Interest on loans and notes	277,578	-	277,578	296,329
Investment return	5,309,811	157,429	5,467,240	(6,744,882)
Gain on sale of real estate	1,074,149	-	1,074,149	8,135
Other revenue	2,339,175	-	2,339,175	1,649,844
Net assets released from restriction	252,994	(252,994)	-	-
<i>Total revenues and other support</i>	<u>34,847,410</u>	<u>(95,565)</u>	<u>34,751,845</u>	<u>21,881,632</u>
<b>EXPENSES AND LOSSES</b>				
Insurance program expenses:				
Medical and dental premiums, claims, and expenses	13,817,592	-	13,817,592	12,856,804
Other insurance premiums, claims, and expenses	3,475,898	-	3,475,898	3,246,807
Program activities:				
Pastoral ministries	3,002,968	-	3,002,968	2,933,541
Education and grants	1,135,529	-	1,135,529	920,910
Communications and faith formation	996,329	-	996,329	938,207
Support for matriculating seminarians	294,902	-	294,902	412,873
Clergy retirement and other support costs	1,320,499	-	1,320,499	1,171,791
Supporting services:				
Chancery office	3,295,563	-	3,295,563	2,967,366
Professional fees and settlement costs	2,361,245	-	2,361,245	4,053,040
Development	96,529	-	96,529	99,278
Other supporting services	2,736,402	-	2,736,402	2,687,381
Interest on deposits and loans	1,331,524	-	1,331,524	1,438,557
Bad debt expense	740	-	740	(57,033)
Depreciation	264,472	-	264,472	258,274
Other expenses	932,972	-	932,972	228,400
<i>Total expenses and losses</i>	<u>35,063,162</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>35,063,162</u>	<u>34,156,197</u>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	(215,752)	(95,565)	(311,317)	(12,274,566)
<b>Net assets, beginning of year</b>	(733,660)	5,424,325	4,690,665	16,049,738
Transfer of net assets	-	-	-	915,493
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<u>\$ (949,412)</u>	<u>\$5,328,761</u>	<u>\$ 4,379,348</u>	<u>\$ 4,690,665</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these combined financial statements.

**COMBINED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS**

Year End June 30

	2023	2022
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Change in net assets	\$ (311,317)	\$ (11,359,073)
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:		
Unrealized realized gains/(losses) on investments (	4,535,726)	7,599,537
Depreciation	264,472	258,274
Bad debt provision	296,028	(52,340)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Accounts receivable from parishes and others, net	(184,356)	(69,195)
Other receivables, net	(589,226)	(454,536)
Accrued interest receivable, net	46,212	475,472
Prepaid expenses	969,065	(707,162)
Land, buildings, and equipment, net	(2,286,751)	(15,327)
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	(98,410)	187,979
Interest payable to parishes and others	1,253	(4,500)
Agency funds	25,650	(3,863)
Other payables	(15,000)	25,000
<i>Net cash used in operating activities</i>	<u>(6,418,107)</u>	<u>(4,119,736)</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Change in depository offsets	-	(633,977)
Net payments received on notes receivable	-	35,471
Proceeds from sales of investments	15,845,944	14,026,551
Purchases of investments	(15,601,008)	(16,413,978)
<i>Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities</i>	<u>244,937</u>	<u>(2,985,932)</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Change in funds on deposit from parishes and others	4,310,977	2,909,230
Change in funds on deposit from cemetery perpetual care	585,322	712,324
New loans issued	(2,062,994)	(2,421,090)
Receipt of funds from new loans	672,344	200,501
Loan payments	1,822,510	2,371,966
<i>Net cash provided by financing activities</i>	<u>5,328,158</u>	<u>3,772,930</u>
<b>NET CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	(845,013)	(3,332,738)
<b>Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year</b>	4,260,127	7,592,865
<b>Cash and cash equivalents, end of year</b>	<u>\$ 3,415,114</u>	<u>\$ 4,260,127</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these combined financial statements.

# Chancery Office Financials

## FY23-FY25 SOURCES AND USAGE REPORT

	FY23	FY24
<b>CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION</b>		
Revenue	\$5,800,044	\$6,235,363
Expense	9,083,835	7,653,232
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$(3,283,791)	\$(1,417,868)
<b>SEMINARIAN SUPPORT</b>		
Revenue	\$89,500	\$67,472
Expense	369,518	206,144
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$(280,018)	\$(138,672)
<b>CLERGY SUPPORT</b>		
Revenue	\$443,387	\$500,801
Expense	1,902,674	1,802,001
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$(1,459,287)	\$(1,301,200)
<b>ANNUAL APPEAL RELATED</b>		
Revenue	\$4,495,256	\$4,351,998
Expense	5,474,685	5,076,925
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$(979,429)	\$(724,927)
<b>SAVINGS AND LOAN</b>		
Revenue	\$1,355,373	\$1,548,681
Expense	1,411,875	1,643,567
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$(56,502)	\$(94,886)
<b>INSURANCE</b>		
Revenue	\$18,451,088	\$19,761,863
Expense	18,419,628	19,374,903
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$31,461	\$386,960
<b>INVESTMENT GAINS/(LOSSES)</b>		
Revenue	\$4,535,726	\$5,932,405
Expense	-	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$4,535,726	\$5,932,405
<b>PROPERTY SALES</b>		
Revenue	\$1,180,525	\$2,913,167
Expense	-	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$1,180,525	\$2,913,167
<b>TOTAL</b>		
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>\$36,350,899</b>	<b>\$41,311,751</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>36,662,216</b>	<b>35,756,773</b>
<b>Net Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>\$(311,317)</b>	<b>\$5,554,978</b>

### Central Administration

Central Administration costs cover the Bishop's Office, Chancery functions (finance, HR, legal, real estate, insurance), Tribunal, Anchor, Communications, and Strategic Planning. They also include expenses for all Diocesan properties, such as the Bishop's residence, Chancery campus, the Newman House at UMass Dartmouth, and the Tribunal building. After the closure of Coyle and Cassidy High School, and later Bishop Connolly High School in June 2023, property maintenance became a Diocesan responsibility. Additional costs include Diocesan events, consultants, audit fees, and legal settlements.

Central Administration costs are partially offset by the parish assessment introduced in January 2016, along with bequests, contributions to the Diocese, fees from service agreements with affiliated agencies (such as CFSEMA, FACE, and Diocesan Cemeteries), and other miscellaneous revenue sources.

### Seminarian Support

The Chancery Office covers 100% of room and board, book fees, medical and dental insurance, and tuition for all seminarians. Currently, there are two seminarians in theology and two in pre-theology programs. These costs are partially offset by a spring collection for the "Ecclesiastical Students Education Fund" at all parishes in the Diocese.

### Clergy Support

Clergy support includes costs related to running the Cardinal Medeiros Retired Priests Residence, medical insurance for retired priests, and support costs for infirmed priests and those on leave. These costs are partially offset by the Easter ("Retired and Infirm Priests") and Cardinal Medeiros Residence (September) Diocesan collections administered across the Diocese each year. Rent payments by retired priests also serve to cover a portion of the retirement residence costs.

In January 2023, the Diocese raised its subsidy for the Cardinal Medeiros residence by 24% to cover rising food, utility, and administrative costs. In January 2024, retired priests moved to the MEDEX 2 supplemental medical plan, achieving modest savings with minimal disruption.

### Annual Appeal Related

Since 1942, the Catholic Appeal has supported people of all ages, sustaining agencies, programs, and ministries that provide food, shelter, education, and meet various needs. Now in its 83rd year, the majority of revenues are raised from May to July with parish support. In December 2023, the Diocese launched the "Serving the Shepherds" campaign to focus on clergy support. The Appeal funds ministries like Catholic Charities, Saint Vincent Services, Community Action for Better Housing, the Respect Life Office, the Catholic Schools Office, the Office for Vocations, the Permanent Diaconate Office, Campus Ministry, Faith Formation, C.Y.O., and the Ministry for the Sick.

### Savings and Loan

The Chancery Office provides loans to and holds deposits of excess funds for the parishes, schools, cemeteries and other affiliated agencies and entities of the Diocese. As of July 2024, the rate paid on deposits was 3.00%. Savings and Loan revenues are related to interest paid on Chancery loans to affiliated agencies and income from Chancery investments. As of July 2024, the default rate on Chancery loans was 5.00%, though changes are made on a case-by-case basis.

### Insurance

The Chancery Office manages employee benefit programs for the Diocese, including medical, dental, property/liability, auto, and worker's compensation insurance. The Diocese is self-insured for medical coverage, with costs tied to claims and stop-loss premiums. Similarly, the property/liability program has high deductibles, functioning like a self-insured plan.

Insurance program costs are primarily covered by billing parishes, schools, and affiliated agencies for their participation. Property and liability coverage is provided by the Catholic Mutual Group (CMG), which insures over 130 dioceses in North America. In February 2023, CMG informed bishops that 2022 was "one of the worst years in insurance history," leading to a 15% premium increase for FY24. Inflation also pushed medical premiums up by 8%, after three years of stable rates.

In June 2023, more modest increases were announced for FY25, with property/liability rising by 7.4%, medical by 4%, and no changes to dental insurance or priest pension billings.

### Investment Gains/(Losses)

Funds from the savings and loan program and Chancery operations are invested under the oversight of the Diocesan Investment Committee. The committee monitors advisors for performance, fees, and adherence to Catholic values. Details are available on the Finance Office page of the Diocesan website.

After a loss of \$7.6M in FY22, investments saw gains of \$4.5M and \$5.9M in FY23 and FY24. These fluctuations highlight the inherent market risk in all investments. Each Diocesan investment follows a policy outlining risk tolerance, and advisors must provide volatility management measures, which are reviewed by the Investment Committee.

### Property Sales

Property sales represent gains from the sale of "Diocesan" properties (as opposed to the sale of parish or school properties which would be represented in the financials of those respective entities), and the gain from "bad debt recovery" related to old parish or school debt that had been placed in abeyance in prior years, but allowing for some recovery if the parish or school were to close or sell off assets in the future.

