

# Dynamic lineup of speakers leads up to Diocesan Ministry Day 2021

By Kristi Anderson | The Central Minnesota Catholic

Mark your calendars! Diocesan Ministry Day is slated for Oct. 23 at St. John's University in Collegeville. This rally-themed event is meant to honor all that we are as a diocese. And, according to Aaron Carpenter, diocesan director of the Office of Worship and co-chair of Diocesan Ministry Day, there is a lot to celebrate.

"Our vision is to gather the people of the diocese for a day to celebrate the gifts of the diocese while being filled with the love of community and the spiritual gifts of our faith," he said. "After a very unusual year, we are hoping to gather for a great diocesan get-together – a party of sorts."

Carpenter, who is co-chairing the event with Kristi Bivens, associate director of lay formation for the diocese, explained that the diocese's two-year focus has centered on the theme, "One Body: Gathered, Nourished, Sent."



People from across the diocese gather for Diocesan Ministry Day 2019 at St. John's Abbey in Collegeville. (photo by Dianne Towalski/The Central Minnesota Catholic)

"We have had to be creative this past year in finding ways to bring this theme to life," he said.

"Although gathering in virtual ways may be a technological leap for many, we still cannot be face-to-face with our brothers and sisters from around the diocese. [We hope that] Diocesan Ministry Day will give us the opportunity to gather with our brothers and sisters from all corners, be nourished by friendships and celebrations, and be sent forth with a new hope and renewed in our faith."

The day, which is slated to be bilingual, will feature guest speaker Cindy Gonzalez. She holds a master of arts in ministry from the St. John's School of Theology and Seminary, where she currently teaches courses on family ministry through the Emmaus Institute in Spanish.

She is a graduate student at the University of Minnesota, College of Education and Human Development, focused on parent and family education. Cindy identifies as a Chicana having grown up in California and spending most summers of her youth with her extended family in Tijuana, Mexico.

Other highlights of the day will include a gathering in the Abbey, nourishment with fellowship and food offerings, and a rally where each Area Catholic Community will have the opportunity to celebrate its collective gifts and identities within the diocese. Participants will be sent forth following Mass with Bishop Donald Kettler.

## Regional Ministry Gatherings

To lead up to the big get-together in October, the diocese has put together a list of dynamic speakers who will give virtual presentations prior to the event. These regional ministry gatherings are free and open to the public. Registration is required.

This regional initiative began in 2018. Due to the pandemic, the in-person regional gatherings have been put on a temporary hold. Virtual gatherings were launched in October, November and December 2020. This second set of virtual gatherings will be held between June and October.

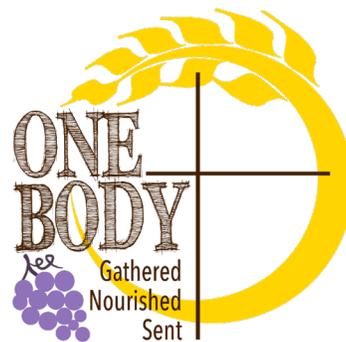
Three of the nine planned gatherings are large-group sessions focusing on the movements in each person's lives: from discerning individual gifts and talents to sharing those gifts with our parishes and ACCs to expanding into the greater community and world.

These three sessions include a 30-45 minute presentation by a keynote speaker, followed by time for reflection and discussion. These sessions also will be recorded for later use on your own or in groups.

The remaining six presentations, referred to as leadership tracks, will be geared toward those working and volunteering in ministries in parishes, schools and organizations across the diocese. These sessions are shorter and include time for dialogue and networking with people who are serving in similar fields of ministry.

"These gatherings will offer the opportunity to look at specific areas of our community ministry and allow time to discuss best practices in our parishes and ACCs," Carpenter said. "Those who participate in these leadership track offerings will find support from their peers in ministry, gain ideas from other parish communities, and share our joys and struggles in ministry. Participants walk away with a clearer lens for how to do ministry based on the experience of the wonderful ministers of our diocese."

"Both the regional ministry gatherings and Diocesan Ministry Day are all about the people of the diocese and how we can support and celebrate one another," Carpenter said. "Through presentations from guest speakers and discussion with our peers we will gain a deeper sense of who we are as members of the One Body and how we continue to journey on the road to Emmaus with Christ as our brother, Savior and Lord."



### UPCOMING REGIONAL MINISTRY GATHERING SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

- **Large Group Session: June 9, 6:30 p.m.**  
Dawn Carrillo, director of Center for Spirituality and Enrichment, St. Scholastica Monastery, Duluth:  
*On the individual: How do we bring ourselves to the community, prepare our own spiritual lives and nurture our own vocations?*
- **Leadership Track # 1: June 23, 10 a.m.**  
Deacon John Wocken, Catholic school teacher, All Called to Christ ACC:  
*Building small communities in our homes and our parishes*
- **Leadership Track # 2: June 28, 10 a.m.**  
Kelli Kleinschnitz, youth minister, Christ our Hope ACC:  
*Engaging young people in a culture of discernment*

For more information or to register for any of the Regional Ministry Gatherings, visit <https://stcdio.org/2021-regional-ministry-gatherings>. For more about Diocesan Ministry Day, watch for information in future issues of The Central Minnesota Catholic and visit <https://stcdio.org/2021-diocesan-ministry-day>.