

Meet Diocesan Ministry Day 2021 co-chairs Kristi Bivens and Aaron Carpenter. (Photo by Dianne Towalski.)

WHAT'S NEW AT DIOCESAN MINISTRY DAY 2021?

CO-CHAIR KRISTI BIVENS INVITES
ALL TO GET EXCITED ABOUT
CHURCH AND FAITH

KRISTI BIVENS, associate director of lay leadership formation for the Diocese of St. Cloud, is one of two co-chairs for Diocesan Ministry Day 2021 slated for Oct. 23 at St. John's University in Collegeville. Along with co-chair Aaron Carpenter, director of the diocesan Office of Worship, Bivens is planning a rally-themed event celebrating the people of the Diocese of St. Cloud. Below, she gives the inside scoop on what participants might expect.

Q TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT THE THEME, "ONE BODY: GATHERED, NOURISHED, SENT."

A The theme of "One Body" was announced at DMD 2019. When we come together for Mass, this is precisely what we do: We gather to pray and worship God, we are nourished by the word and the Eucharist, and we are sent to bring the Christ we received into the world. Our day will follow that format. We will gather together, we will be nourished physically and spiritually, and we will be sent to bring Christ to our world.

Q WHY DID YOU AND AARON DECIDE TO GIVE THIS EVENT A PEP RALLY FEEL?

A Aaron and I began the planning for DMD in the midst of the pandemic. We realized that we needed to think outside the box because we did not know what we would be able to do. The longer the pandemic continued, the more we saw the need for people to just be together in a celebratory event. We also knew that we wanted to celebrate all the people of the diocese and all of the [Area Catholic Communities]. What better way to do that than to have a big

rally? We know that sports fans get excited about their teams at pep rallies, perhaps the Catholics of the diocese will get as excited about their Church and their faith!

Q WHO IS INVITED TO ATTEND?

A Everyone from across the diocese is invited as DMD is a celebration of the entire diocese. Perhaps you have not been connected to a parish in a while and are looking for something to renew that desire. Or you are the sacristan at Saturday evening Mass in your parish. Maybe your connection to your parish is going to Mass on Sunday morning at 10 a.m. Perhaps you are the pastor of four parishes or the director of liturgy for one. Or perhaps your family is looking for something special to do together to celebrate your faith. We want you there!

Of course the next question may be, "Are children invited?" While the day is structured for adults, families are more than welcome to join us. I can still remember going to RENEW events in my diocese as a child in the 1980s. I loved going to those events. Even though the speakers and activities were geared toward adults, the experiences impacted my life. We never know how the Spirit will shape the lives of our young people, but I know mine was shaped by that experience. So yes, children are welcome, but please make sure to register them so we have enough food and materials for everyone.

Q WILL THE FORMAT FOR DIOCESAN MINISTRY DAY BE THE SAME AS PREVIOUS YEARS? WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

A In the past, DMD has been a day with Mass, a keynote speaker and workshops, all in English. There will be several changes to the format this year. We have moved the event to Saturday in order that more people will have the opportunity to join us. There will not be workshops. We also wanted to give people the opportunity to simply be together so there will be ample time for socializing and networking.

Perhaps the biggest change is that DMD will be a bilingual, bicultural event. We really want to celebrate who we are as One Body, and in order to do that well we need to include all the parts of the One Body, regardless of the language they speak. Parts of our day will be in English and parts in Spanish.

Q YOU'VE ATTENDED DIOCESAN MINISTRY DAY IN THE PAST AS BOTH AN EDUCATOR AND AS A PASTORAL ASSOCIATE. WHAT DID YOU GLEAN FROM PAST EXPERIENCES AND WHAT CAN PEOPLE EXPECT TO GAIN BY ATTENDING THIS YEAR?

A I always looked forward to DMD every year. It was a great day to learn, pray and be with the people of the Diocese of St. Cloud. For me, being able to be connected to others from across the diocese was one of the best parts of the day. It helped me to realize that the Church is a diverse body and yet we are all connected by one faith.

Q ANY SURPRISES PLANNED?

A Of course! But you will need to wait and see! Stay tuned by watching upcoming issues of this magazine or by visiting the website www.stcdio.org/dmd21. †

DMD 2021: OCT. 23, 2021, TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

- 8:15 a.m. – Registration opens
- 9:00 a.m. – Mass
- 10:00 a.m. – Morning Refreshments
- 10:30 a.m. – Welcome and Rally #1
- 11:00 a.m. – Speaker – Cindy Gonzalez
- 11:45 a.m. – Rally #2
- 12:00 p.m. – Lunch

Note: During lunch, participants will have the option to attend short sessions on various topics, such as the Saint John's Bible.

- 2:00 p.m. – Rally #3
- 2:15 p.m. – Interview with Bishop Kettler
- 3:00 p.m. – Rally #4
- 3:15 p.m. – Sending Ritual

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.

The virtual gatherings began in June and continue through October. The sessions are also recorded and available for viewing at www.stcdio.org/rmg2021.

Large-group sessions include a 30- to 45-minute presentation by a keynote speaker, followed by time for reflection and discussion. The leadership tracks are 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. †

UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

- Large group session: July 22, 6:30 p.m., Benedictine Father Edward Vebelun, pastor of Harvest of Hope ACC "On parish, ACC and community: How do I bring my gifts to the community? In what ways do I receive what I need from my community? How do I work together with my community?"
- Leadership track #3: Aug. 4, 1 p.m., Christ Our Light staff panel: Father Kevin Anderson, Wendy Rappe and Molly Weyrens, Sherburne ACC "Calling forward and preparing the gifts of the faithful"
- Leadership track #4: Aug. 24, 1 p.m., Joan Krause, retired faith formation leader, One in Christ ACC "Lifelong Formation"