

January 19, 2025

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time



• 2ND SUNDAY IN
ORDINARY TIME •

“DO
WHATEVER
HE TELLS
YOU.”

©LPI

St. Columban Parish

506 First St. S | Yelm, WA 98597

Sunday Mass: 10:30 a.m.

Saturday 5 p.m.

Daily Mass Tuesday-Friday 9 a.m.

(Except First Fridays)

Eucharistic Adoration First Fridays 6:30 p.m.

Confessions Saturday 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Anointing of the Sick By request

Rosary Prayer Group Monday 7 p.m.

Spanish prayer group Tuesday 6:30 p.m., Hall

Sacramental Preparation Contact the office

*The church may be open for prayer during office hours
upon request.*

St. Peter Mission

149 Keithahn St S | Tenino, WA 98589

Sunday Mass 8:00 a.m.

First Friday Mass 9:00 a.m.

Confessions Sunday 7:30-7:45 a.m.

Anointing of the Sick By request

Parish Office at St. Columban

parishoffice@saintcolumbanyelm.org

Monday-Thursday 9:30 a.m.– 2p.m.

Friday by appointment

Sacramental Emergencies

In danger of death call: 360-704-7051

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Help line 360-458-1904

Christi simus, non nostri

We belong to Christ, not ourselves

For your Prayer and Meditation

Reflect on the Sunday Liturgy

Entrance Antiphon

All the earth shall bow down before you, O God, and shall sing to you, shall sing to your name, O Most High!

Sunday Readings *Is 62:1-5/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 7-8, 9-10 (3)/1 Cor 12:4-11/Jn 2:1-11*

First Reading As a young man marries a virgin, your Builder shall marry you; and as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride so shall your God rejoice in you. (Is 62:5)

Isaiah spoke of God's delight in Jerusalem and desire to see Israel as His spouse. What married couples do you know who genuinely take delight in each other?

Psalm Proclaim his marvelous deeds to all the nations. (Ps 96)

Second Reading But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes. (1 Cor 12:11)

St. Paul taught the Corinthians that the gifts of the Holy Spirit to individuals are meant to benefit and unify the community. What gifts do you have that you think benefit others?

Gospel Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs at Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him. (Jn 2:11)

After all the wine was consumed, Jesus turned water into wine for the bride and groom at the wedding. When have you received an unexpected gift from someone?

Communion Antiphon You have prepared a table before me, and how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst. *Or* We have come to know and to believe in the love that God has for us.

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

The English translation of Psalm Responses from Lectionary for Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

Mass Intentions

Parishioners may schedule a Mass intention on our website or by calling the office. Sunday Masses are offered Pro Populo

Jan. 21—Denise & Michelle Stevenson RIP

Jan. 22—

Jan. 23—

Jan. 24—Daniel Walker



The Code of Canon Law confirms the practice of offering Masses for particular intentions is ancient: "The Christian faithful who give an offering to apply the Mass for their intention contribute to the good of the Church and by that offering share its concern to support its ministers and works" (945 §2).

Prayer Intentions

Loving God, we join with others of your people here asking you to hold in Your hands all of our homebound brothers and sisters and those who have asked for our prayers

For The Sick and Homebound*

Robert Fisher, Marcella Thornton, Theresa Gonzales, Joe Judge, Pam Henslee, Mary Taylor, Maria Espino, Mort Kimball, Adrian Moralez, Judy Cusick, Jaseea Karst, Betty Karst, Michelle Meginnins, and Gary Karst.

For The Deceased

All the souls in purgatory, especially Fr. Jim Lee, Jennifer Hansen, and all those who have no one to pray for them. *May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.*

For our young people, that they may eagerly seek and generously respond to their vocations from God.

For peace in the world, for God's protection on those in danger, the defeat and true repentance of unjust aggressors, and mercy for those who have died by violence.

Monthly Intentions of the Pope: For the right to an education—Let us pray for migrants, refugees, and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected.

See Announcements page for Prayer Intentions of the Archdiocese

Connect with us

WEBSITE saintcolumbanyelm.org

PHONE (360) 458-3031
Ministries x1, Spanish/Español x2

LIVESTREAM
youtube.com/@stcolumbanyelm

SOCIAL MEDIA
facebook.com/saintcolumbanyelm
instagram.com/saintcolumbanyelm

ONLINE GIVING
pushpay.com/g/saintcolumbanyelm

MOBILE APP
"Our Catholic Community"
(Apple App Store & Google Play) 

FREE CATHOLIC STREAMING CONTENT
FORMED.org 

PARISH STAFF (360) 458-3031

Fr. Bryan Ochs
Pastor
parishoffice@saintcolumbanyelm.org
*not private

Fr. William Dodoma
Parochial Vicar

Fr. Martin Bourke
Senior Priest in residence

Jennifer Langham In Office: M-Thu
PA for Admin, Liturgy, & Music
jennifer@saintcolumbanyelm.org x1

Matthew Tolar
PA for Admin, Bookkeeping & Records
matthew@3hearts.org
(360) 491-0890 Ext. 1107

Gabriela Makinster In Office: Tu-Th
Elementary & Adult Faith Formation,
gaby@saintcolumbanyelm.org x2
*habla Español

Chad Lucero
Youth Ministry & Confirmation
chad@saintcolumbanyelm.org x3

Steven Slater
St. Columban Maintenance
steven@saintcolumbanyelm.org

Gilberto Espino *St. Peter Maintenance*
gilberto@saintcolumbanyelm.org

St. Columban Finance & Pastoral Council *Please be patient as this council is being restructured. Members will be posted once they have been officially appointed by our Pastor.*

St. Peter Advisory Commission Sherry Bachmann (Chairperson), Marilyn Ritter, Bernie Schwarz, Bob Bacon, Diane Weston

Welcome to our Parish Family

St. Columban Parish proclaims the Roman Catholic faith to the communities of McKenna, Nisqually, Rainier, Roy, Tenino, and Yelm in southeast Thurston and southwest Pierce counties. Our community has grown since its origins at the former St. Margaret Mary Church in McKenna, and our current church in Yelm is named for the Irish-born 6th century missionary to Europe St. Columbanus of Bobbio. We have also been present in Tenino since 1891 through St. Peter Mission, named for the apostle and first pope.

Since July 2024, Sacred Heart Parish in Lacey, St. Columban Parish, and St. Peter Mission formed into Parish Family 40 under our pastor, Very Rev. Bryan Ochs.

A Word from our Pastor

Dear Parishioners,

It is hard to believe that I have been serving as your pastor for over six months! There are some really good signs that this transition has been relatively good. Giving at our parishes has been very strong, new people are joining the parishes, and people are receiving care from priests, deacons, and many lay people. So things are going quite well.



But, there have also been some challenges, many of which were not unforeseen. One of the great challenges has to do with the pastoral presence in our parish offices. Prior to becoming a parish family, St. Columban and Sacred Heart were used to having the pastor present four days per week, but this is not possible when a pastor is shepherding multiple sites.

As for St. Columban, it is lucky if I am able to be present to them one day per week. Due to my role as the dean of the South Sound deanery as well as my service to other Archdiocesan commissions, I often find myself out of area entirely. This means that Sacred Heart, which has a much larger volume of work and is more complex due to its size, is often down to two days per week that I am available.

You can imagine that this has led to a few challenges. Again, this is not unforeseen, but reality has made it an undeniable issue that we must resolve as we move forward. With that in mind, we are beginning a search to bring a new staff member on board to our team at Sacred Heart, and I'm hoping that you can help us locate a good candidate.

The official title of this position is Pastoral Assistant for Administration, but a better short hand name for it is "Chief of Staff." The Chief of Staff will basically oversee

the day to day operations of the office, as well as all of the administrative functions, including finance, maintenance and facilities, technology, human resources, and other operations. They will supervise several members of our staff and, should any needs arise, conduct the hiring process to find new members of our team.

This staff member will provide a vital presence to our team, especially when I am unable to be present due to ministerial needs elsewhere. I believe that this will help all our current employees thrive, and that this person will be able to maintain a healthy work environment for all of our employees and volunteers. This includes helping the staff to remain a cohesive unit that works together and supports each other.

The ideal candidate for this position has a bachelor's degree in business administration, or significant experience managing an office environment. They must also have a passion for the mission of the Church, and care and concern for all people. If you or someone you know might be interested in serving our parish in this capacity, please get in touch with us so we can give you more information on how to apply.

One more thing to mention is that as the Partners in the Gospel initiative unfolds it is quite possible that this position will expand into a larger role. Please keep our entire staff in your prayers as we search for this important new member of our team.

Fr. Bryan

Announcements

9 Days for Life Prayer Novena: until January 24

Join fellow parishioners in praying a Novena for Life in Church nightly at 6:30 p.m. now until Friday, Jan. 24. Prayers can be found at respectlife.org/9-days-daily-prayers. All are invited to come and pray.

Knights of Columbus Spaghetti Dinner, Jan. 25, following the 5 p.m. Mass

Tickets will be on sale after all Masses at St. Columban. Ticket sales support the charitable works of the Knights used to serve our parish and our local community.

Help support PREPARES

During the month of January, plastic baby bottles will be available in the narthex for you to take home and collect loose change to help support expectant mothers and families with young children through the PREPARES program. Please return baby bottles by Sunday, Feb. 9.

You have the power to save lives The American Red Cross will host a blood drive on Thursday, Feb. 13 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Pre-register for an

Announcements

appointment online at www.redcrossblood.org and enter our code “KnightsYelm”.

Check your emails!

We send registered parishioners an emailed version of the bulletin every week with more up-to-date information than this printed edition. Due to early deadlines by the bulletin publisher, more updated information will be found in the emailed edition and on the website. This may include updated Mass times and unforeseen announcements. If you're not registered, please stop by the Parish Office so we may welcome you and assist you. You may also register online at saintcolumbanyelm.org

Faith Formation

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church

1613 On the threshold of his public life Jesus performs his first sign-at his mother's request-during a wedding feast. The Church attaches great importance to Jesus' presence at the wedding at Cana. She sees in it the confirmation of the goodness of marriage and the proclamation that thenceforth marriage will be an efficacious sign of Christ's presence.

Next Sunday Faith Formation Classes

NO CLASS Jan. 19; Classes resume Jan. 26; Feb. 2, 9

Children & Adults, contact: Mrs. Makinster

Elementary & Adult Faith Formation,
gaby@saintcolumbanyelm.org 360-458-3031 x2 *habla Español*

Parent Meeting for First Communicants Jan. 26

Catechists for our Kindergarten Faith Formation Classes and Sponsors for our OCIA program are needed, contact Gaby Makinster at the parish office if you are available to help.

Youth Ministry, contact: Mr. Lucero

ym@saintcolumbanyelm.org

Parents, check your emails! *We will communicate with you directly over email regarding YM events.*

Christian Initiation for Adults (OCIA)

Please pray for our candidates and catechumen as they prepare to join the Church this Easter.

Bible Study Thursday evenings at 6:30 p.m. at the Winter Clothes Closet.

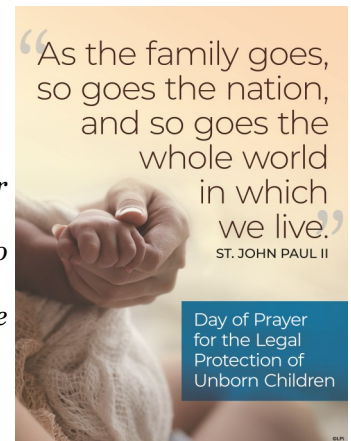
January 22 Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children

On January 22, 1973, the Supreme Court legalized abortion throughout the United States in its companion decisions Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton. Since that time, millions of children have lost their lives, and millions of

women and families have been wounded by abortion.

On June 24, 2022, the Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization decision overturned Roe v. Wade, and we praise God for the great opportunity state and federal legislators now have to protect pre-born children. While God, in His mercy, ended the nearly fifty-year nationwide regime of abortion on demand, right now state and federal laws, in many instances, are still hostile to pre-born children. So, great prayer and advocacy is very needed.

In all the Dioceses of the United States of America, January 22 (or January 23, when January 22 falls on a Sunday) shall be observed as a particular day of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life and of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion.



From the Archdiocese

Monthly Intentions of the Archdiocese:

For our parish family, that through the intercession of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, we may be instruments of joy, courage, and peace.

For our local Church as we mark the 175th anniversary of our Archdiocese, that we may renew our commitment to the Gospel of Christ, sharing the love of Jesus in deed and word.

For young people, that they may turn to God in all the choices and decisions of their lives; and that many will respond to God's call to serve in the Church as priests, religious, and lay ministers.

Prayer for the Filipino community as they celebrate the Feast of Santo Niño: For Filipino Catholics, here and throughout the world, that they may grow in faith, love, and devotion to the Santo Niño, the Holy Child Jesus.

For our newly-elected President and Vice-President, and for all who have been elected to serve in elected office, that they may lead with courage and wisdom, with compassion for the most vulnerable among us.

Bishops release statement in solidarity with immigrants and share study findings on Native American boarding schools

Washington State Catholic Conference represents the Catholic bishops of Washington in their efforts to support public policies that promote the common good. Visit wacatholics.org to read their statements and updates.

Parish Ministries & Events

Weekly Calendar

All events are at St. Columban unless otherwise noted.

MONDAY January 20

St. Fabian, Pope & Martyr; St. Sebastian, Martyr

PARIHS OFFICE CLOSED (*MLK Jr. Holiday*)

Novena for Life 6:00p.m. Church
Rosary Prayer Group 7:00p.m. Church

TUESDAY January 21 *St. Agnes, Virgin & Martyr*

Daily Mass 9:00a.m. Church
Winter Clothes Closet 6:00-8:00 p.m. Small Hall
Novena For Life 6:00p.m. Church
Choir Practice 6:30p.m. Church
Spanish Prayer Group 6:30p.m. Hall

WEDNESDAY January 22

Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children

Daily Mass 9:00a.m. Church
Bible Study 10:00a.m. St. Peter
Winter Clothes Closet 6:00-8:00 p.m. Small Hall
Novena for Life 6:00p.m. Church

THURSDAY January 23

St. Vincent, Deacon & Martyr; St. Marianne Cope, V.

Daily Mass 9:00a.m. Church
Altar Society Weekly Cleaning 9:30a.m. Church
Choir Practice 6:00p.m. Church
Winter Clothes Closet 6:00-8:00 p.m. Small Hall
Novena for Life 6:00p.m. Church
Bible Study 6:30p.m. Small Hall

FRIDAY January 24 *St. Francis de Sales, Bishop & Doctor*

Daily Mass 9:00 a.m. Church
Novena for Life 6:00p.m. Church

SATURDAY January 25 *Conversion of St. Paul*

Youth Ministry Saturday 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Parish Hall
Confession 3:30 p.m. Church
Anticipatory Sunday Mass 5:00p.m. Church
Spaghetti Dinner 6:00 p.m. Parish Hall

SUNDAY January 26 *Third Sunday of Ord. Time*

Confession 7:30-7:45 a.m. St. Peter
Sunday Mass 8:00a.m. *Int.: Pro Populo* St. Peter
Religious Ed 9-10:15 a.m. RE Bldg
Confirmation Classes 9-10:15 a.m. Hall
Coffee & Donuts Fundraiser 11:45a.m. Parish Hall
 hosted by our Youth Ministry

After Mass Breakfast & Coffee Hospitality

Join us after the 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass in the Parish Hall

Jan. 19 —KofC Breakfast

Jan. 26—Youth Ministry Coffee & Donuts fundraiser



Upcoming Events

Saturday, Jan. 25—KofC Spaghetti Dinner

Thursday, Feb. 13. — Blood Drive

Altar Society

A team of talented parishioners beautifully maintain and clean the Church every Thursday after Daily Mass.



Daughters of Mary

Meets monthly, join us for our next meeting **January 28th** at 6 p.m. in the Hall. All women of the parish are invited and bring your favorite snack to share!



daughtersofmary@saintcolumbanym.org

Liturgical Ministries

parishoffice@saintcolumbanym.org

Altar Servers, Choir, Greeters/Ushers, Readers
 Please check your emails and respond to confirm that you will be serving on your scheduled date. This helps us find substitutes should you be unavailable.



Knights of Columbus

The Council and Assembly meet monthly third Wednesdays of every month at 6p.m. in the hall, with Vespers beginning at 5:30 p.m. **Next Council & Assembly meetings: Wednesday Feb. 19.**



St. Peter Circle

Meets second Tuesdays every other month at St. Peter Tenino. Next scheduled meetings: March 11, and May 13 at 9:30 a.m.



Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Meets monthly, on the third Thursday of the month in the parish hall at 7 p.m. **Next meeting is Feb. 20.**



Winter Clothes Closet

Open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, & Thursdays 6-8p.m. Free to all in need, no questions asked. Donations are through the parish office or by using the bin in the narthex. Please do not leave donations outside the doors of the office or hall.

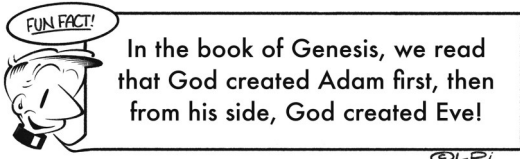


Keep in mind donations should be of good, re-usable quality; something you would wear. Items such as boots, gloves, hats, scarves, coats, blankets, etc. are needed; rather than summer apparel such as swimsuits, shorts, & flipflops which are not particularly useful for keeping warm during the winter months.

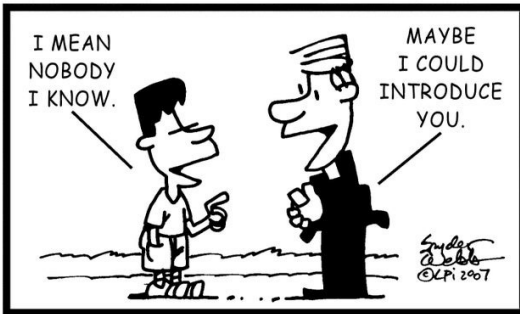
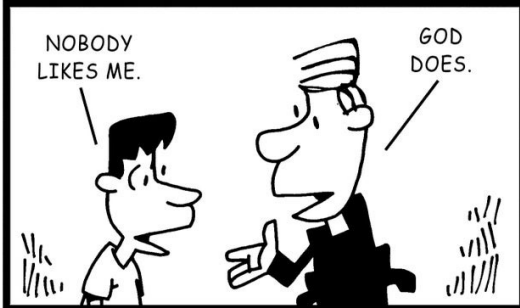
“At what time of day was Adam created?”



“A little before Eve.”



2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Father Flood © LPI



Q&A

Question: Why do some dioceses move holy days, or not even celebrate them at all. Doesn't everyone do the same thing?

Answer: The short answer is no, not everyone does the same thing. Although the church is universal, there are many local customs and saints that each country, sometimes just a region, will honor. For example, feast days and patronal days may not be major feast days on the church's universal calendar, but are celebrated as such in one place. Holy days of obligation are the same way. The US Conference of Catholic Bishops has a certain amount of discretion in choosing days which best reflect the local church's experience and history. Another reason certain feasts are moved is a practical one. With limited clergy, or a great difficulty for people to get to Mass, the feast day may be transferred to a Sunday. The rationale is that if a significant feast should be part of the church's celebration, then better to do so on a Sunday when people and clergy are available, rather than try to fit it on a day when one or both cannot be there. (Text © LPI, our bulletin publisher)

Devotions, Explained! The Angelus, Explained

The incarnation of Christ changed the life of every Christian person who ever lived. Reflecting on that moment in salvation history is an opportunity for grace, growth and peace. Who wouldn't want that every day, or even three times every day? The Angelus is composed of three antiphons which narrate the annunciation, each followed by the recitation of a Hail Mary (a prayer that itself contains the “angelic greeting” of the angel Gabriel). Its name is derived from the first words of the prayer in Latin. This devotion was developed over the course of several centuries and is rooted in the ancient practice of saying three Hail Marys in the evening. Historically, people were called to prayer by the ringing of church bells — “the Angelus bells.” Most people who recite the Angelus do so daily at noon, though it is often said in the morning, at noon and in the evening.

(Text © LPI, our bulletin publisher)

The Angelus:

The Angel of the Lord declared to Mary: And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. Hail Mary... Behold the handmaid of the Lord: Be it done unto me according to Thy word. Hail Mary... And the Word was made Flesh: And dwelt among us. Hail Mary... Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord.



FORMED® THE CATHOLIC FAITH. ON DEMAND.

Mass

There is infinite grace available in every Mass and confession, but our subjective experience may not reflect this objective reality. We need to switch on. The focus of this episode is unlocking more grace from Mass and confession.

Our parish has a FORMED subscription. Visit formed.org/signup and select our parish. Scan the QR code to download the FORMED app to your phone.





Join us for the Archdiocese of Seattle's 175th Anniversary Celebrations

Celebrating a *Legacy of faith*

January 25, 2025 | 11am
Proto-Cathedral of St. James the Greater, Vancouver

February 22, 2025 | 11am
Our Lady Star of the Sea, Bremerton

March 1, 2025 | 11am
Immaculate Conception, Mount Vernon

May 31, 2025 | 11am
St. James Cathedral, Seattle

Learn more at Archseattle.org/175 or scan QR code.



Share YOUR Faith



Support the Collection for the Church in Latin America

In the 13th century, St. Francis and St. Clare said yes to the Lord's call to renew the Church in Assisi, Italy, through lives of prayer, peace, and love for the poor. Their example inspired the men and women of their time to embrace the Gospel and dedicate their lives to God as religious brothers and sisters.

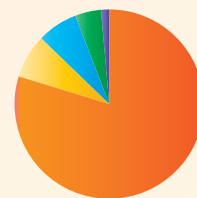
Nearly 800 years later, women continue to answer God's call following St. Clare's example by taking up lives of prayer at the Monastery of St. Clare in the Dominican Republic. Women who enter the monastery begin a formation process that encompasses prayer, study, and adaptation to separation from the world in a cloistered community. With funding through the Collection for the Church in Latin America, the monastery has been able to cover the food, clothing, and educational expenses for 18 sisters in various stages of formation.

Vocations to religious life are fulfilled through the prayers and contributions that sustain men and women religious in their mission. Helping the sisters at the Monastery of Saint Clare say yes to God's call is just one of the many positive impacts made by your support for the Collection for the Church in Latin America in strengthening the relationship between Catholics in the United States and those in Latin America and the Caribbean.

For more information about how donations help the Church in Latin America, visit www.usccb.org/latin-america.

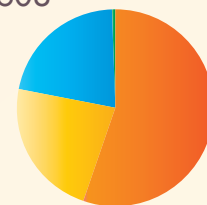
2023 CLA Financials Expenses

- Grants and Donations: **77.60%**
 - Program Costs: **7.91%**
 - Allocations—Internal Grants: **8.22%**
 - Promotions and Fundraising Expenses: **4.66%**
 - Administrative Expenses: **1.61%**
- Total Expenses: \$5,725,947**



Total Number of Grants Approved: 252
Total Amount Approved: \$6,227,608

- General Pastoral*: **53.00%**
- Formation of Clergy and Religious, and Vocations: **19.44%**
- Emergency Disaster Funds: **27.56%**



*Includes evangelization, religious education, family, and other pastoral ministries



Collection for the Church in Latin America | Office of National Collections
3211 Fourth Street NE | Washington, DC 20017-1194 | (202) 541-3365 | www.usccb.org/nationalcollections

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Comparta su Fe

Apoye la Colecta para la Iglesia en América Latina

En el siglo XIII, San Francisco y Santa Clara respondieron con un sí al llamado del Señor para renovar la Iglesia en Asís, Italia, por medio de una vida de oración, paz y amor por los pobres. Su ejemplo inspiró a los hombres y mujeres de esos tiempos a comprometerse con el Evangelio y dedicar su vida a Dios como hermanas y hermanos religiosos.

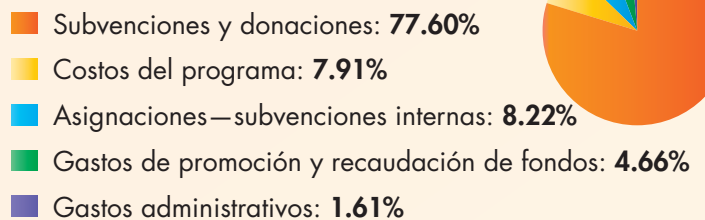
Casi 800 años más tarde, vemos mujeres que continúan respondiendo al llamado de Dios para seguir el ejemplo de Santa Clara llevando una vida de oración en el Monasterio de Santa Clara en la República Dominicana. Las mujeres que ingresan al monasterio empiezan un proceso de formación que incluye la oración y el estudio y una adaptación para separarse del mundo dentro del claustro de su comunidad. Gracias a los fondos que le brinda la Colecta para la Iglesia en América Latina, el monasterio ha podido cubrir los gastos de alimentación, ropa y educación de 18 hermanas, quienes están en diversas etapas de formación.

Las vocaciones a la vida religiosa se cumplen gracias a las oraciones y contribuciones que sostienen a los religiosos y religiosas en su misión. Ayudar a las hermanas del Monasterio de Santa Clara para que respondan con un sí al llamado del Señor, es solo uno de los muchos impactos positivos que usted hace al contribuir a la Colecta para la Iglesia en América Latina, ayudando a fortalecer la relación entre los católicos en Estados Unidos y aquellos en América Latina y el Caribe.

Para más información acerca de la Colecta para la Iglesia en América Latina, visiten www.usccb.org/latin-america.

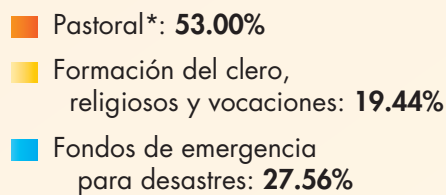
Datos Financieros de CLA 2023

Gastos



Total de gastos: \$5,725,947

Número total de subvenciones aprobadas: 252
Cantidad total aprobada: \$6,227,608



*Incluye evangelización, educación religiosa, pastoral familiar y otros ministerios



Colecta para la Iglesia en América Latina | Oficina de Colectas Nacionales
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January 14, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Happy New Year!

As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with gratitude for the numerous blessings in my life and in the life of our local Church. Together, we accomplished many things – launching new ministries, welcoming people to our communities, starting parish families, embracing synodality and much more.

This past year has also had its challenges – especially as the world around us faces war, pain and suffering. Knowing that our Lord is always walking with us – and working through us – brings me comfort and helps me face difficulties with more strength. While we are not immune from our own challenges and difficulties that test our faith, we cannot forget that he is with us always on this journey, continually calling us to conversion and holiness.

Partners in the Gospel

The focus of the past year was on the beginning of our Partners in the Gospel journey. After nearly a year of consultation with priests, staff and parishioners, we announced the final configurations of the parish families, which resulted in 60 parish families, including eight standalone parishes. This was not a simple task. It took months of planning and many staff and volunteers to accomplish it. Catholics shared their hopes and fears for this process as well as their specific feedback, which not only brought synodality to life in our local Church but also gave us the input we needed to finalize the plan. It is because of this direct input and feedback that we were able to configure the final plan in such a way that reflects the voice of parishioners and local realities. I am so grateful for the engagement of Catholics across the entire Archdiocese in this process, and my hope is that this level of engagement continues and expands as parish families start working together.

After the announcement of the parish families, we then turned our attention to the priest and parish leadership placements. It is no secret that we do not have as many priests as we would like to serve here. To ensure pastoral care throughout the region, we asked priests who are ready to retire to consider postponing retirement, we asked younger priests to take on much larger assignments and we continue to rely on priests from other countries. Thanks to the incredible, prayerful and discerning work of our Priest Personnel Board, by the grace of God, we were able to provide the pastoral coverage needed. And while I am so grateful for the incredible planning and leadership of our Priest Personnel Board, for the generous “Yes!” from so many of our priests and the sharing spirit of many other religious orders, I am also concerned. I am aware as well of the toll this reorganization is taking on our priests and other pastoral leaders.

Additionally, several of our priests became ill this past year and sadly, one of our active pastors passed away. This is an area that truly keeps me up at night, and like you, I must remind myself that the Lord is with us. What gives me great hope and inspiration is that our vocations program has seen an uptick in this past year. We had six applications to the seminary and are hopeful 10 other men will apply this spring! Let

us all pray for them as well as our current priests and religious who are so selflessly serving this archdiocese.

Co-responsibility and Discernment

I also have great hope in our future because of the renewed focus on co-responsibility of all the baptized. While Jesus continues to provide shepherds for the Church by calling some to be priests and bishops, all the baptized are called to follow Jesus and to responsibility for the mission of the Church. Jesus told his disciples to “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

This means that *every* baptized person plays a significant role in the Church. Jesus gave all of us the responsibility to carry out the mission of the Church by living a life in Christ. It also means that the future of our Church doesn't just sit on the shoulders of clergy but with all baptized people who are called by Jesus to serve. Co-responsibility is the cornerstone of Partners in the Gospel because it asks everyone to participate and be engaged in parish life – in the life of the Church. To achieve our vision of renewed parish life, we need everyone to make our parish communities vibrant, welcoming and faith filled. I hope this vision and truth give you great hope and inspiration for the future. How is God calling you to serve?

In July 2024, the parish families officially formed, many of which were under new pastoral leadership. During the following months, we witnessed beautiful welcoming gatherings, pastor installations, staff retreats and many “getting to know you” events among staff and parishioners in parish families. The focus of these first months was really to take quality time to get to know each other. There is no need to rush – especially because we seek the guidance and grace of the Holy Spirit, which requires discernment that is grounded in prayer and consultation.

Communal discernment is another cornerstone of our Partners in the Gospel process. Discernment is the prayerful process that reveals the amazing work of the Holy Spirit demonstrating that we have a Church that is very much alive and eager to share the love and joy of Christ with others. Thus, the process of prayerful discernment requires the engagement of all the baptized in prayerful conversations and consultation. During this next year, you will be invited to communal listening and discernment opportunities to help shape how your parish family – or your standalone parish – will reinvision itself. The success of Partners in the Gospel comes from God's grace and our cooperation with it.

Attorney General

While our focus was on Partners in the Gospel, we also spent a significant amount of energy and focus working with the state Attorney General's office. In 2023, his team subpoenaed all our records under the Charitable Trust Act to gain access to our clergy files. I am not willing to give up our First Amendment rights because it has such grave repercussions for the future for all religions in the State of Washington.

My commitment to victim survivors and all those impacted by clergy abuse remains steadfast. Healing from the pain endured and its aftermath is the reason we launched a Healing Ministry in 2024. This Healing Ministry is the next step in our journey, which started decades ago to address the sin and tragedy of sexual abuse. We have an [entire website](#) dedicated to transparency around this topic, including our list of credibly accused clergy, charts that show the financial impacts of abuse and how since our Safe Environment program was implemented, instances of alleged sexual abuse sharply dropped in the 1980s. In fact, 99% of all incidences of sexual abuse by clergy occurred before 1990 in our archdiocese.

It frustrates me and many Catholics that people think some of our priests are currently abusing minors and vulnerable adults. This is simply not true. This misinformation is demoralizing for our current priests and pastoral leaders who are diligent about our safe environment protocols and are dedicated to healing. It also saddens us that this has caused so many to turn away from the Church. I pray that we can all find healing from this tragedy of abuse.

Global Efforts

As archbishop, I have had the opportunity to participate in several efforts beyond our archdiocese. We are part of the Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons, which began after my pilgrimage of peace to Japan in 2023. I, along with Archbishop John Wester of Santa Fe, Archbishop Peter Nakamura of Nagasaki, Bishop Alexis Shirahama of Hiroshima and Archbishop Emeritus Joseph Takami of Nagasaki, formed this global partnership to work toward a world without nuclear weapons. The focus of this effort is to work for peace and educate people about the threat to all of creation that nuclear weapons pose, while walking in solidarity with the people already affected by these weapons of mass destruction. You can learn more about it [here](#).

Additionally, I was given the great honor as one of the 23 delegates from the United States to participate in the global synod. Last October, I spent the month in Rome sitting at tables with people from all over the world discerning how the Holy Spirit is animating the life of the Church today for spiritual renewal and structural reform. This was a powerful experience that resulted in the publication of the [final document](#) shortly after the synod concluded. Here is a link to my [video summary](#) of this experience and the key elements of the final document.

Looking Ahead

There are many wonderful things to look forward to this next year. First, we are blessed to be celebrating the [175th anniversary](#) of the Archdiocese of Seattle. There will be several special Masses across the archdiocese to mark this historic moment in our local Church, and I hope you will join me for one of them:

- January 25: Proto-Cathedral of St. James the Greater in Vancouver
- February 22: Our Lady Star of the Sea in Bremerton
- March 1: Immaculate Conception in Mount Vernon
- May 31: St. James Cathedral in Seattle

To honor the past and pioneers like Mother Joseph who planted the seeds that have grown into the Church we are today, Catholics are invited to participate in the [Season of Service](#). Our goal is to reach 175,000 hours of serving others while we reflect Jesus Christ in the world. I hope you will join the effort and invite others to do the same.

In addition to our own 175th anniversary, the universal Church is celebrating Jubilee 2025, called "Pilgrims of Hope." This is a time for people to make a pilgrimage. Many priests will be leading pilgrimages abroad, including myself. We will also offer five local pilgrimage sites across the archdiocese so that everyone has the opportunity to participate. You can learn more about Jubilee 2025, the year's prayer intentions, how to obtain an indulgence and our local pilgrimage sites on our [Jubilee 2025 webpage](#).

This year we will also continue to grow together as parish families on our Partners in the Gospel journey – a journey that relies on the co-responsibility of everyone and relies on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which we will seek through our communal discernment sessions. This next year parish families will form new leadership teams and begin the One Parish Planning process to help set the vision for your new parish.

I am also looking forward to the expansion of our Care for Creation ministry that is grounded in our Catholic social teaching, which calls us to care for God's creation and the most vulnerable in it. Efforts to care for creation are directly tied to our Catholic faith, and I am excited about engaging young people who are passionate about this topic over the next year. This is just one of many ministries that I am eager to see flourish.

This next year I will travel to Japan to mark the 80th anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bombs. This gives us a great moment to call for peace – not just related to nuclear war but related to peace in our world, on our streets, in our communities and in our own hearts.

As your archbishop, I seek to fulfill my call of being your pastoral leader while also providing leadership for this corner of the Universal Catholic Church. While the ministry is challenging at times, it is also rewarding, and I could not do it without the dedication and selfless service of our priests and religious brothers and sisters, the leadership and wisdom of our lay staff, the generous stewardship of our volunteers and the faith and action from the whole People of God.

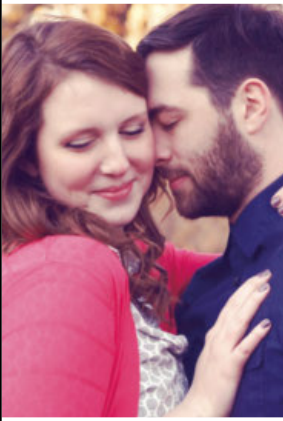
In closing, I wish to express my deep gratitude and encouragement for all those who continue to preach the Word, celebrate the sacraments and exercise any and every kind of charity in the name of Jesus Christ! As always, I remain,

In The Heart of Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul D. Etienne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and "E".

Most Rev. Paul D. Etienne, DD, STL
Archbishop of Seattle

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