


# 2023 BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcement Weekend (2 weeks prior to Kickoff, sent on 1/16 for use on 1/21-1/22):


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## *We Are an Offering*

The 2023 Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA) is getting ready to officially begin in 2 weeks. The ACA supports the ministries and programs of the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings - many of which support our local parishes and schools. Over the campaign, you will see more information in the bulletin each week to let you know how your offering supports our Catholic family of Eastern Montana. Our goal is to have 100% participation this year.

*Please watch your mail for information from Bishop Warfel and Bishop Fleming over the next two weeks. We ask that you prayerfully consider your gift to the ACA during this time and come prepared to make your commitment the weekend of Feb. 4-5, 2023.*



Announcement Weekend 2 (1 week prior to Kickoff, sent on 1/23 for use on 1/28-1/29):

## Commitment Weekend is February 4 & 5, 2023

Please remember that Commitment Weekend is next weekend. Watch your mail for a letter from Bishop Warfel and Bishop Fleming which will explain more about the appeal. Then, bring your pledge card with you to Mass. We are asking that you come prepared to make your commitment next weekend. This can be in the form of making a gift immediately by check or credit card, pledging a gift to be made on a date in the future or making monthly contributions towards an overall gift amount.

Our goal is to have 100% participation, so please prayerfully consider over this next week what contribution you can make. Every gift matters, no matter the size - often it is the act of giving that truly impacts our lives.

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Commitment Weekend (Kickoff, Sent on 1/30 for use on 2/4-2/5):

# Commitment Weekend

We encourage all of our Catholic family to pause for a moment this weekend and reflect on all the God given gifts in your life. Then, take the time to extend your gratitude to God in prayer. As you reflect, we hope that you will see your parish, priest and our Diocese as a part of those blessings - and that you have prayerfully considered a gift to support the work of the church in Eastern Montana.

Our goals are to reach \$1.7 million to fund the ministries and programs of the Diocese through gifts from 100% of our Catholic families. Please complete your gift or pledge this weekend.

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Weekend One:

Thermometer Posters with the Numbers from 2022, no bulletin announcement sent

Weekend Two (Sent on 2/13 for use on 2/18-2/19):

# We Are an Offering

## Ministry Spotlight: Properties & Facilities

One of the ministries of the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings is our "Properties and Facilities Management." Jerry Horton, Property Manager, covers the 94,000 square miles throughout the year to provide assistance with issues from construction, repairs and maintenance of our parishes and schools to deeds, contracts and permits. He is able to provide assistance beginning with planning, guiding through the process and completion and will even help to navigate the insurance processes. Over the last 6 months he has helped with boiler issues, frozen pipes, tornado damage, roof damage, new construction, construction planning, etc. He does all of this at NO COST to the parish or school. The Diocese wants to ensure that we are providing support for the maintenance and stewardship of our churches, schools and facilities. Your gifts to the Annual Catholic Appeal help to ensure that we are able to provide this service on an ongoing basis.



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Weekend Three (Sent on 2/20 for use on 2/25-2/26):

### Ministry Spotlight: Lifelong Faith Formation

Everyone's faith journey is different. The Department of Lifelong Faith Formation assists individuals, catechetical leaders, and pastors in providing the People of God of Eastern Montana with material to strengthen their faith and enrich their spirituality. The mission of this office is to provide relevant, reliable, and trustworthy catechetical and educational materials, consistent with the teaching of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, to enrich the faith lives of Catholics of all ages throughout Eastern Montana.

While people may think of this as working with our children and youth and/or working with sacramental preparation, the Department of Lifelong Formation also works with adults who are becoming Catholic and those who want to strengthen their Catholic faith. Some of the other activities supported through this department include youth events, Synod support, Eucharistic Revival activities and the upcoming Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help.



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Weekend Four (Sent 2/27 for use on 3/4-3/5):

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# We Are an Offering

### Ministry Spotlight: *The Harvest Magazine*

Every other month 14,000 households across Eastern Montana receive a copy of *The Harvest* magazine, at no cost to them. *The Harvest* is one of the primary communication tools used by the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings to ensure that all of our Catholic families are able to stay up to date on what is happening around the diocese. The magazine includes a regular column from Bishop Warfel on a current topic of interest, and now will also include articles from Bishop Fleming. Additionally, *The Harvest*, shares news, announcements, celebrations, education, and recognition about our diocese and the good work that we do. It is an opportunity to highlight local parishes, while also sharing about the work of the ministries of the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings. As an added bonus, *The Harvest* is our way to ensure that every registered Catholic household has a connection and contact with the diocese at least six times each year. We could not provide this without your gifts to the ACA.





Weekend Five (Sent on 3/6 for use on 3/11-3/12):

## Ministry Spotlight: St. Thomas Camp

St. Thomas Camp is both a physical location and an experience that is located just outside of Monarch, MT.

As a physical location, St. Thomas Camp sits in the Lewis & Clark National Forest 45 miles southeast of Great Falls. The camp is used not only for our own summer camps but can (and is) also be rented and used for other retreats, reunions, and events.

As a summer camp, each summer approximately 150 children and teens attend a weeklong camp experience. The goal is to help children and teens feel the love of Christ, experience an adventure in the outdoors, and be challenged to become the saint God wants them to be. It is a way that our youth in the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings can celebrate being Catholic together while participating in sacramental encounters, deep discipleship, camp adventures, and field trips.



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Weekend Six (Sent on 3/13 for use on 3/18-3/19):

## Ministry Spotlight: Foreign Priests

We have 50 churches and 50 missions in the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings, and we need a priest presence at each of these locations. While some of our priests have a dedicated parish, some of our priests cover a "cluster" of churches and may be responsible from anywhere from two to five parishes in surrounding towns.

While our goal will always be to have local men discern the vocation of priesthood, we know that we cannot currently depend on that to ensure that we have enough priests to serve our over 14,000+ Catholic households in Eastern Montana. This means we need support from priests who are from other countries and/or belong to specific orders versus being a diocesan priest. Without these priests - we would

not be able to celebrate Mass every week at each of our locations. Some of our parishes are already experiencing these scheduling issues.

Your support to the ACA assists the Diocese in helping our foreign priests with immigration services, support in transitioning to the United States and Montana, and other support as needed, so they are able to serve our communities.



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Weekend Seven (Sent on 3/20 for use on 3/25-3/26):

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# We Are an Offering

## Ministry Spotlight: Marriage Tribunal Office

The Office of Marriage Tribunal provides compassion and support to Catholics who are looking for support with healing their past marriages and for annulments so they can practice their Catholic faith fully. This is a shared ministry and a part of pastoral care of the Diocese. This office is staffed by the Tribunal Director, Judicial Vicar and Judge, Adjunct Judicial Vicar, and two Defenders of the Bond. Their goal is to foster healing and spiritual growth through the compassionate and just application of the law in ministry of serving God's people.

Additionally, there is support through programs such as Retrouvaille for troubled marriages, Marriage Encounter for good marriages looking for a boost, and being a resource to our priests by helping to train advocates who work with their parish to journey with couples as they navigate these areas.



Weekend Eight (Sent on 3/27 for use on 4/1-4/2):

## Ministry Spotlight: Safe Environment Program

The Diocese leads the Safe Environment program for all of our parishes, schools, and other programs/ministries to follow. The Safe Environment program provides education around abuse and neglect for our children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

The Safe Environment program is completed by all employees and volunteers who are working within the diocese and have any kind of contact with our children, young people, and vulnerable adults. The education helps to identify the signs for abuse and neglect, then helps to educate them on how to report the suspicions so that it may be investigated.

The Safe Environment program also has components that are used with our young people to help them be aware of safe boundaries and interactions with others (including their own age) and who to ask for help if they have a concern.



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Weekend Nine (Sent on 4/3 for use on 4/8-4/9): EASTER – NO BULLETIN INSERT USED

Second Commitment Weekend Ten (Sent on 4/10 for use on 4/15-4/16):

# Commitment Weekend

This weekend is our second and final Commitment Weekend for the 2023 Annual Catholic Appeal. We encourage you to pause this weekend and reflect on all of the gifts that God has given to you and your family. Truly, all that we have, all that we are, and all that we hope to be comes from God. Next, take some time to extend your prayerful gratitude to God.

We also want to take time to refocus on the ministries and services provided by and through the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings. The ACA is our support those ministries. We are making a big push this weekend to encourage as many of you as possible to ensure your commitment to the ACA has been turned in. If you have not yet committed your gift to the Appeal, we hope you will this weekend (can be paid thru 12/31/23).

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Weekend Eleven (Sent on 4/17 for use on 4/22-4/23):

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# We Are an Offering

## Ministry Spotlight: Catholic Cemeteries

While often the idea of planning for the death of ourselves or a loved one is not a comfortable topic, the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings does understand how helpful it is to have support and assistance in ensuring that after passing, we have Catholic cemetery options with Family Service Advisors for our Catholic family in Eastern Montana.

The Diocese of Great Falls-Billings has three Catholic cemeteries located in our diocese. Mount Olivet and Calvary in Great Falls and Holy Cross in Billings. Our Catholic cemeteries provide services which are consistent with Catholic teaching, working closely with families and local funeral homes. All burials are conducted professionally and with the utmost respect to the deceased and their family. Services provided include: full body burial, cremains burial, columbarium for cremains, and a grave locator service.



Weekend Twelve (Sent on 4/24 for use on 4/29-4/30):

## Ministry Spotlight: FORMED Subscriptions

Beginning in March 2022, the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings launched a one-year subscription to FORMED for every Catholic in Eastern Montana. After the positive feedback, this was extended through 2023.

FORMED is a digital gateway to Catholic content, available on demand by the user. It is a one stop location for all of the best Catholic media - where the user can watch, listen, or read at any time. This provides an opportunity for the user to explore their faith anywhere they have an internet connection. Additionally, FORMED has age-appropriate content for

children through adults, on a wide variety of topics. Topics include: Personal Devotion, Scripture, Adult Faith Formation, Teen Faith Formation, Marriage, Sacramental Prep, and many more. These are all found through books, movies, Bible studies, parish programs, audio dramas, and more delivered in multiple languages from your mobile device or computer.



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Weekend Thirteen (Sent on 5/1 for use on 5/6-5/7):

## Ministry Spotlight: Office of the Bishops

The Office of the Bishops is a ministry funded through your gifts to the Annual Catholic Appeal. Your support ensures that our Bishops have the ability and support to perform their ministry and lead the Catholic Church of Eastern Montana. Our Bishops are responsible for teaching doctrine, governing Catholics in their jurisdiction and representing the Church to all people within their jurisdiction. This includes celebrating the Sacraments of Initiation, joining in parish celebrations and milestones, and parish and school visits.

More specifically, funding for the Office of the Bishops supports our

Bishops' salaries, office equipment and supplies, travel expenses (auto, gas, tires, repair, etc.), and costs associated with representing the Church of Eastern Montana worldwide, etc. Our Bishops love to come meet, pray, and visit with you in your local communities and the ACA allows them to do exactly that.



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Weekend Fourteen (Sent on 5/8 for use on 5/13-5/14):

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# We Are an Offering

## Ministry Spotlight: Seminarian Support

As men are discerning the call to priesthood, our Diocese wants to provide support. This begins with a Vocations Director, who will pray with and answer questions to help them discern what is the call of God in their lives. If they feel called to continue the path towards priesthood, the Diocese will also provide support for graduate level seminarian education to include tuition, books, room, boarding, and even some travel expenses. Additionally, we also have a priest that is specifically assigned to Seminarian Formation who will support them through the process up to an including their ordination, when they will become transitional deacons and then priests of the Diocese. These are important pieces of support, so that as these men are working towards priesthood, they do not have to worry about the financial aspects of the process. As we hope to continue to grow our Seminarian program, we will continue to need support for this fund.



Weekend Fifteen (Sent on 5/15 for use on 5/20-5/21):

# Wrap-Up Weekend

Next weekend is Wrap-Up Weekend for the 2023 Annual Catholic Appeal. While gifts and donations can be made throughout the remainder of the calendar year, we will not be actively asking for contributions to the 2023 ACA.

The goal for the 2023 ACA is \$1.7 million - these dollars do not leave the diocese and are used solely for the ministerial work of the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings. Thus far, we have reached just \$1.4 million - and we need your support to be able to meet our budget needs without cutting any programs or services.

We are asking for everyone to commit to their gift to the ACA by next weekend, if you have not already done so. Commitments can be a one-time payment, installments over a couple of months, or gifts given each month. These can be paid immediately or over time, through December 31, 2023.

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Wrap-Up Weekend, Week Sixteen (Sent on 5/22 for use on 5/27-5/28):

## Wrap-Up Weekend

This is Wrap-Up Weekend for the 2023 Annual Catholic Appeal - we made it! We have currently reached approximately 85% of our financial goal, but we are still about \$250,000 short of where we need to be to meet our budget for the ministry services of the Diocese. Additionally, we are at about 24% overall participation - and our goal was 100%. We know that we can get much closer to these goals, but we can't do it without you!

Thank you again to those of you have already made your commitment, we have received gifts from over 3,200 families. And to those who have been considering a gift or who may know be thinking about giving - we are asking you to simply make a commitment this weekend by filling out a pledge card. These can be a one-time payment, installments over a couple of months, or gifts given each month. These can be paid immediately or over time, through December 31, 2023.

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