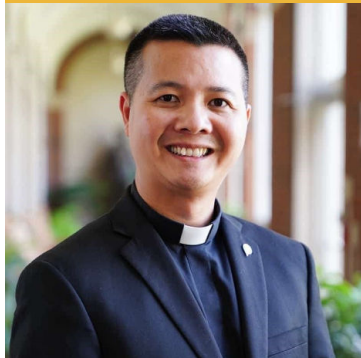


# Catholic Information Center

Friends of the Center · August 2024 Newsletter

[catholicinformationcenter.org](http://catholicinformationcenter.org)



Dear friends of the Center,

I am thrilled to share that we recently received a significant grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its *Thriving Congregations Initiative*. This generous five-year, \$1.25 million grant will support our new initiative, *Formed as Disciples, Prepared for Mission*.

This initiative builds on the success of our current Leadership Formation Institute. As we navigate rapid social and cultural changes, the Institute aims to

strengthen and equip lay Catholics to live out their faith and values at work, with family and friends, and in the wider community.

The grant will allow us to expand current programming, focusing particularly on underrepresented groups within their parishes. Lay people eager to use their spiritual and personal gifts in service of their fellow parishioners and community neighbors will be invited to participate in the Leadership Formation Institute.

We aim to reach nearly 300 lay people, deepening their relationship with God, fostering connections with people from other parishes, and contributing to the flourishing of their communities and the wider world. Participants will gain clarity about our values and mission as the Church, drawing upon practices rooted in Catholic tradition.

To support participants, we are creating a consultation process for pastors and their staff to identify ways to enhance ministry in their parishes. This will help participants discern where best to direct their gifts and learning by creating parish projects that address needs in their community. The funding from Lilly allows us to offer mini-grants to support these parish projects, further enhancing our collective efforts.

Lilly Endowment's *Thriving Congregations Initiative* is designed to help organizations like ours better understand the changing landscape in which we serve. As a Paulist ministry, the Catholic Information Center remains a center for evangelization. This new initiative is a means of addressing the evolving social contexts and identifying the spiritual hungers of people in West Michigan, so that they may respond readily to our invitation to know Christ and his Gospel.

We are grateful for the support of Lilly Endowment Inc., and we remain deeply grateful for your continued partnership. Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to our mission. Together we are building a bright future for our Church!

In Christ,

*Fr. Dat*

Very Rev. Dat Tran, CSP  
Executive Director

## Pray for:

† Carl Acres

Noah Brewer

† Barb Cote

Marlene Fabbro

Grahm Family

Lois Jandernoa

Julia Smith Johnson

Gerri Patis

**August Mass for CIC  
Intentions:  
Sunday, August 11  
5:30 p.m. at the  
Cathedral**

*Please include your prayer intentions with your green envelope or email them to [cicoffice@catholicinformationcenter.org](mailto:cicoffice@catholicinformationcenter.org)*

# Leadership Institute



**Institute for Biblical Studies**  
Wednesdays, Oct. 2 - Nov. 6,  
6-8:30 p.m.

The Institute provides the opportunity for both personal growth and ministry formation. Participants are well formed in how to read and pray with the Bible as a person of faith who is willing to share the Word with others. Participants are equipped with the knowledge and skills for facilitating small group Bible study. On completion of the program, participants will be ready to start (or strengthen) a Bible study ministry in their parish or their lay association.



**Young Adult Leadership Institute**  
Tuesdays, Sept.-Nov.,  
6-8:30 p.m.

YALI is an opportunity for adults in their 20s and 30s to explore living their faith and values at work, with family and friends, and in the wider community.

- + LEARN how your strengths can change the world.
- + LEAD with passion, purpose, and presence.
- + LEAP with trust into God's plan.

Retreats and seminars begin September 10.



**Institute for Hispanic Ministry**  
Saturdays, Aug.-May,  
8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

This unique program is designed to strengthen and empower leaders who are ready for greater service in their parish and wider community. Monthly classes begin in August.

Discover your leadership potential, connect with Hispanic ministry experts, and build a strong network. Together we are building a bright future for our Church!

Your generous and regular contributions help ensure a vibrant and enduring future for the Paulist ministry at the CIC. All donations, no matter the size, make a significant impact.

Become a monthly contributor through online giving by scanning the QR code below or by visiting our website.



**For more information or to register call 616-459-7267  
or visit [catholicinformationcenter.org](http://catholicinformationcenter.org)**

**Institute programs are co-sponsored with the Diocese of Grand Rapids.**



Follow us on Social Media for the latest updates and news.

## Friendship Corner

**Rita Loper**  
Longtime Friend of the Center



Grateful and blessed are the words I would use to describe my feelings about the Paulist Fathers. After moving to Grand Rapids in the late 70s, I looked for a place to call my home church. I found it at the Catholic Information Center: first, because of the many Mass times offered on the weekend, but shortly after that, I was drawn to the many classes, social activities, and projects. The mission of the Paulists fit with my spiritual journey then and now. Each of the Paulist Fathers brought unique gifts to share with our community which encouraged me to grow in my relationships with God and my neighbors.

To mention a few who had a special impact on my life, I would start with Father Les Sieg who spent hours with Randy and I before we were married and then officiated at our wedding. Father Bob Pinkston always had a listening ear when I needed him. Father Dick Sparks gave many talks on current topics and ethics related to Catholicism which helped me grow as an adult Christian Catholic. Father Joe Gallagher, with his wisdom and humor, embodied the Holy Spirit and kept encouraging me to become a Paulist Associate. I am so grateful for the time Father Joachim came to the hospital to give the last rites to my father and pray with Randy and me. Father René Constanza always took time to talk with me, even virtually during Covid times. I could not forget the current priests at the Cathedral who spread the Good News every day with so many people, parishioners or not. This is who the Paulists are! I will always be grateful for the Paulist Fathers.

Excerpt from "Our Stories: 75 Years of Paulist Mission in West Michigan"