



Celebrating 75 years of the Diocese of Dodge City!

Summer Missions Report 2026

We seek to help young people establish and build a relationship with Christ through prayer, catechesis, the sacraments, and works of mercy. This report gives an overview of the Summer along with some things to consider as we prepare for next year.







Totus Tuus

Totus Tuus, a Latin phrase meaning "totally yours," was the motto of St. Pope John Paul II. Taken from St. Louis de Montfort's *True Devotion to Mary*, it signifies our desire to give ourselves entirely to Jesus Christ through Mary. This summer, we focused on the 10 Commandments and the Luminous Mysteries with the grade school students. The junior high and high school students spent time building relationships through sharing of meals, games, testimonies, and prayer.

The Team

- Daniel Ordonez - Garden City; St. Philip Neri Seminary
- Jaci Biggs - Minneapolis; KSU
- Jonathan Lu - Hooker, OK; OU
- Joseph Kiley - Pratt; Newman
- Sydney Wapp - Frankfort; KS Wesleyan
- Jolie Girard - Clyde; KSU
- Natalie Theubet - Manhattan; FHSU
- Jazmin Aguilar - Garden City; FHSU
- Hope White - Hanover; FHSU
- Michaela Hubbell - Spearville; KSU
- John Szot - Great Bend; St. Philip Neri Seminary



"I think the most rewarding part was the transformation from the beginning to the end of the week. Sometimes it was evident that the kids' knowledge was a bit lacking, but it was so awesome to feed their curiosity and really witness the growth in their faith." - Jaci



Parishes Served

St. John, Spearville 59
St. Joseph, Ashland 23
St. Joseph, Ellinwood 28
St. Dominic, Garden City 86
St. Mary, Garden City 175
St. Joseph, Scott City 45
St. Anthony, Lakin 45
Sacred Heart, Larned 27
Prince of Peace, Great Bend 65
St. Patrick, Plains 47
Sacred Heart, Pratt 24
St. John, Hoisington 55
St. Anthony, Liberal 50
MQoP, Ulysses 60

Total: 789 children and youth





Camp Cristo Rey

Camp Cristo Rey is a camp for middle schoolers (5th-8th grade) to discover more deeply the call of faith, and how to live it out. Our patron, St. José Sánchez del Río, boldly and bravely defended our common Catholic faith and at such a young age! Our theme this summer was "Life" - Salvation History.

The Team

- Jazmin Aguliar - Garden City; FHSU
- Hope White - Hanover; FHSU
- Michaela Hubbell - Spearville; KSU
- Pablo Aguilar - Garden City; GCCC
- John Szot - Great Bend; St. Philip Neri
- Allie Von Leonrod - Dighton; FHSU









Location, Dates - Attendees

Camp Aldrich, June 29 - July 2 - **50**

Spearville, June 28th - **25**



Prayer & Action

Area high school youth and their parents are invited to a summer mission trip! Prayer and Action offers a rich experience of the Christian lifestyle where a relationship with God overflows as service to others. They paint houses, pull weeds, and if the weather gets in the way, they visit the homebound.

The Team

- Jazmin Aguliar - Garden City; FHSU
- Hope White - Hanover; FHSU
- Michaela Hubbell - Spearville; KSU
- Pablo Aguilar - Garden City; GCCC
- John Szot - Great Bend; St. Philip Neri
- Allie Von Leonrod - Dighton; FHSU





"It was nice to see so many young kids on fire for their faith this summer. It really gave me hope for the future of our church in the ways these kids were striving to grow in faith. It was nice to be there to help guide them as they walk along their faith journeys going into college or looking in the future. Just being able to see them take on the faith as their own and continue to strive to be better just brought me so much joy and hope for the future!" - Allie





Location:
Garden City

9 of 48 parishes participated

High School Students: 68
Adult Chaperones: 11
Homeowners Helped: 20
Priests Involved: 5
Team Members: 6

The mission begins on Sunday night, followed by 4 full days of weaving together prayer, work, and community; ending on Friday at noon. The students sleep at the parish, take turns cooking and cleaning for each other. A rich immersion in the Christian lifestyle, for only $150.

Bonus Vocations Events



Fourth annual Father/Son Fishing

"My favorite part was watching dad's from different towns connect while helping their sons untangle fishing line. One of the common pieces of biography shared amongst them was the name of their parish and their pastor. It was beautiful to see the diocesan connections grow in that context." - Gentry H.

We hosted our first Mother/Daughter Tea Party this summer to give these ladies an opportunity to come together for crafting, refreshments, and prayer. The girls prayed for help from the Holy Spirit as they discern their vocation, and the mothers blessed their daughters. Fr. John Stang closed the event with a blessing for all who were gathered.





Thank you to the Prayer and Action team for serving the meal and refreshments and all of the priests, host site coordinators, and donors who made these events possible.

Fathers/Sons: 30
Priests: 2
Summer Missions Team: 5

Mothers/Daughters: 23
Priests: 1
Summer Missions Team: 5

The Gathering off Gary

At the end of each summer we invite the current missionaries, former missionaries, seminarians, and other disciples from around the diocese to celebrate together! This year was intentionally smaller due to scheduling conflicts and the unfortunate loss of our typical "Gary Ave." location. Thank you to St. Andrew's, Wright for being our new host.

The Time and Place

THANK YOU to the Heimermans for hosting this location for the last nine years. Your hospitality will be missed!

Fr. Ted Stoecklein and St. Andrew's, Wright parish hosted for the first time on the final Friday of July.





30 missionaries, chancery staff, family members, and priests attended this summer's gathering.

A big thanks to Eric Haselhorst for preparing the shrimp boil.

Training Week

We partnered with the Diocese of Salina Totus Tuus team for training week this year. Thank you to Lucas Roths, Dcn. Bill Meagher, Jaimie Kuhlman, Fr. Luke Theilen, Mandy Meagher, Geoff Andrews, and Matea Fredenberg for their cooperation and support. We were pleased to host training one last time at Sacred Heart Cathedral School. Many new Christian friendships were formed and strengthened amongst the 36 young men and women from western Kansas. Perhaps the most rewarding part of summer missions is watching the young adults form lifelong, authentic Christian friendships.





"It's incredible how close we (my team) got so quickly. I'm best friends with people I met for the first time two months ago! " Jaci, Totus Tuus

NEXT STEPS

TOTUS TUUS

This summer we were blessed with 12 young adult missionaries to serve our diocese, expanding our capacity to serve up to 16 parish locations. Ultimately, 14 parishes partnered with us, including two new locations. One of our largest host parishes was unable to participate in 2026 due to construction; however, overall participation remained steady compared to last year.

Our experience this summer suggests that approximately 2½ teams may be an effective balance for meeting the needs of our parishes while maintaining the quality and sustainability of the program. We will explore the possibility of having a dedicated Totus Tuus team serve for only part of the summer. We will also consider shortening the summer schedule by one week to help prevent team burnout and strengthen the overall experience for our young adult missionaries.

CAMP CRISTO REY

Participation greatly increased this year in both the 1-day and overnight camps.

1. While the 1-day camp is well attended, scheduling conflicts and fatigue may make it difficult to continue this particular form in 2027.

The overnight camp will remain at Camp Aldrich.

2. I would like to explore the option of hiring a standalone Camp Cristo Rey team that consists of both young adults (ages 16-23) and adult chaperones (ages 24+). This would allow us to specialize our training to the particular age group and time-frame, allowing better ministry and safety to the campers.

PRAYER & ACTION

Participation increased again this year, with some teens enjoying the first week so much, they came again for the second week!

1. With the steady growth in participation, I believe it is time to expand to 3 weeks.
2. Possible locations include Garden City or Dodge City. One location for all 3 weeks
3. Additional chaperones are requested to ensure all teens are safe and have adequate pastoral care
4. With the loss of a valuable team member, I am searching for the right person to take over the majority of Prayer & Action training in early June

Bonus Vocations Events

These events seem to align perfectly with our 3 new pastoral plan priorities - call to holiness, family, and relationships. To promote more families participating in intentional time of relationship building, prayer, and vocational exploration, we encourage parishes to host similar events. Localized events will be more accessible and can be hosted any time of year that is best for the community.

Thank you to all of the priests who celebrated the sacraments for us this summer. As the Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith, it is of highest importance that our ministry be rooted in the sacramental life of the Church. We are grateful for your "yes" to the priesthood and trust that it will bear fruit in the lives of those who attended Summer Missions.

Thank You!

Thank you to the many DREs, parents, youth ministers, and volunteers who made this summer possible. Many of you prepared meals, provided spaces, transported students, and more! We are so glad to partner with you in this mission to bring young people closer to Jesus!



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A special thank you to Gentry Heimerman for all of the work he has done to build Summer Missions for the past 11 years. The Heimerman family has relocated to the Wichita area. Their faith and love for authentic Catholic community will be deeply missed.

Scan here to apply for a job as a Summer Missionary next year!

Scan here to view our website and learn more about each program.





