

Bishop Yanta's Journey

Fifty-two years of "Full-Speed Ahead" priestly ministry

collaboration with the bishop. We have a full complement of deans. I am very grateful for them and for their support.

We are blessed by our vicars.

I am very grateful for the priests who have come to us from Mexico, Spain, Nicaragua, Poland, India ...

I am proud of all the religious women in our diocese who have been so faithful to the charisms of their orders.

Catholic Schools

Catholic schools, and in a special way our only diocesan middle school and high school, Holy Cross Catholic Academy, are among my great loves. We have seen the stabilization and growth of Holy Cross paralleled in our entire Catholic school system.

Ecumenical presence

The Lord has blessed our ecumenical presence. I'm particularly grateful to Deacon Floyd Ashley for his leadership in that area. I have a great admiration for the strong moral values of our Protestant brothers and sisters.

Eucharistic Congresses

Our two Eucharistic Congresses were fantastic blessings to our diocese. We have been blessed with visits from five cardinals over the course of the past eleven years: Cardinals Law, Rigali, Martino, McCarrick and Rodriguez. In the total history of the diocese, only 3 cardinals had visited here previously.

Juan de Padilla Symposium

The symposium that was held in 2004 on Fr. Juan de Padilla was a tremendous blessing. Among my unfinished business is getting the Church in the U.S. to recognize Juan de Padilla, and to promote his cause for sainthood, so that the Holy See will declare him a saint. In my retirement I would like to work toward that end.

Diocesan finance

We have a very fine chief financial officer, finance committee and investment committee. Our Capital Campaign was a tremendous success and resulted in the elimination of the diocesan debt.

Catholic Radio

Dale Artho rose up as a leader to be an instrument of the coming of Catholic radio to the Amarillo Diocese.

St. Valentine's Catholic Radio has been a major gift for the evangelization and catechetical training of all of God's people, especially the adult

population.

We have received numerous letters from prisoners affirming that St. Valentine's Catholic Radio has truly been a life-line for them, and has been an instrument of great conversion and strength for those incarcerated men and women who have gone sometimes years without seeing a priest.

We will be celebrating the second anniversary of the launching of Catholic Radio in Amarillo on Feb. 14.

Families

I see so many outstanding Catholic families in our diocese.

The pro-life movement is in place and thriving here.

If you can get popular culture in tune with natural and divine law, great things will happen. A totality of massive influence will form leaders and give them direction.

Eucharistic Adoration

We have seen a great growth of Eucharistic Adoration in our parishes and convents.

What people have influenced you the most?

Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI.

If someone had told me the late eighties or early nineties that Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger would one day become pope, I would have bet all the money in Fort Knox against it.

I went to Rome for his installation. Twenty-seven years prior, when Karol Wojtyla was elected and became Pope John Paul II, I went to Rome as well.

It was time of great elation. Poland stood out as the moral leader of the world and the Catholic Church during the Communist era, with its stubborn defiance – the Solidarity labor movement and the popular movement of the people.

WTC: I know you have a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Bishop Yanta. Please tell us about that.

Bishop Yanta: I learned that at home.

My devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe was learned at the Seminary of St. John's.

The Vincentian priests were very strong in teaching us Spanish and giving us a good spiritual life with devotion to Mary.

We prayed a daily rosary and observed the Marian feasts and the celebration with a procession on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

When I came to Amarillo, I instituted our annual Our Lady of Guadalupe celebration.

I made a Marian pilgrimage for the 50th anniversary of my priesthood.

I visited Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal, Our Lady of Pilar in Spain, Lourdes in France, St. Catherine Laboure in Paris; St. Vincent de Paul, who I always held as a great priest and inspiration.

I was the first president of the St. Vincent de Paul Society in the seminary at 20 years of age.

One of my disappointments: I wanted to have Societies of St. Vincent de Paul in all of our parishes to take care of those who are poor, economically and spiritually.

I know that blessing will come in God's time.

Safe Environment

I was prepared, I think, for the scandal of sexual abuse of minors by clergy because I had such a case in a parochial school in San Antonio when I was there and had been prominent on the personnel committee.

I am very thankful to the Lord that the Holy Spirit has guided us in the Diocese to provide a safe environment to our youth and restore the trust deserved by the people of God and leadership of the Church.

WTC: What are your immediate plans, Bishop Yanta?

Bishop Yanta: One of the things I want to do is stop and go through the boxes I have accumulated over the past 52 years of my priesthood. They contain many historically significant items.

I'm looking forward to having a chance to reconnect with family and friends.

Wherever I go to live temporarily, I will make myself available for service to the local bishop.

I do not wish to disengage myself from the diocese, but in the beginning it is good for Bishop Zurek to be more free, to see the diocese for himself, to get to know the priests, deacons, leaders, staff members and parishes.

Each parish has its own personality, and he will need an opportunity to get to know them.

WTC: Do you have any parting words for the people of our diocese?

Bishop Yanta: To the people of our diocese – Thank you!

I ask you to give your new bishop, Patrick J. Zurek, your total prayerful support and to continue to be good stewards building the Kingdom of Justice, Peace and Love through the Church.

Prayer to Our Lady of the Holy Eucharist



Let us pray, asking Our Lady of the Holy Eucharist to intercede for us that we will grow together to become a Eucharistic Culture Diocese:

“O Mary, our model of faith,
you gave the human origins to Christ,
your Son our Redeemer.

O Mother of our Savior,
you built up Christ's physical body as mother
and continue this role in His
Mystical Body, the Church.

Lead us to the Eucharist of your Son
so that we might live His Word.

Lead us to God our Father,
thanking Him for all His gifts,
especially His Son and the Holy Spirit.

Lead us to being transformed
into the Jesus we receive,
worshipping Him as Son of God in His
Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament.

O Mary, you are the first and best
believer and disciple of Jesus,
lead us to recognize the Holy Eucharist
as the way to healing, reconciliation,
reparation and renewal,
and to unity in our Church.

Your Son, through the Church,
teaches us that the Holy Eucharist
is the source and summit of the Christian life.

May we be a Church centered in
the Eucharist:

In our marriages and our families,
our parishes and our religious communities,
our Diocese of Amarillo,
and in the whole universal Church!

O Mary, I am wholly yours!”

(Remembrance of the Eucharist Congress in the Diocese of Amarillo 2002 and 2006)