



# DIOCESE OF GREAT FALLS-BILLINGS

## OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

P.O. Box 1399 † Great Falls, Montana 59403 † (406) 727-6683

[www.diocesegfb.org](http://www.diocesegfb.org)

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### 2026 Pastoral Assignments

June 9, 2026

*Bishop Jeffrey Fleming announces the following appointments, effective July 1, 2026, unless otherwise noted. The appointments were made in consultation with the Diocesan Personnel board following discussions with those involved.*

- **Rev. Joseph Asirvatham**, current Sacramental Minister of the parish cluster of Hays, Lodgepole, Fort Belknap, and Zortman, is assigned as Parish Administrator of the parish cluster of **Immaculate Conception in Fort Benton** and **St. Margaret in Geraldine**
- **Rev. Anthony Abiamiri** is reassigned as Parish Administrator of the parish cluster of **St. Mary in Livingston**, **St. Joseph in Big Timber**, **St. Margaret in Clyde Park**, and **St. William in Gardiner** for an additional one-year term.
- **Rev. Philip Chinnappan, HGN**, currently Parochial Vicar at Holy Spirit Parish, is assigned as Pastor of **Holy Spirit Parish in Great Falls** for a six-year term.
- **Rev. Ryan Erlenbush** is reassigned as Pastor of **Corpus Christi Parish in Great Falls** for an additional six-year term.
- **Rev. Owen Ince**, of the Neocatechumenal Way, is assigned as Parish Administrator of the parish cluster of **Sacred Heart in Bridger**, **St. Joseph in Fromberg**, and **St. John in Joliet** for a temporary term.
- **Rev. Thomas Johnson**, to be ordained a priest on June 25, 2026, is assigned as Parochial Vicar of the parish cluster of **St. Francis Xavier in Circle**, **St. John the Baptist in Jordan**, and **St. Francis de Sales in Richey** through September 27, 2026, at which time he is assigned to continue studies in canon law at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome.
- **Rev. Jose Marquez** is reassigned as Pastor of **Mary, Queen of Peace** parish in Billings, Montana.
- **Rev. Felix Nayak** is reassigned as Pastor of the parish cluster of **St. Mary in Malta**, **Sacred Heart in Dodson**, and **St. Francis of Assisi in Saco** for an additional six-year term.
- **Rev. Biju Thottankara**, current Parochial Vicar in Big Sandy, is assigned as Parish Administrator of the parish cluster of **St. Mary in Rocky Boy**, **St. Margaret Mary in Big Sandy**, and **St. Anthony in Box Elder** for a three-year term.
- **Rev. Joseph Tran**, current Pastor in the parish cluster of Rocky Boy, Big Sandy, and Box elder, is assigned as Pastor of the parish cluster of **St. Paul in Hays**, **St. Thomas in Lodgepole**, **Sacred Heart in Fort Belknap**, and **St. Joseph in Zortman** for a six-year term.



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*Additionally, Bishop Jeffrey Fleming announces the following, effective July 1, 2026.*

- **Rev. Masilimani Suvakkin**, currently Pastor in the parish cluster of Bridger, Fromberg, and Joliet, has been granted permission to serve in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati for an indeterminate amount of time.
- **Rev. Doug Krings**, currently Pastor of Holy Spirit Parish in Great Falls, will retire.
- **Rev. Mohanraj Arockiasamy, HGN** currently Pastor of the parish cluster of Fort Benton and Geraldine, will be returning to India to pursue advanced studies.
- **Rev. Peter Guthneck**, Canonical Pastor of the parish cluster of Hays, Lodgepole, Fort Belknap and Zortman, will return to full retirement.
- **Rev. Steven Kropp, OFM Cap**, former Pastor on the Crow Reservation, has been elected Provincial Minister of the Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order in Detroit, effective June 4, 2026. His former parishes will be cared for by the Capuchin priests while a more permanent minister is sought and assigned.

*Bishop Fleming expresses his heartfelt gratitude to all these priests for their past, present, and/or future ministry in the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings.*