

Ministries

Gaspar River Catholic Youth Camp

For 18 summers, Gaspar River Catholic Youth Camp and Retreat Center has served the young people of the Diocese of Owensboro and beyond. In the summer of 2025, we welcomed campers **from eight different dioceses** to our facility. Each year, attendance continues to grow, and our 18th summer was the largest ever—with **more than 500 campers**.

Camp days are filled with fun and adventure—zip line, giant ladder, team's course, vertical playground, giant swing, Tower #68, river activities, and all kinds of games. What makes Gaspar River unique, however, is how these activities are combined with **daily Mass, teachings of our Catholic faith, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and Eucharistic Adoration**. This creates a powerful setting for young people to encounter the Risen Christ and deepen their relationship with God and His Church.

These encounters are often life-changing not only for campers, but also for their families. Some campers who arrived as non-Catholics—invited by friends—were so moved by their experience that they entered the Catholic Church, sometimes bringing their entire families with them. Truly, the Holy Spirit is alive and at work at Gaspar River Catholic Youth Camp.

Keeping Camp Affordable

In 2025, the **American Camp Association** reported the average cost of a week-long camp at **\$1,100**. As a rural, mission diocese, we work hard to keep our fees as affordable as possible. Our current cost is **\$450 per week**, yet even that is a struggle for many families. Each year, nearly all of our scholarship funds are used because we never want cost to prevent a young person from experiencing a life-changing encounter with Jesus.

This is where your generosity to the **Disciples Response Fund** makes an incredible impact. The Diocese of Owensboro goes above and beyond to help subsidize camp so it remains accessible to families across western Kentucky.

Lifelong Fruits of Camp

Because of your support, the fruits of this ministry continue to spread far and wide:

- Young men entering the seminary
- Young women discerning religious life
- Teachers serving in our Catholic schools
- Youth ministers and parish leaders inspiring others
- Holy marriages rooted in Christ

All of these vocations and ministries trace back to seeds planted at Gaspar River.

Your generosity ensures that this sacred place will continue to grow, welcoming more young people who will **encounter Christ, grow in faith, and then go forth to serve His Church**—impacting communities throughout our diocese and far beyond.

2025-
2026

ANNUAL
APPEAL

Disciples
Response
Fund



Marriage Anniversary Mass

The **Office of Marriage and Family Life** hosts an annual Marriage Celebration Mass at St. Stephen Cathedral to honor couples celebrating milestone anniversaries such as 5, 10, 25, 40, and 50+ years of marriage. Each couple receives a certificate signed by Bishop William F. Medley. The Mass, celebrated by Bishop Medley, is attended by approximately 200 couples and their families each year.



Sophia Awards Mass

Each year, the **Stewardship Office** hosts a Mass honoring the recipients of the Sophia Awards. These awards recognize individuals age 65 and older who embody lives of stewardship through a lifetime of service to their parish and community. Approximately 325 people attend the Sophia Awards Mass and reception annually, each Sophia recipient receives an award, which is also celebrated by Bishop Medley.

Acts 2:42 Groups

Office of Evangelization & Discipleship - Acts 2:42 Groups are a Eucharistic Revival initiative of the Diocese of Owensboro designed to encourage adult faith formation and small group faith-sharing around the Eucharist in all 78 parishes of the diocese. Each session features a video reflection from Bishop Medley, offering a meaningful way for parishes to engage in the Revival.



Rainbow Mass

The Rainbow Mass is a biennial celebration that gathers students from all 17 Catholic schools in western Kentucky at the Owensboro Sportscenter. This Mass brings students together to celebrate their common faith. The name "Rainbow Mass" comes from the vibrant rainbow effect created by the students' different-colored school uniforms. Founded in the 1980s by the superintendent of Catholic Schools, the Rainbow Mass continues to be a joyful tradition of unity and community building.