

## Transitioning from Maintenance to Mission through Back Office Efficiency

Archdiocese of Detroit

### Challenges

## Transitioning from Maintenance to Mission through Back Office Efficiency

The Archdiocese of Detroit is responsible for the Catholic ministry across over 200 parishes in southeast Michigan. Most of its revenue is generated via assessment income from independent parishes, donations, and appeal campaigns. As a nonprofit, the Archdiocese needs to track each of these sources and related transactions as separate restricted and unrestricted funds based on donor intent. However, its legacy accounting system made this very cumbersome, as any cash movement between funds required several manual journal entries.

When the organization decided to transition towards greater focus on the mission of the church versus maintenance operations, it went looking for ways to streamline its back office processes. "IT recommended the move to a cloud-based financial management solution, but it was important to me that our team wouldn't be overly burdened by having to learn a new system," reflected Don Genotti, the Archdiocese of Detroit's Controller. "We considered both Sage Intacct and NetSuite, and chose Sage Intacct because its workflows were more clear, clean, and user-friendly, and the solution was truly accounting-focused rather than including ancillary functionality we didn't need."

The Archdiocese worked with Sage Intacct implementation partner RSM to deploy the system, design a greatly simplified chart of accounts, and set up over a dozen entities to track its Chancery operations and campaign activities. "Our relationship with RSM has been great ever since the implementation, and we still engage them on an as-needed basis," said Genotti. "They're very responsive to our needs, have a good understanding of the organization, and offer creative ideas to achieve our goals without requiring customization."

### Solutions

## Automated Financial Processes Increase Productivity 25%

After leveraging Sage Intacct to streamline several accounting processes—which minimized duplicate data entry and Excel spreadsheet workarounds—the Archdiocese of Detroit's finance team boosted efficiency by 25%. In particular, the Archdiocese enjoys Sage Intacct's timesaving improvements to accounts receivables. Rather than tracking daily cash receipts in spreadsheets, re-keying that activity into the financial system later, and tediously processing check payments, with Sage Intacct, the team can post checks and cash receipts against open invoices in half the time. The software's automated recurring invoice capabilities also cut time spent on monthly invoicing by approximately 20%.



### Company Overview

Powered by prayer and the Holy Spirit, with roots dating back to 1701, the Archdiocese of Detroit forms disciples and builds Catholic community in southeast Michigan. The organization administers Roman Catholic parishes and schools within the city of Detroit as well as Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, St. Clair, Monroe and Lapeer counties. It serves with a spirit of gratitude and joy, going forth with apostolic boldness to unleash the Gospel. The Archdiocese is under the care of the Most Reverend Allen H. Vigneron, Archbishop of Detroit. Established by Pope Gregory XVI in 1833, the diocese initially included all of Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and portions of the Dakotas, east of the Mississippi River.

### Executive Summary

#### Previous Software:

- Serenic

#### Results with Sage Intacct:

- Reduced monthly close and reporting timetable by ~15%
- Improved forecasting efficiency ~20%
- Increased finance team productivity ~25%

## TRANSITIONING FROM MAINTENANCE TO MISSION

Additionally, the organization transformed its treasury function and loan deposit program—going from just nine bank accounts to 26 segregated bank accounts that track cash separately for each of its different funds. Instead of struggling to manage cash movement through manual journal entries, the finance team simply exports transactions from its loan and deposit system each day and imports them into Sage Intacct, slashing their time spent supporting banking processes by approximately 25%.

All of these improvements are helping the organization reduce its monthly close cycle, which is currently 15% faster and trending towards 25%. Finally, Genotti estimates that he's saving about 18% of his time on report preparation, and 20% on quarterly forecasting for budget-to-actuals. He noted, "A key focus of ours is monitoring actual expenses to budget, which is much easier in the Sage Intacct world. Now we have the ability to drill down by dimension and review attached documentation with just a couple clicks."

### Results

## More Timely, Accurate Financial Data Improves Spend Management

Sage Intacct provides deeper reporting and analysis of the Archdiocese's financials by enabling full insight into a variety of operational dimensions. Before Sage Intacct, department heads often didn't receive their management reports until six weeks after the close of a month. But now the organization can effortlessly slice and dice its data across specific departments, campaigns, parishes, vendors, or restricted versus non-restricted funds and everyone has better, faster visibility. The finance team can easily view activity at the lowest level, track specific programs or events, and get instant answers to questions about fund sources and uses. As a result, Sage Intacct helped reduce risks related to compliance with restricted funds by approximately 10%.

The system's capabilities support the Archdiocese of Detroit's complex reporting needs, including several department and fund-level versions of its statement of activities and balance sheets, as well as a consolidated roll-up that compares actual operating results to budget on both a monthly and year-to-date basis. The finance team has also started designing role-based dashboards with Sage Intacct, which will help them get real-time financial statements into the hands of key leaders sooner, so they can quickly make decisions in each of their respective areas.

“Prior to Sage Intacct, we spent approximately 85% of our time on bookkeeping, and had only 15% free to analyze our data or do other special projects. Now that balance has changed, whereby we're spending 65-70% of our effort on transactional tasks and about 30% on analytical work, despite increasing our workload with the same-sized team.”

Donald M. Genotti,  
Controller,  
Accounting & Treasury,  
Archdiocese of Detroit

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