



EXPEDITIONS
ADVENTURE FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION
An Outreach of Wyoming Catholic College

REFLECTIONS

ON COR'S FIRST 8 YEARS AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

FALL 2023



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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COR

THE FALL OF 2023 marks the close of COR Expeditions' 8th year. Since long before I ever heard of Wyoming Catholic College, I had dreamed of starting a Catholic outdoor ministry to bring Christ to an otherwise secular industry. Once I began teaching at WCC and saw graduates who were both professionally qualified in the outdoors and formed through a faithful Catholic education, I realized the opportunity had come. So in 2016, when the first call came asking about the possibility of a trip external to the college, it was a long-awaited moment for me.

From decades of experience in the outdoor industry, I have seen firsthand the unique ability of the wilderness to challenge the mind and body, to renew the heart, and to build intense community over a very short period of time. Organizations such as the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS, also based here in Lander), Outward Bound, Backroads, and many more have capitalized on these attributes for decades. However, I had never heard of a professional outdoor company that operated with faithful Catholic values and programming. This shortcoming was, to me, unacceptable. The wilderness, or "God's First Book" as we love to call it here, is undeniably central to Salvation History and to our Faith. Biblical figures from the earliest pages of Scripture, Christ Himself, and saints for centuries afterwards, have entered the wilderness to pray, receive their mission, and ground their identity in God. To me, the need for an effective ministry to follow that tradition was overwhelming.

Eight years ago, COR Expeditions first met that need. Since our first summer with four trips and 1 full-time staff member, I have been privileged and blessed to witness COR grow at an astounding pace into the organization it is today. COR Expeditions' mission, "To reclaim the wealth of people's identity and purpose in Christ through wilderness ministry" has been met with great enthusiasm from the thousands of participants, benefactors, and donors who have been a part of our ministry. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for all the incredible supporters who have made this mission possible. And if you are not yet supporting COR, please consider joining this Adventure for the New Evangelization and helping us impact the lives and Faith of more and more people each year.



Thomas Zimmer, Ph.D.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COR EXPEDITIONS



FROM THE PRESIDENT OF WYOMING CATHOLIC COLLEGE

WHEN I TELL PEOPLE that I am the president of a small, Catholic, liberal arts college in the middle of Wyoming that features an outdoor program as a formal part of its curriculum, I'm often met with both interest and surprise. When I explain that the college's professionally-accredited outdoor program has provided over one hundred trips this year in addition to the ones it ran for its students, that surprise turns into amazement. And so it should. The incredible growth that Wyoming Catholic College and COR Expeditions have experienced over a very short period is nothing short of providential.

I am proud to be president of a college where students are immersed for four years into an integrated spiritual, academic, and outdoor formation, and COR is a vital component of that formation. Beyond the immense good that the COR missionaries serve as the seasoned professional staff who train and mentor our students, however, the missionaries reach outside the College to provide a powerful form of outreach and evangelization to a world that desperately needs it. Through COR we offer people who are not spending four years in Lander a share in the riches of Wyoming Catholic College's formation, and even this short exposure is transformative. COR participants are renewed and set aflame by their experience of delight and wonder in the outdoors, their deepened bonds of friendship, their opportunity for growth in virtue, and above all, their encounter with Christ in the wilderness. I could not be more proud of the unique and important outreach that we offer.

I am so proud, too, of Dr. Tom Zimmer and his crew of dedicated staff for the herculean work they have accomplished thus far. These staff members, most of whom are alumni of our college, are among the most zealous, hard-working, intelligent, and faithful group of individuals I know. I look forward to the bright and important future of Wyoming Catholic College's outreach in COR, extend my thanks to all our current benefactors, and invite you all to consider supporting this extraordinary mission.

Kyle Washut, S.T.L.

PRESIDENT OF WYOMING CATHOLIC COLLEGE



WONDER, CREATION, SALVATION

FR. ETIENNE HUARD, OSB



Reflections from a COR Chaplain.

IN THE VERY OPENING PAGES OF SACRED SCRIPTURE, God desires to reveal the goodness of creation to us. In the completion of the land, the sea, the air, all that grows, flies, creeps, walks or swims, God rejoices for "he saw that it was good" (Gen 1.25). God's own goodness had been imprinted into the very nature of creation. Creation was willed by God to be an instrument of this goodness and a place fitting for his most incredible creation, the human family. Here they are to live in this creation and have with God an intimate relationship. It was in the purity of the garden that Adam and Eve could be fruitful, multiply, and walk with God face to face.

The garden's whole existence communicated God's love, protection, and desire that his creation was to be a place of intimacy. Everything was good for life; everything was created to bring life. In the tragedy of the fall, the full communication of God's love through creation was corrupted, not by God, but by our own sin. Creation became an innocent victim of violence and death, marked by a corrupting spirit, much like men. Not everything of creation was now safe and suitable for life; the wild can be dangerous and frightening.

This corrupting spirit did not, however, end God's desire for creation and its goodness. Much like his desire to redeem men from their sins, God desired that creation be "set free from its bondage to decay and [that it] will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (Rom 8.21). In the plan of salvation, God's vision saw to it that his creation would become the instruments of his presence, both in sign and in wonder.

An immediate thought that always comes to mind when I consider COR and its ministry with the outdoors is the lesson of wonder. Wonder is this ecstatic moment of gratefulness and of being overwhelmed by the beauty of God's creation. Being taught that what we see before us in our natural surroundings as we wrestle with nature's complexity is God's hand in all things. He communicates his love for us by giving us this gift of wonder. I go out into the wilderness, astonished at what is awesomely mysterious to me, a longing for God. This is the beauty of COR; it teaches us to wonder.

The sign and wonder of God's presence in creation are not only left to the natural processes of life, decay, and rebirth, but by purposeful and planned expression brought about by the use of creation. The very acts of stewarding

“ **WONDER IS THIS ECSTATIC MOMENT OF GRATEFULNESS AND OF BEING OVERWHELMED BY THE BEAUTY OF GOD'S CREATION.** ”





creation bring into focus God's plan and presence.

Think of Israel's rescue from slavery. What was God's instrument of redemption? Was it not creation? How did God reveal Himself to the people? Was it not in fire and cloud? Where was it he met his people? Was it not upon the mountains he created? Did not creation become for men the expression of worship, gift, and forgiveness in the rite of sacrifice and praise? Was not the Promised Land a place of intimacy with God? How was the temple decorated? Was it not with vines, and trees, water, and land as the new expressions of Eden?

It is easy to fall into the error, especially in our modern industrial world, that creation has no purpose but for survival and exploitation; that creation is nothing but an instrument of our control. This is far from reality, and COR's mission is to teach our generation the sacredness of nature, that God's hand is at work, and we are to be the stewards of God's creation! I was impressed by the care we took of the environment we explored. Nothing was done with destruction or exploitation, but with care and love; creation was a gift to be respected.

In the coming of Christ, God deepened creation's role in the salvation of humanity. God became a created being and existed in His own handiwork, subject to its laws, its hopes, and the result of its fears. God touched fallen men with hands that had worked with nature's gifts, healed with the very mud which his voice brought into being, ate and drank the fruits of the earth. He stood upon mountains revealing his glory, his teaching, and the gift of his life. Upon the hills his command had brought into existence, He adored his Father.

In his greatest gift, His very body and blood, he used the fruits of creation as the instruments of his presence, bread and wine. Here the simple, yet noble, foods common to all men became God himself. Creation became the sign of the noblest of all love, "Amen, Amen, I say to you unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much

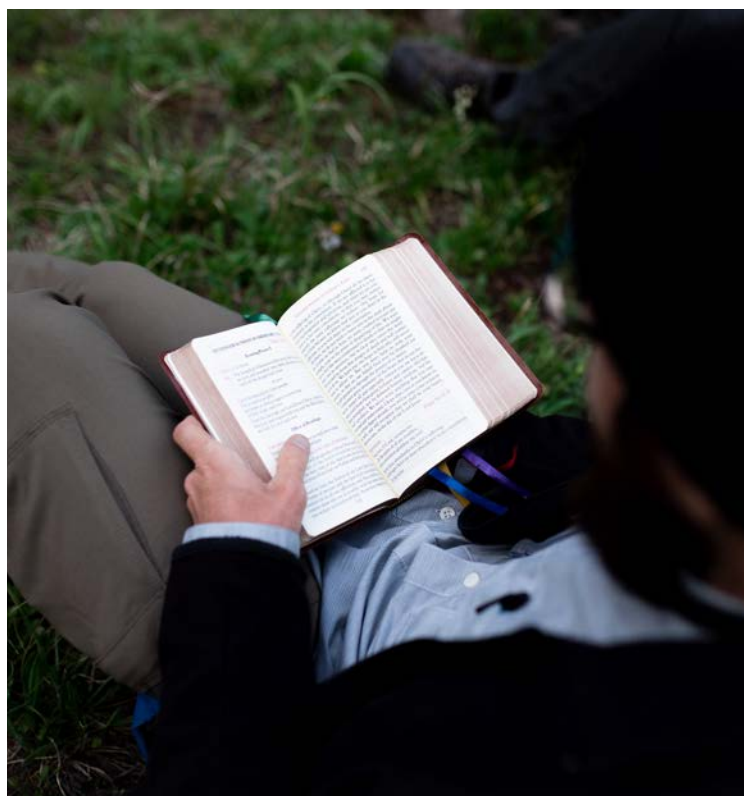


fruit" (Rom 6.21-23).

By far, my best memory of being with COR was a moment I did not initially expect. On our trip through the canyons of Utah, one morning, we searched for a place to offer Mass. We found a small area near the top of the canyon amidst ancient ruins and markings. A small jut of rock was formed along the wall that served as the mensa, and a rock clearing, formed in front, allowed all members a place. As the rising sun crested the rock face, Christ was being adored in the matter of creation as the Host was being elevated. At that moment, I felt a sense that all of creation was worshipping with us, healed of Adam's sin. This moment, I treasure each day.

Creation is the gift of God to us. It can become, for us, a real sign of God's love and care for us. It can become a wonder of his love and plan for our salvation. It can be transformed into God's very presence in our midst. Creation has a part to play in our lives as a real sign of God's abundance, his intimacy of life, and his desire for all things to be one in him.

Thank you, COR and all its members, for your ministry, your witness, your care for God's GOOD creation, and may God bless all of you.



Benedictine monk and priest Etienne Huard is an instructor of the Diaconate Formation Program and a Chaplain and Formation Advisor at Conception Abbey in Missouri. He is a consistent chaplain on COR Expeditions courses, including the Professional Instructor Courses.



MEET OUR STAFF!

“ I SENSE THAT THE MOMENT HAS COME TO COMMIT ALL OF THE CHURCH’S ENERGIES TO A NEW EVANGELIZATION AND TO THE MISSION AD GENTES. NO BELIEVER IN CHRIST, NO INSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH CAN AVOID THIS SUPREME DUTY: TO PROCLAIM CHRIST TO ALL PEOPLES. ”

— POPE SAINT JOHN PAUL II

EVANGELIZATION IS A DEEPLY PERSONAL PROCESS. Investing in excellent staff who are not only expert outdoor professionals, but also dedicated missionaries allows us to provide trips that are ahead of the industry in terms of risk management, and at the same time a transformational Faith experience for the participants. Each time we collect feedback from our participants, the COR staff are always the greatest highlight of the trips. The hard work and passion for ministry that our staff devote to their job is the greatest reason COR has been able to provide such high quality adventure and high quality evangelization for the past eight years.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Leadership Team was formed in 2022 to help disseminate the responsibilities of running COR between the executive director and the most senior COR staff. Since forming the Leadership Team, the institutional goals of COR have been greatly clarified, and our yearly operations have become much more efficient. In addition to sharing the responsibilities of directing COR, all members of the Leadership Team also spend a significant amount of time fundraising.



Thomas Zimmer, Ph.D.
COR Executive Director



Zachary Carlstrom
COR Assistant Director



Sarah Carlstrom
COR Director of Client Relations



Karl Eby
*Assistant Director of the WCC
Outdoor Leadership Program*



Marissa Daskiewicz
COR Administrative Director

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

In addition to helping COR's mission behind the desk, COR's administrative staff have all served extensive time in the field, giving them important experience with how the trips run and context for their different roles in administration.



Marley Green
Contracts Coordinator



Jeremiah Baur
Operations Manager



Paul Milligan
Donor Relations Officer



Laura Montreuil
Administrative Assistant

FIELD STAFF

In addition to instructing individual trips, course directors manage the big-picture logistics of every trip we send into the field, ensuring that the instructors for each trip are receiving the information, support, and equipment they need. Our missionary staff are the front-line of the ministry, leading participants on our trips all year round. Course directors and missionary staff also fundraise their salaries, constantly practice their outdoor skills, and provide support for other missionaries in the field.



Jacob Ramaekers
Course Director



Elizabeth "Betz" Meluch
Course Director



Andre Klaes
Missionary



Joshua Rutnicki
Missionary



Jack Swindell
Missionary



Kathy Swindell
Missionary



Joseph White
Missionary



Damien Walz
Missionary

WHY WE SUPPORT COR

BY ANDY AND DEBBIE ALLEN



OUR FIRST REAL EXPOSURE to the concept of a Catholic outdoor retreat was when our daughters attended WCC about 10 years ago and then shared with us the experiences of their freshman 21 day backpacking trip. Intentional spiritual direction and daily mass for three weeks while out in the wilderness...what a great concept! Years later when COR Expeditions was formed and we were approached by Zach Carlstrom, we were a very “easy sell”, understanding that others outside WCC might be able to enjoy similar experiences as had our daughters. (Truth be told, we probably would have wanted to support any endeavor pitched to us by Zach and/or Sarah...) As time progressed and we understood even further the COR operation, we became even more excited to help support this emerging ministry.

Our deacon son was recently sharing with us the fact that many of the conversion and vocation stories he hears begin with something like: “When I was on retreat with _____, I truly heard God’s voice/call for the first time”. This was the case both for him and for our Dominican nun daughter. All of us yearn to know God and be loved by God. COR Expeditions places its participants in the beautiful circumstance of God’s creation where, away from the distractions of day to day life, they can truly hear God as pilgrims on their faith journey. What better way to reach souls than by letting them encounter God in “His First Book”? We believe in COR’s solid mission, top-notch staff, and the tremen-

dous future potential of their programs.

We recently re-read COR’s mission statement: “To reclaim the wealth of people’s identity and purpose in Christ through wilderness ministry.” All pilgrims on expeditions with COR will be touched and have the opportunity to grow spiritually and physically with each adventure and encounter. When surrounded by God’s beauty of the wilderness and being free from the distractions of our complicated lives, phones, and culture, one can freely wonder and ask the big questions of life, such as: What is God’s will for me? This natural openness in God’s creation can truly transform hearts and help all to become the best version of themselves.

In addition to the experiences of our two daughters, we also have a son currently at WCC that praised the 21 day wilderness trip every bit as much as his sisters. During his trip, we had the privilege of being able to join in by meeting a re-ratation team at the trailhead as they returned from the back country. Meeting these fine young COR staff, along with the priests they escorted out, was a highlight for us and just further confirmed





“ WE SEE THEM MINISTERING TO EACH PARTICIPANT AT THEIR OWN LEVEL, FROM NOVICE TO EXPERT, BOTH SPIRITUALLY AND WITH RESPECT TO THEIR OUTDOOR ADVENTURE SKILLS. ”

our understanding of the high spiritual and technical caliber of the COR staff.

Being part of the WCC family, we also had the opportunity to meet and know some of the original staff of COR when they were students and friends of our children. The exponential growth we saw in them, both spiritually and in their outdoor adventure skill sets, has been ever-impressive. Because of their WCC education, they are well-formed spiritually, very sincere, and, honestly, great examples to all who know them. Also because of WCC’s Outdoor Leadership Program, under Dr. Zimmer’s guidance, their personal experience and additional expertise gained in certifications makes the COR staff very qualified for adventuring. These exceptional students are now exceptional outdoor professional guides, who are also willing to personally sacrifice by taking on lower-than-market wages and fundraising their own support, done all for the love of sharing the gospel message, impacting lives, and glorifying God.

We truly believe COR as an outreach and organization has tremendous POTENTIAL! So many different groups of folks can benefit. We see them ministering to each participant at their own level, from novice to expert, both spiritually and with respect to their outdoor adventure skills. We have witnessed COR working in programs for families, teens, young adults, college students, seminarians, and other religious. They tailor each trip to meet the needs and goals of that group. This unique minis-

try helps all participants focus on the good, the true, and the beautiful. WOW! Our culture needs what COR has to offer even more during this crazy time we live in. We count it a blessing to be part of an organization that could grow exponentially and reach more and more folks across this country.

Solid mission, top-notch staff, and tremendous potential... that’s why we find it such a blessing to support COR. As this ministry gets more exposure and more people like us gain insight into all of its benefits, we have little doubt that God will continue to bless this ministry with continued success.



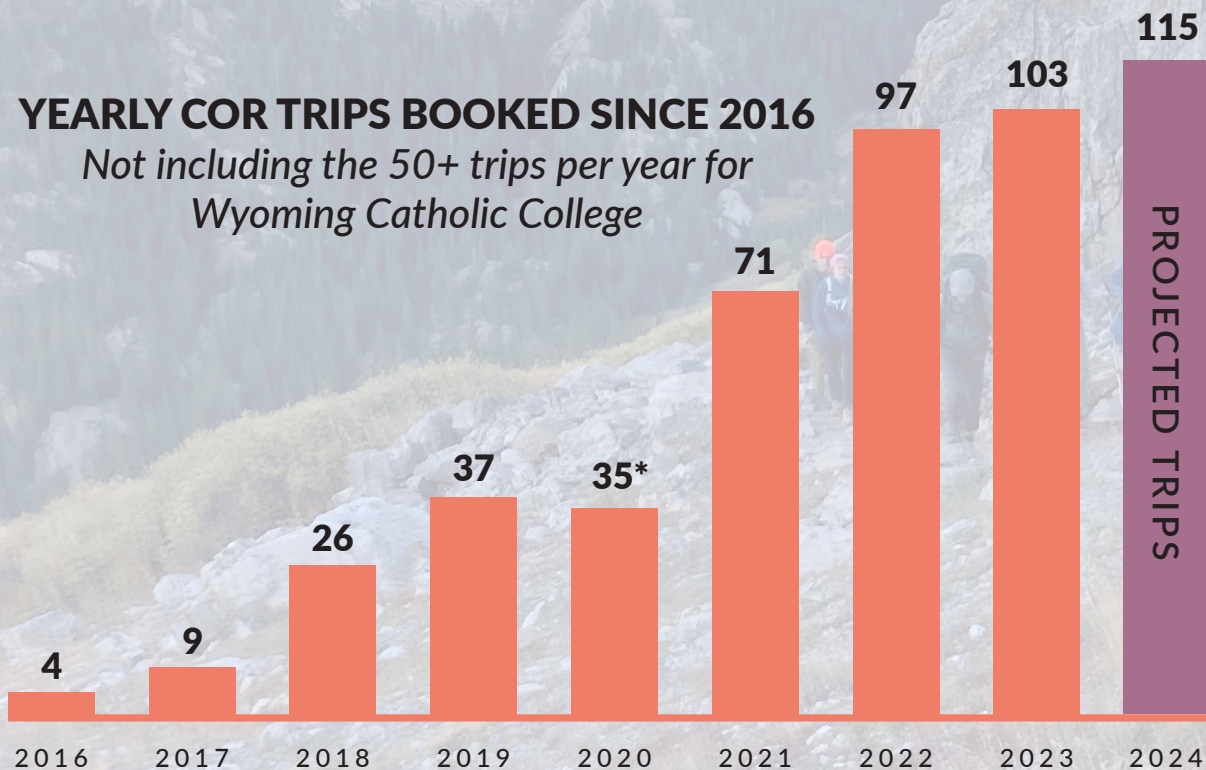
Andy and Debbie Allen are generous supporters of COR Expeditions and Wyoming Catholic College as well as avid adventurers themselves.

STATISTICS



YEARLY COR TRIPS BOOKED SINCE 2016

Not including the 50+ trips per year for Wyoming Catholic College



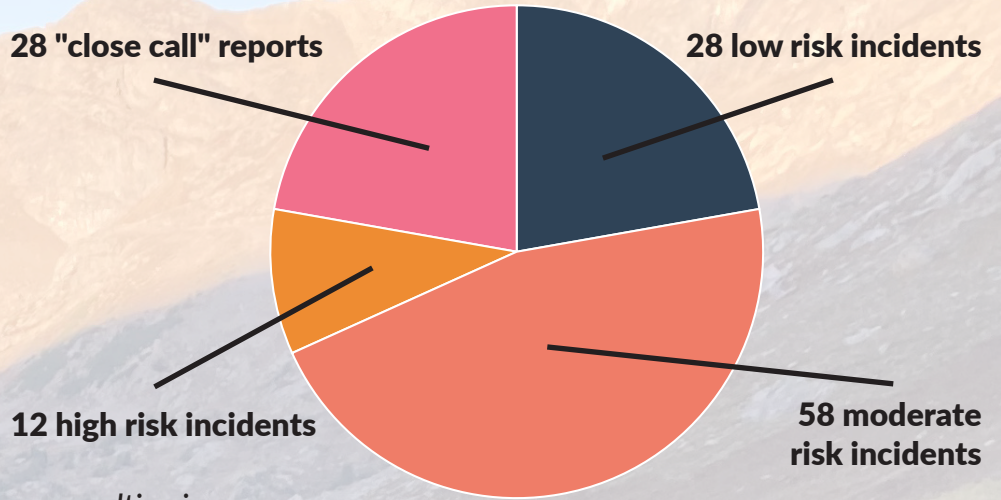
*20 trips canceled due to COVID-19

ON COR'S FIRST 8 YEARS AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

RISK MANAGEMENT

During the safety review of 2021-2022, COR accounted for 11,505 user days and the following incidents:

- 0 Fatalities
- 0 Serious Injuries*
- 30 Illnesses
- 30 Minor injuries
- 23 Evacuations
- 2 Helicopter Evacuations
- 38 Other**



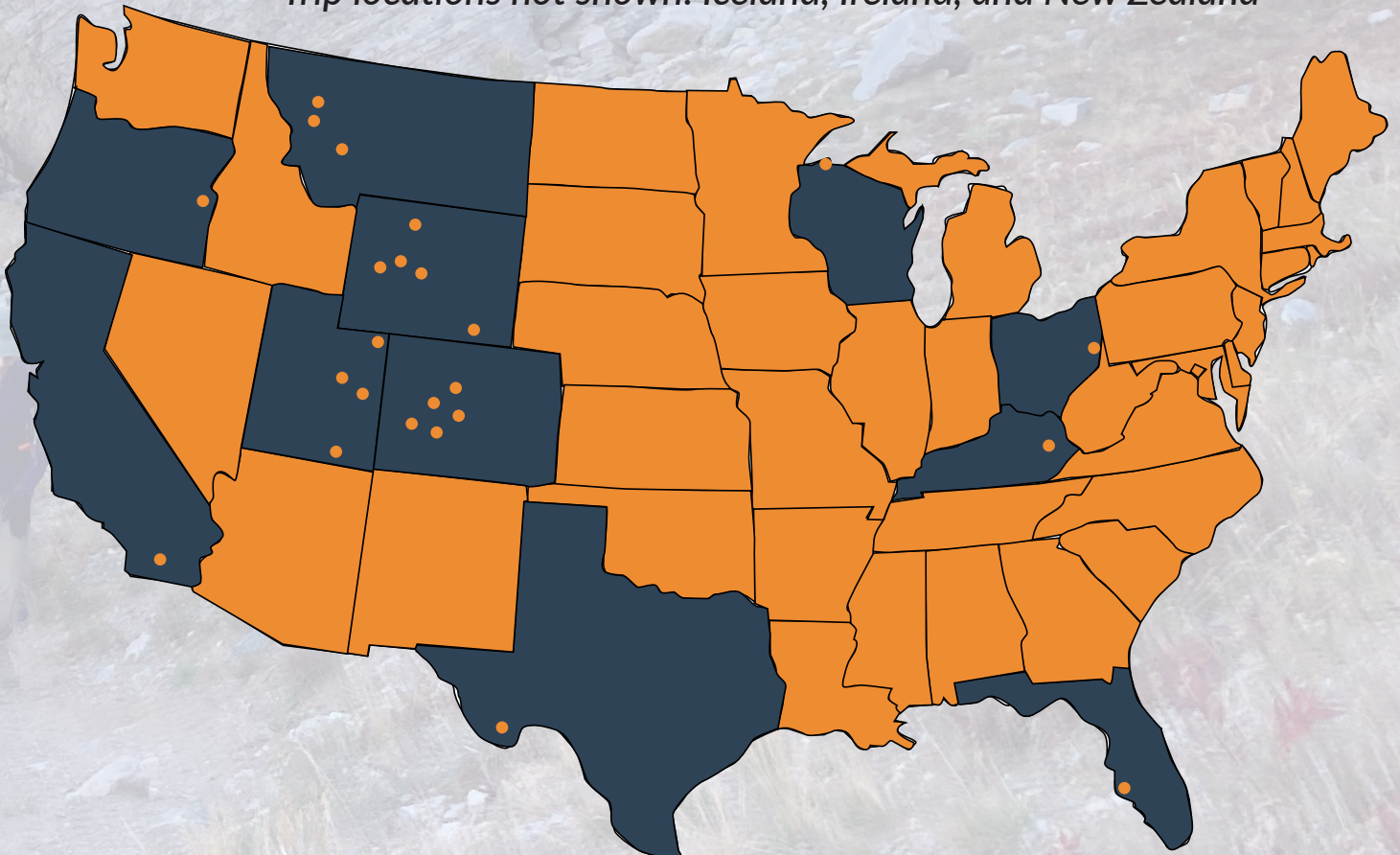
*Requiring long term hospitalization, or resulting in amputation, paralysis, or long-term injury.

**Driving, lost person, close calls, etc.

Our evacuation rate per 1000 user days was less than 1%. Our helicopter evacuation rate was near 1:10,000 user days. Our hospitalization rate was under 1%. These rates reflect a level of risk-management well above the national standard.

TRIP LOCATIONS IN THE USA

Trip locations not shown: Iceland, Ireland, and New Zealand



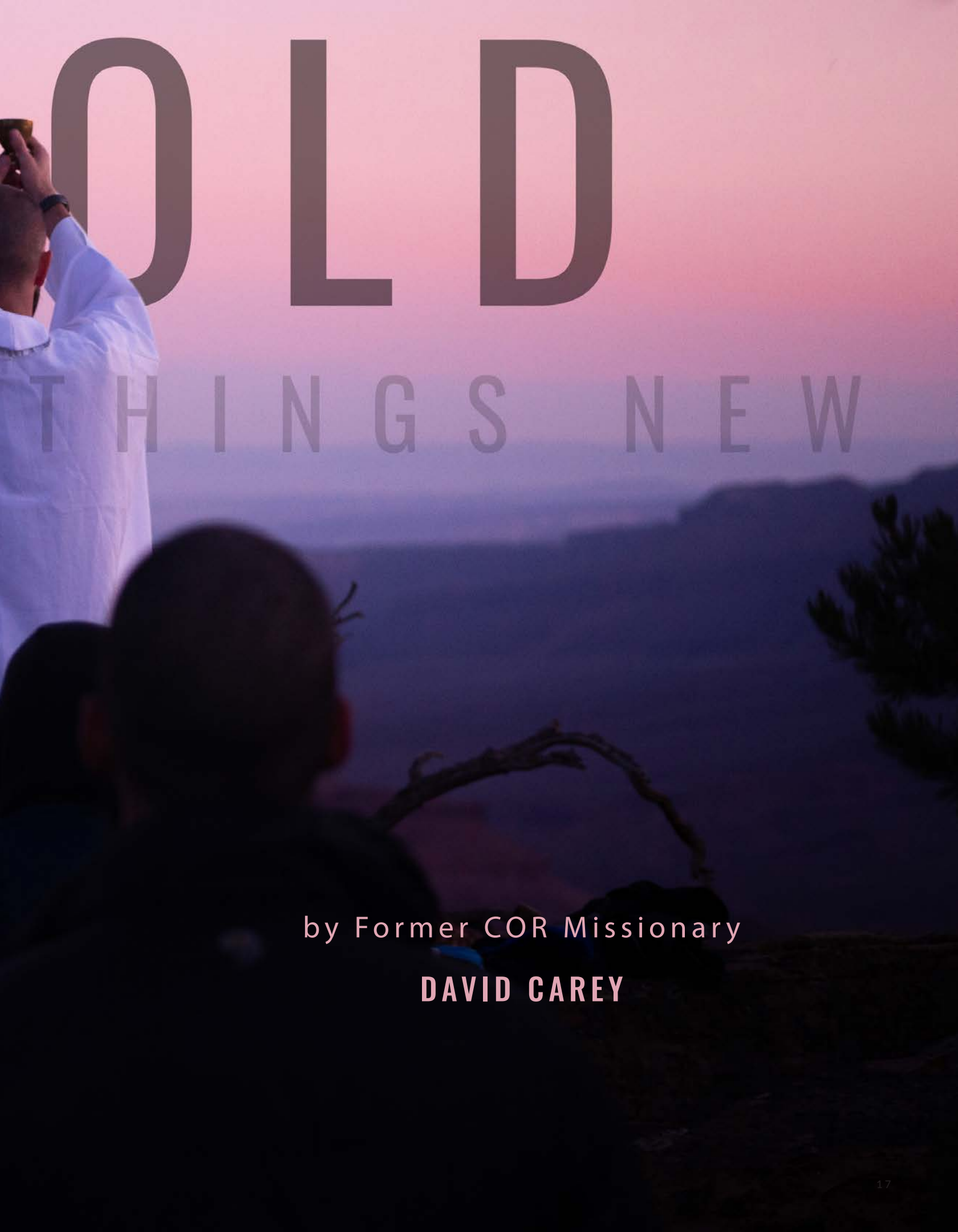
BEH

I MAKE ALL

“

HE FOUND HIM IN A DESERT LAND,
AND IN THE HOWLING WASTE OF THE
WILDERNESS; HE ENCIRCLED HIM,
HE CARED FOR HIM, HE KEPT HIM AS THE
APPLE OF HIS EYE (DEUT. 32:10).

”



OLD

THINGS NEW

by Former COR Missionary

DAVID CAREY

Every year, the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal spend 21 days in the desert with COR, seeking radical life.

THE COMMUNITY of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal (CFRs) are a religious order based in the Bronx, New York, dedicated to the service of the poorest of the poor, and participating in the Lord's work of renewal in the hearts of man. Every year, they contract a trip with COR Expeditions to take their postulants (the first step in religious formation towards becoming a vowed brother, prior to the novitiate) out into the desert of Moab, Utah for a 3 week retreat and excursion in the wilderness. The purpose is for it to be a time of prayer, challenge, and growth. Through intense, shared experiences, the men in formation will truly become brothers, and men who are solely dependent on God, better prepared to lean on Him as they continue to prepare to implement their ministry in the streets of New York. As one of the instructors on the trip, I consider myself extremely blessed to have been a part of it. Not only is it always a joy to watch someone climb their first rock climbing route, rappel down into canyons, backpack through gorgeous canyons with 1000 year old ruins in them, or experience Mass and adoration in the wilderness, but it was a beautiful experience for me because I shared the experience with them. They welcomed me and the other instructors as brothers as well, sharing their struggles, joys, temptations, and strengths with us. Within the 21 days, we spent one day climbing, 7-8 days backpacking, 4 days canoeing, 5-6 days dropping into and sliding through canyons, and even a day with a 300 foot rope swing involved! Needless to say, it is quite the adventure...

21 days. In the grand scheme of one's life, those 504 hours don't seem like much. How often do we go through a 3 week period of time and do not have much to report? Yet in the wilderness, life seems to suddenly come crashing together. Experiences are compacted,

emotions are drawn out and stretched to new depths and heights, and one walks away from it with far too much to recount in a few short words. To the outside perspective, 3 weeks in the wilderness may appear to be a lot. It sounds intense, unnecessary, to some, even foolish. Yet it feels short. For all of the postulants, this trip was unlike anything they had ever experienced. Expectations varied, motivations changed, and for many of them, fear threatened to taint or dominate their mindset. For a few, it was a fear of heights while rock climbing and rappelling; for others, it was a fear of vulnerability with their brothers; others still, fear of the wilderness in general and the discomfort of the desert. Despite this, the Lord was vigorously triumphant. Grace permeated everything. There was a steadfast spirit of readiness and acceptance of the invitation of the Lord to enter into His "desolate place." Truly, the analogy to (or perhaps the reality of...?) the scriptures was proposed anew throu-





ghout our experiences: the Israelites wandering through the desert, Elijah or the prophets seeking the solace of the Lord in the wilderness, Christ's own numerous journeys to the wilderness to pray. For these men who are called to take up the cross and emulate Christ through their entire lives as Franciscan Brothers, I cannot envision a better place for them to retreat to than the desert.

It may seem odd to have men who are called to serve the poor in the streets of the Bronx spend three weeks climbing, backpacking, rappelling, and canoeing in Utah. The transference may not seem immediate. For a lot of the guys, this question was at the forefront of their minds. They were just beginning to feel at home in Harlem, just beginning to really feel rooted in their vocation, and then they were called away to a new place that felt completely unrelated. "Why am I here?" they asked. The beauty of it was that they all had to go on an individual journey to answer that question. For some it took minutes, for others, a few days, but early into the trip, they all had a solid, steadfast answer to that question.

"The Father drew me to the desert to teach me to pray. I longed to hear him say: 'This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased!' In so many ways I heard the Father speak to my heart." -Esteban.

"I can't say how thankful I am that I was 'forced' to go on this trip. I would never have chosen to go on this trip on my own, but this is how God works. I was taken completely out of my comfort zone and stripped of all my securities. As I said 'yes' to this invitation to let go of myself, it was amazing how I grew in trust and confi-

dence. I was able to focus less on myself, and more on my brothers. I was able to be more open to the love that God has for me moment by moment." - Gaetano

"For a lot of the guys, their brothers became a large portion of their reasonings. The desert strips away just about every comfort. You wake up cold and tired after a hard night of sleeping on the ground, you can't walk up to a coffee pot and get the satisfaction of the sound of that nectar of the gods pouring into your cup, and prayer is difficult outside of your normal routine and comfy spot in the chapel, to name a few. Naturally, we all build up habits, but many of those are unable to be carried out into the wilderness with us. It is then that most of those guys realized 'the only comfort I have is my brother next to me.'" - Mike.

"The desert was very bonding. Constantly being together, seeing each other's weakness, loving each other in their weak moments, vulnerable conversations, etc., all contributed to this. I feel like we're brothers now. We're not just a group of friends, but now we're family. We've reached a depth in our intimacy with each other which is more like family than friends." - Joe

The pressure of instructing these men hit me and my co-instructors at times. Zach Carlstrom, now COR's Assistant Director, had this to say about his experience instructing the first CFR course in 2018 when he was a missionary instructor -

Zach: "When I first heard I would be instructing CFRs for 21 days in the desert the first year we did this, I'm not going to lie, I was intimidated. What could I possibly have

to give men who have given up their lives in such a radical way for the poor and the Church? These men have a rich and regimented prayer life, the leadership of wise and holy priests, and no worldly possessions. Through prayer and planning, my co-instructor and I delivered 21-days of COR's programming, focusing on sonship and identity in Christ as well as building the bridge from that identity to brotherhood (community) and fatherhood (leadership). This necessitated consistent feedback from the two CFR formators who were with us. I was nervous that these messages and teachings were things they already knew. Thankfully the feedback received was to the contrary: while these men may know these truths, they need to believe them in their bones and hold them before their eyes at all times to serve the poor and each other. COR presents students the perfect opportunity to reflect on what they really believe about themselves and God.

Having an identity in Christ that impacts our daily life is at the heart of what it means to be a Christian. While that concept may be familiar to many, we may not believe it, or worse, we may have crippling misbeliefs surrounding who God is and who we are. You can be the "holiest" person (whether you're a priest, married, or single) through pious action and, at the end of the day, be miserable, angry, or hopeless due to a misbelief developed overnight or over a lifetime. COR helps foster belief in what is most true about people and God, and empowers them to live wholeheartedly, to be fully alive in Christ. I am more proud of that than anything else we

have accomplished with COR, and I'm grateful that the CFRs have been a part of that story."

Zach's experience was similar to ours this year. We saw this "wholeheartedness" permeate community and prayer and be a dynamic shift in understanding for some. The postulants didn't just turn towards each other in a utilitarian mode of friendship. Fraternity and Charity came alive in our hearts as we helped one another through intense trail-finding through overgrown bushes, being cold and wet while canoeing in 30 degree weather, and stemming our way through ridiculously narrow slot canyons (less than a foot wide. In one particular section known as 'Belfast Boulevard', we couldn't turn our heads). For a lot of the guys, they were able to clearly see that the other men in formation with them were not just there because they all happened to apply at the same time. God placed each one of them with the others for a purpose, and to build each other up. Many of their flaws were laid out in the open when we challenged them to be the leaders of the day, acting as our guides and mentors for that section of trail or river. They had to take on responsibility for the entire group in their decision making, and quite often had to be vulnerable and ask for each other's support and assistance when they fell short. Part of the beauty of the fraternity we experienced as well was that we never really spoke about it. It wasn't contrived or contractual. There was never a time where we sat down and all decided that we



would support each other, or “be brothers” to one another, “because that’s what holy men do.” It was organic. It was real. The circumstances demanded it of us, and, by God’s grace, we all responded and were transformed.

Prayer and joy also seemed to permeate the trip in a natural way. We had the privilege of waking up every morning before sunrise, to pray the Liturgy of the Hours, celebrate Mass, and sit with the Lord for an hour in Eucharistic Adoration. Throughout all of the challenge, discomfort, and excitement, these men wholly embraced each other in a spirit of thanksgiving for it all. It reminded us all that the spirit of joy finds a home in our hearts when we engage in suffering and sacrifice. Coming off the trip, I told many people that I have never prayed so hard, laughed so hard, or worked as hard as I did countless times out in the desert. It was truly a time of renewal and depth. All of us walked away with a greater joy, a deeper trust, and a more well-rounded confidence in our own strengths and weaknesses. To this day, I still fondly reminisce over my time with the CFRs and continue to find grace and strength in the memory of the desert.



David Carey came to COR first as an intern in 2020 before joining the team full-time for 2 years. David instructed year-round, including the trips that COR leads annually for the CFRs. Deeply

impressed by the charism of the friars that he experienced on these intense trips, David joined them as a postulant in September of 2022. In November of 2022, he came back to the 21-day CFR expedition which he loved so much, this time as a participant, and in August of 2023, he was officially invested with the Franciscan habit.



OUR PROPERTIES

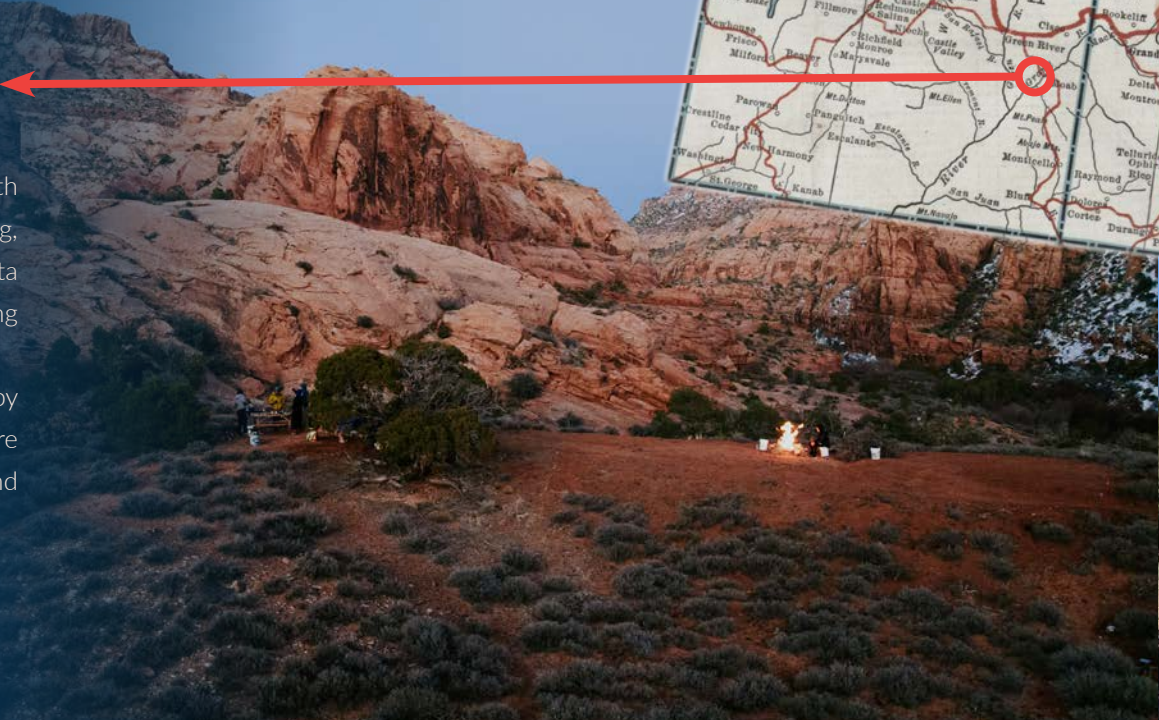
LANDER HEADQUARTERS (WYOMING)

- Over 7,000 square feet
- Space for administrative staff offices, gear storage, and vehicle fleet parking
- Nestled in the foothills of the Wind River Mountains with easy access to world-class climbing locations and trailheads for summer backpacking in one of America's most beautiful mountain ranges



MOAB PROPERTY (UTAH)

- 250 acres
- National park-quality land with rock climbing, canyoneering, backpacking, and via ferrata all accessible within walking distance of the central camps
- Completely surrounded by public lands with even more backpacking, canyoneering, and climbing access



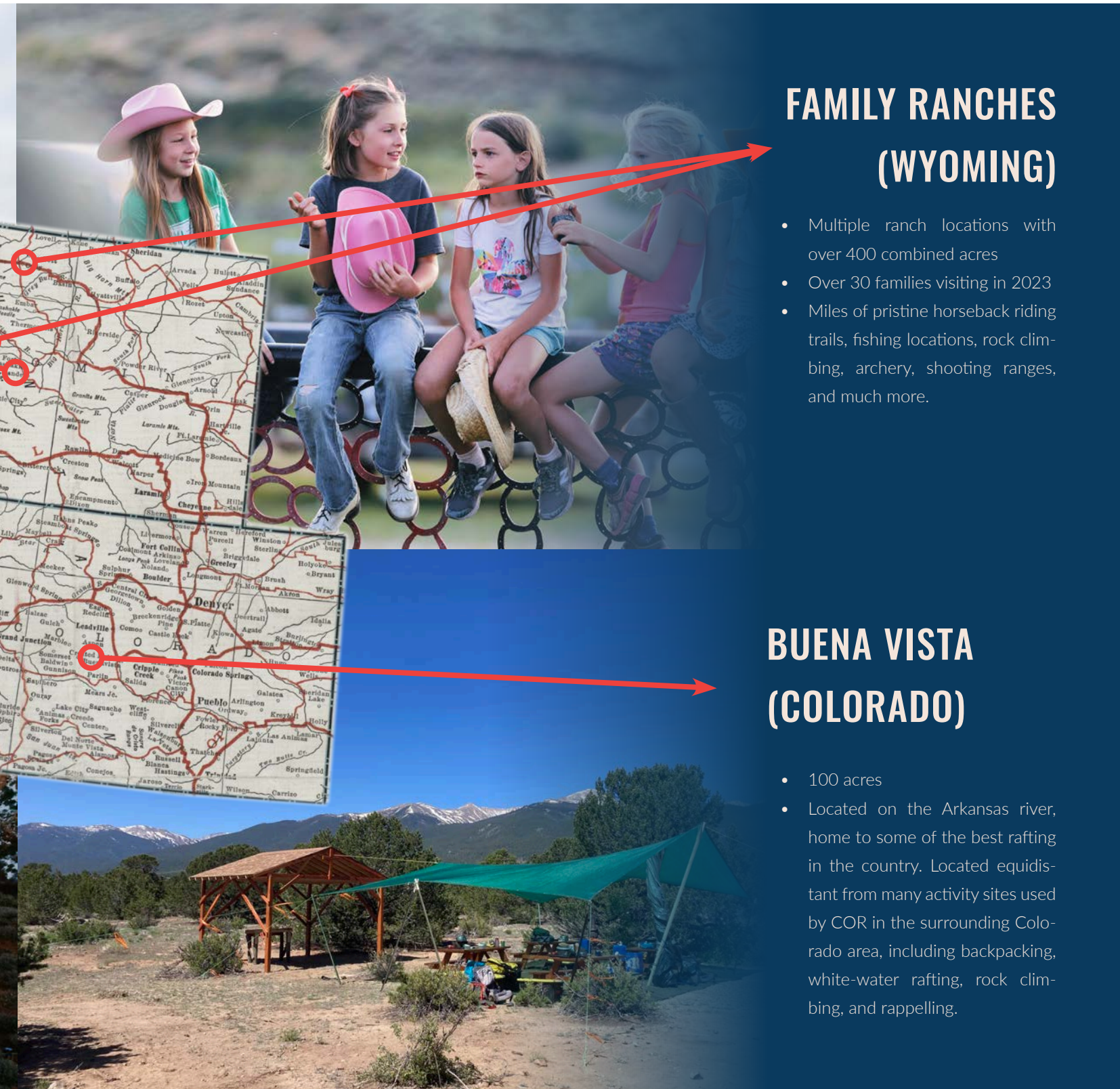
Besides providing trips in other areas such as public lands and national parks, generous benefactors have made various properties available to COR for regular use. From our ranch properties in Wyoming which serve as the bases for our family getaway weeks, to the red rock canyons and rugged mountains of Utah and Colorado, these properties provide dedicated and private spaces for dozens of COR activities including backpacking, mountain biking, rock climbing, rappelling, kayaking, canyoneering, horseback riding, and more.

FAMILY RANCHES (WYOMING)

- Multiple ranch locations with over 400 combined acres
- Over 30 families visiting in 2023
- Miles of pristine horseback riding trails, fishing locations, rock climbing, archery, shooting ranges, and much more.

BUENA VISTA (COLORADO)

- 100 acres
- Located on the Arkansas river, home to some of the best rafting in the country. Located equidistant from many activity sites used by COR in the surrounding Colorado area, including backpacking, white-water rafting, rock climbing, and rappelling.



TESTIMONIALS

“I strongly recommend that every seminary consider making a partnership with COR Expeditions a regular component of their formation program.”—**Fr. Zachary Webb**, *Formator at Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving, TX*

“COR is a powerful new avenue of evangelization for the Church.”—**Curtis Martin**, *Founder of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS)*

“COR Expeditions was exactly what our Youth Ministry needed. It taught the teens responsibility, allowed them to be creative and independent, and encouraged them to lean on others and trust one another. It challenged them to think outside the box and dive deeper into elements of their faith...It was unlike anything any of us had ever experienced, in the absolute best ways. Two of the boys in the youth group are discerning the priesthood and said that their COR experience has a lot to do with them hearing the call.”—**Joanna Ojeda**, *Youth Minister at Annunciation Catholic Church, Orlando, FL*

“COR has custom courses and staff that are second to none.”—**Fr. Nathan Cromly**, *President of Eagle Eye Ministries, St. John Institute.*

“A particular mission of my priesthood is to share the Theology of Adventure. COR lives that mission. They are faithful and competent. Partnering with them has borne great fruit in Griz Catholic Campus Ministry and Legendary Adventure Camp.”—**Fr. Kirby Longo**, *Pastor of Christ the King University Parish in Missoula, MT*

ANONYMOUS TRIP PARTICIPANTS SAID:

“My week with COR gave me exactly what they promised. A Catholic Outdoor Renewal. The trip renewed my commitment to God and to my Catholic Faith. I now see that a life devoted to the ways of Christ is a life lived to the fullest. It is not void of adventure and excitement, but full of it. I came to know this truth through the COR team and the inspiring world of nature that God placed us in.”

“The area we were in had an eerie quietness to it compared to the bustling college campus I normally reside in. The first day on the river, it was so quiet it almost sounded like my ears were ringing. By the second day I fell in love with this lack of outside noise. After mass one day I found a rock to sit on and just closed my eyes and let the silence take me over. I started to cry, realizing it had been much too long since I was willing and able to hear God's voice.”

“Right up there as one of the best weeks of my life. For me it was just powerful to experience the beauty of the raw outdoors with others who shared my wonder for it, and I was inspired by the faith of those around me. Just something special about spending time with God in his creation with minimal

distractions.”

“God wants my happiness and freedom, not my slavery.”

“I came on this trip as a last ditch effort to find joy and adventure in my life...I left with so much more than that!”

“The beauty and the community I experienced was amazing. This trip was challenging and thus very rewarding both physically and spiritually. I can firmly say this was one of the best experiences of my life. I had never done anything like it and overcame many fears.”

“My buddies and I were going to go to Cancun for Spring Break and drink and whatever else happens down there. Instead we went on what we thought was just a climbing trip. It was a week that transformed our lives. God literally had me drive to Utah for the trip so I could learn about sonship, AMAZING!”

“This program helped turn me around from suicide and isolation...now I have a voice to share my experiences with others.”

“I’m so thankful to have participated in this retreat expedition. Through a variety of activities – hiking, rock climbing, rappelling, white water rafting – we built a community of encouragement and joy. The COR missionaries did an exceptional job teaching leadership skills, but, more importantly, of being Christ to us.”



COR'S PARTNERS

GRADE SCHOOLS AND HIGH SCHOOLS:

- St. Martin's Academy
- Great Hearts Schools
- Western Academy
- Valor Schools
- NY High Schools
- St. John Paul II Prep HS
- St. Agnes School
- Cistercian Prep
- Machebeuf High School
- St. Louis High School
- Jesuit High School
- St. Joseph's School
- Holy Rosary Academy
- Skutt Catholic High School
- Magnolia School
- Summit High School
- Overbrook High School
- Catholic Memorial High School
- Christendom Academy
- The Heights School
- Ozark Catholic Academy

MINISTRY AND YOUTH GROUPS:

- Eagle Eye Ministries
- Camp Wojtyla
- WONDER
- Creatio
- Into the Deep
- Sursum Corda
- Dominican Campus Ministry
- White Heart Guardian Project
- St. John Institute
- Legendary Lodge
- Troops of St. George
- Inferno Men
- USAFA Youth Group
- Wyoming youth groups
- Private youth groups

SEMINARIES AND RELIGIOUS ORDERS:

- Franciscan Friars of the Renewal
- Holy Trinity Seminary
- St. John Vianney Seminary
- Diocese of St. Augustine
- Jesuit Vocations
- Dominicans
- St. Vincent De Paul Seminary
- St. Joseph's Abbey

UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES:

- Notre Dame University
- Benedictine College
- University of Tennessee
- Winona State University
- Boston College
- University of Wyoming
- Carroll College
- University of Portland
- College
- UNC Study Center
- Louisiana State University
- McNeese State University
- Numerous FOCUS groups

OTHER:

- Cathedral of Christ the King
- St. Stephen's Parish
- St. Dominic's Parish
- WCC Alumni
- FOCUS New Staff Training
- Private trips for families, father/son groups, and home school groups
- Men's groups

Of our 103 planned trips in 2023, approximately 41% were for highschool and middle school students, 35% were for young adult and college age students, 10% were for families, 8% were for seminarians and religious orders, 3% were skills trainings, and 3% were for veterans.

FEATURED PARTNERS

FOCUS: While COR frequently runs trips for small groups from FOCUS campuses around the country, FOCUS has also done new staff training with COR in and out of the backcountry. For the past two years, COR has led upwards of 60 first and second year FOCUS missionaries on a backpacking and canyoneering trip to help them prepare for their year of ministry on college campuses across America.

Valor: Valor Classical Schools are a system of charter schools that provide K-12 education in central Texas. For the last two years, COR has led Valor high school students on multi-adventure style trips in Moab. Valor, along with Great Hearts Schools and Western Academy, is representative of the increasing number of classical curriculum schools contacting COR to run trips that augment the curriculum they are offering.

White Heart: The White Heart Guardian Project focuses on providing "eco-adventure therapy" to improve the mental health of members of the disabled veteran community. COR has provided the technical expertise and staff necessary to run the White Heart Guardian Project since its inception in 2016. Veteran leaders run the programming of the trips, and COR guides the white-water rafting, rock climbing, and other activities, making accommodations for all the veterans involved, including double amputees.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

As a non-profit organization, COR Expeditions is reliant on the support of donors in order to operate. As a deeply Catholic apostolate, COR is blessed to have the opportunity to include donors in this wonderful mission. From our missionaries' support teams, to our biggest benefactors, and all our supporters in between, we are incredibly grateful for the generosity of these amazing people and for the opportunity to invite even more to join the COR team. Here are some of the many important ways that you can help our ministry grow and improve!

\$20,000: Help us build a chapel on one of our properties

\$5,000: Help us build new infrastructure on our properties

\$580: Get us a new packraft

\$120: Buy us a new backpack

\$70: Get us a new camp stove

\$300,000: Help us obtain more annual use permits to increase our access to wilderness areas

\$30,000: Help us upgrade our vehicle fleet with a new vehicle

\$1,200: Fund professional development, such as a rock climbing certification, for one of our staff

\$900: Pay for a chaplain's travel and trip expenses to come on one of our trips

Which basecamp can you climb to?



WHAT WE NEED



Gear: Although COR's gear cache is fully equipped to run all of our year-round trips, there is always need to replace or upgrade gear due to normal wear-and-tear. Funding gear and equipment helps us improve the quality of our trips and even practice risk management more effectively, such as when we improve our vehicle fleet or upgrade our emergency communication devices.

Scholarships: One of our top priorities has always been to keep our trips accessible to as many people as possible. Contributing to our scholarship funds allows participants to experience COR who do not otherwise have the means.

Infrastructure: Generous donors have given COR use of a few properties which we visit many times a year with our participants. Your support helps us to improve these properties and create and install infrastructure, which gives our participants an even better experience there.



Permits: One of the greatest impediments to growing our ministry is obtaining new permits to the wilderness areas we visit. Since these wilderness areas are some of the most beautiful and well-managed in the US, annual permits are extremely expensive and difficult to obtain. Helping us purchase more year-round permits is perhaps the most important way to help our ministry grow.

Visit www.CORexpeditions.org/donate to make a gift!

For questions, comments, additional ways to give, or questions about planned giving, please contact COR's Donor Relations Officer Paul Milligan via email at PAUL@COREXPEDITIONS.ORG or call at 307-438-9039.

Other ways to help:

Prayer is one of the greatest ways to support us. Please keep COR in your prayers!

Word of mouth is by far the most powerful marketing tool we have. If you are interested in helping spread the word about COR, we are happy to send you promotional materials. Please send us a note at INFO@COREXPEDITIONS.ORG.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

With the help of our benefactors, there are a few elements of our programming that we hope to grow and improve in 2024 and beyond. Our decision to focus on these areas in particular comes from the great needs we see within the Church, and from our own ability to excel in these areas of mission.

SEMINARIAN FORMATION

Across the United States, bishops have recently begun implementing an update to the guidelines for seminarian formation, newly published by the Vatican. The update called for a

new period of non-academic formation before candidates officially enter seminary known as the “Propaedeutic Year,” which focuses on building community, removing worldly distractions, and discerning entrance into the seminary.

At COR, we see our programs as the perfect complement to the formation required in the Propaedeutic Year. COR has been running trips for seminarians since its very beginning with great success, and we’ve received extremely positive feedback to these courses. Beyond helping renew virtue, wonder, and identity, a formation trip with COR has an

incredible impact on community since the seminarians continue to live together and build on the impact of the trip as long as they are in formation with each other.

The great need for enhancing priestly formation hardly needs to be stated. Seminarians become priests, and priests guide, teach, and minister to all of us. We are honored to help build up the future leaders of our Church by offering such trips, and excited to find new partners interested in adding a COR trip to their Propaedeutic Year.



OPEN ENROLLMENT TRIPS



Although COR's custom courses have occupied the largest percentage of our trips, our Open Enrollment offerings have been part of our mission since the very beginning. Since these trips are somewhat dependent on our own marketing and promotion efforts, our goal moving into 2024 and following seasons is to increase our efforts and focus on reaching new open-enrollment candidates and growing this important facet of our apostolate.

FAMILY RANCH GETAWAY WEEKS

Another aspect of our mission we see bearing great fruit is COR's Family Getaway weeks. From a small start in 2018 to a waitlist of over 30 families going into 2024, the popularity of our Ranch programs have exploded, as families experience the beauty of the Wyoming wilderness in an accessible way, with other faithful families, served by a Catholic COR staff and a priest. The incredible volume of participants and positive feedback we've received has encouraged us to focus even more attention on improving this amazing experience for our 2024 season and beyond.

"This was the vacation I did not know I needed. After our amazing week, I am still filled to the point of being overwhelmed with gratitude. The scenery was breathtakingly beautiful. We were outdoors every day. And the community was filled with joy. Right now my husband and I are filled with the "peace that the world cannot give" and we know that it is of God. We are inspired to get back to work building a Catholic community at home that is as beautiful as what I saw in just five short days at a ranch with a bunch of strangers."

~Anonymous Ranch Participant



Spread the word!

We would love your help promoting these programs! Your good word to a vocation director, a family, or a high school or college age friend can make all the difference to help us fill our formation trips, ranch weeks, and open enrollment trips. Thank you for your help!



EXPEDITIONS
ADVENTURE FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION
An Outreach of Wyoming Catholic College