

Diocesan and Community News

Need Hope? Take A Minute to Get to Know the "God of All Hope"

The New Year 2026: Jesus is Our Hope (1 Tim. 1:1)

Moving forward in this New Year, we are called to be beacons of hope in the world, as called for in Romans 15:13: *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope."* Let us continue to ask the Lord to increase our faith and hope in Him so that as beacons, we will help others to encounter Jesus through acts of love and mercy.

Human Trafficking Prevention Month: January is Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Learn more about the vast, tragic reality of human trafficking, and what you can do to make a difference, by visiting usccb.org/offices/migration-refugee-services/human-trafficking.

Small Group Study for the New Year - Rescue Project: An engaging faith study for small groups is entitled "Rescued" by Fr. John Riccardo of Acts XXIX. This will be the focus for the New Year. There are nine sessions with FREE videos, a compelling book for a reduced price, discussion questions and other FREE materials are available. Go here for more information: <https://watch.actsxxix.org/therescueproject>.

Healing Ministry for those Who Have Lost a Baby: Do you know someone who is carrying the grief and sorrow of losing a child through miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, stillbirth, or abortion? Rachel Ministries of the Diocese of La Crosse offers a compassionate heart and confidential help. Call 608.860.6698 or email Hope4U@diolc.org. There are also healing retreats offered in the Diocese of Madison. For more information, visit <http://madisondiocese.org/rachel>.

Franciscan Spirituality Center: Winter can be an especially challenging time of year for people who are experiencing grief. The Franciscan Spirituality Center, 920 Market St., La Crosse, WI, offers the following programs, open to anyone seeking support and understanding amid the loss of a loved one.

LISTENING TOGETHER, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Monday, January 12: This free, drop-in gathering on the second Monday of the month is open to anyone who would like peer support and a safe place to share stories and process emotions – after an immediate loss as well as those that surface years later.

GRIEF CIRCLE, 10 a.m.-noon Wednesdays starting January 21: This six-week, in-person gathering is a welcoming space to share thoughts, feelings and concerns with others who understand the depth of your pain. For more information or to register, please visit www.FSCenter.org or call 608-791-5295.

CALIX: A Catholic Substance Abuse Recovery Support Group:

Calix is an association of Catholics wanting to live free of addiction to alcohol or drugs, and it is also for affected family members. It is not a substitute for AA or Al-Anon, but provides a Catholic perspective to complement these 12-step programs. "Calix," Latin for "chalice," was founded in Minneapolis in 1947 by a group of five men, all recovering alcoholics, who saw their Catholic faith as a sure path to serenity without alcohol. If you are interested in learning about the Calix group that meets every other Tuesday by Zoom in the Diocese of La Crosse, email Christine at healthandharmonywi@gmail.com. To learn more about Calix <http://www.calixsociety.org/>.

Kids Korner

A Bit About... Baptism



A sacrament is an outward sign of a grace that God gives us in our soul. When we are baptized, water is poured on our head as a symbol of the sin being washed out of our soul.

You might be wondering if babies need to get baptized when they haven't even done any sins yet. But baptism also takes away original sin, which comes to us from Adam and Eve. Baptism also gives us the grace we need to live a good Christian life. Of course babies can't sin when they are very young, but Baptism will give them grace when they need it.

Why do you think that Jesus got baptized, since He didn't have original sin or actual sins? Jesus didn't need to get rid of any sins, but He was baptized to give us an example.



Answers to Cross-Word:
Across: 1. John
6. Heavens
7. me
8. water
9. Son
11. Is
12. After
14. until
16. Jordan
19. told
Down: 1. Jesus
2. need
3. show
4. Baptism
5. heard
10. out
11. into
13. river
15. God
17. at
18. no

Jesus' Baptism Cross-Word Puzzle

See if you can find all these words relating to Jesus' baptism and fit them into the puzzle:



Across:

1. What was the name of the man who baptized Jesus?
6. The _____ opened and the Holy Spirit came down.
7. John said to Jesus, "You should baptize _____!"
8. John baptized with _____.
9. "This is my beloved _____ with whom I am well pleased."
11. "This _____ my beloved Son..."
12. _____ Jesus was baptized He came out of the river.
14. Once John had said about Jesus, "I am not worthy to _____ His sandals!"
16. What was the name of the river where Jesus was baptized?
19. Jesus _____ John that it was fitting for Him to be baptized.

Down:

1. Who had never done a sin but was baptized anyway?
2. John said, "I _____ to be baptized by you!"
3. Jesus did this to _____ us how important baptism is.
4. The John in this story is called John the _____.
5. They _____ a voice from Heaven.
10. John came _____ of the desert to preach and baptize.
11. When we are baptized, the Holy Spirit comes _____ our soul.
13. Jesus was baptized in a _____.
15. The Heavens opened and the Spirit of _____ appeared.
17. Jesus came from Galilee to John _____ the Jordan.
18. Jesus had _____ sins even before He was baptized.



PARISH PRIEST

Rev. Sengole Vethanayagam

(Fr. Sen) (715) 615-1774

frsengolevema@gmail.com

WEEKDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Wednesday and Friday.....8:00 AM

WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday.....8:00 PM

Sunday.....10:00 AM

ADORATION

Wednesday....7:00 PM with Benediction at 8:05 PM

CONFESSIONS

Wednesday during Adoration

Before Saturday mass & By Appointment

PARISH OFFICE (located in the church Sacristy)

Hours: Wednesday 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Friday 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Melissa Schaub.....Secretary/Bookkeeper

Office Phone: (608) 452-4680

Bulletin deadline:Wednesday

Email: parishoffice@stpmr.diolcparish.org

PARISH WEBMASTER

Christopher Pundzak

SACRISTANS

Richard Korish & Austin Menn

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Miranda Flock & Carol Gronemus (assistant)

PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL

Mark Nicolai (Chairman), Brandon Flock,
Louisa Peterson, James Hundt & Nick Gronemus
(Committee liaisons: Peter Benzing & Leo Leis)

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Tom Schaub, Mark Stephenson, Rob Slattery,
Peter Benzing, Kathy Flock, Sarah Gronemus

PCCW - Parish Council of Catholic Women

Pam Benzing, Mary Bach-Filla

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Leo Leis (Chairman), Mark Gronemus,

Pat Lucey, Don Halderson, David Scharping

CEMETERY SEXTON

Tom Schaub

FUNERAL COMMITTEE CHAIR

Deborah Leis

MUSIC

Terese Slattery, Coordinator

Leland Gregorich, Organist

St. Peter's Catholic Church Middle Ridge, WI W697 State Hwy 33 Rockland, WI 54653 608-452-4680

Parish website: www.saintpetersparish.net



THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD JANUARY 11, 2026



CALL THE PARISH OFFICE TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR:

- Joining the Parish • Weddings • Baptisms
- Anointing of the sick
- If you are home-bound & would like to be visited

Parish Intentions

1/14 Wednesday 8:00 AM –
The Korish Family (RK)
1/16 Friday 8:00 AM –
† Adeline Clements (MLH)
1/17 Saturday 8:00 PM –
The Herbert Meyer family (MJM)
1/18 Sunday 10:00 AM –
St. Peter’s Parish Family

Attention: If you would like to have a mass prayed for your intention, you can place it in a marked envelope in the offertory. If you have a certain date you would like, please specify. The mass intention fee is now \$20.

Ministry Servers

Saturday January 17 – 8:00 PM
Servers: Matthew Schaub & Mason Leis
Ushers: Ron Hurtz & Mike Schaub
Lector: Lynda Hurtz

Sunday January 18 – 10:00 AM
Servers: Arnie & Adeline Nicolai
Ushers: Peter Benzing & Leo Leis
Lector: Pam Benzing

Reminder We understand everybody's schedules get busy. If you are not able to make it on a day you are scheduled PLEASE make the effort to find a replacement or at least let somebody know ahead of time!!

Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesdays: Rosary @ 7:00 PM – Eucharistic Exposition @ 7:20 PM – Quiet Prayer/Confession - Benediction @ 8:05 PM
Come spend some quiet time with Jesus.

8 Ways to Pray During Eucharistic Adoration ~
- Read Spiritual Books - Ask for Intercession - Meditate
- Offer a Holy Hour - Write a Prayer Journal -
Pray Spontaneously - Ask the Saints for help - Read the Scriptures

Parish Calendar of Events

Wed. Jan. 14 – Grades 7-10 CCD Class 7 – 8:15 PM
Sun. Jan. 18 - Grades 1-6 CCD Class 8:45 – 9:45 AM
Wed. Jan. 21 – Grades 7-10 CCD Class 7 – 8:15 PM
Sun. Jan. 25 - Grades 1-6 CCD Class 8:45 – 9:45 AM
Sun. Feb. 1 – Rosary in church @ 7:30 PM



***NOTE*:** When sending money for flowers, mass intentions, church support or special collections PLEASE make out separate checks or cash as these things go into different accounts and it is easier for bookkeeping purposes.

St. Joseph’s Ridge Mass Times

Saturday 4:00 p.m. and Sunday 8:00 a.m.
Tuesday 5:30 p.m.
(Adoration before Mass beginning at 5:00 p.m.)
Thursday.....8:00 a.m.
First Saturday Mass.....8:00 a.m.
(Please note new mass times)

Stewardship Reflection

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

Today marks the close of the Christmas season, but before we return to Ordinary Time, we have one more great feast to celebrate — The Baptism of the Lord. Today’s feast is a perfect opportunity to reflect on the privileges and responsibilities we all share as Christian stewards by virtue of our Baptism.

At our Baptism, we became adopted sons and daughters of God and members of His Holy Catholic Church. Unknowingly, this moment also marks the beginning of our journey as Christian stewards, disciples of Jesus Christ, called to follow His example and share the Gospel message daily.

In our second reading from the Acts of the Apostles, St. Peter offers a glimpse of Jesus, whom we should imitate. “He went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.” This should inspire us to follow Jesus' example of doing good to everyone we meet.

In the Gospel passage from Matthew, we see Jesus humbly standing before John for baptism. His act of humility and willingness to unite Himself to us invites us to reflect on our own humility and desire to serve as His disciples in daily life.

And when we do strive with all our might to live out our Baptismal call to Christian stewardship, we will experience the profound honor of knowing that we, too, are God’s “beloved” sons and daughters “with whom He is well-pleased.”

Parish News

St. Peter’s Annual Couples Night: In the second week of February we celebrate National Marriage week by putting on a romantic dinner celebrating married couples and those who have been recently engaged. This year we hope to do this on Friday February 13th. Before plans can be firmed up, we need a commitment from a minimum of 12 couples that wish to enjoy a 4 course gourmet meal, music, fellowship with other married couples and inspiration. We need interest confirmation before January 30th to continue with plans. Please contact the parish office or Tom & Melissa Schaub.

Appreciation: “A heart-felt thank you from the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and our Diocesan Mission Office to St. Peter Parish of Middle Ridge for answering our Holy Father’s call to be ‘Missionaries of Hope Among the People’ with your generous response of prayer and sacrifices for World Mission Sunday. We will forward your financial contribution of \$145 to our national office. They can in turn support Catholic institutions most in need. Gratefully in the Lord, Rev. Woodrow H. Pace”

Mission Trip: Join us for a Life-Changing Mission Trip to Casa Hogar! Get ready for an unforgettable adventure! In August 2026, students from our parish are invited to travel to Casa Hogar Juan Pablo II in Peru—a home filled with joy, faith, and hope. You’ll serve alongside incredible families, help with community projects, grow in friendship, and experience the vibrant culture of Peru. This is more than a trip—it’s a chance to make a real impact and let God work through you in amazing ways. Want to learn more? Contact Mike Klinkner or Carol Gronemus. A meeting will be planned soon. Let’s step out in faith together!

Help Catholic Charities Love our Neighbors in Need: Catholic Charities reaches out to our neighbors in need in so many ways, from providing shelter to the homeless in our midst (especially in winter) to giving hope and support to moms before and after birth to working with married couples looking to adopt, to assisting the poor and people with disabilities. Especially in this holy season of Christmas, find out how you can help by visiting cclse.org.

Reasons To Celebrate! Wedding Anniversary Blessings: At the first weekend masses Father Sen will bless all of the Wedding Anniversaries for the month. This Wedding Anniversary Blessing will continue for each subsequent month at the first weekend masses. **Birthday Blessings:** At the second weekend masses, Father Sen will bless the birthdays for the month. The Birthday Blessing will continue each subsequent month at the second weekend masses.

Celebrating Growth: The 156 parishes of our diocese have been taking Mass counts for over two decades. Average Mass attendance in 2025 was 42,952 - an increase of 1.5% from 2024. Even with a large number of deaths, our Mass attendance has increased each year for five straight years. Praise God! See the latest updates here: <https://diolc.org/rebuildmychurch/updates/>

January Pro-Life Initiatives, Prayers and Intentions: Though the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision declaring a right to abortion was overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2022, many states’ laws are hostile to preborn children. And so our pro-life prayers and efforts are just as important as ever. Learn more and find parish and personal resources from our U.S. Bishops at respectlife.org.

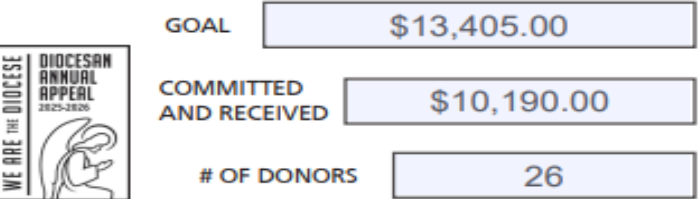
Aquinas Catholic School Updates:

-2026-2027 Enrollment Dates - Wednesday, January 7 Re-enrollment opens for *current* ACS families. Monday, January 19 Enrollment opens for *new* ACS families
-Aquinas Middle & High School Open House - Wednesday, January 14, 2026 Meet our teachers, explore academics, athletics, clubs, and activities, and discover why Aquinas is simply the best place for you and your family to learn and grow!
-Welcome Meetings in the Theatre - Middle School: 5:00 pm, High School: 6:00 pm. We hope to see you there!
-*Save the Date!* Mardi Gras Ball - Saturday, January 31, 2026 4:30 pm at the Radisson Ballroom



AS THE FATHER HAS
SENT ME, SO I SEND YOU.
- JOHN 20:21

DIOLC.ORG/STEWARDSHIP



Pray Often & Daily!!!



Parish Finances (Fiscal Year Budget)

Weekly Target -	\$1,900.00
Last Week’s Total -	\$2,388.00
	+\$488.00
Year to Date Target -	\$51,300.00
Year to Date Total -	\$52,714.27
	+\$1,414.27

Looking Ahead: Readings for January 18, 2026

First Reading: Isaiah 49:3, 5-6
Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:1-3
Gospel Reading: John 1:29-34