

December 17, 2023



MARY MOTHER OF THE CHURCH



3rd Sunday of Advent

MASS TIMES

Saturday Vigil 4 PM
Sunday 8 AM & 10 AM
Tuesday–Friday 7:30 AM

CONFESSIONS

Saturday 3:15 - 3:45 PM or
by appointment.

HEARING ASSISTANCE

Hearing devices are available. See s for
additional information, especially for
hearing aids paired with Bluetooth.

THE ROSARY

Prayed before each weekday Mass
Tuesday - Friday beginning at 7:05 AM.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday–Friday 8 AM - 3 PM

Contact the parish office to register,
schedule a baptism, schedule a wedding
(six months notice required), and to
request the Sacrament of the Sick.

SCRIP

Scrip is sold before and after all week-
end Masses and in the parish office on
Fridays from 8 AM - 3 PM.

BULLETIN DEADLINE

Requests are due to the office by Mon-
day in written format.

PARISH STAFF

788-5483

Rev. Brian D. Konopa ext. 3
Pastor
frkonopa@mmoclacrosse.org

Rev. Mr. Terry Bell ext. 6
Deacon - Adult Faith Formation
& RCIA/OCIA
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Bookkeeper
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Steve Young ext. 1
Office Assistant
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AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Ted Knutson 784-8585
President

Tara Key 782-5998
Principal, Cathedral School

Kate Moll 782-5564
Principal, Blessed Sacrament School

Angela Koblitz 783-5483
Principal, St. Patrick School, Onalaska

Andrew Bradley
Principal, Aquinas Middle School 784-0156
Principal, Aquinas High School 784-0287

OUR MISSION

Mary, Mother of the Church
parishioners are called to be the
People of God, formed by the
Holy Word and nourished by
the Holy Eucharist. We joyfully
share our faith and gifts of time,
talent, and treasure. We are
committed to serve all God's
people in the building of the
Kingdom.

3rd Sunday of Advent

Advent: Preparing Our Hearts for Christ's Coming

The Gospel for the Third Sunday of Advent is John 1:6-8, 19-28. The focus of the Reading is again on John the Baptist: "There was a man named John sent by God who came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe." John the Baptist wanted to relate to others what he knew to be true; that Christ is the Light of the world. If we follow Jesus, we won't have to walk in darkness, because we will have the Light of Truth that leads to eternal life.

This theme of light is also apparent in creation. The days of Advent are the darkest days of the year. On December 21, we will experience the winter solstice which marks the shortest day and longest night. And then as we approach Christmas it begins to reverse, with more light and longer days, pointing to the birth of the Christ Child – the true Light shining in the darkness.

As we see the Christmas lights on the tree and on the house, we want to remember that these lights refer to Christ who is the Light of the world. Further, it is important to allow the Light of Christ to shine from our hearts. Let us ask God for one small way to share the Light He has placed in our hearts such as visiting a lonely person.

In the same way that John bore witness to Jesus Christ through telling others about Him, let us speak about the real meaning of Christmas with others and invite people to come to Mass on the Sundays of Advent and on Christmas. We need to welcome people back to our family celebrations in which we hear the Word of God and receive the Holy Eucharist – the same Christ Child born in a manger in Bethlehem.

Advent Sacrament of Reconciliation

Penance Service with individual confessions

- St. Patrick, Onalaska: December 17 at 7 PM
- Individual Confessions
- St. Joseph the Workman Cathedral: Dec. 18 at 9 AM - 6 PM

Special Mass Schedule

This year, the Fourth Sunday of Advent lands on Sunday, Dec. 24; rather than having the usual 8 AM & 10 AM Mass schedule that day, there will only be one Sunday Mass at 9 AM.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

- Dec. 23 at 4:00 PM
- Dec. 24 at 9:00 AM

Christmas

- Dec. 24 at 4:00 PM & 6:30 PM
- Dec. 25 at 9:00 AM

Mary, Mother of God*

- Jan. 1 at 9:00 AM

*Not a holy day of obligation this year, so there will be no 4 PM Vigil Mass on Sunday, Dec. 31.

NEEDED: Liturgical Ministers

Liturgical positions need to be filled for Christmas and Jan. 1 Mass at 9 AM. This includes Sacristans, Ministers of Holy Communion, Greeters, Gift Bearers, and Servers. Please consider filling in if you are available.

Go to www.mmoclacrosse.org and click on the Ministry Scheduler link at the top of the page, or call Steve at 608-788-5483, ext. 1.

Children's Christmas Choir

We are asking all children, 5K and older, to join our Sunday Choir in leading the music on Sunday, December 24 for the 4 PM Christmas Eve Mass (prelude music starting at 3:30 PM with the Sunday Choir). All music will be done from the choir loft.

Mrs. Marilyn Jensen-Henry, Cathedral's music teacher, and Mrs. Mary Jo Lium will be leading the music. We will NOT have a large group rehearsal. The music will be simple Christmas carols known to the kids. We are asking everyone to be in the choir loft, ready to go at 3:40 PM. To make sure we have enough music, please contact Mary Jo Lium if your child(ren) will be singing in the choir this year. Thank you! (mjlium@mmoclacrosse.org)

Christmas Flower Donations

We are receiving donations toward the purchase of flowers and decorations in memory of a loved one or as a gift. You can use the flower envelope in your Nov/Dec. packet or use a blank envelope with your donation and the name of the person(s) you would like to memorialize. A list of those who are honored and remembered will be published in January.

Parish Office Hours During the Christmas Season

We will be closed on Dec. 26 & 29.

Early Bulletin Deadlines

It is that time of the season when all bulletin items are due earlier than Mondays. The bulletin for Jan. 7 is due by Tuesday Dec. 26.

Angel Tree 2023

A huge thank you for all the donations to the Angel Tree this year. Many families will have a brighter Christmas due to your generosity. May your faithful hearts inspire others to know Jesus and His wonderful works. The total amount raised was \$8,755!

Religious Retirement Collection Thanks

Our women and men religious offer gratitude. A sister shares, "I thank the Lord for all who give. I don't think we would make it without them." Thank you for giving to the Retirement Fund for Religious last week. Your donation makes a difference in the lives of elderly women and men religious. To learn more about how your gift helps, visit retiredreligious.org.

50th Jubilee Wedding Anniversaries

Any couple celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary in 2024 is requested to notify the parish office by December 21. This information is forwarded to the diocese for special events. Call Steve 788-5483 x1 or email secretary@mmoclacrosse.org.

Family Life

Wedding Banns (II)

Deven Nietzold & Lily Manning on December 30, 2023. Keep them in your prayers as they prepare for their wedding.



PCCW

Cookie Walk Thank You

To everyone who donated cookies, candy, breads, pies, soup, chili, craft, time, talent, treasure to this year's Cookie Walk, thank you! Please keep an eye on upcoming bulletins for a profit report.

Social Justice

Warming Center Volunteers on Tuesday, Dec. 19

Food & Milk (to be delivered to 413 S. 3rd St. by 6:30 PM): Katie Ott, Robin Woodwick, Angela Schlack-Haerer (food & milk)

Intake (6:30 PM - 9 PM): Mary Olson, Sarah Kopski, Pat Korger, Terri Pedace, Heidi Korger

Morning Volunteers (6 - 8:30 AM Wed.): Brad & Lynn Sturm, Tracey Mullaney

Free haircuts by Linda Kuehl

--Mary Olson, MMOC Coordinator for The Warming Center, molson@mmoclacrosse.org.

Donate to Help the Victims of Violence in the Holy Land

Catholic Relief Services, in conjunction with Caritas partners, are working to meet the desperate humanitarian needs caused by the terrorism and fighting in the Holy Land. How can you help? Visit ww.crs.org or scan the QR code to find out.



NATIONAL Eucharistic Revival

Two Minutes With Jesus

1. The Eucharist is called the Holy Sacrifice. A sacrifice is the act of giving up something highly valued for the sake of something else, considered to have a greater value or claim out of love for another person and/or for God. The perfect sacrifice was Christ's death on the Cross, by which He offered Himself to the Father out of love for us, which accomplished our salvation. The Holy Mass is a sacrifice because it is the re-presentation and the memorial of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. The sacrifice of Calvary is being made present in an unbloody manner on the altar at Mass. Let's pray this right now and every day this week: Jesus, please give me the grace to appreciate the sacrifice that is made present at every Mass in which You offer Yourself to the Father out of love for me. This week, read Luke's account of Jesus offering Himself in sacrifice to the Father for love of us in Luke 22:14-20.

2. The Eucharist is called Holy Communion When we receive Holy Communion at Mass, we are receiving Jesus Himself, which is our closest union with Him on earth. As we receive Jesus' Body and Blood into our own body and soul, we are united with Him in a deep and intimate bond. Jesus feeds our soul, strengthening us to be faithful by following Him, and loving and serving Him through serving others, particularly those in

need. Let's pray this right now and every day this week: Jesus, thank you for the incredible treasure of Holy Communion in which You allow us to be united with You in the closest possible bond of friendship and love. This week, read how Jesus encourages us to "remain" in Him in John 15:4-5.

"the ANSWER" Eucharistic Rally June 7 The La Crosse Center



We are very excited to announce "the Answer" Eucharistic Rally that will be held on June 7, 2024 at the La Crosse Center in La Crosse, WI. This event kicks off the first day that the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage will be in the Diocese of La Crosse. "the Answer" Eucharistic Rally will begin with a Eucharistic Procession Across the Cameron Street Bridge in La Crosse. It will end at the La Crosse Center where the rest of the rally will take place. The day will include Mass, Adoration, Confession, powerful speakers such as Chris Stefanick, Immaculee Ilibagize, and Josh Rosa, music from Luke Spehar, and plenty of vendors. The cost for this event is only \$15 per person. This rally is for middle and high school youth, young adults, adults, families, etc. Tickets will go on sale December 15, 2023. You can find more information about the event by visiting <https://diolc.org/the-answer/>.

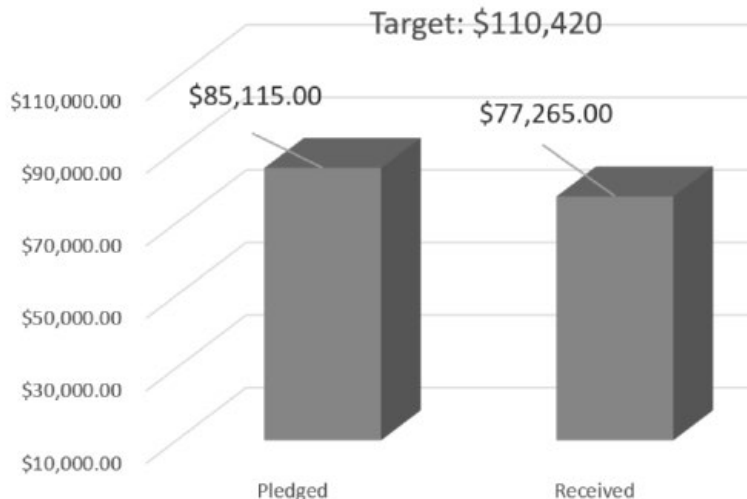
Finance

Plan Ahead For The Holidays

As Christmas approaches, please plan ahead for your Scrip purchases for all your shopping, baking, decorating and gift buying needs. You can buy Scrip in the office on Fridays from 8 AM to 3 PM. You can also buy scrip online, please call Mike or Sister Meg in the office for all the details at 788-5483, ext. 2.

Diocesan Annual Appeal

The target goal for our parish is \$110,420. As of December 8, parish participation is at 26% Please be generous. If you are unable to contribute financially, please return the appeal form to the diocese with \$0 written in the amount pledged line. Thank you.



December 17, 2023

Faith Formation

Family Faith Formation

Family Faith Formation meets this Wednesday, December 20 from 5:30 PM - 6:45 PM at Mary, Mother of the Church for a special Advent celebration. Contact Kristin with any questions at 608-788-5483 Ext. 4, or at kjohnson@mmoclacrosse.org.

Family Faith Formation Christmas Break

Family Faith Formation will NOT meet December 27. Continue working on our At Home Lessons and we will see you January 3!

Community Events

Pilgrimage for LIFE – Jan. 17-21 in Washington D.C.

Your pro-life witness is needed more than ever! Come with us by coach bus to Washington, DC, to participate in the annual March for Life. For ages 13 and up, \$400/person. Parish or school groups must have each participant complete the registration online, fill out the required forms and pay a non-refundable deposit of \$100. The remainder of the fee will be paid to the parish or school. For more information and to register, visit diolc.org/vya/youth-opportunities/pilgrimage-for-life.

On Formed.org

The True Meaning of Christmas with Dr. Michael Baxter

Do you love Christmas traditions but don't know where they come from? Tune in for Dr. Michael Patrick Barber's Advent reflections called "The True Meaning of Christmas" and learn the meaning behind your favorite Christmas pastimes. To go deeper, be sure to get his accompanying book, "The True Meaning of Christmas".

Nicholas: The Boy Who Became Santa

Nicholas was still a young child when he discovered a very special secret that changed his life forever. It was the gift of giving, by which he brought happiness to many people. Nevertheless, in sharing this gift, Nicholas had to face many dangers.

Here is the fascinating story of the boy whose love and care for others make him one of the most popular figures of all times. Today, more than sixteen centuries later, the entire world celebrates the kindness and generosity of the man we call Santa Claus. Based on historical facts and traditions, Nicholas: The Boy Who Became Santa, is the beautifully animated film worth watching all year long.



Liturgical Roles Dec. 23-24

Minister of Holy Communion

Sat - 4:00 PM Barbara Stetzer, Chris Schlegel, Kelly
Sun - 9:00 AM Deacon Terry Bell, Daniel Skiles, Polly Berendes

Lector

Sat - 4:00 PM Joseph & Therese van Oss
Sun - 9:00 AM Matt Binsfeld, Mary Jo Swarouth

Server

Sat - 4:00 PM Aubrey Jakes, Ellyana Jakes
Sun - 9:00 AM OPEN, Christopher Hughey

Cantor

Sat - 4:00 PM Rick Wilson
Sun - 9:00 AM Christine Nelson

Musician

Sat - 4:00 PM Mary Jo Lium
Sun - 9:00 AM Natalie Solverson

Sacristan

Sat - 4:00 PM OPEN
Sun - 9:00 AM Linda Schwartz

Gift Bearer

Sat - 4:00 PM Steve & Erin Klar
Sun - 9:00 AM Chuck & Polly Berendes

Greeters

Sat - 4:00 PM OPEN, Steve Schaub, Arian Arens, Phil Watson, Joe Riemer, Patrick Hogan, OPEN, Linda Gillette-Lead
Sun - 9:00 AM Felicity Bell, OPEN, Lydia Bell, Andrew Schwartz, Elly Binsfeld, Megan Binsfeld, Anna Binsfeld, OPEN-Lead

Scrip Sellers

Sat - 4:00 PM Sue Prestasky, OPEN

Live Streamer

Sat - 4:00 PM Joseph van Oss

Weekly Mass Intentions

Tuesday, December 19, 2023

7:30 AM † Larry Weibel

By Family

Wednesday, December 20, 2023

7:30 AM † Jim & Dorothy Marx

By Rod & Bed Kadmas

Thursday, December 21, 2023

7:30 AM † Donald Bowman

By Family

Friday, December 22, 2023

7:30 AM † Marie Meyers

By Richard & Judy Wuensch

Saturday, December 23, 2023

4:00 PM † Carol Schams

By Family

Sunday, December 24, 2023

9:00 AM Pro Populo

4:00 PM † Jane O'Neil

By Russell O'Neil



The Celebration of St. Nicholas on December 5.

A big thank you to all of the people that volunteered their time, talent and treasure for making this evening an event to remember.

A wonderful time was had by all!



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