



ST. DONATUS



ST. ALEXIUS

ST. FRANCIS  
DE SALESSTS. PETER  
& PAULOUR LADY  
OF THE ANGELS

ST. PAUL'S



## SEVEN SISTERS APOSTOLATE: *Faithfully and Prayerfully Supporting Our Priests*

At Catholic parishes across the state, country, and world, there are good and holy men leading people to Christ as priests. They offer their lives to Jesus and pray for all of us, their parishioners. But how often are we all, as parishioners, praying for our priests? They urgently need our prayers, as well.

Judy Detloff recognizes that without priests, we'd be without the sacraments. Back in 2020, the Seven Sisters anchoress, or group leader, from another parish called Judy and asked her to be the anchoress for a group here at Parishes on the Prairie to keep the prayers going for Fr. Jeremy Theis. The structure of each group is seven women and one priest for one hour of prayer each day for one year. Ideally, the prayers should happen in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

"It was the Holy Spirit's plan because I had thought about it after a women's retreat, but I procrastinated, so I said 'yes,'" Judy says.

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*"The Seven Sisters Apostolate is a call to strengthen the Church by ensuring that a holy hour is prayed each day of the week for the sole intention of a specific priest or bishop." — JUDY DETLOFF*



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### First Communion Dates for the ACC

*April 27 — 4 p.m., First Communion at St. Paul's Mass*

*April 28 — 10:30 a.m., First Communion at St. Paul's Mass*

*May 4 — 4 p.m., First Communion at St. Paul's Mass*

*May 4 — 6 p.m., First Communion at Our Lady of the Angels Mass*

*May 5 — 8 a.m., First Communion at Our Lady of the Angels Mass*

*May 5 — 10:30 a.m., First Communion at St. Paul's Mass*

### Wednesday, April 3 — Parishes on the Prairie ACC Youth Barn Dance

*With DJ Salty*

*From 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Joe and Becky Eibensteiner's farm, 40028 County Rd. 191, Sauk Centre, Minn.*

*An endless evening of fun for any youth in sixth through 12th grades. Snacks, lots of indoor and outdoor activities, dancing, and prayer. Barns are heated and all are welcome.*

*If interested in chaperoning, contact Shari at 320-491-4858.*

### Saturday, April 6 — Youth Group Garage Sale at HFS (50 Families)

*7 a.m. to 3 p.m.*

*All proceeds go towards the Steubenville trip this summer.*

### Sunday, April 7 — Catholic United Financial-Elrosa Breakfast

*Sts. Peter and Paul Church basement*

*9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.*

### Saturday, April 13 — Youth Group Bake Day, St. Alexis

*From 1 to 5:30 p.m.*

*Join us for an afternoon of baking, friendship, fellowship, and fun! For students in fourth through 12th grades. Younger families are encouraged to join us with an adult guardian present. Sign up through the St. Alexis Facebook page or contact Christina at 320-980-0475.*

### Sunday, April 14 — Youth Group Bake Sale, St. Alexis

*From 7:45 to 8:15 a.m. and after Mass from 9:15 to 9:45 a.m.*

*All proceeds from the bake sale will benefit the youth group Valleyfair trip in May. Looking for youth volunteers to run the bake sale. Sign up through the St. Alexis Facebook page or contact Christina at 320-980-0475.*

### Sunday, April 14 — Confirmation for Our ACC

*Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Elrosa, begins at 2 p.m. with Bishop Neary.*

### Sunday, April 21 — Youth Mass at St. Alexis

*8:15 a.m.*

*Youth in sixth through 12th grades lead all parts of the Mass.*

### April 22-26 — First Communion Dialogues with a priest

### Monday, April 22 — Registration open for Vacation Bible School at the Centre for Christ

### Sunday, May 19 — Parishes on the Prairie ACC Pentecost Adoration Night

*For youth in eighth through 12th grades, at St. Paul's Church from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Open to any surrounding area youth in the diocese. Supper provided, along with music, adoration, youth testimonials, prayer teams, confessions and talks given by Fr. Greg and Fr. Aaron.*

**Searching Souls** — meets on Mondays each month at 6:30 at the Centre for Christ. Videos are presented, followed by small-group discussions to grow together in our Catholic faith. Follow the Searching Souls Ministries Facebook group to see what is happening! Call 320-761-3590 for more information.

### April 1 — Consolers Celebration Day (for those completing the Consoling the Heart of Jesus book study)

### April 8 — The Incarnation

### April 15 — Transubstantiation

*A Letter From Our Pastor*

# THE JOY OF THE *Paschal Mystery* THIS EASTER SEASON

Dear Parishioners,

**A**s we rejoice from the celebration of Easter at the end of March, April brings us into the Easter season. I want to highlight the profound significance of the 50 days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost in the Catholic Church. This extended period is a time of immense joy, hope, and spiritual renewal, reflecting the exhilarating experience of the disciples witnessing the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Paschal mystery, encompassing Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection, is the heart of our faith. In the resurrection, we find the ultimate victory over sin and death, promising new life, and eternal salvation. The 50 days of Easter serve as a continuous celebration of this life-altering event.

Celebrating the Paschal mystery throughout the Easter season is crucial for several reasons.

Let's begin with the joy of Jesus' resurrection, the cornerstone of our faith, which offers us all hope. The extended Easter season allows us to bask in this joy, inspiring us to live in the light of the risen Christ.

The Paschal mystery signifies not only Christ's victory over death but also our potential for renewal and transformation. The Easter season reminds us that through Christ, we can experience spiritual rebirth and profound life change.

Celebrating the Paschal mystery throughout the 50 days allows us to deepen our faith. We can contemplate the meaning of the resurrection, explore the rich symbolism of the Easter



liturgy, and experience a profound connection with Christ's sacrifice and victory.

The Easter season is a prime time for evangelization, an occasion to share the joy of the resurrection with others and invite them into the fold of the Church. By living out the Paschal mystery, we can become beacons of hope and share the Good News with the world.

The 50 days of Easter culminate in the celebration of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles. It is a reminder of the vital role the Holy Spirit plays in our lives and the mission of the Church. Celebrating the Paschal mystery throughout the season prepares our hearts to receive the

Holy Spirit with renewed vigor and openness.

As we journey through the Easter season, let's immerse ourselves in the Paschal mystery, reflecting on the transformative power of Christ's resurrection and allowing it to permeate every aspect of our lives. May these 50 days be a time of renewal, deepening faith, and evangelization as we continue to celebrate the joy of Easter.

In our Father's hands,

Fr. Greg Paffel  
Pastor





# Youth

## Offering Young Parishioners Valuable



After a group of high school youth returned home from various Catholic conferences, they wanted to be involved in the Mass as a way of living out their faith.

“At a Bible study at the Saltmarshes’ home in 2023, the youth asked if they could call Fr. Greg to see if they could lead a youth Mass and sing songs from their retreats,” says Shari Saltmarsh. “He happily approved it for all six parishes.”

Now, youth from kindergarten through 12th grade are involved in the monthly Youth Mass that rotates among the six parishes in our Area Catholic Community. The youth take on the music, bringing up the gifts, greeting, leading the Rosary before Mass, altar serving, lecturing, ushering, and serving as Extraordinary Ministers for Holy Communion. There are between 15 and 20 youth typically involved during a given Mass.

Shari facilitates with each parish faith formation leader and the music director to coordinate the Youth Mass. The Masses occur on the third weekend of each month. As she notes, it’s important to involve youth in this way for “building up and empowering the future church” as servant hearts of Jesus through Mary.

Through their involvement and service, the youth are engaging in a means of stewardship for our parish community. They are sharing their time and talents with our congregation, and offering it back to God.

“It energizes them and gives them a sense of belonging as participating in the Mass in various roles,” Shari says.

Since the Masses began, Shari says some of the youth have joined liturgical ministries in their respective parishes, serving as lectors or distributing Holy Communion as

The upcoming Youth Masses  
will take place:

**Sunday, April 21 —**

**8:15 a.m., St. Alexius in West Union**

**Sunday, May 19 —**

**10:30 a.m., St. Paul’s in Sauk Centre**





# Classes

## Opportunity to Engage in Stewardship

Extraordinary Ministers. There have been a number of positive impacts on the congregations, as well as the youth themselves. Shari says that parishioners have offered positive feedback, encouraging our youth in their walk as the future of the Church.

“The youth have been getting to know other parishes and their parishioners,” Shari says. “They are growing closer to Christ by serving Him in the Mass and taking their servant hearts into the world outside of church. They feel they are a part of something, like they are made for more and they belong to something more than just this side of heaven.”

Any youth are welcome to sign up to serve for a Youth Mass at any parish.

“The youth and their families know they are welcome to participate in any ministry upon entering any of our six parishes,” Shari says. “Praise God for this unity.

“I circle them up and pray with the youth before and after each Youth Mass,” she adds. “We lift up our intentions of praise and thanksgiving for our ACC’s progress of growing in friendship and holiness with youth from near and far. Any youth are always welcome at any parish, without question or doubt — just like Jesus welcomed everyone.”

*To get involved, please contact Shari Saltmarsh at [ssaltmarsh@parishesontheprairie.org](mailto:ssaltmarsh@parishesontheprairie.org).*

## SEVEN SISTERS APOSTOLATE *continued from front cover*

Fr. Theis was moving here on July 6, 2020, and Judy had one week to find six other women so they could begin on his first day. So, a group was formed.

“I introduced myself to Fr. Theis and told him I was his new Anchoress,” Judy says. “He knew that if he needed special prayers he would contact me, and I would relay the request to the other women.”

The Seven Sisters Apostolate was started in 2010 by Janette Howe, who felt a calling to pray specifically for the Rector of the Cathedral of St. Paul in St. Paul, Minn., Fr. Joseph R. Johnson. She was so appreciative of all he did for her and her family. In 2011, Janette was praying a holy hour for Fr. Joseph, and she heard the words “Seven Sisters.” She felt a calling to invite six other women to pray for one hour per day, specifically for their pastor and for a

deepening of his devotion to the Blessed Mother.

Being part of this apostolate has deepened Judy’s faith. She believes this is a very important ministry because our priests truly need our prayers.

“The Seven Sisters Apostolate is a call to strengthen the Church by ensuring that a holy hour is prayed each day of the week for the sole intention of a specific priest or bishop,” Judy says.

When Fr. Theis was reassigned, a few of the women stayed on to pray for Fr. Joe Korf, a retired priest. Judy also prays on Thursdays with another group. Fr. Greg Paffel and Fr. Mark Botzet have their own Seven Sisters groups.

The hour is meant to focus only on the priest and his intentions. The group also prays that he would have a deepening devotion to Mary.

*To become part of this ministry for St. Donatus, St. Francis de Sales, and Sts. Peter and Paul, contact Judy Detloff at 320-429-4879 or [mommadetloff@yahoo.com](mailto:mommadetloff@yahoo.com). For St. Alexius, Our Lady of the Angels and St. Paul’s, contact Deb Tholl at 320-423-6263 or [debberg77@gmail.com](mailto:debberg77@gmail.com).*



# EUCHARISTIC REVIVAL PROCESSION COMING THROUGH SAUK CENTRE IN MAY

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## North

*We are part of the Marian Route.*

The Pilgrimage will follow Jesus through rural Minnesota and Wisconsin farmland, with many Masses along the way. Sauk Centre is included in this route, arriving on Thursday, May 23.

## Thursday, May 23

- Pilgrims arrive at 12 Noon Our Lady of the Angels
- 1 p.m. — Rosary Our Lady of the Angels
- 1:30 p.m. — Procession to St. Paul's Church
- 2 p.m. — Adoration at St. Paul's Church
- 3 p.m. — Divine Mercy Chaplet
- 3:30 p.m. — Pilgrims depart

## Details

*Starting Location — Mississippi Headwaters, Lake Itasca, Minn.*

Departing from the headwaters of the Mississippi, the northern arm of the Pilgrimage will descend through the midwestern United States, pass through Wisconsin and Illinois, and meet up with the other three pilgrimage routes at the Congress in Indianapolis.

## About the Intercessor

The Marian route is named for its visit to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion — formerly Our Lady of Good Help — the first and only approved Marian Apparition site in the United States. This is fitting, because the very first Eucharistic Pilgrimage was made by our Blessed Mother, who traveled with the Body of Christ growing in her womb. Just as Mary followed Jesus perfectly throughout his earthly life, pilgrims will journey closely with Our Lord from May to July 2024.

*Mother of the Incarnation, pray for us!*

## Other Directions/Routes

South — Juan Diego Route

West — Serra Route

East — Seton Route

**Visit [www.eucharisticcongress.org](http://www.eucharisticcongress.org) for more information.**



# THE *Merciful Jesus* COMMITTEE:

## *Devoted to Spreading the Message of Divine Mercy*

Promulgated by St. Faustina, the good news of Christ's divine mercy and the recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet has become a powerful devotion within the Catholic Church. Putting this good news at the forefront, the mission of the Merciful Jesus Committee is to spread the message of Christ's divine mercy.

Committee member Mark Haskamp has been struck by the powerful message of divine mercy on a personal level and wants to share it with others.

"The mission is quite simply to promote the message of divine mercy," Mark says. "That message is that God loves us and He wants us to recognize that His mercy is greater than our sins."

In the 1930s, St. Faustina wrote a diary that chronicled her mystical visions of Jesus. Our Lord would appear to her often in prayer and instruct her to pray for the world. He taught her the evils and ugly consequences of sin and

provided her with mystical insights into the moral state of the world. The most powerful mandate Christ shared with St. Faustina was for her to remind the world of His mercy and how His grace conquers sin.

The Merciful Jesus Committee was started in 1979 when four men were inspired by St. Faustina's diary. They were so convicted by Jesus' divine mercy that they built a shrine and carved an image of the Merciful Jesus.

"In the early years of the ministry, the carving was a shrine," Mark says. "It was brought to many communities and homes of people who were ill, or in need of conversion."

The founders of the committee were zealous in their pursuit of sharing Christ's message of mercy and redemption.

"The men sent information about the devotion to congressional representatives, congress, and national leaders, including, at the time, President Ronald Reagan," Mark says.

The men also spent time sharing the message of Christ's

*continued on back cover*

*"The mission is quite simply to promote the message of divine mercy. That message is that God loves us and He wants us to recognize that His mercy is greater than our sins."*

— MARK HASKAMP



Parish Office: 304 Sinclair Lewis Ave.  
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#### WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULES

##### *Saturday*

- 4:00 p.m. - St. Paul's, Sauk Centre
- 6:00 p.m. - Our Lady of the Angels,  
Sauk Centre
- 8:00 p.m. - Sts. Peter & Paul, Elrosa

##### *Sunday*

- 8:00 a.m. - Our Lady of the Angels,  
Sauk Centre
- 8:15 a.m. - St. Alexius, West Union
- 10:30 a.m. - St. Francis de Sales,  
Belgrade
- 10:30 a.m. - St. Paul's, Sauk Centre

*See our website for a full listing of  
daily Mass & Confession times.*

## THE MERCIFUL JESUS COMMITTEE

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divine mercy throughout the diocese. As they started to see the fruits of their labor within our diocese, they decided that the carving of the Merciful Jesus should be enshrined at St. Paul's Church so that more people could come and visit it.

Now the Merciful Jesus Committee continues this mission by hosting activities and events. "Our biggest event of the year is Divine Mercy Sunday, which will be held on April 7 this year," Mark says. "We are planning to host Eucharistic Adoration and Confessions before the 4 p.m. Mass." Adoration will start at 3 p.m. as this is the hour of mercy, the time that Jesus died on the cross. During adoration, the Divine Mercy Chaplet will be said.

One of the greatest gifts of St. Faustina's visions with Christ was the institution of the Divine Mercy Chaplet. It is a prayer said on the rosary, where two major prayers are repeated in a meditative way. In addition to spreading the message of God's mercy, the Merciful Jesus Committee works towards raising awareness of this prayer.

"In the chaplet, the prayers revolve around mercy and



holiness for the whole world," Mark says. "It's an extremely powerful prayer for our souls and for the sanctification of the world. Also, Christ promised that whoever recites the chaplet will receive great mercy at the hour of their death."

*All are encouraged to visit the shrine and pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet.*