



Parishes
ON THE PRAIRIE
ONE FLOCK • ONE SHEPHERD



ST. DONATUS



ST. ALEXIUS



ST. FRANCIS DE SALES



ST. PETER & PAUL



OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS



ST. PAUL'S



Children's Liturgy engages young parishioners

Volunteers wanted to help bring the Word to youth at Mass

As Jesus said in Matthew 19:14, "Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

That is the mission of the Children's Liturgy of the Word volunteers at Parishes on the Prairie, as they bring children closer to Jesus by presenting His Word at their level and giving them an activity to engage them with what they have heard.

"Children's Liturgy allows them to participate," said Katherine Mackedanz, one of the Children's Liturgy leaders. "It allows their parents, of course, to listen to the readings, Gospel and homily and not have as many distractions as you do with kids, but it also allows (children) to have their separate space where they get to do something. ... The church is for them, too."

Mackedanz has led Children's Liturgy of the Word at St. Paul's Church and Our Lady of the Angels Church in Sauk Centre for a couple of years so far.

"My twins were involved, and that was how I got involved," Mackedanz said. "Now, my daughter Evelyn is one of my helpers. ... I want to show my kids how you can be involved in Mass, especially when you have the time and capabilities to do that."

Children's Liturgy of the Word is held at Sunday Masses during the school year — 8 a.m. at OLA, 10:30 a.m. at St. Paul's and 8:15 a.m. at St. Alexius Church in West Union. Before the Mass' first reading, a leader and, if possible, some helpers go to the front of the church, and children are invited to join them.

"Typically, we say any child over the

Children's Liturgy from front

age of 2 through their First Communion is welcome to come to Children's Liturgy," Mackedanz said. "Sometimes, we get kids who are a little older who bring a younger sibling, but I leave that to the parents' discretion."

At St. Paul's, Mackedanz estimates about 20-30 children join the Children's Liturgy when it resumes in the fall, and that number increases by the following spring. Any child is welcome, regardless of if they are parishioners of that church or even Catholic.

"We've had a lot of visiting kids who come who are there with their grandparents," Mackedanz said. "That's really fun, too."

The children follow their leaders to a gathering place. For St. Paul's, it is the adoration chapel; for OLA, it is the couches in the entryway; and for St. Alexis, it is the church basement. They begin in prayer before they read a summary of one of the day's readings,

usually the Gospel, on the children's literacy level.

"We do have a curriculum," Mackedanz said. "Every leader runs it a little differently."

The group leaders will lead a discussion of the reading.

"I try to help the kids connect the dots," Mackedanz said. "Some of those 8-9 year olds, they engage the older kids. ... and help lead the discussion."

Then, everyone does an activity related to the reading or celebration, such as coloring, puzzles, singing or making a small craft. For the Sept. 8 Mass at OLA, because it was the Feast of the Nativity of Mary, children went out to the Marian garden next to the church to sing "Happy Birthday" to the statue of Mary and color the patio stones with chalk. After about 20 minutes, they prepare to return to the church.

"We have to gauge it based on how long each homily is,"



Mackedanz said. "We also try to allow (the children) to come to a place where they can do things."

At the end of Children's Liturgy, each child is given a small coin to give the priest during the offertory. Not only is it another means of participation for the children, but it also helps the church keep track of how many children are involved each week.

Children's Liturgy has a good number of volunteers, but they are always looking for more people to help lead. Mackedanz encourages the parents of young children to come to Children's Liturgy with their young ones to see what it is and perhaps find out if it is something they

"I'm grateful to do it most Sundays," Mackedanz said. "I like seeing the kids and helping them grow up and be involved

in Mass, but I would love to have more helpers, especially those who see some value and benefit from it and who also have young children. Sometimes, it's nice to grow up with them."

While Children's Liturgy is there to bring the children closer to God, the benefits extend beyond the children themselves.

"I like to have a role in Mass, and that role with Children's Liturgy is so vital," Mackedanz said. "As we all know, our churches and parishioners are aging; we need kids who are involved in Mass or feel like they also have a role in Mass. What I've heard from parishioners, they love to have 25, 30 kids come running up for Children's Liturgy. Everyone likes to see kids learn at church."





The Rosary: to Jesus through Mary

During Christ's Crucifixion, it says in John 19:26-27, "When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, 'Woman, behold, your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Behold, your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his home."

Jesus is really talking to all of his disciples, giving us His mother to be our spiritual mother. This is one of the greatest reasons why we pray the Rosary, and October is the month of the Rosary.

Mary's entire existence is to point toward her Son and to draw people to Him. When we ask for her intercession through the Holy Rosary, we're called, first and foremost, to meditate on the life of Christ. The mysteries are meditations on who Christ is, and they are meant to help us grow in our love of Jesus.

Secondarily, we're asking Mary to pray for us and the whole world, especially at the hour of our death. We're asking her to pray for our intercessions so she can perfect our prayers. When I was a kid, there were times I'd go ask Mom the best way to approach Dad; she had a lot more pull than I did in any of those kinds of discussions. Mary has great pull because she's the mother of Jesus. He still lives the fourth commandment, honoring his mother, in heaven as he did on earth. Whatever she asks, He is willing to grant because she will only ask what is in line with God's Will.

In my own life, I grew up Cath-



olic. I knew the Our Father because we prayed it at Mass and I knew the Meal Grace because we prayed that as a family. However, nobody taught me the Hail Mary until my second year of college. My friend Refugio, meaning "refuge," taught me the Rosary. I prayed my first Rosary with him in my second year of college; we were lying in the grass on a hill, looking at some beautiful, puffy clouds, calling on the Queen of Heaven to pray with us.

To help pray the Rosary, some people use CDs, tapes, or apps like Hallow, which are good ways to learn the mechanics of the Rosary and can be meditative.

One of the tips for me is, when I announce the mystery — say, the Agony in the Garden — I stop and try to imagine Jesus kneeling at a big rock with his disciples a stone's throw away, while the disciples were leaning against a tree and sleeping. I try to put myself in the scene; then, although I sometimes get distracted as I pray the Hail Marys, I have that image in my mind. I don't have to think to say the Hail Mary; I want to think about what the mystery is, and it helps me grow spiritually.

Mother Theresa said, "Families who pray together stay together." What I love about the Rosary is a 4-year-old can pray it at their own level, while an 84-year-old can pray it with them in deeper meditation. It's one kind of prayer you can really pray together at your own level. Therefore, it is a good family prayer.

I try to pray the Rosary every day. It brings me peace, and I believe it will bring you peace too. May the Rosary always bring us to Jesus through Mary.

In our Father's hands,

☺ Fr. Greg Paffel



Food and fellowship

OLA, Sts. Peter and Paul to hold annual suppers

Supper time is when the family gathers together, and that is always the case for the church families in Parishes on the Prairie. As autumn gets underway, people are invited to two upcoming dinners: The Chow Mein Supper at Our Lady of the Angels Church in Sauk Centre, and the Sausage Supper at St. Francis De Sales in Belgrade.

OLA — Chow Mein Supper

The Chow Mein Supper is Our Lady of the Angels' biggest annual fundraiser, and its proceeds go toward the subsidy for Holy Family School in Sauk Centre. This year, it is being held from 4-7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 17.

Rob and Mary Gruber have chaired the Chow Mein Supper at OLA for the last couple of years; this will be their first year running the dinner themselves, as they previously co-chaired with Dave and Lisa Beilke. How-



ever, they have volunteered with the dinner since the late 1990s, and they are not the longest-running volunteers, either.

"We have some very reliable volunteers," Mary said. "Many of those ladies have been volunteering for almost as long as the Chow Main

Supper has been going, and they keep coming every year."

From poster delivery to kitchen work and final cleanup, it takes about 140-160 volunteers to put on the Chow Mein Supper.

Preparation for the 2024 Chow Mein Supper started around the end of July, when

the Grubers checked their inventory and checked in with their lead volunteers. They also check in with the Sauk Centre Lions Club and local veterans' associations, who fund takeout meals the Chow Mein Supper sends to the veterans at Eagle's Healing Nest in Sauk Centre; this year, they will be sending about 75-80 meals there.

By the end of August, the Grubers began ordering supplies for the dinner. They need about 650-700 pounds of chicken, over 200 pounds of minute rice, 25 cases of chow mein noodles, 14 cases of bean sprouts, 100 pounds of onions, five cases of celery, 50 pounds of cornstarch, and other assorted ingredients.

"We're trying to find a decent price (for chicken)," Rob said. "Prices came up."

Suppers

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The Chow Mein Supper is also famous for its variety of donated, homemade pies. Because that is harder to coordinate, the Grubers often have to compensate on the fly; some years have them running to the store for backup, while other years leave them with a bunch of leftovers.

The dinner's dine-in menu includes chow mein, pickle and carrot relishes, pickled beets, fresh dinner rolls, and pie. Takeout orders are similar, except relishes will not be available.

The Chow Mein Supper serves about 1,600 per year, which includes Eagle's Healing Nest, meals shipped to Catholic Charities and local assisted living facilities. About 400-500 of those meals are served in the church.

"The church has beautiful dishes," Mary said. "For the dinner, we always use those plates in the dining room with the coffee cups and real silverware, so it's a little more like a traditional family sit-down meal."

The Grubers take pride in organizing the dinner, not only because of the support it gives to HFS and its students, but also because it unites the parishes for a meal and some time to get to know each other.

"There are people who come down here to meet people," Mary said. "Last year, there were several people new to the church, and they wanted to come meet some people, so they came and helped. ... It's a great way for the whole community to come together."

St. Francis De Sales — Sausage Supper

For many years, the St. Francis De Sales Catholic



Church has been hosting a Sausage Supper on Palm Sunday and the last Sunday in October at the parish center in Belgrade. This year's fall supper will take place from 2:30-6:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 27.

Aaron Liebl has been the chair of this event for 2 years now, with this being his fourth breakfast organizing.

"It's a pretty smooth supper," Liebl said. "I make some phone calls to some of the head volunteers, and we are set."

Each year, almost every parishioner is scheduled to work a shift during the supper.

"We have a lot of workers who show up every year, new and old," Liebl said.

Each parishioner who helps work the event is a valuable part of keeping the supper running smoothly for close to 70 years.

Takeout meals are available for attendees. There is a separate door attendees should go to for takeout. The parish serves them at a separate door so the takeout orders do not have to wait in line along with the members dining in.

The menu consists of

sausage, pancakes, dinner rolls, ham, and homemade desserts. The parish buys the sausage through Belgrade Meat Center, who works with the church to ensure there is plenty to be served.

"The homemade desserts are actually a fan favorite," Liebl said. "The year of COVID-19, we had to buy cookies from the bakery to coincide with the rules put in place, and we had a lot of people who were disappointed. Needless to say, the homemade desserts are back."

Stony Creek Dairy donates milk, and one of the parishioners donates all of the butter.

"We have a great parish that puts forward a lot of work," Liebl said. "If we did not have the help from the people of the parish, this fundraiser would not happen."

The first supper was held in 1956, and the church has never missed a year. Over the years, as the supper grew, the crowd came to average 1,000-1,200 attendees each year.

"A lot of this does depend on harvest and if the weather is holding out since it is in the end of October," Liebl said.

When the farmers are not in the field, those are the years the attendance is around 1,200 people.

"It's a great time to get see everyone," Liebl said.

"There are times people will come from other parishes that we don't get to see very often. There are even a couple of people from surrounding communities that we only see at the two suppers each year."

"We have a great parish that puts forward a lot of work. If we did not have the help from the people of the parish, this fundraiser would not happen."

— Aaron Liebl



UPCOMING EVENTS

First Saturday Devotions:

Saturday, Oct. 5. Our Lady of the Angels.

Confession: 7:45 a.m.

Adoration: 8 a.m.

Rosary: 8:30 a.m.

Mass: 9 a.m.

Spiritual Adoption Program

Prayer and pledge cards will be available Saturday, Oct. 5, and Sunday, Oct. 6.

This is a beautiful opportunity of prayer and commitment to help save the life of a baby.

**Chow Mein Supper at
Our Lady of the Angels Church**
Thursday, Oct. 17
Serving from 4-7:30 p.m.
Church basement

St. Alexis Youth Group Food Shelf Food Drive

The St. Alexis Youth Group Food Shelf Food Drive is 2-4 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 19.

Meet at St. Alexis Church parking lot for prayer. We will travel around the West Union area to collect food shelf items. Snacks and beverages will be provided. After collecting items, we will meet back at the church parking lot for prayer and departure for home.

Adult volunteers needed for driving.

Questions, please contact Christina Rousslang at 320-980-0475.

St. Alexis Sausage Supper
Sunday, Oct. 6
Serving from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Church grounds

Knights of Columbus Meeting

Tuesday, Oct. 8. St. Paul's Church basement.

Rosary at 6:30 p.m. Meeting at 7 p.m.

St. Theresa/St. Margaret Mission Group

Thursday, Oct. 10. St. Paul's Church basement at 1 p.m.

Searching Souls

Searching Souls meets on Mondays each month at 6:30 p.m. at 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.

Monday, Oct. 14, Bishop Neary's study on the Eucharist.

Session 1: Eucharist as Gift.

Monday, Oct. 28, Bishop Neary's study on the Eucharist.

Session 2: Eucharist as Encounter.

World Mission Sunday

Saturday, Oct. 19

Trick or Treating on Main Street (Sauk Centre)

Friday, Oct. 25. Stop by Centre for Christ

(West door on Main Street) for a treat from 4-6 p.m.

**St. Francis de Sales Fall
Sausage Supper**
Sunday, Oct. 27
Serving from 2:30-6:30 p.m.
Parish Center in Belgrade

Holy Family School

Friday, Oct. 4 – Workathon.

Monday, Oct. 7 – No school.

Friday, Oct. 11 – Grandparents' Day 1 p.m.
(Program only at the church.)

Thursday, Oct. 17, and Friday, Oct. 18 – No school.

Led to the office

Himsl embraces role as new ACC pastoral associate

The Parishes on the Prairie Area Catholic Community is welcoming Deb Himsl as its new pastoral associate, based out of the ACC office at St. Paul's Church in Sauk Centre. Although she never would have expected to be in this position at the beginning of the year, she is grateful to the Holy Spirit for guiding her to greater involvement in her faith community.

"It's been very comforting to be here, more than what I had ever expected it to be," Deb said.

Originally, a position in the ACC office was not something Deb had on her radar, having been retired for 9 years. She had previously worked in nursing for 30 years at St. Michael's Hospital in Sauk Centre, now the CentraCare-Sauk Centre Hospital, and for 20 of those years, she was the surgical services director. Her husband, Buford Himsl, was an officer for the Sauk Centre Police Department, retiring as the police chief.

The Himsl's have been parishioners at St. Paul's Church and Our Lady of the Angels Church in Sauk Centre since 1988. After they retired, they were able to give more time to the parishes and have served as sacristans, Eucharistic ministers, and members of perpetual adoration at the St. Faustina Chapel of Divine Mercy in St. Paul's. Deb also started the GriefShare support group with Jeanine Wolbeck.

After Cindy Sunderman retired from the ACC, Deb was not planning on applying for the pastoral associate job, although she had seen it advertised. She heard about the position again during an ACC meeting in Padua in early May.

"Nobody can take Cindy's place," Deb said. "It sounded like the position was being filled in a matter of days. The next morning, I just had an urge; I say it was the Holy Spirit who pushed me off my couch. I came in and dropped off an old resume. . . . That was about 10:30 in the morning, and by 4:30 in the afternoon, Fr. Greg (Paffel) was



offering me the position."

Soon after, Deb started work as the ACC pastoral associate.

In her position, Deb coordinates many of the ACC's activities. She works as a funeral planner along with funeral homes to help families choose the appropriate liturgy, music, and more. She acts as the liaison between the pastor and ministry leaders — lectors, ushers, music, and others — to ensure Masses have enough volunteers and are running smoothly; she also works with the priests with scheduling and volunteer lineup for holy days, special Masses, and Masses and Confessions for Holy Family School.

Recently, Deb has begun reaching out to ACC parishioners who are not able to attend Mass regularly. As an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, she can bring the sacrament to them if they cannot leave their homes.

While working as a surgical services director, Deb acquired experience in managing and orchestrating everything needed to perform a surgery: the surgeon, the staff, the equipment, the scheduling, and more. That knack for organization and planning is something she has carried over into her role as pastoral associate.



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parishesontheprairie.org

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.

Himsl from page 7

"I'm pretty good at troubleshooting or, if something comes up at the last minute, being able to not get too excited about it and just go with it," Deb said. "We've had some funerals where it's like, 'Can we meet with the family in 15 minutes?' and that happened within my first two weeks here."

Being part of the parish office not only ties in well with Deb's volunteerism at church, but she has also found the job to be humbling in ways she did not expect.

"They are our talents, but our talents are given to us by God," she said. "We have to step back and realize that. We live in such a fast-paced world, we don't take that kind of time to do that."

To step more out of her comfort zone, Deb is taking it on herself to ask people what they need prayers for throughout her day.

"It's been good for me to be able to do that," she said. "It's another step of helping people."

So far, what Deb has enjoyed most about being a pastoral associate has been the extra time for prayer, as well as meeting parishioners and people she previously has not encountered.

"With nursing, you had your same old circle of people," she said. "Now, I've expanded that, and it's a world of wonderful people out there."

