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APRIL 2025

Watch for your next bi-monthly newsletter at the beginning of June

Church participants, not consumers ACC retreat points to prayer's power

Snow, ice and wind did not stop parishioners from gathering at the annual Parishes on the Prairie Area Catholic Community retreat March 15 at St. Paul's Church in Sauk Centre. The theme of the retreat was "Lord, teach us to pray," and by the end of everyone's time, not only were people given new insights into prayer, but everyone who prayed for a safe trip home saw the storm go away.

The day started with a breakfast and sign-in, during which the speakers, Fr. Mark Stang and Maureen Otremba, mingled and spoke with participants. The third speaker, Jim Otremba, was unable to attend for family reasons.

Stang began his session with prayer and the song "Ten Thousand Reasons." At the start of his talk, he said he did not believe he had much to offer but still wanted to share what he



Aimee Huston (from left), Sally Ross, Darla Dunn from the Stewardship committee helping with retreat hospitality.

had learned through his life, including from his time ministering in the area.

"What I learned from you, I want to share back to you," Stang said.

Through his life story, Stang shared his journey with prayer and his vocation, from his initial inspiration while driving a tractor on his family's farm through his surrender to the seminary, his cancer battle

and subsequent miraculous recovery, and his pastoral and hospital ministry. With his story, Stang showed how his model of one's progress in their spiritual life is not so much a series of ups and downs as it is a series of cycles or personal paschal mysteries; if people remain oriented toward God, these cycles will bear them toward him.

"Every paschal mystery helps us to grow closer to God," Stang said. "It leads us to the ultimate Paschal Mystery."

Stang had participants pair up for an imaginary gift-giving exercise to illustrate the value of imagination and listening in prayer. Additionally, he said the burdens one bears in life are not meant to be carried alone.



Anastasia Polipnick (from left), Emma Meyer, Shari Saltmarsh, Abi Parker and Abigail Mohs.

Retreat from front

“When you pray for (people), the most loving thing you can do is give them to Jesus. ‘Jesus, these children are yours. My grandchildren are yours. ... They’re yours, Lord, they’re your children,’” Stang said. “It isn’t like you’re dismissing your children, but it’s the most loving thing you can do for your children. Give them to Jesus.”

After lunch, Maureen Otremba gave her presentation, pointing out the places in the Mass where the faithful are called to participate and pray together to the Father, through the Son and in the Holy Spirit. By being a participant in the liturgy instead of a mere consumer, congregants are called to put their brokenness, frustrations and other life challenges on the altar to be transformed into food for the journey.

While the Catholic Church, unlike other Christian denominations, does not allow nonmembers to participate in Communion unless they fully affirm the teachings of the Church, Otremba said the truth of the Mass and the Eucharist needs to be shared.



Parishioners prepare to hear Fr. Mark Stang’s talk

“If we really believed what we say we believe, ... we can’t keep it to ourselves,” she said. “We can’t. We have to help other people understand.”

In the face of a suffering Church, Otremba reminded attendees to do Jesus’ work in the world today.

Retreat page 3

On listening and attention in prayer:

“We don’t have enough listening in our society. There’s a lot of noise, there’s a lot of talk, but the gift of listening is a special gift.”

— Fr. Mark Stang

“We are attention-challenged in this culture. Everybody wants our attention because attention can be monetized. Your attention is valuable to people who want to sell you something. ... Our attention is worth something. Our attention is worth the most to God.”

— Maureen Otremba



Fr. Jim Maderak speaks with Riley Goracke before the retreat.



Retreat attendees converse over lunch.

Retreat

from page 2

“In order for church to move forward through this whole ACC process, we need to see ourselves as the Body of Christ in the Diocese of St. Cloud, in Minnesota, in America,” Otremba said.



Fr. Mark Stang and Maureen Otremba enter into prayer to start the retreat.



Shari Saltmarsh worships during song.

On participation in the liturgy:

“We don’t come to watch the priest do the prayers. I feel so uncomfortable celebrating the Mass as a performer. I do not want to do that; my prayer is that everyone who comes to celebrate the Mass leaves a different person, not the same. ... How important it is to come not to watch the Mass but come to worship in your role as priest, as prophet, as king. You join with the priest in the prayer.”

— Fr. Mark Stang

“People will say, ‘I don’t get anything out of Mass, and I’m just not going to go today; it won’t matter if I’m not there.’ It will definitely matter if you’re not there, because you are a participant in the priesthood of the laity. You are not just another body in the pew. You are a member of the Body of Christ. You don’t know what your presence in the pew means to the person next to you. ... It is vital. You are missed when you are not here.”

— Maureen Otremba

Fully in the *faith*



Meet the ACC's newly confirmed



Jay McLellan

Parents: Tara and Jason McLellan

Parish: St. Paul's

Who did you choose as your confirmation sponsor and why? I chose my sister, Savanna, as my sponsor because she is someone I am close to, and she practices her faith.

Who is your confirmation saint, and why did you choose them? My confirmation saint is St. Sebastian. I chose him because he is the patron saint of athletes, and athletics is a big part of my life.

What does it mean to you to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation? To me, receiving confirmation means I am growing closer to God in my life and becoming a bigger part of the Catholic Church.

Now that you've been confirmed, how are you planning to engage in your church community? I can engage more in the church community gatherings.

How did you celebrate being confirmed? I celebrated confirmation by having a family gathering after Mass.



Kaydence Haider

Parents: Brad Haider and Dawn Rupp

Parish: Sts. Peter and Paul

Who did you choose as your confirmation sponsor and why? I chose my grandma, Kathy Haider, because she has a very strong faith life and is always pushing me to grow closer to God.

Who is your confirmation saint, and why did you choose them? I chose St. Bernadette as my confirmation saint because I was inspired by her humbleness, how she overcame challenges and how she helped the sick. I also thought it was really interesting that she had visions of the Virgin Mary.

What does it mean to you to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation? Receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation means a lot to me. I see it as a way to grow my faith and really connect with the Holy Spirit. This was a big step of my journey, and it shows I am ready to live it out and be more involved in my church and community.

Now that you've been confirmed, how are you planning to engage in your church community? Now that I have been confirmed, a few ways I would like to engage in my church community is continuing to go to church, help out at the church meals and potentially go on retreats.

How did you celebrate being confirmed? To celebrate being confirmed, I had a get-together and a dinner with my close family.

Jacinta Radermacher

Parent: Mary Radermacher

Parish: St. Donatus

Who did you choose as your confirmation sponsor and why? I chose my confirmation sponsor, Lino Rulli, because I have been listening to his radio show "Catholic Guy Show" for 8 years. Each year, kids write in asking to be Lino to be their sponsor, and he chose me. I've always enjoyed hearing his humorous yet thoughtful take on the Catholic faith and how he lives out his faith.

Who is your confirmation saint, and why did you choose them? My confirmation saint is St. Tekakwitha, and I chose her because she kept randomly popping up in my life, and I unexpectedly went to her shrine in New York last summer.



What does it mean to you to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation? Receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation means I will forever be sealed with the Holy Spirit, and I will more fully see/feel the Holy Spirit in my life.

Now that you've been confirmed, how are you planning to engage in your church community? Now that I'm confirmed, I will continue serving at St. Donatus Church, attending youth conferences

like Steubenville and helping my grandma with cleaning and changing the books at church. I look forward to seeing where else God wants me to help, such as being a lector.

How did you celebrate being confirmed? I was confirmed along with my two cousins, Aiden Radermacher and Samuel Klaphake, and we celebrated with our family and sponsors with good food, cake and ice cream.



Meagan Willenbring

Parents: Sonny and Terry Gruber, Nick and Katie Willenbring

Parish: Saint Francis De Sales

Who did you choose as your confirmation sponsor and why? My sponsor was Jane Weller. She grew up in a very Catholic household and spread her faith to everyone she met, regardless if they believed or not, which shows how dedicated she is to spreading God's word.

Who is your confirmation saint, and why did you choose them? My saint's name was Saint Teresa of Avilla. She is a saint because of her reform work and miracles. I chose her because she is a patron saint of those who are ridiculed for their Catholic faith; I found that important to me because, no matter other people's beliefs, I stand up for Faith.

What does it mean to you to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation? To me, receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation means that not only are you still God's child as you were before but I now have a stronger faith than ever before, knowing I now have a closer connection with God.

Now that you've been confirmed, how are you planning to engage in your church community? After I have been confirmed, I will still help with community activities such as the parish sausage supper and Totus Tuus, helping the younger kids deepen in their faith.

How did you celebrate being confirmed? I celebrated being confirmed by being surrounded by all my friends and family. We enjoyed a delicious meal, celebrating and rejoicing the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Rylan Pallow

Parents: Ryan and Brittney Pallow

Parish: St Alexius

Who did you choose as your confirmation sponsor and why? I chose my uncle, Greg Frieler, as my sponsor because he is my godfather and is a good role model.



What does it mean to you to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation? Receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation means becoming an adult of the church and growing in my faith.

Now that you've been confirmed, how are you planning to engage in your church community? I plan on continuing to help with the West Union sausage supper, Vacation Bible School and Family Bingo.

How did you celebrate being confirmed? I chose to celebrate with a party and supper at my house with family and friends. My cousins, Emily and Meagan, who were also confirmed Sunday, celebrated with us.

Who is your confirmation saint, and why did you choose them? I chose St. William as my confirmation name because it was my great-grandpa's name, and I like what that saint stands for. St. William is also the patron saint for adopted children, and I have several cousins who are adopted.

Raphael Goellner

Parents: Phillip and Sara Goellner

Parish: Our Lady of the Angels

Who did you choose as your confirmation sponsor and why? I chose Margaret Murtha as my sponsor because she helped me out during a difficult time, and I feel she is a very good example of someone who lives out their faith the way God wants them to, even when things get rough.



What does it mean to you to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation? What receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation means to me is that I finally received the gifts I need to be a better person and make better decisions going forward.

Now that you've been confirmed, how are you planning to engage in your church community? I plan on going on more retreats and trying to increase my own faith, which I feel I have been neglecting, before I go out and engage in the church and help others.

How did you celebrate being confirmed? I celebrated my confirmation by having a little party at my house; I invited friends and family over, and we just hung out and had a good time.

Who is your confirmation saint, and why did you choose them? My confirmation saint is St. Louis IX, King of France. I picked him because we share a birthday, which I thought was cool, but more importantly, he is a great example of a man of power and influence who used it for the good of all, and that is something I respect and look up to.



UPCOMING EVENTS

First Saturday Devotions:

Saturday, April 5
 Our Lady of Angels
 Confession: 7:45 a.m.
 Adoration: 8 a.m.
 Rosary: 8:30 a.m.
 Mass: 9 a.m.

Elosa Catholic United Financial Match Grant Breakfast

Sunday, April 6
 Location: Sts. Peter & Paul Church, Elosa
 Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Knights of Columbus Meeting

Tuesday, April 8
 Location: St. Paul's Church basement
 Time: Rosary at 6:30 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m.

Baptism Class

Wednesday, April 9
 Location: St. Paul's Church meeting room
 Time: 7 p.m.
 If you are expecting your first child or it has been over 3 years since you last attended the class, please call our parish office to register.

St. Theresa/St. Margaret Mission Group will meet

Thursday, April 10
 Location: St. Paul's Church basement
 Time: 1 p.m.

St. Francis De Sales Sausage & Pancake Supper

Sunday, April 13
 Location: Parish Center, Belgrade
 Time: 2:30-6:30 p.m.

Divine Mercy Sunday

Sunday, April 27
 1 p.m. Adoration begins
 2 p.m. Confession
 3 p.m. Chaplet
 4 p.m. Mass

Youth together in faith



Youth gather for first Friday Mass at Our Lady of the Angels Sienna Klaphake, Olivia Marsh, Anastacia Polipnick, Abigail Mohs, Jacob Drevlow, Karsten Saltmarsh, Analise Saltmarsh, Logan Frank, Keegan Christians, Matthew Zenzen, Jay McLellan.



Analise Saltmarsh (from left), Nora Wurm, Hannah Wurm, Elyse Hellermann, Leah Peters, Kendra Kortan, Scarlette Deters, Kadie Miller, Alyssa Miller and Megan Miller gather after Ash Wednesday mass at St. Paul's.



Jay McLellan (from left), Karsten Saltmarsh, Kyle Drevlow, Chad Herickhoff, Claire Seanger, Cori Haberl, Sienna Klaphake, Fae Duevel and Leah Peters gather after Ash Wednesday mass at St. Paul's.



Shelby Jeppeson (front, from left), Eli Jeppeson, Tim Spoden, Brayden Marthaler, Easton Paulzine and Makia Herickhoff; (back, from left) Cassidy Drobny, Alayna Schultz, Brock Marthaler, Roger Dunn, Silas Borgerding, Lexy Marthaler and Tiffany Marthaler make memory verse signs at St. Alexis.

Meal for a matching grant

CUF St. James Council's annual breakfast set for April 6

For nearly every year since its founding in 1982, the Catholic United Financial St. James Council No. 303 has fundraised through their annual matching grant breakfast. While the council provides the meal, the people who come provide the means the council needs to support local programs.

It takes volunteers of all ages to make the breakfast a success.

"It's an intergenerational thing," said Julie Heinze, St. James Council member and current co-chair of the breakfast with Toni Borgerding. "We'll get elementary students who are helping bus tables, and we'll have elders who are collecting or selling tickets."

The breakfast will be held from 9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Sunday, April 6, in the basement of Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Elrosa. The all-you-can-eat meal will feature ham, scrambled eggs, homemade hash browns, cinnamon and fritter bread, fruit sauce, cheese, milk and coffee. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students 6-11 years old; there is no cost for children 5 years old and younger.

Much of the food for the breakfast comes from donations, whether they be cash or the food itself.

"Last year, we had over \$1,000 in food and services donated from (CUF) members and community members," Heinze said. "Last year, the eggs were donated. With (this year's) increase in food prices, I'm not sure if we'll have those



Members of the Catholic United Financial St. James Council No. 303 — Ken Dold (from left), Karen Gruber, Julie Heinze, Diane Dold and Joe Heinze—unfurl a banner for the matching grant breakfast.

same donors step up or if other people will donate toward the eggs, but we do have them ordered, and they're locked in. ... We'll have eggs; it's just a matter of how much that costs."

April 4, the Friday before the breakfast, volunteers will get ham from Harry's Pizza in Elrosa, which is sliced and kept in cold storage until it is brought over Sunday morning and placed in roasters. The potatoes are washed, boiled, and

cooled on Friday and peeled and shredded on Saturday when the dining room is set up.

"There are a lot of older people who can't stay on their legs as much to help with the breakfast," said Diane Dold, a previous breakfast chair and St. James Council member. "They will come on Saturday morning because they can sit around a table and visit (while preparing potatoes), and we need that help."

The day of the breakfast, two shifts of adults and youth work to make sure everyone is served; some people, especially the council officers, will work for the whole morning, including for the setup ahead of time. Each shift last year was composed of 27 volunteer workers. The volunteers have plenty to do; for instance, the kitchen in the Sts. Peter and Paul basement does not have a dishwasher, so the plates, cups and silverware need to be cleaned by hand.

There will be a couple of activities held alongside the breakfast. One will be a raffle for a quilt designed and made by Kim Wesbur and Kim Derichs, the proceeds of which will go to Options for Women in Sauk Centre. The Parish Council of Catholic Women of the Sts. Peter and Paul parish will also be holding a bake sale; those funds will benefit the charitable activities of the PCCW.





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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. Alexis, 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.

Matching Grant

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Exactly 600 meals were prepared and sold at the 2024 breakfast, which is a similar number to previous years. Two-thirds of the orders were dine-in while the rest were takeout, including some that were donated to Eagle's Healing Nest in Sauk Centre by a member.

After expenses, last year's breakfast brought in about \$5,500, not counting the \$1,000 CUF matching grant. Along with the grant, though, the St. James Council was able to fund many local initiatives, including meals and cookies for religious education classes, meals for Totus Tuus, First Communion and Confirmation gifts, a pilgrimage to Steubenville, Options for Women, Elrosa Senior fish fries, individual gifts to parishioners, the Sts. Peter and Paul bell tower project and sponsorship for the Rosary on KASM radio.

While the St. James Council is glad to help the community through the funds raised from the event, one of their favorite parts of the breakfast is the camaraderie shared between the volunteers. The



kitchen will often get loud with people talking, laughing and telling stories.

"With the different Mass schedules,

you don't always get to see the people who belong to your parish," Dold said.

"It's a nice time for everyone."