

ST. ALBERT

WINTER 2024

*the Great*



# PASTOR'S NOTE



Fr Ben  
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*We continue to celebrate with great joy, this, our 60<sup>th</sup> year of ministry!* The First Mass was celebrated in early 1964. In May, we'll mark the 60th Anniversary of the Dedication of St. Al's Church!

**This year has been a humdinger so far!** We've seen higher student participation than ever before: over 250 different students have participated in a Bible Studies this fall. Mass attendance has been strong, and one of our December graduates, James Domitrovich, has just been accepted as a seminarian for the Diocese of Marquette. God is pouring out a lot of good fruit!

Fr. Romeo arrived as our third recent associate pastor in September. He served in the eastern U.P. before coming to Houghton. I hope you enjoy the interview with him, he is a huge blessing to our community and to the mission.

I hope you've already had a chance to register for the livestream of the Ice Mass ([mtucatholic.org/icemass](http://mtucatholic.org/icemass))! We also have our Pi Day Gala coming up in March ([mtucatholic.org/gala](http://mtucatholic.org/gala)). We're going to dig into some powerful testimonies from our FOCUS Missionaries and the students they mentor.

**Thank you so much for supporting St. Al's and making this mission possible!** Please keep us in your prayers, and know of our prayers for you and your family.

## ON THE COVER:

Top: Yooper Catholics join together for a photo at the Fall 2023 Retreat.

Bottom left: Franciscan Sisters steal the show as the Three Blind Mice for Halloween

Bottom right: James Domitrovich ('23 Civil Engineering), recently accepted to Seminary, carries the cross at the 2023 Spring Ordination.

## IS IT REALLY THAT TIME AGAIN?

*"Pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's..." MK 12:17*

Happy New Year everyone! I hope and pray 2024 has started off as a good year. Thank you all for being a part of the St Al's community. As the new year dawns one of the nagging thoughts that may enter your mind is... taxes (April 15 is looming). St Al's can help you have a better tax season and follow Christ's teaching. Any dollars donated to St Al's are tax deductible. The best thing about donating to St Al's is that you know exactly how your money is being used...to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to the campus of Michigan Tech. If you happen to be a part of the St Al's community over the age of 73, you can donate some of your Required Minimum Distributions from your retirement accounts and save more money on your taxes. Definitely talk to your tax or financial advisor for the correct steps to take in order to donate RMD funds, if that opportunity appeals to you. As I write this note, we are preparing for Graduation, Christmas Break, the Great Lakes Invitational and SEEK24. For pictures and stories from these momentous gatherings, check out all of St Al's available social media. God bless you all.



JOE RUSHLAU  
Development Director  
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## Welcome Fr. Romeo! Question & answer time with our new Associate Pastor

**Where are you from and how did you get to the UP?**

I am originally from south of Detroit in a suburb called Southgate. It is about 15 minutes south of Detroit. After graduating highschool in 2010 from Southgate Anderson High School, I went right to seminary at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit. I studied there for four years as I began the discernment process. At that time I was studying for the Archdiocese of Detroit. When I graduated seminary in 2014, I decided to take a year off and discern religious life with the Companions of Christ the Lamb in Paradise, Mi. This religious order is in the UP and it is how I got to the UP. Although, I loved going to the UP for family vacations as a kid. After joining that order, I did a novitiate with them and then remained in the order until 2019 when I discerned out as a deacon. I had gone back to seminary after a one year novitiate in 2014-2015 with the Companions and remained in the seminary for four more years. After graduating seminary in 2019, I moved up to the UP and was ordained a deacon in May. And I have been serving for the diocese ever since - first for the Companions for six months, and then moving on to serving full time for the diocese. I

was ordained a priest on June 5, 2020.

**How are you settling into your role as Associate Pastor here at St. Al's?**

I think I am settling in fairly well. There have been a lot of people to get to know!

**What hobbies and activities do you enjoy/are involved in?**

I like motorcycling, snowmobiling, reading, traveling, nature, playing guitar, and tons of other things.

**What are you most looking forward to at St. Al's?**

I think this place is a place with a lot of energy and I am excited to continue to delve into that.

**How can we pray for you during this time?**

I think general prayers are the best, or I would not mind prayers for my family. We priests have families too- I love mine and do not get to see them much. So maybe by praying for them, I can give back to them in some way.

*Above: Fr. Romeo Capella (left) with Bishop John during one of St. Al's 60th anniversary celebrations.*

# STAGE REVUE: St. Al's Presence at this Winter Carnival Classic

## What is Stage Revue?

Michigan Tech describes it as, “a performance given by multiple groups of Michigan Tech students participating in individual short sketches, with a focus on comedy. These sketches will all be based on the Winter Carnival Theme.”

MTU Student Organizations orchestrate each production from script writing, to set design, to coordinating

stagehand cues. After some years of not participating, St. Al's got back in on the action in 2017. We connected with Alum, Melissa Schorr (Geology '17), to find out how exactly St. Al's first got involved.

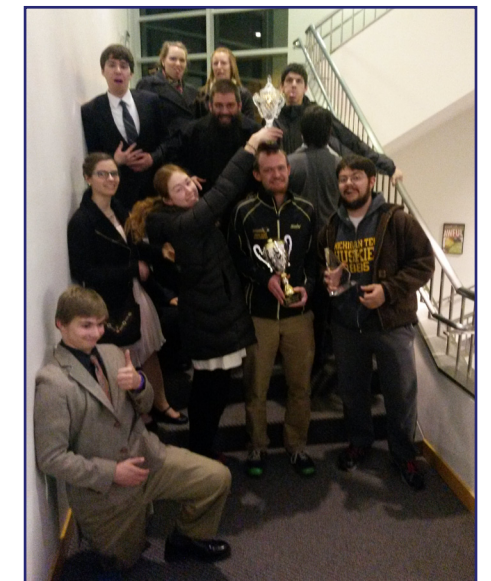
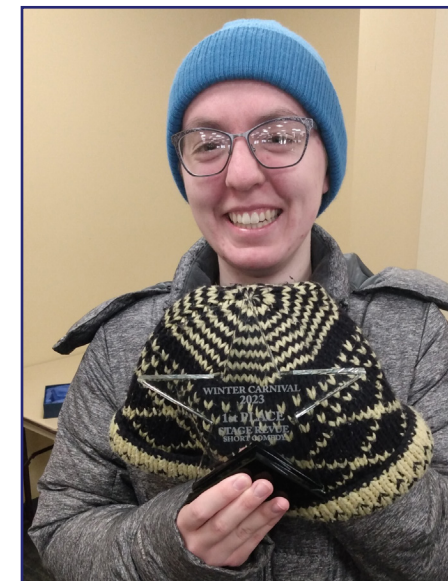
“I was probably the impetus for St. Al's getting involved with Stage Revue. I had written and directed Stage Revue skits the two years previous with my residence hall learning

community. St. Al's participated for the first time recently in the Stage Revue for Winter Carnival 2017. It is such a fun event, and I'm glad the other students wanted to participate with me.”

She reflected humbly on the first show, “Honestly, the first Stage Revue I did with St. Al's I'll admit was not my best work, but we had a lot of fun doing it. Probably the most memorable part was our set. Fr. Ben helping

me put together a large bus made out of wood and cardboard. I'll also never forget all the laughs and fun we had practicing for the show.

After several years of finishing well, St. Al's won first place for the first time (in recent years) in 2023! The students did an incredible job, and we could not have been more proud of their hard work.



Left: Students perform a scene during the 2023 Stage Revue.

Top: St. Al's herd of deer make an appearance in the 2023 Stage Revue performance.

Above, left: Imelia Meiser proudly displays the 2023 trophy.

Above, right: In 2017, the Winter Carnival theme was “Across the Decades”. The skit was based around a bus filled with all sorts of characters from across the decades -saints and college students alike.

WATCH LAST YEAR'S PERFORMANCE:

Scan the QR code or visit  
[mtucatholic.org/youtube](https://mtucatholic.org/youtube)



# Behind the Scenes

## Making the Ice Mass: How to Build an Ice Chapel

Building a chapel out of ice and snow was just a fun idea until a small group of students decided to give it a go in 2016. It became clear right away that this unique celebration of Mass was meant to become a yearly tradition. And so it was dubbed, "The Ice Mass at the Ice Chapel of Our Lady of the Snows," or simply, "The Ice Mass."

The Chapel is hand-built each year by college students and community members. A mountain of snow; plywood forms held together with 2x4's; and a workforce of students shoveling, bucketing, and stomping snow, brings the chapel to life.

Building the Ice Chapel is an awesome opportunity for students to get to know each other and build friendships. Each year more students get involved in the build, and offer new creative dimensions. The chapel's centerpiece, the altar, is built using thick slabs of ice, hand cut from Lake Superior (it's quite an ordeal to get it in place). Built into the snow-walls, one can find a raised pulpit, a Marian grotto, a hand-carved confessional, corridors along the sides, and beautiful 'stained ice'

windows.

When asked how much it costs to build an Ice Chapel, Father Ben Hasse simply responds, "about a thousand dollars worth of pizza," which fuels the student labor. The St. Al's community is overjoyed each year to shovel together a creation that glorifies God and brings the greater Keweenaw community together through the Mass.

The priests at St. Al's will celebrate three planned Ice Masses in the Our Lady of the Snows Ice Chapel, the first of which is live-streamed on Facebook: Feb 9, 2024 at 5:30pm EST. To register, visit [mtucatholic.org/icemass](http://mtucatholic.org/icemass)



# CHEERS TO 60 YEARS!

## A Celebratory Giving Day on St. Albert the Great's Feast Day

As you may know, 2023 marks 60 years since our cornerstone was laid in 1963. In celebration, we held our first ever St. Albert the Great Giving Day on our patron's feast day, Nov 15th. Our goal was to raise \$25,000 for scholarships and transportation to support students attending the national FOCUS conference, SEEK24 in St. Louis. Praise God, we did it! **Thanks to you, our generous donors, we raised just over \$25,000 and sent three huge buses full of students down south this January to join 17,000 of their peers.**

*An excerpt from the 25 Year History of St. Albert the Great University Parish:*

"Work progressed quickly and on October 6, 1963 the cornerstone was laid. The copper container within the cornerstone holds the entire historical background of the church and center as well as the names of the benefactors. At the ceremony Fr. Lester Bourgeois, Pastor of St. Joseph-St. Patrick in Hancock delivered the address. He said that St. Albert the Great, the patron saint of the natural sciences, was the appropriate patron for a center at a technological university. He noted that 'St. Albert is an especially apt patron for scientists because he made his love of truth about nature into an instrument of his love of Christ.'

Three hundred and fifty townspeople, students, and clergy

attended the ceremony. They inspected the church, which was approximately 85% completed by this point. Both Herman Gundlach and Charles Valentine III were present to answer questions."



*When choosing a patron saint for the campus ministry 60 years ago, members decided that his devotion to God and dedication to the sciences made St. Albert the Great the best fit.*

## St. Albert the Great Giving Day

### NOVEMBER 15, 2023

Adriane Limmex, FOCUS missionary at St. Al's

"From daily opportunities for Mass and Adoration to talks from Catholic speakers on all sorts of topics, the SEEK conference provides a welcoming, and engaging, atmosphere for students to grow deeper in their faith.

Every year, the SEEK conference is able to speak something directly to me and meet me where I'm at in life."



**ST. ALBERT THE GREAT UNIVERSITY PARISH**

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**Ice Mass on Feb. 9, 2024**

Register online at [mtucatholic.org/icemass](https://mtucatholic.org/icemass)

**RSVP FOR THE ICE MASS & PI DAY!**

**ST. AL'S  $\pi$  DAY**

*Digital Gala*

*Exponential Outreach*

**March 10, 2024 | [mtucatholic.org/gala](https://mtucatholic.org/gala)**