

Volume 20 Issue 1

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SACRED HEART AND VISITATION CATHOLIC CHURCHES

St. Isidore Newsletter

Father Peter Dery

Reflections on Lent

Introduction

Lent is deeply rooted in Christian tradition and carries profound spiritual significance. It is a season of repentance, fasting, prayer, and almsgiving leading up to Easter, which commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The forty days period which does not include Sundays, is symbolic, rooted in Jesus' own forty days of fasting in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13), during which he was tempted by Satan and prepared for his public ministry.

Repentance

Lent is a time of self-reflection and repentance, an opportunity to confess sins and seek reconciliation with God. The call to repentance is an invitation to turn away from sin and return to the mercy of God and grace. In the Old Testament, the prophet Joel called the people to "rend your hearts and not your garments" Joel 2:13, emphasizing that true repentance is about internal transformation, not just external rituals.

Fasting and Self-Denial

Fasting during Lent is not just about abstaining from food but is a way of disciplining the body and mind, focusing attention on spiritual matters rather than worldly distractions. By giving up certain comforts, Christians identify with Christ's suffering and develop a deeper dependence on God. The practice also mirrors the forty days Jesus spent fasting in the desert, emphasizing spiritual preparation and strengthening of faith,

Theologically, fasting is connected to the idea of solidarity with the poor and the oppressed, aligning with Jesus' call to love others and seek justice. Through fasting, Christians aim to break free from attachment to material things and recognize their ultimate dependence on God.

Prayer

Lent is also the time to intensify prayer, seeking to deepen one's relationship with God. Prayer is a means of reflecting on God's word, meditating on the life and passion of Christ, and preparing for the joy of Easter. In particular, the Stations of the Cross, a devotional practice commemorating Christ's suffering are often a central part of Lenten observances.

This period of prayer invites us to examine our lives and ask for God's guidance and strength in overcoming personal struggles, sin, and temptations.

Almsgiving/Charity and Service

Lent emphasizes the Christian call to love others, particularly through acts of charity and service to the marginalized. Almsgiving is not just about giving away money, but involves acts of kindness, generosity and justice. It reflects Jesus's teachings about caring for the poor and the needy, as well as his example of self-giving love.

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Newsletter staff: Fr. Peter Dery, Deacon Paul Brown, Barbara Ann Brumm, Tammy Lamb, Marilyn Coonradt, Deb Popp, and Annette Uker
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Theologically, almsgiving is a reminder that Christians are stewards of the gifts God has given them and that they are called to use their resources to serve the broader community. It is also an expression of solidarity with others, especially those who are suffering or less fortunate.

The Passion and Suffering of Christ

The passion of Christ is at the heart of Lent. Through meditation on Christ's suffering, we are invited to enter into the mystery of the love of God for humanity, as demonstrated by Christ's willingness to endure pain and death for the sake of redemption.

Lent emphasizes that through suffering, there is potential for transformation. Just as Christ's suffering led to resurrection, so also our own suffering, when united with that of Christ, can lead us to spiritual growth and a deeper experience of the grace of God.

Death and Resurrection

Lent is not only a time to focus on the death of Christ but also to anticipate his resurrection. This period of penance and preparation culminate in the joy of Easter, where we celebrate the victory of Christ over sin and death. This is an expression of our belief that death is not the final word, but that God can bring life out of death. Again, it points to the hope of our spiritual renewal, purification, and the ultimate resurrection that await all believers.

The Paschal Mystery

Lent is a time of focusing on the paschal mystery—the death, burial, and the resurrection of Christ. This mystery is the central theme of Christian salvation, and Lent serves as a time of spiritual preparation for fully entering the celebration of Christ's victory over sin and death at Easter.

In liturgical traditions, this mystery is most fully expressed through the Holy Week celebrations, particularly the observances of Good Friday which commemorates the crucifixion of Christ and Easter, which commemorates the resurrection of Christ. These events provide the framework for the Christian understanding of salvation and eternal life.

Transformation

Ultimately, the goal of Lent is spiritual renewal. It is about being transformed by God's grace and becoming more Christ-like. It is a journey from death to life, from sin to redemption, and from darkness to light. The season of Lent invites us to reflect on our relationship with God, repent of our shortcomings, and embrace the possibility of new life in Christ.

Conclusion

Lent provides an opportunity for us to renew our faith, deepen our commitment to discipleship, and prepare ourselves to celebrate the resurrection with joy and gratitude. Through repentance, fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, let us enter more fully into the mystery of Christ's sacrifice and resurrection, experiencing transformation as we walk with Jesus Christ toward Easter.

HOW TO Fast

Fast from judging others; Feast on Christ dwelling in them.
Fast from apparent darkness; Feast on the reality of light.
Fast from pessimism; Feast on optimism,
Fast from thoughts of illness; Feast on the healing power of God.
Fast from words that pollute; Feast on phrases that purify.
Fast from anger, Feast on patience.
Fast from worry, Feast on Divine Providence.
Fast from unrelenting pressure; Feast on unceasing prayer,
Fast from negatives; Feast on positives.

Contributed from a Parishioner

Fast from complaining; Feast on appreciation.
Fast from hostility; Feast on non-resistance.
Fast from bitterness; Feast on forgiveness.
Fast from anxiety; Feast on hope.
Fast from yourself; Feast on a silent heart.



GO FORTH

The Monthly Email Newsletter from the Offices of the
Archdiocese of Dubuque Pastoral Center

GO FORTH

If you have not been receiving this monthly email from the Dubuque office and wish to receive it, please call the office at 732-4342 and give Jill your email address so that we can forward it to the Dubuque office. There is always a letter from Archbishop Zinkula and several other pages of interesting stories.

Below is the first page of the February 2026 issue which was received towards the end of February. It has information about our “Journey in Faith” process.



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As we begin the holy season of Lent, we enter once again into a time of prayer, reflection and renewal—a time to draw nearer to Christ and allow His grace to transform our hearts. This sacred season invites us to trust more deeply in God’s plan for our lives and for His Church. It is in that same spirit of faith and trust that I share this latest update on our *Journey in Faith*.

Over the past months, your steadfast prayers, thoughtful feedback, and deep love for your parishes have continued to guide our discernment. The Archdiocesan *Journey in Faith* Planning Commission and our priests have each met again to review and offer additional insights on the final pastoral plan. With their guidance, and in light of all we have heard from thousands of parishioners, the *Journey in Faith* Core Team and I are now prayerfully discerning how best to structure our Archdiocese into pastorates—groupings of parishes that will collaborate more closely in mission and ministry.

Please know that no parishes will be closed or merged in July. However, there will be changes to priest assignments, Mass schedules and to how parishes share staff, ministries and outreach. These adjustments will help us serve one another more effectively and ensure that every parish remains vibrant and mission-focused.

We expect to announce the final pastorate plan this spring. At that time each parish will know which parishes they will be working with, and the pastor and parochial vicars assigned to their pastorate to accompany them in the next phase of this journey.

I also want to offer special gratitude to our deacons, who have been called upon again and again to take on additional duties and responsibilities over the past few months. Their faithful and joyful service is a true witness to Christ the Servant, and they have been an incredible blessing to our Archdiocese.

As we walk together through Lent, may our hearts be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit—renewing our faith, deepening our unity, and guiding us toward Easter joy and resurrection hope.

Please visit dbqjourneyinfaith.org for ongoing updates, accurate information and resources to help you stay connected.

Thank you for your faith, patience and trust. May this Lent be a time of grace and growth for all of us.

Walking with you on this *Journey in Faith*,

Archbishop Thomas Zinkula

The Sacrament of Reconciliation: Experience peace and love...by Deacon Paul Brown

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) is one of the most unique and beautiful aspects of Catholicism. Jesus Christ, in His abundant love and mercy, established the Sacrament of Reconciliation, so that we as sinners can obtain forgiveness for our sins (mortal and venial) and reconcile with God and the Church. The sacrament “washes us clean,” and renews us in Christ.

“Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.’ And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained’” (John 20:21-23).

If you haven’t been to Confession in a while, the Catholic Church wants to welcome you back and invites you to participate in this beautiful sacrament of healing. Take a step in faith. You’ll be surprised about how free you feel after taking part in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. So many Catholics describe incredible feelings of peace, joy, relief, and love that they never expected. Jesus is calling you to experience His mercy in this way too.

Check out the YouTube video by Father Mike Schmitz titled ‘Going to Confession for the First Time in a Long Time’ at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWxp5BNgmVY>

Benefits of regular Confession

Confession helps us to better “know thyself.”

St. Augustine and countless other saints and doctors of the Church talk about the importance of knowing ourselves well. Through coming to know ourselves better, we realized how fallen we are, and how badly we need God’s help and grace to get through life. Frequent Confession helps remind us to rely on God to help rid us of our sins.

2. Confession helps us overcome vice.

The grace we receive from the Sacrament of Reconciliation helps us combat our faults and failings and break our habits of vice much more easily and expediently than we could otherwise do without the sacramental grace (God’s love).

3. Confession brings us peace.

Guilt from the sins we commit can make us feel all mixed up inside and cause us to lose our peace and joy. When we hear God’s forgiving words to us from the lips of the priest (who represents Christ) in Confession, a burden is lifted off our shoulders and we can again feel the peace of heart and soul that comes from being in a good relationship with God.

4. Confession helps us become more saintly, more like Jesus.

Jesus was perfectly humble, perfectly generous, perfectly patient, perfectly loving—perfectly everything. Don’t you wish you could be as humble, generous, patient, and loving as Jesus? Saints throughout history have felt that way too, and they have frequented the Sacrament of Reconciliation to help transform them into people who are more like Christ. Little images of Christ—that’s what saints are.

5. Confession makes our will stronger.

Every time we experience the Sacrament of Reconciliation, God strengthens our will and our self-control to be able to resist the temptations that confront us in our lives. We become more resolute to follow God’s will and not our own whims.

Of course, the list of benefits of the Sacrament of Confession goes on and on. But you have to go to reap the benefits. Going to Confession regularly will truly change your life.

The words of absolution in the Confessional are truly beautiful: “I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Jesus is waiting to forgive you—all you have to do is ask.

Are you ready for the high point of the Church Year?...by Deacon Paul Brown

The summit of the Liturgical Year is the Easter Triduum—from the evening of Holy Thursday to the evening of Easter Sunday. Though chronologically three days, they are liturgically one day unfolding for us the unity of Christ's Paschal Mystery. The single celebration of the Triduum marks the end of the Lenten season and leads to the Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord at the Easter Vigil.

Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil/Sunday allow us to enter directly into the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus. It provides a profound opportunity to experience God's love and mercy, celebrate the institution of the Eucharist and Priesthood, and renew one's faith.

Key reasons to participate include:

- **Celebrating the Paschal Mystery:** The Triduum is not just a commemoration but a sharing in the saving mysteries of Christ's death and resurrection.
- **The Three-Day Liturgy:** Although separated, the liturgies from Holy Thursday evening to Easter Sunday are one single, continuous celebration of Christ's sacrifice.
- **Institutions of the Faith:** On Holy Thursday, the Eucharist, priesthood, and call to humble service (washing of feet) are commemorated.
- **Adoration of the Cross:** On Good Friday, believers honor the Passion and reflect on God's love in the suffering of Christ.

The Peak of Hope: The Easter Vigil brings the highest joy, celebrating the resurrection and renewing baptismal promises.

Participating in these services offers a chance to move from the sorrow of the Crucifixion to the immense joy of the Resurrection.

2026 Community Lenten Luncheons

All are invited.

First United Methodist Church, 527 Main St, Osage

Lunch begins at 11:45am with speaker following.

THEME: Our Obedience to Following Jesus

Cost of meal—Free will donation with the proceeds to Mitchell County Food Bank

March 5—Gary Gilbert—First Baptist

March 12—Andy Sayer—Prairie Lakes

March 19—Fr Peter Dery—Sacred Heart

March 26—Martha Chancellor—St. Ansgar UMC



Metanoia Series during Lent

Everyone in our St. Isidore Cluster is invited to this series which will be held **each Sunday from February 22 through March 22**. Fr. Dery and team will lead the series. We will meet in the Sacred Heart Church from **2:00-3:30 pm**. Even if you are unable to attend all of them, please attend as many as you can.

METANOIA means conversion, but it is much more than that. It means to change, to repent, to turn, to think differently. Metanoia is an ongoing process. As Christians we are to live a life of metanoia.

The purpose of this series is to assist the viewer in this ongoing metanoia. Jesus invites everyone to a deeper more profound conversion – a metanoia – that moves us from something to someone, as metanoia ultimately turns us to Jesus.

Most people understand the word “conversion” to mean the act of converting from one religion to another, or a significant and powerful event, a conversion experience, that causes a person to grow deeper in their faith. **But conversion is for everyone at all times.**

Faith Formation: Sacred Heart and Visitation

Catholic Relief Services – Rice Bowl Project

Each year, during Lent, Catholic Relief Services provides Parishes with Rice Bowls for contributions to provide services to fight hunger and poverty locally and globally. Each year we put a Rice Bowl in our classrooms for donations. We will begin this project February 25th and end April 1st. Catholic Relief Services offers videos, along with geographic information and personal stories of the people in poverty stricken countries which can be viewed and discussed in the classroom. This year Ghana, Guatemala and Timor-Leste.

The Archdiocese and local Social Justice Committees strongly encourage participation in the Rice Bowl project since the US government's cut in international aid to USAID in early 2025 has severely limited CRS's ability to serve the poor and vulnerable worldwide. This makes the CRS Rice Bowl even more important this coming year.

Sacred Heart Faith Formation...by Tammy Lamb

Youth Christmas Fundraiser Sales

THANK YOU to all those that ordered from our youth fundraiser and/or donated money.

Advent Program

On December 17, the Sacred Heart Faith Formation youth had their Advent Program “Stations of the Crib”. Thank You to everyone that came out to watch the children and joined us afterwards for supper.

Pizza & Bingo

Please join us for Pizza & Bingo on Saturday night, March 7 at 6:30pm. The proceeds will go to the Catholic HEART WorkCamp kids. They will be going to Atlanta, GA this summer.

St. Isidore Youth Shoe Drive Fundraiser

St. Isidore Youth is conducting another shoe drive fundraiser from NOW – May 12. These funds raised will be used for the Catholic HEART WorkCamp Mission trip to Atlanta, GA this summer. St. Isidore Youth Ministry will earn funds based on the total weight of the pairs of gently worn, used and new shoes collected, as Funds2Orgs will issue a check for the collected shoes. Anyone can help by donating gently worn, used and new shoes at Sacred Heart Church east entrance, Sacred Heart Faith Formation Center entrance, and Visitation Church middle entrance or elevator door entrance or by calling Tammy at 641-732-3428 to arrange an appointment for pick up. Thank You for your support!

Senior Recognition Sunday

This is the Mass where we will recognize the St. Isidore youth that are graduating from high school. This will occur at both parish Masses on Sunday, May 10, 2025.

Upcoming Sacraments: St. Isidore



First Communion: April 19, 2026. Please pray for the following students of St. Isidore Catholic Community (Sacred Heart and Visitation) as they prepare for their First Eucharist. Camryn Brumm, Hugh Heimer, Evan Kotek, Kyler Kuper, Britton LeBlanc, Asher O'Malley, Julia Porter, Blake Ramker, Clara Ramker, Huxley Rice, Porter Taets, Wells Taets, Mason Warrington, and Mae Wilcox.

Confirmation: April 12, 2026, 10:30 am Mass, Visitation Church, Stacyville. Please pray for the following students from St. Isidore (Sacred Heart and Visitation) as they prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation: Emerson Brumm, Tess Darrow, Harper DeMaris, Kellen Hanke, Brynnlie Havig, Koen Juenger, Landen Juenger, Lily Kolbet, Claire Machin, Daniel Merten, Charlie O'Malley, Spencer Power, Isabelle Reinardy, Hattie Rogerson, Lyla Sonberg, Kellen Taets, and Natalie Wagner. All are invited to the reception following Mass in the Visitation Hall.



Lent through Easter Opportunities

Stations of the Cross February 20-April 1
8:00am at Visitation on Wednesdays and Fridays
5:00pm at Sacred Heart on Fridays

Reconciliation

Every Saturday at 4:30pm at Sacred Heart
Every Sunday at 8:00am at Visitation

Communal Reconciliation with 3 priests – Sunday, March 15 at 4:00pm at Sacred Heart

Lenten Luncheons – February 19-March 26

Each Thursday a lunch will be served at 11:45am at the United Methodist Church
Each week a different minister will give a talk.
Cost of lunch is free-will with proceeds going to Mitchell County Food Bank.

Osage Knights of Columbus Fish Fries

Friday dinners at Sacred Heart Church Hall from 5:00pm-7:00pm

Metanoia Series during Lent

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Easter Triduum – April 2-4

Holy Thursday 6:30pm at Sacred Heart – Celebrate the Mass of our Lord's Supper
Good Friday 3:00pm at Sacred Heart – Join us in remembering Jesus' Passion
Easter Vigil 8:00pm at Visitation – Celebrate the Resurrection on this most holy of nights when Christ was raised from the dead.

Easter Sunday – April 5

8:30am at Visitation
10:30 at Sacred Heart

During Lent

ABSTINENCE: Refraining from eating meat is to be observed by all people 14 years of age and older (Ash Wednesday, Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday)

FASTING: All adults (18 and over) are bound by the law of fast up to the beginning of their sixtieth year (until you turn 59). On a fast day one full meal is allowed, and two other meals, sufficient to maintain strength may be taken according to each one's needs, but together not to equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids, including milk and juice are allowed. (Ash Wednesday and Good Friday)

Sacred Heart Advent Program



Visitation Faith Formation...by Barbara Brumm

Stations of the Crib – December 19, 2025

Visitation Faith Formation students presented Stations of the Crib as the annual Christmas performance followed by a chili and chicken soup supper for all the families and guests.



Visitation Faith Formation...by Barbara Brumm



Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Faith Formation Students sent cards to all the Seminarians in the Archdiocese of Dubuque, some Priests, the Sisters at Mount St. Francis in Dubuque, and colored Valentine greeting pictures to all the residents of the Stacyville Nursing Home.

St. Isidore Faith Formation

As we begin these forty days of **Lent**, on February 18, Ash Wednesday, let us take some time out of our busy schedules to reflect upon what is most important in our lives. Lent is a time for prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These traditions offer an opportunity to grow in our Faith, improve our prayer life, and increase our charity and generosity for the poor.

During Lent we follow the footsteps of Jesus who journeyed through death into his resurrection. We are called to realize that following Jesus doesn't mean **just** going to Mass every week or being kind to others. To follow Jesus we must follow the way of the cross.

One of the real challenges that we too often face in our busy lives is finding time to be together as a family. It is especially difficult to find opportunities to pray together. Lent is a great time to review family values and make changes that will bring our families closer to God. Prayer: pause before and after meals for a minute to give thanks, pause during the morning rush to simply ask God to be with you as you go about the day, pause before going to bed thanking God for the blessings of the day. Say the Act of Contrition. *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me a sinner.*

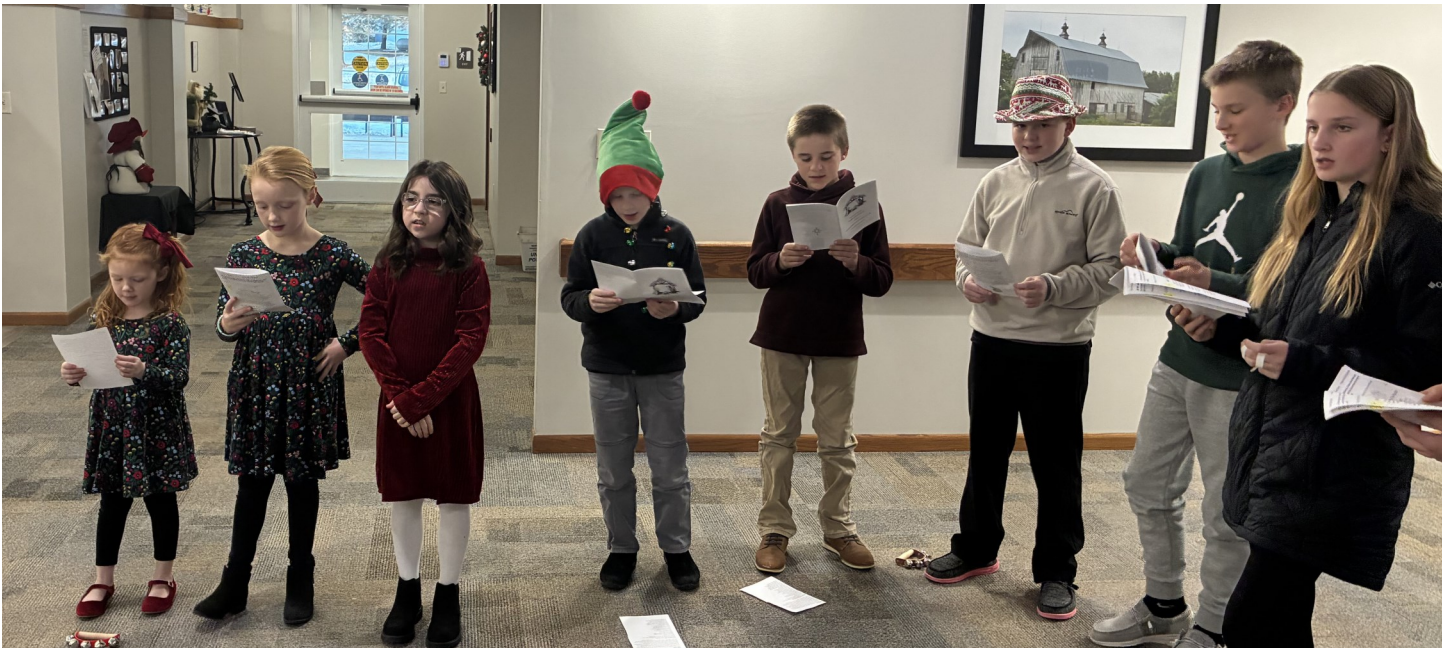
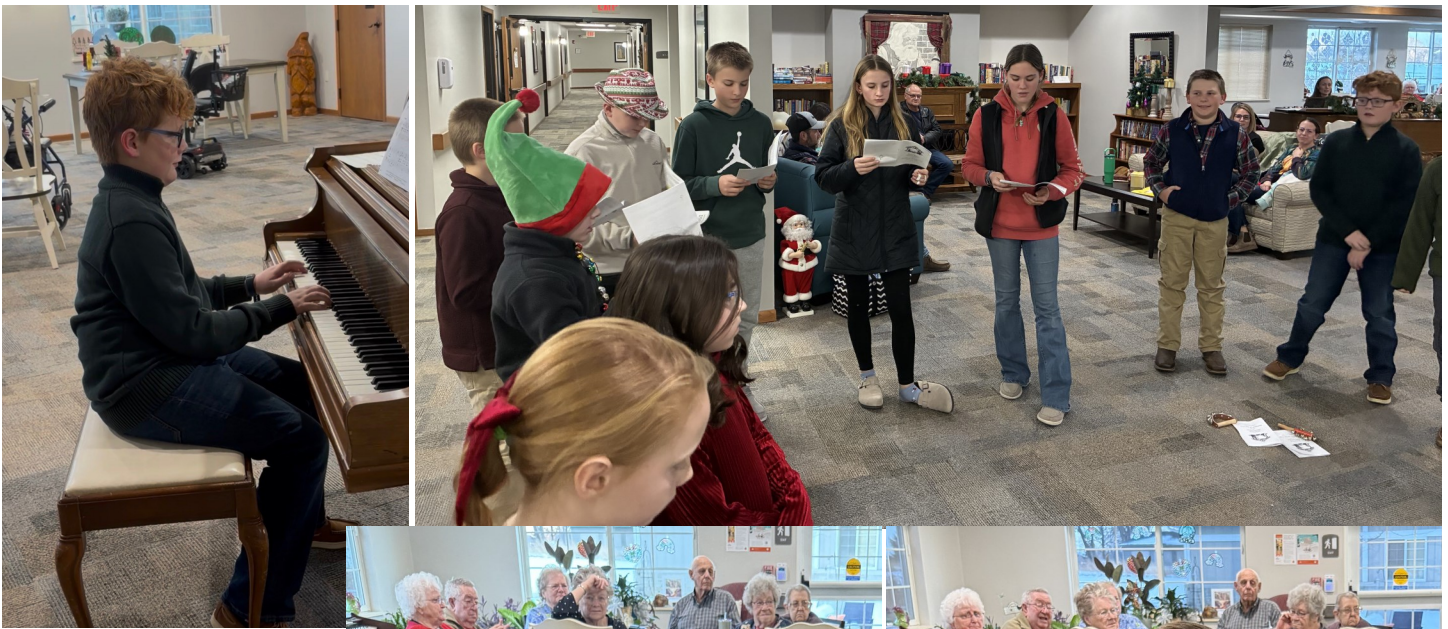
Let's tell God how we will show our love for him and prepare ourselves for Jesus' Resurrection during Lent. We will give with joy! We will pray with joy! We will fast with joy!

Adult Faith Formation opportunity St. Isidore...by Barb Brumm and Tammy Lamb Beauty in Christ 2026

Grace for the Journey. January 25, 2026. This live-streamed women's conference was held throughout 35 parish locations and homes throughout Archdiocese of Dubuque and in a couple other states. Sacred Heart hosted 14 ladies and Visitation hosted 12 ladies. This women's conference was sponsored by the National Council of Catholic Women, The Archdiocese Council of Catholic Women, and The Catholic Foundation in the Archdiocese of Dubuque. The speakers Kitty Cleveland and Kelsey Kaiser offered reflection on Consecration to Mary, living through Mary's example, being open to God's word, being sensitive to the Holy Spirit in our lives, sharing God's love and gifts, and knowing that we are loved by God, becoming beautiful as God works in our lives, welcoming God to be the center of our lives, and through prayer magnifying the blessings God has given us. This conference allowed the women of St, Isidore to relax, reflect, pray, share faith and refresh friendships. Comments from attendees: "Well, the speakers we had were excellent. I could really relate with Kitty especially. And I plan to order her book. I've joined her site as well. She made quite an impression. The food was so delicious too. Our hostesses were so gracious. They deserve a round of applause! Thank you to all the organizers and sponsors too. It was BEAUTIFUL day! "You are the beloved daughter of Almighty God" Love that!! "I found it inspiring with our 2 speakers in their deep personal love of their faith. So nice to hear when so many are so critical. Would like to hear more from them. The conference was excellent and touched my heart and soul."



Sacred Heart Youth Choir singing at Apple Valley



Sacred Heart and New Haven Churches Children's Choirs at Faith Lutheran Home; Osage





Sacred Heart, Meyer Oratory, steeple repair project.

Sacred Heart Guild Appreciation Dinner



Decorations done by Elaine Schwab.

Oldest: Marcella Voight
Youngest: Lydia Koch



Sacred Heart Study Club meeting in December.

Deo & Joan Koenigs—70th Wedding Anniversary & Joan’s 90 Birthday...by Lisa Heimer

Deo and Joan Koenigs would have celebrated their 70th Wedding Anniversary on April 11 this year. They were united in marriage on April 11, 1956, at Sacred Heart Church in Meyer, IA. They raised 6 children on a dairy farm near Meyer, Mark (Sindee), Jim (Linda), Harry (Robin), Greg (Sally), Paul and Lisa (Keith) Heimer. Their family continues to grow with 14 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren.

Deo and Joan shared a deep faith, starting with the place they met in the choir at church. Dating often began with a stop at church for a prayer together. The first 10 years of their married life, Deo and Joan prayed the rosary each night. Joan stated she felt that was what helped them get through those early years as a newly married couple with 6 young children.

Deo and Joan have been a great example of how to love and live as a married couple to their children and grandchildren. They have shown that being married isn’t always easy and sometimes is hard work being in a forever relationship. But the love and joy God has bestowed on them, helped them get through the ups and downs of daily life and the sadness of losing a baby girl at birth and three grandsons. God’s greatest gift was the blessings of faith and family.

The family invites you to join them for coffee and rolls after Mass on May 3, to celebrate Joan’s 90th birthday on May 4, and the nearly 70 years Joan and Deo were a married couple.



Sacred Heart Farm Land Update

This is an update on the Rogers’ and Vols’ farm ground.

Sacred Heart Parish was blessed with the Tom & Marlys Rogers’ family farm donation to our parish and to the Archdiocese of Dubuque. The farm was sold last fall and we are slowly receiving some of the proceeds. We will give you final numbers and final update when the trust is settled, hoping in the next couple of months.

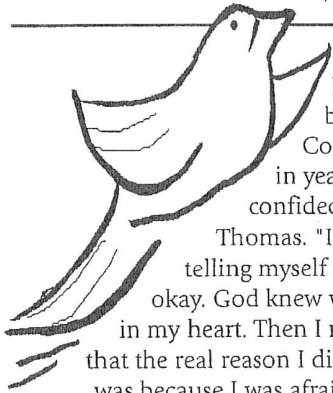
Sacred Heart Parish was blessed with the donation from Albert Vols with his farm land in 2007. We managed that ground until 2017 when a trade of ground between Sacred Heart Parish and Dustin Balsley took place (160 acres for 160 acres). One of the agreed-upon terms was that Dustin was able to farm the land at a cash rent price for 5 years. Upon the conclusion of that lease this year, the Sacred Heart Pastoral and Finance Councils voted to sell the land. The auction was held February 12 and the land was sold for \$17,400 per acre. Total land was +/- 159 tillable acres which will equal roughly \$2,766,000. The sale will close on or before April 1. We will update with total numbers when they are available.

From these proceeds, Sacred Heart Parish has paid the church building loan off from the Archdiocese of Dubuque. The remaining money will be invested with CFAD (The Catholic Foundation in the Archdiocese of Dubuque). The bulk of the money will be placed in an endowment fund with only the interest being able to be withdrawn annually. The principal amount will remain in the endowment and will remain with our parish. The fund will be named “Sacred Heart Vols and Rogers Endowment”. The total amount will be around \$4,000,000. We hope to have all of this in place before July 1. As stated above, we will let you know the final numbers when they are available.

If you have any questions, please reach out to any Pastoral or Finance Council member.

Find the joy in Confession

Many Catholics forget that the purpose of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is just that - reconciliation. We get so caught up in our guilt that we miss the point.



"I hadn't been to Confession in years," confided

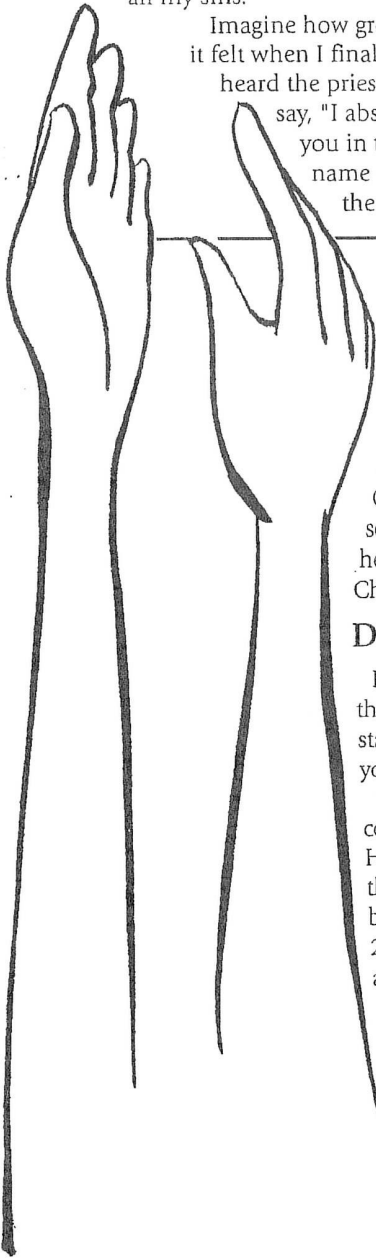
Thomas. "I kept telling myself it was okay. God knew what was in my heart. Then I realized that the real reason I didn't go was because I was afraid to face all my sins.

Imagine how great it felt when I finally heard the priest say, "I absolve you in the name of the

Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

Toby said, "I stayed away because I was scared of what the priest would say if he heard some of the bad things I had done when I was younger. Finally, I couldn't stand it anymore so I went. Want to know what the priest said to me after conveying absolution? "Welcome back!"

"Avoiding Confession wasn't something I did consciously," said Sharon. "It just wasn't important to me. Then, I followed the accounts of how Pope John Paul II spent his final hours and was struck by his peace. I knew that I could only have peace like that if I was reconciled to Jesus." The gift of Reconciliation is offered to each of us. It's there for the taking.



Why do Catholics go to Confession?

Disobeying God damages our friendship with him, so we need to ask his forgiveness to heal it. But that has to come on God's terms. As Jesus directed, the Church established the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation (also called "Confession") to bring us back to God. In Confession, we admit what we did, say that we're sorry, and resolve never to do it again. Penance helps us make up for it. When the priest conveys Christ's forgiveness to us, our friendship is restored.

Do we really need Confession?

Picture yourself on a small boat in the middle of the ocean. It's windy, and you have to struggle to stay on course. If it weren't for your compass, you'd be lost.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is like a compass designed to help keep us on track to Heaven in the face of heavy winds. The points of the compass are such Biblical guides for our behavior as the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:12-17) and the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-11) and we are piloting toward them.

When preparing for Confession, ask yourself how your actions compare to these standards. You may also want to figure out how Jesus might have handled the situations you've faced. The difference would be the basis for your confession.

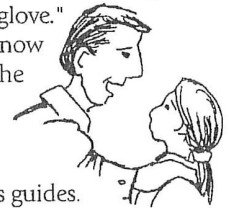
The best part? Afterwards the slate is wiped clean and you get to try again.

Help your child make a good Confession

All children need reassurance that they are loved even when they mess up. That's why Jesus created the Sacrament of Reconciliation. He wanted to give us an outward sign of his unconditional love and forgiveness. Try these tips to help children appreciate God's special, forgiving love:

"Who, Me?!" Children often think of sin as relative. "It was okay to hit him because he hit me first." "I took his pen because he took my glove."

Children need to know that God's rules are the ones to follow. Use the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes as guides.



"Say you're sorry." Even young children can understand the need to say they're sorry when they do something wrong. That's the first step toward taking responsibility for our actions and changing our behavior.

Change. Avoiding future sin means deciding to change. The priest hearing Confession may have suggestions, but you can also help your child figure out how to keep from "messing up" in the future.

Remember - forgiving sin is what God loves to do most.

Practice full disclosure

Confessing and taking responsibility for all of our sins are keys to obtaining God's forgiveness. "If we say, 'We are without sin,' we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing" (1 John 1:8-9).

Ask for healing together

The most effective way to convince our children of the value of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is to seek it ourselves. If you haven't been to Confession in years, remember that it is first and foremost a sacrament of healing. And welcoming a penitent sinner back to God's forgiveness is one of a priest's greatest joys.

It's Rice Bowl Time!



From the St. Isidore Cluster Social Justice Committee

As countries around the world reduce their funding for international humanitarian aid and hunger continues to rise, **Catholic Relief Services** (CRS) invites Catholics across the United States to pray, fast and give alms through its annual Lenten program, CRS Rice Bowl, which starts Ash Wednesday and ends on Easter Sunday.

Ongoing conflicts, extreme weather, and persistent inflation are driving up food prices, pushing more families into hunger. According to the **United Nations**, nearly **700 million people worldwide** face hunger today, just as cuts to humanitarian aid are leaving millions with fewer lifelines. This dangerous combination makes faith communities and programs like CRS Rice Bowl more critical than ever.

“The past year has been incredibly difficult for so many families around the world,” said Sean Callahan, CRS’ president and CEO. “We’re seeing more people go hungry just as the resources available to help them are being reduced. CRS Rice Bowl offers Catholics in the U.S. a meaningful way to respond and affirm that no one is forgotten.”

Rooted in Catholic social teaching and the Lenten practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, CRS Rice Bowl invites participants to live the principle of solidarity—recognizing that all people are part of one human family. Through the program, Catholics support lifesaving work overseas while also helping fund local hunger-relief efforts in dioceses across the United States, responding with compassion and generosity to those most in need.

Donations to CRS Rice Bowl support CRS programs around the world that address hunger and poverty by tackling their root causes. In addition, 25% of funds collected remain in local dioceses to support hunger-relief efforts in communities across the United States. As many families nationwide struggle with rising costs of living, these local investments are more vital than ever.

“As Catholics, we are called to serve those most in need, especially when the challenges feel overwhelming,” Callahan said. “Right now, families everywhere are feeling the strain of rising costs, no matter where they live. CRS Rice Bowl offers Catholics in the United States a tangible way to live out their Lenten almsgiving, transforming small, personal sacrifices, like skipping a weekly coffee, into a greater impact for families facing hunger.”

This year, at St Isidore Cluster, we have set a Rice Bowl goal of \$1,000. Please help us meet this goal by collecting money in your Rice Bowl, and/or by leaving a donation at our team’s webpage by holding your cell phone camera over the code above.

By Marilyn Coonradt-Director of Music, Sacred Heart Church

Prayer, Renewal, Calming of Heart & Soul, Repentance, Sacrifice, Mindfulness, Longing, Quietness...
Some of the many descriptive words that come to me during the Lenten season.

Can you imagine being at the foot of the Cross, at the foot of our suffering, crucified Jesus, at the moment of His death? In the hours to follow, reflecting on His days that brought Him to that hour? How could you even put it into words?

The hymn, **O Sacred Heart Surrounded**, comes to mind.

O Sacred Head, surrounded by crown of piercing thorn!
O bleeding head, so wounded, reviled and put to scorn!
No comeliness or beauty Thy wounded face betrays,
Yet angel hosts adore thee, and tremble as they gaze.

O, Love, all love transcending, O, wisdom from on high!
O Truth unchanged, unchanging, surrendered up to die!
Was e'er a love so wondrous! That from his heav'nly throne.
God should descend among us to suffer for his own.

O Jesus, we adore thee, upon the cross our King.
We Humbly bow before thee, and of thy victory sing!
Thy cross is our salvation, our hope from day to day,
Our peace and consolation when life shall fade away.

I will borrow these eight words that Deacon Paul Brown used in his sermon for Ash Wednesday morning Mass, **“What state are our souls in right now?”**

Those words struck me-how would I have answered this question while at the foot of the Cross where Jesus died during that time? I can only imagine the conversion of souls that may have taken place at that moment and in the days after Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection.

How would I answer this question today?

How do we engage this Lent with the suffering of Jesus? How do you 'Walk the Walk' with Jesus during this time of our lives?

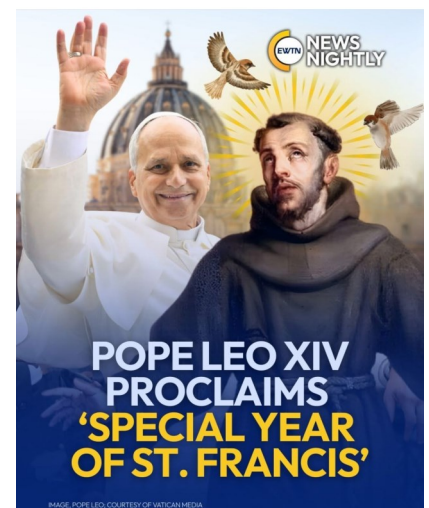
I find myself often incorporating music and prayer into my participation of Lent.

Sometimes listening to music fosters in me moments to deeper prayer and soul searching, and helps me to prepare for our Easter Sunday celebration of the Resurrection. Also, singing with community in church as we reflect on Jesus during these Forty Days. These things, among many other activities and deeds, guide me in my personal walk with Jesus.

May you have a blessed, reflective Lent, and may you experience Joy in the Resurrection of Christ!

Franciscan Jubilee Year declared by Pope Leo XIV

Just days after the Jubilee Year of Hope concluded in Rome, Pope Leo XIV has declared a Franciscan Jubilee Year to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi. The Jubilee was inaugurated on January 10, 2026 and will run until January 10, 2027. This year is seen as an opportunity for spiritual renewal, inviting believers to reflect on the life and teachings of St. Francis, who is known for his commitment to peace, humility, and care for creation. Pope Leo XIV emphasizes that this Jubilee Year is not just a time for reflection but also a call to action. The example of St. Francis urges believers to live out their faith through concrete acts of charity, fostering peace and caring for both people and environment. The Pope's message highlights the inseparable connection between peace with God, peace among people, and peace with creation. The Franciscan Jubilee Year is a profound opportunity for spiritual growth, community engagement, and a renewed commitment to the values exemplified by St. Francis of Assisi. It invites all to participate actively in this time of grace and reflection.



Happy Birthday! Celebrate 85 years and older!

March 7 William Perry
March 14 Daniel Thome
March 24 Wilbur Puettmann
April 5 Janet Mayer
April 14 Larry Blake
May 4 Joan Koenigs
May 6 Betty Brumm
May 13 Delphin Theobald
May 19 Darlene Hemann
May 31 Jerome Koenigs

March 6 Leo Meitner
March 9 Maria Godoy
April 1 John Pint
April 2 Herschel Fry
April 12 Marcella Voight
April 15 Merlin Christensen
May 3 Ann Rezabek
May 5 Montel Hernan
May 14 Bob Frein

Wedding Anniversaries

10 Years

April 23 Michael & Trisha Mack

15 Years

May 14 Theodore & Meghan May

20 Years

May 13 Mason & Ashlie Kolbet

35 Years

March 22 Randy & Mary Hanke

April 20 Mike & Dawn Adams

40 Years

April 12 Kelly & Audrey Christensen

April 12 Marty & Annette Adams

April 12 Chris & Rose Krahenbuhl

May 24 Alan & Betty Hackenmiller

45 Years

March 7 Mike & Donna Dorsey

May 2 Michael & Debbie Chisholm

May 2 Kelvin & Carolyn Palsic

50 Years

May 8 David & Marilyn Bode

May 22 Robert & Maxine Friedman

55 Years

April 17 Norman & Marcia Klapperich

May 29 Dasil & Bev Darrow

Baptisms

VIS 2-15-26 Gus Matthew, son of Dylan & Grace Hanna

VIS 2-21-26 Stetson Henry, son of Jacob & Kristian Koenigs

New Parishioners

VIS Chad & Tauna Juenger

VIS Luke & Grace Timmerman

SH Donald Cook & Debra Kasel

Deaths

SH 12-13-25 Jean Taets

SH 12-22-25 Charles Laures

VIS 1-2-26 Jerald Kruse

SH 1-13-26 Ruth Ginder

SH 1-29-26 Kent Shultz

SH 2-14-26 Gary Mork

VIS 2-18-26 Deo Koenigs

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