

SEPTAQUINTAQUINQUECENTENNIAL ST. JAMES CHURCH!

An anniversary of 175 years is certainly significant, but there is no common word used to describe such a milestone. Some sources indicate that the word "septaquintaquingecentennial" combine the Latin words "sept" for "seven," "quinta" for "five," and "quingecentennial" for "500 years," emphasizing the milestone of 175 years. For our purposes at St. James, we have avoided using this difficult word.

There is a certain magic that fills the air when a church community gets together to celebrate a momentous occasion. You'll feel that sense of significance when St. James parishioners gather to mark the Feastday of St James the Greater on the 175th anniversary of the church's founding on July 27, 2025.

Preparation for this historic day began more than a year ago, when a committee of 10 formed to begin brainstorming on what the occasion would entail. July 27, 2025 was the date chosen because it is closest to the Feast of St. James the Greater, (July 25) the parish patron saint. Father Santy helped the committee choose a biblical theme from the Book of Psalms, Chapter 126, Verse 3: "The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy." Guided by this verse, the group planned three key components to mark the occasion: spiritual, historical, and celebratory.

Spiritual Component

The day would begin with Mass. Along with parishioners, guests of honor were chosen and invited. Bishop David Ricken and Bishop Frank Dewane will concelebrate the Mass, with Father Brian Belongia, Father Santy Turiano Jr., Father Bill O'Brien and Father Dennis Ryan as co-celebrants. Deacon Dan Gray and Sister Helen Plum, SSND will also participate. A 10:00am Mass time was chosen, and a decision was made to celebrate the Mass inside the church rather than in the cemetery. Should there be an overflow crowd, a live feed will be set up in the parish hall, and the Mass will be broadcast on our Facebook page, [St James Parish Cooperstown](#).

Instead of opting for another cookbook or photo directory, the committee chose to pursue a spiritual initiative. It would be a booklet entitled "Voices of Faith" wherein parishioner's original prayers would be compiled. Teaching materials were distributed, and Faith Formation students were encouraged to participate. A total of 118 prayers were submitted forming a treasury of personal devotions from the year 2025. The booklets will be distributed for free at the 175th celebration day as a keepsake for generations to come. This project was made possible through a grant from the Catholic Foundation of Green Bay.

Historic Component

Be sure to browse the historical photo displays and artifacts in the parish hall and under the smaller tent outside. Thank you to everyone who let us borrow their memorabilia.

An Amazing Cemetery Race will take place at approximately 2:00 in the afternoon. Participants of all ages will be given clues directing them to 12 headstones in the cemetery. At each location, they will decipher clues and record answers to questions based on the headstone information. Each stop will offer a clue leading to the next location, ensuring continuous progression throughout the cemetery. Every participant/team that completes the race with all correct answers will have their name entered into a drawing for cash prizes.

"From the Archives" was a monthly bulletin blurb published leading up to the celebration. Some of the notations included the cyclone damage in 1893, building a horse stable for the visiting priests in

1899, a disastrous fire in 1915, how people carried on during the Great Depression, closing the school in 1986, and numerous mentions of “pew rent.”

A look back at the past 175 years of national, state and church history was compiled and documented on poster boards. They will be on display at the celebration.

Children were also invited to step back in time by memorizing various Prayers and Principles of the Catholic Faith. Monthly prizes for completion were awarded, and there will be more prizes given out on July 27.

Celebratory Component

Family friendly festivities are planned for the afternoon following Mass. A huge tent will be set up with tables and chairs for eating and relaxation. (Or, feel free to bring a lawn chair from home.) DeGrand’s Family Restaurant will be selling summer favorites including hamburgers, brats and hot dogs with accompaniments. Beer, soda, hard seltzers, and water will also be sold. The Mark Jirikovec Band will be playing their old-time polka hits starting at noon, and a hard surface floor will be laid out for dancing.

Giving a nod to the Irish heritage of St. James Parish, dancers from the Heritage Irish Dance Academy will be up front while the band takes a break at approximately 2:30. You’ll be treated to costumed young people performing an assortment of traditional Irish dances as well as more contemporary songs like Cotton Eye Joe.

Children can bounce the afternoon away with two free bounce houses set up on the rectory front lawn. One for toddlers, and one for older kiddos.

Over 30 parishioners have documented their experiences at St. James on video. They include individuals, couples, and some young people who are making an impact at St. James. You will be able to select the segment you wish to view on a large TV set up in the parish hall. This activity correlates to the interviews that were recorded for the 150th church anniversary.

Favorite yard games like Giant Jenga and Cornhole will be set up to play with family and friends in friendly competition.

A photo booth is always fun. Attendees are encouraged to take their own photos using our props of all kinds for a souvenir picture. We hope to have a QR code set up for you to upload your photos to St. James Parish to share if you wish.

No celebration would be complete without cake and ice cream. Father Brian will be serving up cake and ice cream from the parish hall kitchen at about 12:30. Listen for the announcement!

The Mass and festivities are open to the public. A church celebration represents more than just an event on the calendar; it is a dynamic expression of faith, love, and community. It serves as an opportunity for renewal—a time to give thanks to God for past blessings and to look forward with hope for the future. We cordially invite you to join us.

please park away from the flow of people for safety.

