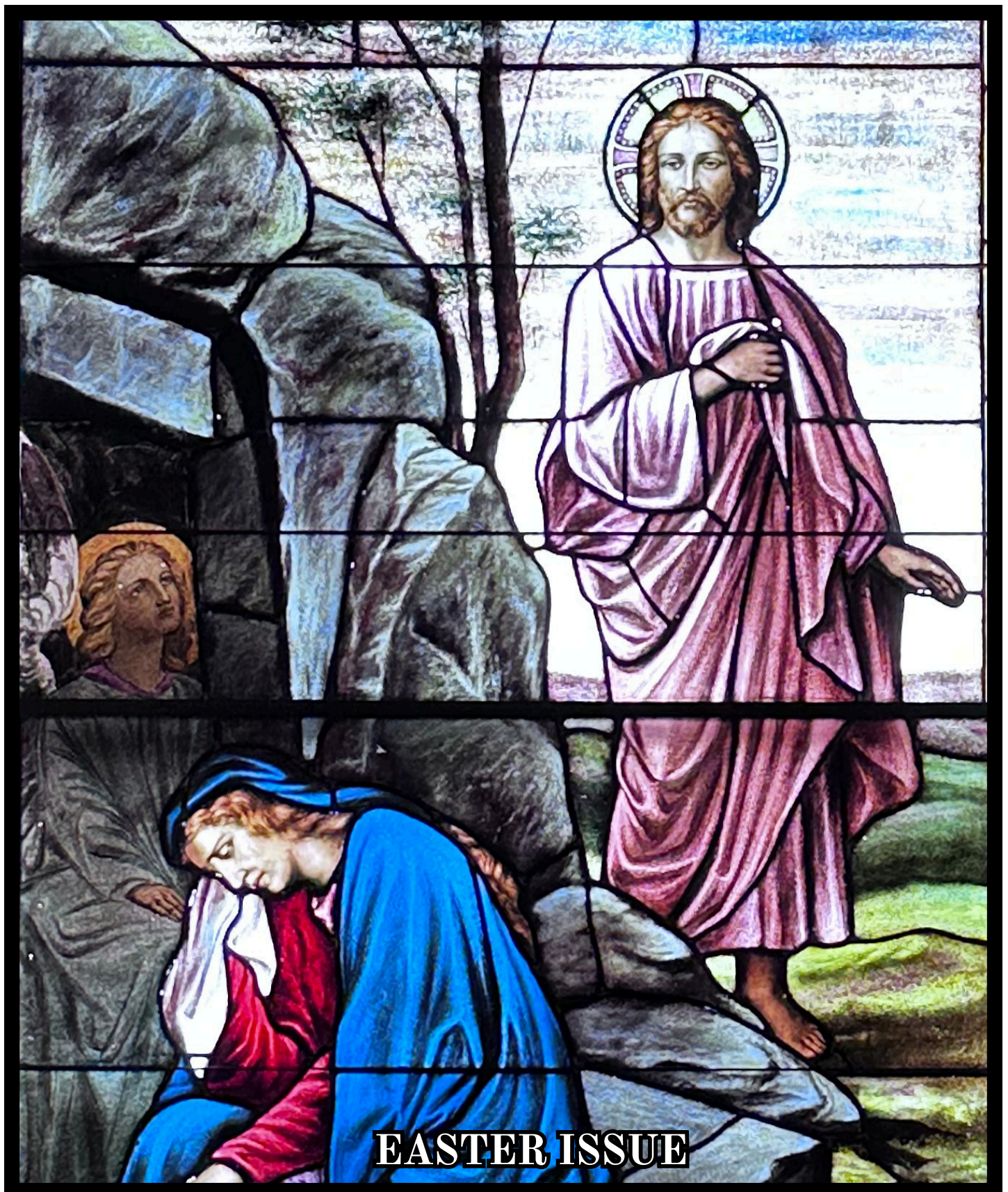




# ST. MAX NEWSLETTER

— APRIL 2025 —







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## Pastor's Page

FR. KYLE KOWALCZYK

### THE SURVEY SAYS... “GET NEW PRIEST”!

Just kidding. In fact, I was overwhelmed and humbled that the average response for the question “Would you recommend your pastor?” was an 8.9 out of 10, (only slightly behind the rating for the parish which was 9.1). That’s a B+! During my educational career, I have never scoffed at a B+! Similarly, about 86% find my homilies helpful for their faith growth, which I am very grateful to know.

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*Priest joke: What do you call a priest who got Bs in seminary?  
Answer: Father.*

---

This survey (or assessment) was very helpful for me and for my team. Thank you for your openness and honesty in filling it out. We have been analyzing the data and will use it to implement improvements in what we are doing, how we are communicating, and what we are offering. Of course, we don’t have trend data yet, but as we repeat this in a year or so, we will have some gauge as to how we are succeeding or where we can continue to grow. Like I never tire of saying (even if you tire of hearing it) God loves us right where we are and he wants us to change--individually and collectively!







I will be sharing some of the findings in this article and in homilies when the time presents itself. Some of the results are really just for in-house purposes. And some aren't terribly helpful until we have something to compare them with.

Over 300 surveys were filled out (though some questions were left blank), which is about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of our adults at Mass on a weekend. We decided to conduct the survey at Mass, because it tends to yield a higher response rate than a digital survey. We also did this because we are most interested in feedback from the people in the pews. When McDonald's wants to improve their food, they ask people who frequent McDonald's not people who frequent Taco Bell, because if you want tacos, you shouldn't go to a burger place.

**75% of  
adults who  
attend Mass  
at St. Max  
participated  
in the  
survey**





*Over 90%  
agree that  
St. Max  
fosters an  
authentic  
Catholic  
Culture.*

## WHAT PEOPLE APPRECIATE MOST

What people say they love most about the parish are (in this order) The reverent traditional liturgies, the welcoming community and families, and the super-awesome pastor (well, they didn't say "super-awesome" but they did put the pastor). Next on the list were our beautiful churches and our school.

These responses are very encouraging, since it has been one of our primary aims to have transcendent, beautiful liturgies that draw our hearts and minds to God. 90% of parishioners agreed or strongly agreed that Masses do just that!

Another one of our goals is to foster authentic relationships within our parish community, and 90% of parishioners agreed or strongly agreed that we have a "welcoming parish".

This is no small feat. It often seems that beautiful liturgies and welcoming parishioners are mutually exclusive; that we can successfully balance both is a real testimony to everyone here!





SILENT	BOOMERS	GEN X	MILLENNIALS	ZOOMERS
born 1928-1945	born 1946-1964	born 1965-1980	born 1981-1996	born 1997-2010

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Here is some interesting demographic information. Of those who filled out the survey (which of course did not include children) 29% consider themselves Baby Boomers, 18% Gen Xers, and 23% Millennials. Whereas not quite 1/3 of our parishioners have been at St. Max for 25 years or more, nearly 40% have only moved here or started attending Mass here only during my tenure, i.e., the last 6 years. That is quite a shift!

When it comes to Mass times, nearly half of parishioners (and oftentimes it is well over half) say 10AM is their normal Mass time, whereas about a quarter hold claim to the 8AM, and a little less than that the 5PM.

Over half of every “tenure” group with the exception of those who have been here for *longer than 25 years*, prefers the 10AM Mass. Moreover, twice as many Millennials as Boomers attend the 10AM and the same in reverse for the 8AM. My best estimate (even excluding small children) is that the 10AM is nearly 20 years younger than the 8AM. This is not to put one group over another, it’s just to say we have a very young parish.

We could dice the numbers up even further, but suffice it to say, this serves as a good reminder that if we tend to only come to one Mass time, we only see a portion of the parish and not the whole of it. Of course, we tend to be friends with those in the same generation or neighborhood or other associations. A 10 o’clock-only parishioner will perceive the parish very differently than an 8 o’clock-only parishioner. This should serve to caution us in making unfounded judgements and perhaps even invite us to come to a different Mass time every once in a while and meet a new person.

Did you know: the 10am Mass is our “high” Mass; it is always celebrated on the high altar, it has more Latin, and uses incense. The 5pm and 8am have less Latin, no incense, and use the high altar less frequently.

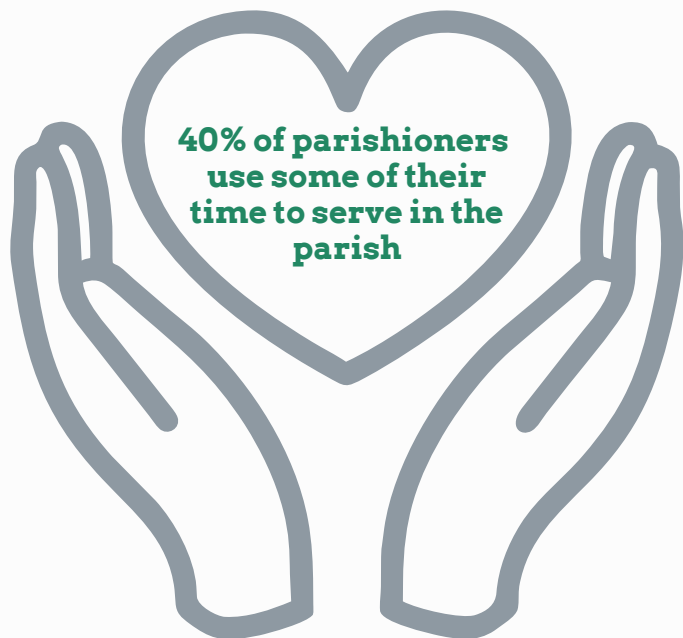


# **SURVEY**

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

The survey revealed some really encouraging information about our faith practices. Most impressive is that 29% of parishioners go to confession at least monthly! And another 29% go quarterly! A full 80% going at least annually! For reference, the national average as of last year was 42% go annually, and the other 58% don't go at all. Now, I don't know if that is Mass-going Catholics, or anyone who calls themselves Catholic, however, I do know that, when I first got here we were pretty average. We used to only have confessions 3 days a week. Now we have confessions every single day of the week, except Monday, which is my day off. And it is not because people started sinning more!

Also, encouraging are the 50% of parishioners that tithe at least 5% of their annual income to the parish, the 37% who are in small groups, the nearly 50% who are in the adoration chapel regularly, and the almost 40% find ways to serve in the parish.



***60% of parishioners go to confession at least once every 3 months***

***50% of parishioners tithe at least 5% of their income***

***almost 50% of parishioners spend time in the Adoration chapel regularly***



## OPPORTUNITIES

Of course there are always opportunities for growth. When asked how the parish can help you to be transformed in Christ, we found there is a desire for the following: more large group studies, more small groups, and more youth events. The parish staff is already looking at the calendar to see how we can accommodate these requests and fulfill these desires, so stay tuned. Other suggestions in the areas of homebound ministry, music, and other requests will need more explanation and teaching to be properly understood. That is another outcome of this survey, my own recognition that I need to communicate and over-communicate way more than I thought, something I will be taking up in coming months.

Additionally, some areas for improvement for all of us are the 8% of people who feel they lack community in their life--that means we all can do a better job reaching out. Also, I'd like to work to see an increase in registered adorers, the number of people taking 20+ minutes of silent meditation each day, and servants.



## HOW YOU STACKED UP

In my own private survey that only I filled out, I rated you my beloved parishioners a whopping 9.9 (always room to grow)! I am very honored to be your pastor, and to be entrusted with the great task of caring for your souls. I know, I probably fail more than I succeed. But with the help of the Holy Spirit and you the faithful people of St. Max, I will continue onwards. As I enter my 7th year here (the last of my first term), I hope to be here for many more years, and it seems we are in agreement on that point. There is much work to be done. And I feel I've only just begun!





# ***33 Days to Morning Glory***

***Small Group***

***Marian Consecration begins***

***Monday, April 28***

Group meets Saturdays in May; childcare available. Scan the QR code for more details and to sign up - or call the office.

Open to all people.



## ***MARIAN PROCESSION & MAY CROWNING***

***Sunday, May 11***

Directly following the 10  
am Mass.

Donut reception  
immediately afterwards







# FR K'S TRIP TO EUROPE.

Clockwise from bottom: Fr. K and his cousin Fr. Andrew Brinkman eating their paczki in Poland, Plaque telling where Max stood in courtyard when he gave his life, Auschwitz, Tomb of Francis the man St. Max saved, Our Lady of Czestochowa, St. Max's desk





# CATHOLIC SUMMER CAMPS

*Extreme  
Faith Camp*  
6-8th graders



*Totus Tuus*  
Pre-k to 12<sup>th</sup> grade



Camp has helped me a lot in my prayer life, by the daily Mass and small group. The daily mass gives us the Body and Blood of our savior Jesus Christ. Small group is a community of friends and peers which all want the same destiny, Heaven; and we do that by prayer, fellowship and games. So come to EFC 2025!

- Michael, St. Max Student

*VBs at Watertown*  
3-12 years old



Check out our summer camp  
webpage or call the parish  
office for more information!





# BELOVED RECAP

The Beloved series was a twelve session group retreat for couples which met on Saturdays this winter. Couples had the opportunity to spend uninterrupted time with each other (childcare was provided) and got to chat about marriage with other couples. The parish hopes to offer this experience again in the fall of 2026.



## TESTIMONY

*"The Beloved series was exactly what we needed at this point in our marriage. Beloved provided us both the time and the ideas for conversations about marriage and family life that we honestly haven't been able to talk about since marriage prep. The ability to grow in relationship with other couples at a similar state in life was also a great blessing. It was like a Saturday morning date that also mixed with intentional conversations among like minded couples. Free breakfast and childcare was certainly a bonus as well! Every marriage struggles in different ways and at different times; Beloved has incredible content to help work through each of those situations successfully as a couple. Newly married or empty nester, and everything in between, Beloved is for you!"*

★★★★★

*Kyle and Cyrcce Salonek*

# WOMENS LENTEN RETREAT RECAP

Thank you to all the ladies who came out on a Saturday morning in March for our annual mini Lenten retreat (morning of reflection). We started the time with confession and Mass, followed by a delicious light breakfast that included a yogurt bar, fresh fruit and pastries, nuts, a variety of juices and hot coffee with all the fixings. Fr. K led us into reflection with his talk focusing on Ephesians 5:22-24. "... now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything." We shared experiences in small group, and ended our time with prayer and Adoration in the main church.





# Meet the Streacheks!



## Parishioner Spotlight



Scott and Annette

Harry and Shelby

Samson and Brianna

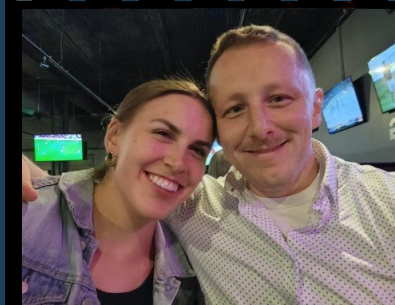
Seth & Katitlin w/ baby Naomi, and Selah (center)

Shanie and Alex

Simon and Emma

Saul and Karolyn

Sidney and Brock





**How long have you been parishioners?** We have been parishioners at St. Max since August 8th, 2017.

**What drew you to St. Max?** An interesting story about why we joined St. Max. It is about friendships and how even a young teen can influence a family. Our son Simon had a friend Wyatt Russek and both were Catholic and both would be in confirmation classes. At the time our family was attending Our Lady of the Lake in Mound, MN. It was a little commute for us and it did limit the involvement for our children. Our children expressed the desire to change churches. The promise to Annette and myself was that they would be more involved. To the last point, we agreed and joined St. Max.

**Tell us a little bit about your family.** Annette and I have been married for 35 years. We are blessed with 8 children ranging from 32 years to 18 years, 4 girls and 4 boys. Our children's names are Shelby, Sydney, Seth, Shanie, Samson, Simon, Saul, and Selah.

**How are you involved in the parish/what do you currently participate in?** Over these years our family have been active and partaken in many classes, speakers, and groups. To list a few; our family has taught faith formation, along with participating in Adoration, Exodus 90, the Synod Evangelization Team, KofC Breakfasts, St. Max Academy Breakfasts, college ministry, ushering, altar serving, lectoring, and Young Adult Ministry known as "Militia Immaculata". Currently, when Selah is home from college, she may lector at Mass, Saul and Simon may serve on the altar. Annette and myself are active in the Rescue Project and Marriage Prep. I especially enjoy Thursday morning coffee & Summa with the guys group after the 6:30am Daily Mass.

**What do you appreciate about St. Max?** There are many aspects about St. Max that we appreciate. First it feels like "family". Many families made us feel welcome, including the Russeks, Ottos, and the Ludwigs. When I (Scott) had knee surgery, these families helped in bringing me my winter wood supply, to which I am very grateful. St. Max lives its mission statement "Let the Eucharist Lead". The beauty of the Churches expresses the depth and sacredness of our Catholic faith. The altar, statues, and décor survived the Vatican II interpretations, and it still placed God at the center. Jesus, The Eucharist is the focal point of the Mass through the Latin responses, Latin Mass, communion rail, incense, ad orientem, and the cassock/surplice the altar server wears bring reverence to Jesus. Our family is grateful for the direction and inspiration Fr. Kowalczyk devotes to the parish. Fr. Kowalczyk is truly concerned for the parishioner's goal to "make it to heaven". His sermons challenge us to grow deeper in our faith and live it. Lastly, our family is sincerely grateful for St. Max Kolbe Academy. The school has played an intricate role in assisting us with the faith and character development of our children. It is encouraging to know that St. Max Academy promotes the same values that our family has and not the values of the government schools. Our youngest daughter Selah is an example of the care, faith, direction and education that St. Max Academy instills. Mrs. Carroll spent individual time to make her successful at Holy Trinity High School and now at the University of Minnesota – Duluth.

**Talk a bit about your faith journey.** Being "Catholic" has been a way of life for our family. Annette and I grew up attending Catholic School and we have many fond memories of the Sisters teaching us. For myself, I appreciated altar serving, especially during Lent and funeral masses. (It was a day when we ate yummy hotdish and missed a few hours of class.) My faith became "real" in my late teens. I attended a T.E.C. retreat (Teenagers Encounter Christ) in high school and understood what having a real relationship with God meant. Over the years my faith has "deepened". I read, pray, attend Mass, and regularly attend confession. I am understanding my faith to "living" my Catholic faith. As Fr. Mike Schmitz says "It's not a transfer of knowledge, but transformation."

**What is a fun fact about you that may surprise people?** From time to time you can catch Selah reading at the "Sunday Mass" on Ascension Presents with Fr. Mike Schmitz.

**Do you or your family have any favorite hobbies, activities or traditions that you participate in?** Our family enjoys cooking, baking, campfires, reading, puzzles, board games, and cards.

**Is there anything else you would like to share about yourself or family?** In closing, three thoughts come to mind. First, there is no "one" parish, priest, or staff that will be perfect for everyone. We are a family and each of us has "shortcomings". Keep our eyes focused on God. Second, get involved. Matthew 9:37-30 "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few." Lastly, do not underestimate the power of the "little things". A smile, a greeting, an extra prayer, a kind word will transform lives. It may even be yours!



# BEAUTY & SILENCE

## RAYMOND'S WITNESS

One of the many blessings of attending St. Maximilian Kolbe Academy is the accessibility to beauty and silence on a regular basis and how those experiences moved one of our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, Raymond Klein.

*"A few times this year we walked down to St. Joseph Chapel for Adoration during theology class. I was interested in the beauty of the chapel at first but after a few visits, I realized that I loved praying there."*

*The silence helps me to have a good conversation with Jesus who is right in front of me and it's just a good place to be.*

*One recent Sunday homily was all about prayer and Adoration and I knew then that I wanted to commit to an hour a week and I have been going ever since - sometimes inviting my friends to join me.*

*The experience of my Adoration hour has drawn me closer to God and has helped me pray and understand more about Scripture and the love Jesus has for me."*



## BOOKS FOR ALL AGES AND INTERESTS

# WE ARE HOSTING AN IGNATIUS BOOK FAIR!

Every book purchased supports our library.

**May 1, 5:30-7pm | May 2, 8-8:30pm & 11:00am**

**May 3, 4:30-6:30 | May 4, 9am-12pm**

**ST. MARTHA HALL @ St. Peter Church**





JOY  
&  
SERVICE



## BLESSED & GRATEFUL

We reached our goal of \$75,000!!!

To the organizers, student and adult volunteers, and supporters of our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual St. Patrick's Day Gala - THANK YOU! Your prayers and financial support of the extraordinary Mission of Catholic education is in service of Truth Himself.

*"Catholic education aims not only to communicate facts but also to transmit a coherent, comprehensive vision of life, in the conviction that the truths contained in that vision liberate students in the most profound meaning of human freedom."*

-Saint John Paul II







# Holy Week & Easter Triduum Mass Times

You are invited to experience the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus through the Liturgy.

\*All are at St. Peter Campus unless indicated.

Main Church at St. Peter Campus  
217 2nd Street S.  
Delano, MN 55328



## **Saturday, 12 April 2025**

- 5:00 pm Vigil Mass with Blessing of the Palms

## **Palm Sunday, 13 April 2025**

- 8:00 am Low Mass with Blessing of the Palms
- 10:00 am High Mass with Procession and Blessing of the Palms

## **Tuesday, 15 April 2025 \*Adoration Chapel**

- 5:00 pm Confession
- 5:30 pm Daily Mass
- 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm Confession

## **Wednesday, 16 April 2025 \* Adoration Chapel**

- 8:00 am Confession
- 8:30 am Daily Mass

## **Holy Thursday, 17 April 2025**

- 5:30 pm Adoration Chapel Closes
- 7:00 pm Holy Thursday Mass
- 8:00 pm – 10:00 pm Altar of Repose

## **Good Friday, 18 April 2025**

- 3:00 pm Good Friday Service

## **Holy Saturday, 19 April 2025**

- 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm Confession
- 8:36 pm Easter Vigil Mass
- 10:00 pm Easter Vigil Reception

## **Easter Sunday, 20 April 2025**

- 8:00 am Easter Morning Mass
- 10:00 am Easter Morning High Mass

## **Divine Mercy Sunday, 27 April 2025**

- 5:00 pm Vigil Mass (Saturday, April 26)
- 8:00 am & 10:00 am Mass Followed by the Divine Mercy Chaplet & Donut Sunday



Announcing the new...

*St. Max*

# PHOTO DIRECTORY

Our photo directory is woefully out of date! Help us know who's who by submitting a family photo!

Scan QR code below or visit the parish website to participate.

**Submissions are due  
May 31.**

**Upload Now!**



# UPCOMING *Events*

APR  
5

## *Happy Birthday, Fr.K!*

Birthday wishes and blessings to our pastor, Fr. Kowalczyk!



APR  
6

## *Family Holy Hour*

**ADORATION CHAPEL, 4 PM** All Parishioners Welcome! Adoration Materials for parents and kids will be available.

APR  
9

## *Ars Vivendi - Last one of the season!*

Join us for prayer, dinner, and a talk. Daycare and classroom learning for the kids. Father K will teach from the sanctuary at the Main Church - the last of a 3-part series on the Mass.

APR  
11

## *Last Stations of the Cross & Soup Supper of Lent*

Join us for the final Stations of the Cross this Lent at 5:30pm in at the main church at St. Peter, followed by soup supper in St. Martha Hall

APR  
12

## *Easter Church Cleaning*

Come and help make our church shine in preparation for Easter! Meet at St. Peter Church at 9 am.

APR  
23

## *State of the School Meeting*

Year in review and looking ahead to next year. Open to all parishioners and school families.

APR  
28

## *Marian Small Group Consecration Begins*

33-day consecration preparation in a small group setting. Sign up on the website.

MAY  
11

## *Mary Crowning and Procession*

Procession with our Mary statue after the 10 am Mass, ending with the Mary crowning and donuts outside.

MAY  
18

## *Steeple Chase 5K*

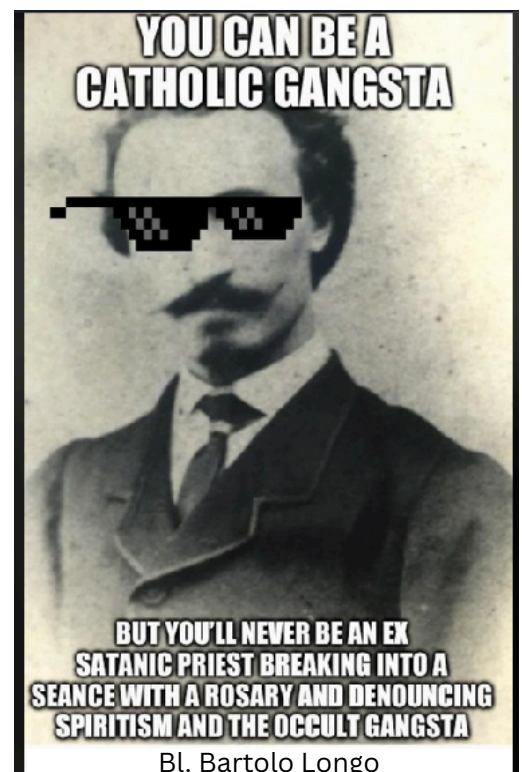
Family friendly walk/run after the 10 am Mass at 12:15 pm. Food trucks and games to follow the race.

MAY  
28

## *End of Life Workshop*

Learn more about end of life decisions and planning. Following 8:30 am Mass at St. Joseph Campus.

Meme of the month







# NEEDS AT THE PARISH

## Servant Lead Wanted for Homebound Ministry!

We are looking for a servant to coordinate our homebound ministry team. This person will keep track of who is homebound, make sure that their ministry team is visiting them and has what they need, coordinate with the clergy for communion calls and other things.

## Now Hiring Facilities Manager!

At St. Maximilian Kolbe we are blessed with a team of people who love their faith and are committed to making a difference in the lives of others. We are seeking someone who will take pride in overseeing the upkeep of our sacred spaces, classrooms, and all facilities, keeping everything running smoothly. This position allows a person to use their talents and “handyman” skills to maintain and build God’s Church. Click the QR Code to view the job posting. Resumes can be sent to [administrator@stmaxkolbechurch.org](mailto:administrator@stmaxkolbechurch.org).



## MEET OUR SPRING INTERN

### Saul Streachek

Hello, my name is Saul Streachek, and I am honored to serve as the Business Intern here at St. Max Kolbe Catholic Church. My time at the parish has been truly rewarding, as I’ve been able to contribute to its vibrant Catholic culture and mission in meaningful ways. In addition to my work at St. Max Kolbe, I’m also interning at MRD Consulting, a firm in town that offers outsourced accounting services to small businesses in the West Metro Area.



These internships are part of my journey to earning a degree in Business Administration from the University of Mary this spring. Originally, I had planned to play football, but a torn ACL during my senior year of high school changed those plans. What began as a setback ultimately became a blessing, leading to my conversion and deeper faith.

Looking ahead, my aspirations include starting my own business and raising a family. I’m passionate about real estate and handyman work, and I hope to use my skills to serve others and build communities. My dream is to launch a business specializing in restoring homes and creating welcoming spaces for families. Beyond real estate, I envision finding ways to integrate my faith into my career. Perhaps one day, my business can contribute to charitable initiatives, provide housing solutions for those in need, or sponsor projects that uphold the values I hold dear.

Raising a family is at the heart of my aspirations. I dream of creating a home where faith, love, and laughter are abundant. I want to instill in my children the values I’ve come to cherish: hard work, generosity, resilience, and deep faith.

While these dreams are ambitious, I trust in God’s guidance and the lessons I’ve learned through my faith journey. Every step forward—every success and challenge—is an opportunity to honor Him and serve others. I’m committed to working diligently, embracing the unknown, and pursuing my passions with gratitude and hope.

### Life Insurance • Annuities • Fraternal Benefits

We offer financial security through life insurance & annuities while creating social, spiritual & charitable opportunities.

**Brian Marketon, RICP®, FICF, CEBS®**

**763-658-4009**

[bmarketon@catholicforester.org](mailto:bmarketon@catholicforester.org)

**CATHOLIC ORDER OF FORESTERS**

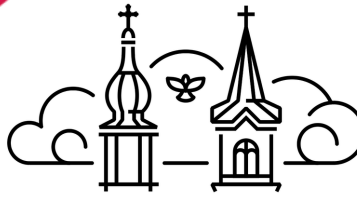
355 Shuman Boulevard, Naperville, IL 60563-1270 | 800-552-0145 | [catholicforester.org](http://catholicforester.org)

Thank you  
to our Parishioner  
& Sponsor!

(11/23) 23-01-22-A BM1893



# 5K RUN WALK



**St. Max**  
STEEPLE CHASE



\$ 25

per person  
\$75/family includes t-shirt

12:15

start time  
kids run free at 12:00

S · U · N · D · A · Y  
**MAY 18**  
2 0 2 5

## THE RACE BEGINS AND ENDS AT ST. MAXIMILLIAN KOLBE ACADEMY

Fr. K has long been trying to figure out a way to use his running to promote the parish and school. He'd been planning to do some outrageously long run all around the parish boundaries, when he learned that one of our new school families had joined the school because they saw the church steeple, and thought, "I wonder if there is a school attached to that?" So, he joined forces with Jessica Kaminsky to coordinate a 5K race starting and ending at the St. Peter Campus. When they brought in Tim Litfin, a native of the parish, the mayor of Waconia, and the founder of the Tour de Tonka, they were delighted to discover that he had started a 5K race here some 25 years ago! The committee decided to resurrect the Steeple Chase with a new route that passes both church steeples, and serves as a preview for Fr. K's 50K run that he will do on June 4 (stay tuned for details on that). Additionally, Fr. K has long desired to light up our St. Peter's steeple, a dream that will soon become a reality thanks to the generous donation of Arlene and the late Glen Litfin, and their family. Fobbe Electric has already begun the work, and we are hopeful it will be completed by Easter! If you would like to run or walk in the 5K, registration is now open. If you would like to volunteer to help with the race, please scan the QR code below or call the parish office.



**MORE INFO  
&  
REGISTRATION**



**SIGN UP  
TO  
VOLUNTEER**

