

THE CHANCERY BULLETIN & CATECHETICAL LEADER

DECEMBER 2025 | VOLUME 68 | NO.12

DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR | THE BISHOP HAMMES CENTER

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ATTACHED AT THE END OF THIS BULLETIN:

- Respect Life Essay Contest Flyer and Reflection
- OCIA Workshop Flyer

LINKS

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CALENDAR



DECEMBER 6

OCIA WORKSHOP
ST. JOSEPH | HAYWARD

DECEMBER 12 - 13

SCHOOL OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP
ST. ANTHONY | TONY

DECEMBER 8

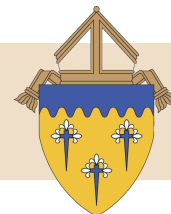
FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

DECEMBER 24 - 25

MERRY CHRISTMAS!
DIOCESAN OFFICES CLOSED

DECEMBER 31 - JANUARY 1

HAPPY NEW YEAR!
DIOCESAN OFFICES CLOSED



CHANCERY NEWS

USCCB OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIAL MESSAGE ON IMMIGRATION



BALTIMORE. November 12, 2025 – As the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) gathered for their Fall Plenary Assembly in Baltimore, the bishops issued a Special Message [Special Message](#) addressing their concern for the evolving situation impacting immigrants in the United States. It marked the first time in twelve years the USCCB invoked this particularly urgent way of speaking as a body of bishops. The last one issued in 2013 was in response to the federal government’s contraceptive mandate.

Under the regulations pertaining to statements and publications of the Conference, a “Special Message” may only be issued at plenary assemblies, and they are statements which the President of the Conference, the Administrative Committee, or the general membership consider to be appropriate in view of the circumstances at the time. To show the consensus of the body, a Special Message must receive two-thirds of the Conference members present and voting at the plenary in order to pass. In a vote of 216 votes in favor, 5 votes against, and 3 abstentions, the bishops overwhelmingly approved the Special Message, with sustained applause of the body following the vote.

The full text of the bishops’ Special Pastoral Message follows:

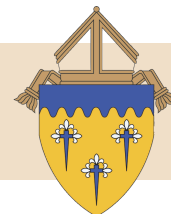
As pastors, we the bishops of the United States are bound to our people by ties of communion and compassion in Our Lord Jesus Christ. We are disturbed when we see among our people a climate of fear and anxiety around questions of profiling and immigration enforcement. We are saddened by the state of contemporary debate and the vilification of immigrants. We are concerned about the conditions in detention centers and the lack of access to pastoral care. We lament that some immigrants in the United States have arbitrarily lost their legal status. We are troubled by threats against the sanctity of houses of worship and the special nature of hospitals and schools. We are grieved when we meet parents who fear being detained when taking their children to school and when we try to console family members who have already been separated from their loved ones.

Despite obstacles and prejudices, generations of immigrants have made enormous contributions to the well-being of our nation. We as Catholic bishops love our country and pray for its peace and prosperity. For this very reason, we feel compelled now in this environment to raise our voices in defense of God-given human dignity.

[Catholic teaching](#) exhorts nations to recognize the fundamental dignity of all persons, including immigrants. We bishops advocate for a meaningful reform of our nation’s immigration laws and procedures. Human dignity and national security are not in conflict. Both are possible if people of good will work together.

continued on the next page...

Joy is a net of love by which we catch souls. -Mother Teresa



CHANCERY NEWS

USCCB OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIAL MESSAGE ON IMMIGRATION



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We recognize that nations have a responsibility to regulate their borders and establish a just and orderly immigration system for the sake of the common good. Without such processes, immigrants face the risk of trafficking and other forms of exploitation. Safe and legal pathways serve as an antidote to such risks.

The Church's teaching rests on the foundational concern for the human person, as created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27). As pastors, we look to Sacred Scripture and the example of the Lord Himself, where we find the wisdom of God's compassion. The priority of the Lord, as the Prophets remind us, is for those who are most vulnerable: the widow, the orphan, the poor, and the stranger (Zechariah 7:10). In the Lord Jesus, we see the One who became poor for our sake (2 Corinthians 8:9), we see the Good Samaritan who lifts us from the dust (Luke 10:30–37), and we see the One who is found in the least of these (Matthew 25). The Church's concern for neighbor and our concern here for immigrants is a response to the Lord's command to love as He has loved us (John 13:34).

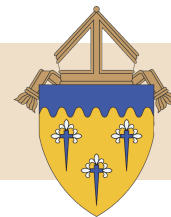
To our immigrant brothers and sisters, we stand with you in your suffering, since, when one member suffers, all suffer (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:26). You are not alone!

We note with gratitude that so many of our clergy, consecrated religious, and lay faithful already [accompany and assist immigrants](#) in meeting their basic human needs. We urge all people of good will to continue and expand such efforts.

We oppose the indiscriminate mass deportation of people. We pray for an end to dehumanizing rhetoric and violence, whether directed at immigrants or at law enforcement. We pray that the Lord may guide the leaders of our nation, and we are grateful for past and present opportunities to dialogue with public and elected officials. In this dialogue, we will continue to advocate for meaningful immigration reform.

As disciples of the Lord, we remain [men and women of hope](#), and hope does not disappoint! (cf. Romans 5:5)

May the mantle of Our Lady of Guadalupe enfold us all in her maternal and loving care and draw us ever closer to the heart of Christ.



CHANCERY NEWS

INSTRUCTIONAL WEBINAR - ANNUAL CEMETERY & COLUMBARIUM CERTIFICATION REPORT | DECEMBER 10

To help simplify the process of completing the Annual Cemetery and Columbarium Certification Report, Larry French, Director of Financial Services, will be conducting an instructional webinar on Wednesday, December 10, at 1:30p for those responsible for completing this report. A webinar invitation will be sent via email soon and attendance is highly recommended. Get your related questions and concerns answered about the process, perpetual care funds and more before the deadline, February 6, 2026. Additionally, to help you prepare for the webinar, please watch for the updated form and instructions coming to you in advance. The State of Wisconsin mandates that each cemetery establishes and maintains a Perpetual Care Fund for the future upkeep of parish cemeteries. This year the state-required report covers cemetery activity between January 1 and December 31, 2025. If your parish has a cemetery and/or stand-alone columbarium, a 2025 Cemetery Certification Request form must be completed. All forms must be completed and returned no later than February 6, 2026.

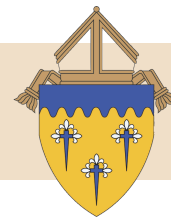
HEALTH INSURANCE OPEN ENROLLMENT ENDS DECEMBER 15th

'Tis the season for health insurance open enrollment. By now you should have received a memo regarding open enrollment via postal mail, or for some, in your chancery mailbox. Please note that there has been a premium rate increase to all of the health insurance plans. The rates are online for parish and school employees, but they are different.

The open enrollment window will be open until December 15th. Any additions to your health insurance or switch of plans or enrollment in coverage must be submitted by this day. The changes will go into effect January 1, 2026. Please review the physical memo which has been sent or view it here: <https://catholicdos.org/health-insurance-open-enrollment>. Please actually read through the memo and review the instructions online thoroughly as well! If you have any questions regarding open enrollment and the changes, please contact Cindy Gronski at cgronski@catholicdos.org.

ANNUAL STATUS ANIMARUM QUESTIONNAIRE

Considering Diocesan needs when moving forward, "looking back" in the form of the Status Animarum Questionnaire (SAQ) is beneficial and necessary. Please watch for forthcoming January email regarding updating your Parish contact for this task, SAQ instructions and login information to complete of this annual survey online.



CHANCERY NEWS

POETRY FOR PILGRIMS - PRAY WITH POETRY THIS ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

Catholic Herald reporter Jenny Snarski offers a unique series of prayerful poetry during this season of Advent and Christmas which features renowned 20th century poet Sr. Madeleva Wolff, CSC, who hailed from Cumberland, WI. The project was featured on the popular [Aleteia Catholic website](https://catholicimaginings.substack.com/) which reaches millions worldwide; great coverage for women from the DOS! The series is directed especially to those who might feel intimidated by poetry or think of poetry as purely an academic and scholarly pursuit. Sign up here to participate: <https://catholicimaginings.substack.com/>



RESPECT LIFE NEWS | “LIFE: OUR SIGN OF HOPE” - ANNUAL YOUTH ESSAY CONTEST

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities annually selects a theme highlighting the dignity of each person and respect for his or her life. The October 2025 – September 2026 theme is **Life: Our Sign of Hope**, highlighting our baptism, where we share in the life of Jesus, and our hope for eternal life.

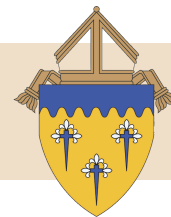


In conjunction with this theme, the Diocese of Superior Respect Life Committee annually holds a pro-life youth contest, endeavoring to:

1. Help young people deepen their understanding of our God-given human dignity and what it means for our daily lives and decisions, particularly within the context of respect for human life, and
2. Move hearts and minds with the joyful Gospel of Life through the artistic expressions of the young participants.

The contest is intended for use across multiple age ranges and disciplines. Youth in grades 5-12 are eligible to enter. Contestant entries can be in essay or poem format. Please encourage your parish youth to participate in this initiative and engage them in the Catholic faith, help them grow in their relationship with Christ, and provide them an opportunity to bear faithful witness in our local community. Please see the attached flyer and reflection for more information. [Essay Contest Information](#)

Essays from each grade category will be honored with an Amazon Gift Card and recognition in the Catholic Herald Newspaper. Entries should be submitted to Carol Grund at the Chancery no later than Monday, February 16, 2026.



CHANCERY NEWS

OFFICE OF PARISH TRANSFORMATION NEWS

GOVERNANCE AND GOAL SETTING WORKSHOP | JANUARY 13, 2026

10:00am-3:00pm
St. Joseph, Hayward

This workshop is being led by the Office of Parish Transformation and will include a review of the parish finance and pastoral council articles and by-laws as well as an introduction to Appreciative Inquiry as a process for strategic planning and goal setting. There will be an option to attend this workshop either in-person or virtually. To register for this workshop please contact Andrew Kreye at akreye@catholicdos.org.

THE CHANCERY IS HIRING! | COORDINATOR OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS AND INSURANCE

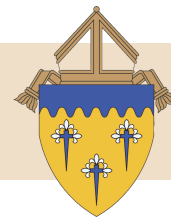
The Diocese of Superior is seeking a full-time Coordinator of Employee Benefits and Insurance at the Chancery in Superior. This position is responsible for tasks of the administration of employee benefits such as group health, cafeteria flex plan, dental, life and disability insurance including open enrollment and compliance with the Affordable Care Act, plus assist in the administration of property, liability, vehicle and workers' compensation insurance.

Qualifications: Two or Four-year degree in business, finance, or human resources, with benefit administration experience, or an equivalent combination of education and experience, a working knowledge of QuickBooks, and MS Word, Excel and Outlook. The ability to communicate clearly and effectively, plus maintain a high level of confidentiality is a must. Salary commensurate based on qualifications and experience. A practicing Catholic is preferred. If you or someone you know is looking for upward professional growth, send a letter of interest, résumé, and references to : Cindy Gronski, Director of Policy Coordination, Benefits & Payroll at cgronski@catholicdos.org.



December 13

St. Lucy



CHANCERY NEWS

VATICAN UNVEILED COMING TO MALL OF AMERICA® | JANUARY 10 - FEBRUARY 1

SAINT PAUL, MN - While we wait and hope Pope Leo XIV will return to the Twin Cities – where he studied as a seminarian in the early 1980s – we know that 250-300 items from previous popes, saints and others are coming here this winter.

In celebration of the 175th anniversary of the Catholic Church in Minnesota, the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis is hosting Vatican Unveiled, an exhibit of the largest collection of papal artifacts outside of Rome. Father Richard Kunst, a priest of the

Diocese of Duluth, serves as curator of the exhibit. Father Kunst has a deep knowledge of the items and a passion for telling their stories.



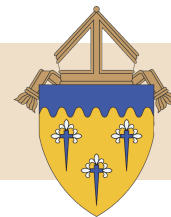
This unique, historical collection will be hosted daily at Mall of America from January 10 – February 1, 2026. Some of the items will include a document with the second oldest papal signature outside of the Vatican and a Swiss Guard uniform from the time of Pius X so rare that the Swiss Guard asked to borrow it for their own exhibit.

The 19,000 square foot exhibit is open and welcoming to all, as people will experience interesting historical perspectives, artistic items with old-world craftsmanship, and papal artifacts that show the humanity behind the leaders.

News gatherers, content creators and show hosts are encouraged to tour Vatican Unveiled and speak with Father Kunst and Archbishop Bernard Hebda when each is available, as well as willing attendees. We are confident your readers, viewers and listeners will be interested in the educational and spiritual opportunities an exhibit like this presents.

Media day – with live broadcast opportunities starting very early in the morning – will be Friday, January 9. You will receive more information about media day in mid-December. You may find more details about the exhibit on the Archdiocese's [Vatican Unveiled](#) website, along with this media kit and special promotional video from Archbishop Hebda. Archbishop Hebda and the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis look forward to hosting you and your viewers, listeners and readers.

About Father Richard Kunst: Originally from Duluth, Minnesota, Father Richard Kunst was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Duluth in 1998. Prior to ordination, he worked in the political realm as a staff member for U.S. Senator Rod Grams of Minnesota. As a priest, Father Kunst juggles parish assignments as well as diocesan duties, including columnist for The Northern Cross and oversight of initial phases of the sainthood cause of Monsignor Joseph Buh. Father Kunst has a deep love for Church history as can be seen in the collection of papal and other artifacts he has curated.



CHANCERY NEWS

SPRING 2026 CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE

<u>PARISHES</u>	<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Grantsburg - Immaculate Conception w/ Frederic, St. Dominic	Wednesday	April 8	6:00p
Somerset - St. Anne w/ Osceola, St. Joseph Farmington, Assumption of BVM	Sunday	April 12	10:30a
Ladysmith - Our Lady of Sorrows w/ Bruce, St. Mary Flambeau, St. Francis of Assisi Tony, St. Anthony de Padua Weyerhaeuser, Ss. Peter and Paul Gilman, Ss. Peter and Paul Sheldon, St. John the Apostle Jump River, St. Michael Lublin, St. Stanislaus	Sunday	April 19	2:00p
Tomahawk - St. Mary	Sunday	April 26	11:00a
Turtle Lake , St. Ann w/ Cumberland, St. Anthony Abbot Almena, Sacred Heart of Jesus	Wednesday	April 29	7:00p
Superior , Cathedral of Christ the King w/ Superior, St. Anthony Superior, Holy Assumption Pattison Park, St. William Superior, St. Francis of Xavier	Friday	May 1	7:00p
Hammond - Immaculate Conception w/ Glenwood City, St. John the Baptist Wilson, St. Bridget	Saturday	May 2	6:00p
Amery, St. Joseph w/ Balsam Lake, Our Lady of the Lakes Clear Lake, St. John	Wednesday	May 6	6:30p
Rice Lake - St. Joseph w/ Dobie - Our Lady of Lourdes Haugen - Holy Trinity Birchwood - St. John the Evangelist	Saturday	May 9	4:30p
River Falls - St. Bridget	Sunday	May 10	11:00a



JUBILEE 2025 - PILGRIMS OF HOPE

December 24, 2024 - January 6, 2026

The Universal Church is celebrating the [Jubilee Year 2025](#) – 2,025th anniversary of the Incarnation of our Lord. The Jubilee Year offers the faithful opportunities to participate in various jubilee events at the Vatican and in local dioceses. The great tradition of opening the Holy Door began when Pope Francis opened the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica on December 24, 2024. Bishop Powers opened the Jubilee Year on December 29, 2024 at Cathedral of Christ the King in Superior.

As a special focus in the Diocese of Superior, Cathedral of Christ the King in Superior and St. Joseph in La Pointe on Madeline Island are designated as holy sites to receive indulgences. Another special focus for the Jubilee Year is on celebrating the Consecrated Life that served our parishes in the past and the faithful sons and daughters of our diocese who committed themselves to Consecrated Life.

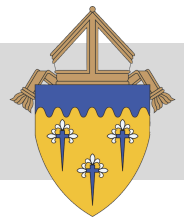
A handbook for parishes to use to plan events and also celebrate with the diocese can be found [HERE](#). Additional information is here: usccb.org/jubilee2025. For any questions, please contact Peggy Schoenfuss, pschoenfuss@catholicdos.org.

CELEBRATION OF JUBILEE DAYS THROUGHOUT 2025

The Holy See has designated a number of Jubilee Days throughout 2025 to recognize and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Church. These resource packets can be used and/or adapted by dioceses, eparchies, parishes, schools, campuses, apostolates, movements, organizations, or individuals to plan their specific Jubilee celebration. These resources may also serve as a catalyst or inspiration for the creation and development of local or year-round resources for your community.

DECEMBER 14 | [JUBILEE OF PRISONERS](#)





BISHOP HAMMES CENTER

OCIA WORKSHOP | DECEMBER 6

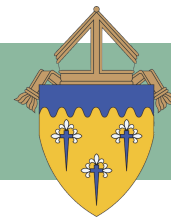
The diocese will host a workshop for OCIA teams at the St. Joseph parish center in Hayward on Saturday, December 6th from 9:00am to 2:30pm. The day will provide an in-depth overview of the OCIA process, the structure, the rites, and how OCIA fits in the broader context of the mission of Evangelization. Fr. Isaiah Schick will be the primary presenter. The Offices of Evangelization & Missionary Discipleship and the Office of Worship are co-sponsoring this important event. There is no cost for this workshop. Lunch will be provided. See flyer at the end of this bulletin. To register, call or email (715) 234-5044, jjohnson@catholicdos.org.

MEN'S RETREAT | JANUARY 24 - 25

The diocese will host the annual Men's Retreat at Trinity Woods Catholic Retreat Center in Trego January 24th - 25th. The weekend retreat will begin Saturday with registration beginning at 8:00am and will wrap up on Sunday around noon following Mass. Lodging is available Friday night. Our theme this year is Men after Christ's Heart: The Call to Grow in Holiness and Virtue. Dr. Jonathan Reyes will help us to hear and respond to the Lord's invitation to become saints. His reflections will unpack specifics of what a life of holiness and virtue looks like as men in the 21st century. To register, call (715) 234-5044 to book/confirm your lodging. Then use the online link on the [Men's Retreat page](#) of the diocesan website.

WOMEN'S RETREAT | JANUARY 31 - FEBRUARY 1 OR FEBRUARY 7 - 8

The diocese will host the annual Women's Retreats at Trinity Woods Catholic Retreat Center in Trego January 31st - February 1st or February 7th - 8th. The retreat will begin Saturday with registration beginning at 8:00am and will wrap up on Sunday around noon following Mass. Lodging is available Friday night. We will be led on retreat by the Handmaids of the Heart of Jesus! This will be a reflective weekend focusing on authentic femininity and how the Lord reveals to us our deepest identity as women. It will provide many moments of silence, allowing you to enter into the heart of God. To register, call (715) 234-5044 to book/confirm your lodging. Then use the online link on the [Women's Retreat page](#) of the diocesan website.



OFFICE OF ECCLESIAL MINISTRIES | [Chris Newkirk](#)

SCHOOL OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM CALENDAR 2025-2026

August - April

Fridays, 6:00pm - 9:00pm and Saturdays, 8:30am - 4:00pm

Meals provided

St. Anthony Parish Hall | Tony



His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you."
(John 2:5)

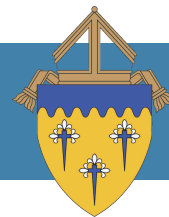
Get ready to lead with purpose! The Diocese of Superior's 2025-2026 School of Servant Leadership is back – and you won't want to miss it!

This inspiring series of presentations is designed for those who feel called to lead – in the Church, in the community, or in the workplace – and who recognize that true leadership begins with service.

Led by Christine Newkirk, Blurette Puchner, and a lineup of engaging speakers, this year's program will challenge and empower you to embrace your vocation to serve with courage, compassion, and commitment. Discover what it means to be a servant leader, and, as a disciple of Christ – someone who lifts others up, fosters growth, builds community, and lives with purpose. Whether you're discerning your path or already leading in your parish or profession, this is your chance to be inspired, equipped, and transformed. Answer the call. Step into your potential. Be a light to the world.

September 12-13	Foundations in Servant Leadership	Tom Thibodeau
October 3-4	Servant Leadership through Evangelization and Missionary Discipleship	Chris Hurtubise
November 7-8	Building Assets and Affirming Strengths	Bob Lecheler
December 12-13	Building Community	Richard Kyte
January 16-17	Stewardship/Ethical Decisions	Richard Kyte
February 13-14	Prophetic Leadership	Bob Lecheler
March 13-14	Peace Building Conflict Resolution	Sr. Georgia Christensen
April 17-18	Ritual/Tradition/Celebration	Tom Thibodeau

Course information and program details are available online at catholicdos.org/school-of-servant-leadership. Registration for the complete program has closed, but you may contact Christine directly if you are interested in registering for a specific course, or with any other program-related questions. Registration forms may be mailed to the address listed on the registration form, or register online by clicking the link [here](#).



OFFICE OF WORSHIP | [Paul Birch](#)

2025- 2026 DIOCESAN CALENDAR OF FEASTS, FASTS AND PARTICULAR LITURGICAL OBSERVANCES

catholicdos.org/liturgical-seasons: Call the Office of Worship at (715) 394-0233 for paper copies.

NEW TRANSLATION OF RITUL BOOK:

This newly translated text will replace the ~~Order of the Anointing of the Sick and their Pastoral Care~~ from the early 1980's, Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum. Besides the newly translated texts, the structure of the ritual book has changed. The ritual from the 1980's was arranged in a manner suitable for use by both clergy and lay ministers. The new ritual text will be only for use by Priests and Deacons. However, as the implementation date approaches, the USCCB will ensure that non-ordained ministers continue to have access to those texts which they use in ministry to the sick and homebound. The newly translated rite may begin to be used as of February 11th, 2026 (the Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes). Its use is obligatory as of April 5th, 2026 (Easter Sunday). Once information about the publishers is released there will be an opportunity for a diocesan bulk order of the new ritual books, timed so that they will be available for pick-up at our diocesan 2026 Priest Assembly / Mass of Chrism – Sunday, March 22nd through Tuesday, March 24th. catholicdos.org/ritual-books-new-editions

SYNOD ON SYNODALITY IMPLEMENTATION STAGE 2025-2028

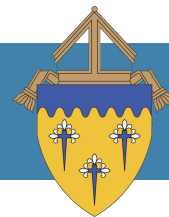
Within the implementation stage of the synod, our local Church is called to receive the directives of the [Final Document](#) of the Synod and begin to apply them through a process of accompaniment and evaluation. In review of the Final Document, the Diocese of Superior has identified that much of what is expressed and expected of the local Church is already in process through our Maintenance to Mission initiative and pastoral plan. As a diocese, we will continue follow the [Pathways for the Implementation](#) through our Maintenance to Mission Initiative. While we remain on this journey, **please continue to recite the Synodal Prayer at Mass at a minimum of one weekend per month**. If you have any questions, please contact Peggy Schoenfuss, pschoenfuss@catholicdos.org.

ADVENT COMMUNAL PENANCE MATERIALS

The diocesan Office of Worship provides Advent Communal Penance Service materials for parish use. The format includes a leader's booklet intended for use by the Priest-celebrant and assisting ministers. A separate one-page worship booklet for assembly use is also provided. Click on the link for the materials: catholicdos.org/communal-penance-services

SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION | MONDAY, DECEMBER 8

This is celebrated as a holy day of obligation in 2025.



OFFICE OF WORSHIP | [Paul Birch](#)

SOLEMN CLOSING OF THE JUBILEE YEAR | SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

More information about our diocesan celebration of this event will be distributed, soon.

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD | THURSDAY, JANUARY 1, 2026

This is celebrated as a holy day of obligation in 2026.

DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF UNBORN CHILDREN | THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2026

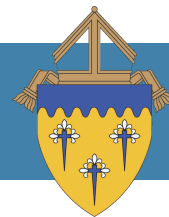
Observed in all dioceses nation-wide, January 22 (or January 23 when January 22 falls on a Sunday) shall be observed as a particular day of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life and of penance for the violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion. The liturgical celebrations for this day may be the “Mass for Giving Thanks to God for the Gift of Human Life” (no. 48/1 of the Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Occasions), celebrated with white vestments; or the “Mass for the Preservation of Peace and Justice” (no. 30 of the Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Occasions), celebrated with violet vestments. Information from the USCCB for this date may be found at: <https://www.usccb.org/january-22>

SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD [THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME] | SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 2026

In 2019 Pope Francis issued an apostolic letter instituting the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time as the “Sunday of the Word of God.” This celebration promotes the celebration, study and dissemination of sacred scripture. Parish resources provided by the USCCB Committee on Divine Worship are available here: <https://www.usccb.org/committees/divine-worship/sunday-word-god>

RITE OF ELECTION / CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION (FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT) | SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2026

The Rite of Election / Call to Continuing Conversion is always celebrated on the First Sunday of Lent. It will be celebrated in 2026 on Sunday, February 22 at the Cathedral of Christ the King in Superior. The liturgy, which is not a Mass, begins at 3:00 p.m. with Bishop Powers presiding. All parishes are asked to submit the names of their catechumens (unbaptized) and their candidates (already baptized) who will take part in this annual liturgy in Superior. Additional information and the electronic submission form are available here: [More information about this event will be distributed, soon.](#)



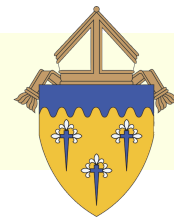
OFFICE OF WORSHIP | [Paul Birch](#)

LITURGY TRAINING PUBLICATIONS MATERIALS AVAILABLE AT A 35% DISCOUNT

Most LTP materials include a 35% discount if ordered via our diocesan website [HERE](#). Upon receipt of the LTP invoice, parishes should reimburse LTP directly. LTP shipping charges (minimum \$9) are 10% of order value or actual cost, whichever is higher, plus a fee of \$6.00 per drop-ship delivery address. Orders for electronic items do not qualify for the discount.



Joy is a net of love by which we catch souls. -Mother Teresa



SUBMITTED EVENTS

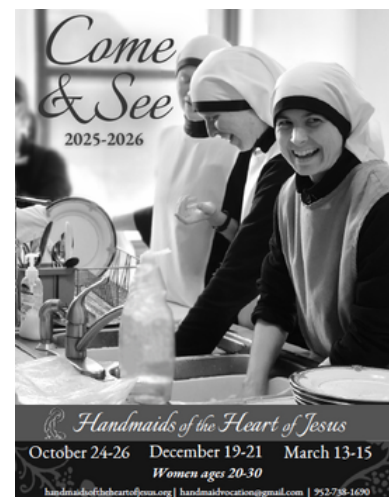
RETROUVAILLE MARRIAGE MARRIAGE WEEKEND | FEBRUARY 13 - 15, 2026

Retrouvaille \Retro- vī\Marriage Help Weekend Coming Soon! – Retrouvaille offers hope and a path to a joyful marriage with forgiveness & trust. The next program begins with a weekend stay Feb 13-15, 2026. Fully Confidential, affordable, and open to couples of all faiths or no faith background. For availability call, 877-922-HOPE (4673). More info at HelpOurMarriage.org.

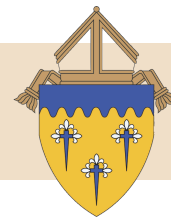
HANDMAIDS OF THE HEART OF JESUS COME & SEE OPPORTUNITIES | 2025 AND 2026

2025: December 19th - 21st | 2026: March 13th - 15th

The [Handmaids of the Heart of Jesus](https://handmaidsoftheheartofjesus.org) are a religious community of sisters in New Ulm, MN. They are offering a handful of Come and See opportunities this school year. “A Come and See retreat is designed to give women an experience of our life from the inside. In addition to entering into our rhythm of prayer and the joys of community life, retreatants receive conferences on religious life and guidance in their discernment. Above all, it is a time to be with Jesus as He reveals His love and the desires of His Heart. Good candidates for a Come and See retreat are single Catholic women, ages 20-30, who are in good health and have been living a life faithful to prayer and the sacraments for at least one year.” Click [here](#) for more info!



If you are interested in having an event submitted to the Chancery Bulletin, please email Amy Little (alittle@catholicdos.org) or JulieAnne Johnson (jjohnson@catholicdos.org). Please include 1) Name of event 2) Location 3) Date & time 4) Basic information about event 5) How to register (if applicable) 6) Contact person/phone/email for event.



CLERGY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

BIRTHDAYS

12/05 Rev. Robert J. Koszarek
12/07 Dcn. Gregg J. Miller
12/08 Dcn. Chester E. Ball Jr.
12/12 Mr. Jacob Nollet
12/12 Rev. Sunil Kumar Thumma
12/17 Rev. David L. Neuschwander
12/18 Dcn. Patrick F. Haines
12/18 Dcn. Richard J. Meier
12/27 Rev. Dennis M. Mullen
12/28 Dcn. James J. Celba

ORDINATIONS

12/03 Rev. Chandra Ery
12/16 Dcn. Harvey G. Drost
12/20 Very Rev. Jerome D'Souza

CLERGY PRAYER CALENDAR

WORD OF LIFE

WALKING WITH MOMS IN NEED

OFFICE OF RESPECT FOR LIFE | Bonita Thom

IMPACT

OFFICE OF STEWARDSHIP & DEVELOPMENT | Steve Tarnowski

SPECIAL INTERCESSIONS

OFFICE OF VOCATIONS | Intercessions for Mission/Evangelization, Youth and Vocations

HANDBOOK CHANGES

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR | Peggy Schoenfuss



DIOCESE OF
SUPERIOR



OCIA WORKSHOP

DECEMBER 6TH | 9AM - 3PM

For all those who assist with OCIA in the
Diocese of Superior -- this day is for you!
Come and learn the ins-and-outs of OCIA.

Hosted by the Office of Evangelization &
Missionary Discipleship and the Office of Worship.

Register by Friday, 11/21
jjohnson@catholicdos.org
(715) 234-5044

Free of Cost
Lunch provided

📍 St. Joseph | 10586 N Dakota Ave. | Hayward, WI 54843

LIFE

Our Sign of Hope



There is perhaps no more beautiful celebration than when parents bring their newborn child to the waters of baptism. Parents, godparents, family, and friends share in this sacrament with incomparable joy. For in baptism, we share in Christ's death and resurrection, and through the outward signs of water and oil, are made *children of God* and given the hope of eternal life with Him.

"The death and resurrection of Jesus is the heart of our faith and the basis of our hope."¹ Through our Lord Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven, death is overcome, and life is victorious. "Hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite not knowing what the future may bring."² Because of this Christian hope, we can face the unknown trials of life with faith rather than fear.

We are called to be signs of hope to all people, especially those whose goodness, value, and dignity are undermined. As members of the Body of Christ, we carry this hope with us as we continue Jesus' mission on earth. Pope Leo XIV encourages us, "How important it is that each and every baptized person feel himself or herself called by God to be a sign of hope in the world today."³

Sadly, there is a devastating absence of hope today. We see this most profoundly in a sweeping disregard for human life in its most vulnerable forms and stages. Abortion and assisted suicide are products of

"Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us." Romans 5:5

hopelessness and despair. Yet even amid the increasing attacks on human life, we know that the "storms that buffet us will never prevail, for we are firmly anchored in the hope born of grace, which enables us to live in Christ and to overcome sin, fear and death."⁴

We have been entrusted with a message of hope for the woman who finds herself unexpectedly pregnant or for the man diagnosed with a terminal illness. At these challenging moments, we must bring God's presence, witnessing to His love, and inspiring a renewal of hope in those whose hearts are burdened. For "hope is born of love and based on the love springing from the pierced heart of Jesus upon the cross."⁵

Having been "buried with Christ in Baptism, we receive in his resurrection the gift of a new life that breaks down the walls of death."⁶ Confident of God's presence within us, may we share the Gospel of Life with those most in need of hope, knowing that "the grace of God precedes and accompanies his people as they press forward firm in faith, active in charity and steadfast in hope."⁷

¹ Pope Francis, *Spes non confundit*, 20.

² *Ibid.*, 1.

³ Pope Leo XIV, Vatican News, May 26, 2025: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2025-05/pope-leo-xiv-africa-day-pilgrimage-blessing-vatican-basilica.html>.

⁴ Pope Francis, *Spes non confundit*, 25.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

Hope that Anchors Us

Facing the end of life, whether for ourselves or someone we love, can stir fear, sadness and deep questions about what lies ahead. Yet, in these moments, we are called to cling to a hope far greater than anything this world offers. Christian hope is not just a wish for things to improve; it is a certainty, rooted in a person who will never fail us. Our hope rests in the One who guarantees it—Jesus Christ, who holds our future in His hands.

So how do we truly live out this hope, especially when suffering weighs heavy?

Let us use the letters of the word “hope” to reflect more deeply on the assurance Jesus has given us.

Holding Fast to Christ

Our hope is not in vague ideas but in Jesus Christ: God who took on flesh, loved us to the end, and conquered death. When life’s final chapter feels uncertain, He remains our sure and steadfast anchor. We are held by a God who keeps His promises. “The mystery of the Redemption of the human person is in an astonishing way rooted in the loving involvement of God with human suffering. That is why we can entrust ourselves to God and to convey this certainty in faith to the person who is suffering and fearful of pain and death.”¹

Overcoming Death

Through His resurrection, Jesus Christ, overcame death and gave us the hope of joining Him in eternal life. Eternal life is a relationship with our Lord who does not die, who is Life and Love itself. “Death is a decisive moment in the human person’s encounter with God the Savior.”² Thanks to the grace of Christ, death is not the end of life but a promise of communion with God. This is the glorious future awaiting us, and the great hope that steadies us even now when we are suffering.

Persevering in Solidarity

The Gospel is not just information; it transforms. It changes our life and enables us to act. Since we know who holds our tomorrow, we can face today’s fears with courage. This hope reshapes how we face suffering. It means living our final days not in despair, but with joy, offering our pain as prayer and witness.

This hope is not just for us; it is a light we pass to others. In hospice rooms, family conversations, and quiet acts of care for others, we become living reminders that no life is beyond God’s reach. “The scene of the Cross provides a way of understanding that even when it seems that there is nothing more to do there remains much to do, because ‘remaining’ by the side of the sick is a sign of love and of the hope that it contains.”³ Together, we can build communities anchored in solidarity that no illness or grief can destroy. We believe that every human

life, to the very last breath, has inestimable value and demands our protection and care.

Embracing Suffering

Jesus did not just observe human suffering—He entered into it. Our God chose to become like us! Love Himself chose to suffer with us, and that changes everything. Even when we feel alone, He is there, whispering, “I am with you.” Our suffering becomes meaningful when united to Christ’s suffering on the Cross. When we unite our pain with His, it becomes a share in God’s redeeming work, a mystery where our deepest wounds become vessels of grace. This is the scandal of our faith: a God who did not spare Himself so that we would know we are never abandoned.



Isaiah the prophet tells us, “They that hope in the Lord will renew their strength” (Is. 40:31). In life’s hardest moments, let us fix our eyes on our Lord Jesus Christ. He walks this path with us, redeems our struggles, and promises a dawn where every tear is wiped away. May His hope light our way, guiding us and our loved ones to our heavenly home with Him.

¹ *Samaritanus bonus*, Conclusion.

² Ibid, V, 10.

³ Ibid, II.

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UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS
Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities | uscgb.org/prolife



fb.com/uscgbrespectlife

 [@uscgbprolife](https://twitter.com/uscgbprolife)

 [@ProjectRachel](https://www.instagram.com/ProjectRachel)

DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR - RESPECT LIFE ESSAY CONTEST

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) announced the 2025-2026 theme which begins in October 2025 and continues through September 2026:



ESSAY OR POEM CONTENT: In thinking about respecting all life & using the theme *Life: Our Sign of Hope*. Explain what it means to you by writing an essay or a poem.

WHO MAY ENTER: Students in Grades 5 through 12

ESSAY REQUIREMENTS:

- ✦ 150-200 words (approximately) - Students in Grades 5,6,7,8
- ✦ 200-300 words (approximately) - Students in Grades 9,10,11,12

*If writing a **poem**, the number of words are not a requirement.*

Entries must include the following information on the following Essay ID ½ page:

- ✦ Contestants' Name, Address, City, Zip code
- ✦ Number of Words in **Essay** (*NOTE: the entry is disqualified if the number of words in the essay does not meet the standards listed above; the number of words in a poem is not required*).
- ✦ Grade
- ✦ Teacher's Name & contact information
- ✦ Fill in blanks for Home School, Religious Education, or Catholic School

SEND ESSAYS TO: **Carol Grund / RESPECT LIFE OFFICE**

Diocese of Superior
PO Box 969
Superior, WI 54880

POSTMARK DEADLINE:

- ✦ *Monday, February 16, 2026*

If you have further questions, please contact Bonita Thom @ 715-394-0206; bthom@catholicdos.org.

QUOTES FROM THE ESSAYS MAY BE INCLUDED IN THE CATHOLIC HERALD NEWSPAPER.

PRIZES AWARDED TO THOSE ESSAYS CHOSEN BY THE JUDGING COMMITTEE.

ESSAY/POEM IDENTIFICATION ½ PAGE (include this completed ½ page sheet with each entry):

OF WORDS IN ESSAY: _____

CONTESTANT'S NAME, ADDRESS, CITY, ZIP CODE: _____

GRADE: _____

TEACHER'S NAME, EMAIL & PHONE NUMBER: _____

Home School - please list the address if different than the contestant's above:

Religious Education - please write the parish info:

PARISH NAME ADDRESS, CITY, ZIP CODE: _____

Catholic School - please write the school info:

SCHOOL NAME, ADDRESS, CITY, ZIP CODE: _____



Office #: _____

ESSAY/POEM IDENTIFICATION ½ PAGE (include this completed ½ page sheet with each entry):

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