

THE CHANCERY BULLETIN & CATECHETICAL LEADER

JANUARY 2026 | VOLUME 69 | NO. 1

DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR | THE BISHOP HAMMES CENTER

CONTENTS

CHANCERY NEWS	02
BISHOP HAMMES CENTER	09
OFFICE OF ECCLESIAL MINISTRIES	12
OFFICE OF WORSHIP	13
SUBMITTED EVENTS	17
CLERGY BIRTHDAY AND ANNIVERSARY LIST	18

ATTACHED AT THE END OF THIS BULLETIN:

- Presbyteral Council Minutes Nov 18, 2025
- A Prayer for Our Church
- Respect Life Essay Contest Flyer and Reflection
- Safe Haven Sunday Step-by-Step
- Catholic Schools Week Flyer & Collection Flyer

LINKS

[CLERGY PRAYER CALENDAR](#)

[WORD OF LIFE](#)

[WALKING WITH MOMS IN NEED](#)

[IMPACT](#)

[SPECIAL INTERCESSIONS](#)

[HANDBOOK CHANGES](#)

CONTACT US

CHANCERY

Amy Little: alittle@catholicdos.org
715.394.0225

BISHOP HAMMES CENTER

JulieAnne Johnson:
jjohnson@catholicdos.org
715.234.5044

CALENDAR



JANUARY 1

HAPPY NEW YEAR!
DIOCESAN OFFICES CLOSED

JANUARY 20 - 25

MARCH FOR LIFE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

JANUARY 24 - 25

MEN'S RETREAT
TRINITY WOODS RETREAT CENTER | TREGO

JANUARY 25 - 31

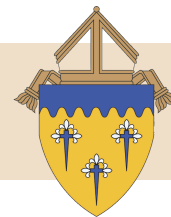
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

JANUARY 31 - FEBRUARY 1

WOMEN'S RETREAT #1
TRINITY WOODS RETREAT CENTER | TREGO

FEBRUARY 7 - 8

WOMEN'S RETREAT #2
TRINITY WOODS RETREAT CENTER | TREGO



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.

ANNUAL CEMETERY & COLUMBARIUM CERTIFICATION REPORT

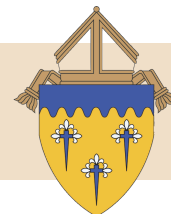
The State of Wisconsin mandates that each cemetery establishes and maintains a Perpetual Care Fund for the future upkeep of parish cemeteries. The Chancery office will report to the State on behalf of all parishes. This year the state-required report covers cemetery activity between January 1st and December 31st, 2025. The Chancery office will report to the State on behalf of all parishes, based on your completed form. If your parish has a cemetery and/or stand-alone columbarium (NOT in the cemetery), a 2025 Cemetery Certification Request form must be completed. All forms must be completed and returned no later than February 6th, 2026.



An instructional webinar was held December 10th in an effort to answer topical questions and concerns regarding the Cemetery reporting process and completing the form. If you were unable to attend, all instructional materials including the slide deck, account listing, and recording can be found at: <https://catholicdos.org/webinars>. To view only the video go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9FpO8ljwJo>. The form and instructions will arrive very soon.

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 information** for the person responsible for completing this important annual task, SAQ instructions, and login information to complete of this annual survey online.



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](#) 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:

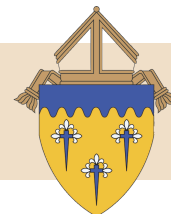
As pastors, we the bishops of the United States are bound to our people by ties of communion and compassion in Our Lord Jesus Christ. We are disturbed when we see among our people a climate of fear and anxiety around questions of profiling and immigration enforcement. We are saddened by the state of 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



... continued from the previous page

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).

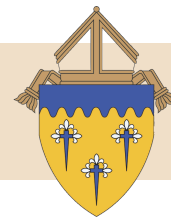
To our immigrant brothers and sisters, we stand with you in your suffering, since, when one member suffers, all suffer (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:26). You are not alone!

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

RESPECT LIFE NEWS

NINE DAYS FOR LIFE NOVENA

The Nine Days for Life novena takes place each January in observance of the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children. Although the primary focus is prayer, educational components are interwoven to help participants grow in their understanding of the Church's teachings on human life and each person's role in building a culture of life. Parish resources are available at <https://www.respectlife.org/leaders-resources>. You can sign up to receive the novena via email or text at: <https://www.respectlife.org/9-days-signup>



"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.

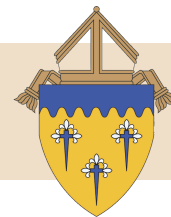
In conjunction with this theme, the Diocese of Superior Respect Life Committee annually holds a pro-life youth contest, endeavoring to:

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. You can also find the info here: [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 16th, 2026.



CHANCERY NEWS

QUARTERLY PARISH BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT | ANUNCIO DEL BOLETÍN PARROQUIAL

Pastors, parochial administrators, parish life coordinators, and parish directors are reminded that the following notice should be published quarterly in parish bulletins. "The Catholic Church is working diligently to prevent sexual abuse by parish employees, volunteers, deacons, and priests. If you have been sexually abused by someone associated with the Church and would like to report or discuss the experience, we urge you to contact: Bonnie Thom (715) 718.1110. The Diocese of Superior welcomes your call and understands how difficult it may be to reach out in this situation. The phone number provided is confidential and dedicated solely to these calls. Know that your call will be treated with respect, dignity, and compassion. The Diocese of Superior is bound by civil and canon law to report sexual abuse of a minor to civil authorities. Anyone who believes that they have been sexually abused is strongly encouraged to report as well."

"La Iglesia Católica está trabajando arduamente para evitar que sus empleados, voluntarios, diáconos y sacerdotes cometan abuso sexual. Si usted ha sido abusado sexualmente por alguien asociado con la iglesia y le gustaría poder reportarlo o hablar con alguien, le pedimos que por favor se comuniquen con : Bonnie Thom (715) 718.1110. La diócesis de Superior entiende que es difícil pedir ayuda en casos de abuso sexual. Por eso el número telefónico es estrictamente para reportar estos casos y la llamada es confidencial. Su llamada será tratada con respeto y dignidad. Conforme a la ley civil y de la iglesia, la diócesis de Superior está obligada a reportar a las autoridades cualquier reporte de abuso sexual a un menor. A cualquier persona que piense que ha sido abusada sexualmente se le sugiere o recomienda reportarlo."

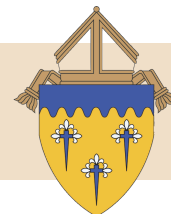
If there are questions about the above notice, please contact Dan Blank, Director of Administrative Services: (715) 394.0211, dblank@catholicdos.org.

Si tiene preguntas sobre el aviso anterior, por favor contacte Dan Blank, Director of Administrative Services: (715) 394.0211, dblank@catholicdos.org.

A PRAYER FOR OUR CHURCH

A hardcopy is also attached at the end of this Bulletin





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.



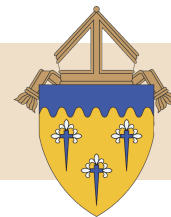
This unique, historical collection will be hosted daily at Mall of America from January 10th – February 1st, 2026. Some of the items will include a document with the second oldest papal signature outside of the Vatican and a Swiss Guard uniform from the time of Pius X so rare that the Swiss Guard asked 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 9th. 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.

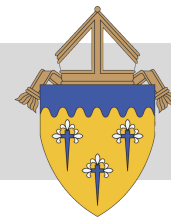
About Father Richard Kunst: Originally from Duluth, Minnesota, Father Richard Kunst was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Duluth in 1998. Prior to ordination, he worked in the political realm as a staff member for U.S. Senator Rod Grams of Minnesota. As a priest, Father Kunst juggles parish assignments 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



BISHOP HAMMES CENTER

TOTUS TUUS SITE LEADER MEETING | JANUARY 12

These virtual meetings are for Parish Catechetical Leaders and volunteers who are in charge of hosting Totus Tuus at their church. Even if a volunteer primarily holds this position, a PCL should be in attendance at these meetings as well. During these monthly meetings, we'll go over host site expectations, timelines / check lists for what needs to be completed by the time the week of Totus Tuus comes, housing / meal planning for the Totus Tuus teams, etc. The January meeting will cover these topics big picture, and subsequent meetings will provide support and check-in on how these items are going. Contact Tyler Kircher with any questions at tkircher@catholicdos.org.

Monthly Meetings, January - May

- January 12th | 1:00pm - 2:00pm
- February 9th | 1:00pm - 2:00pm
- March 9th | 1:00pm - 2:00pm
- April 13th | 1:00pm - 2:00pm
- May 11th | 1:00pm - 2:00pm

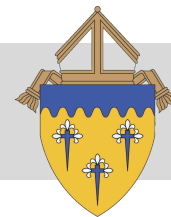
Link | [Join Zoom Meeting](#) | Meeting ID: 825 8050 2539 | Passcode: 560845

MARCH FOR LIFE | JANUARY 20 - 25

About 20 students, chaperones, clergy and diocesan staff will be taking a bus to Washington D.C. to take part in the annual March for Life! They'll head out on January 20th, and arrive back on the 25th. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers and they make this pilgrimage!

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, **first call** (715) 234-5044 to book/confirm your lodging. Then use the online link on the [Men's Retreat page](#) of the diocesan website. Please complete registration and payment by **January 2nd**.



BISHOP HAMMES CENTER

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! **The January 31st - February 1st retreat is FULL.** There is still space for 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 lead 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 God. To register, **first call** (715) 234-5044 to book/confirm your lodging. Then use the online link on the [Women's Retreat page](#) of the diocesan website.

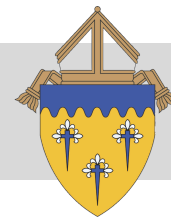
SAFE HAVEN SUNDAY | FEBRUARY 22

Once again, under the direction of Bishop Powers and the Presbyteral Council, our diocese will be celebrating our 3rd Annual Safe Haven Sunday during the first weekend of Lent, February 21st - 22nd. In 2024 the theme, "Equipping the Family, Safeguarding Children," was meant to draw our attention as a diocese to the seriousness of the issue of pornography and to recommit ourselves to take steps to ensure our homes are safe havens for all. In 2025 the theme, "Having Critical Conversations", was meant to guide parents and other adults in having the difficult discussions on pornography with their children. In 2026, the theme, "Safety Through Connection," is meant to emphasize the importance of strong family bonds to protect children from online dangers. A timeline with resources for you to implement Safe Haven Sunday (links included) can be found in the attachment at the end of this bulletin. If you have not ordered the book "Connected" yet, please do so ASAP to ensure there are enough books available. You can do so [HERE](#). If you have any questions, please call/email Loree Nauertz @ (715) 234-5044 or lnauertz@catholicdos.org.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK 2026 - "UNITED IN FAITH & COMMUNITY" | JANUARY 25 - 31

NCEA continues hosting the traditional Celebrate Catholic Schools Week. Schools typically observe the week with Masses, assemblies, events and other activities for students, families, parishioners and community members to join the celebration around what makes Catholic schools stellar. The [NCEA website](#) has themes for each day as well as graphics for social media and other promotional tools. See flyer at the end of the bulletin.

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



BISHOP HAMMES CENTER

SUPPORTING OUR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS: CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK COLLECTION

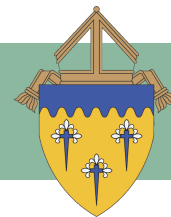
With grateful hearts, we are invited to support the mission of Catholic education by helping ensure the excellence of Catholic education and that our schools remain available, accessible, and affordable for families. In the Diocese of Superior, caring for our 14 Catholic schools is a shared responsibility and one that extends beyond the parishes with schools and invites all Catholics to steward the life of the wider Church. As we celebrate Catholic Schools Week, January 25th – 31st, 2026, we continue a tradition with a special diocesan-wide collection that provides immediate support to our schools. We encourage you to joyfully promote this collection within your parishes. No gift is too small. Our generosity is an expression of Discipleship, an outward sign of our faith and our unity with Catholic school communities throughout northern Wisconsin. See flyer at the end of this bulletin.

EXTREME FAITH CAMP PARISH REGISTRATIONS DUE | JANUARY 9TH

The countdown to camp is on! **Parish Registration Forms are due on January 9th.** Space fills up *quickly* - especially for the 2nd week at CrossWoods. Spots can't be guaranteed after the 9th, so be sure to get your forms in! If there is space open after the 9th, we will continue to take registrations. Looking to promote camp at your parish? Check out the [Extreme Faith Camp page](#) of the diocesan website. Reach out jjohnson@catholicdos.org with any questions.



January 1st
Mary, Mother of God



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)

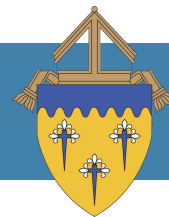
Get ready to lead with purpose! The Diocese of Superior's 2025-2026 School of Servant Leadership is back – and you won't want to miss it!

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, Bluette 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 RITUAL BOOK: *Order of the Anointing of the Sick and their Pastoral Care*

This newly translated text will replace the Anointing ritual that has been in use since 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

CLOSING OF THE JUBILEE YEAR 2025

2025 the Jubilee Holy Year, the 2,025th anniversary of the Incarnation of our Lord, an "event of great spiritual, ecclesial, and social significance in the life of the Church." The concept of "Jubilee" has its origins in the Book of Leviticus (chapter 25) as a special year of reconciliation, pilgrimage, and coming home. Pope Francis designated the 2025 Holy Year as a time to renew ourselves as "Pilgrims of Hope."

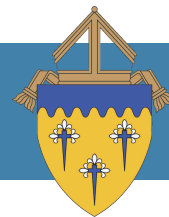


**DECEMBER 24, 2024 -
JANUARY 6, 2026**

The USCCB presents a web page (link below) which offers Catholics in the dioceses of the United States resources and ideas for celebrating the 2025 Jubilee locally or by making a special pilgrimage to Rome. The site is regularly updated with the latest news: <https://www.usccb.org/jubilee2025>

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

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



OFFICE OF WORSHIP | [Paul Birch](#)

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

Observed in all dioceses nation-wide, January 22nd (or January 23rd when January 22nd 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

In 2019 Pope Francis issued an apostolic letter instituting the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time as the “Sunday of the Word of God”, to promote 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>

ANNIVERSARY OF THE CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE KING DEDICATION | THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5

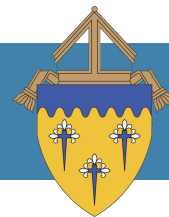
This celebration ranks a feast day in the diocese and as a solemnity at the Cathedral. Mass orations are taken from the Common of the Dedication of a Church, Anniversary of Dedication. (Form “A” is used at the Cathedral and form “B” is used elsewhere in the diocese.) Scripture readings are from the Lectionary at numbers 701-706.

34TH WORLD DAY OF THE SICK | FEBRUARY 11

World Day of the Sick is sponsored by the Vatican’s Pontifical Council for Health Pastoral Care and has been celebrated since 1992 on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. This celebration reminds us to pray for all who are sick and to recognize and honor healthcare workers and caregivers.

“The compassion of the Samaritan: loving by bearing the pain of the other” is the theme chosen by the Holy Father for this World Day of the Sick. This year’s theme is centered on the Gospel figure of the Samaritan who manifests love by taking care of the suffering man who has fallen into the hands of thieves. This is intended to emphasize this aspect of love for one’s neighbor: love needs concrete gestures of closeness, through which we take on the suffering of others, especially those who are ill, often in a context of fragility due to poverty, isolation and loneliness.

continued on the next page...



OFFICE OF WORSHIP | [Paul Birch](#)

34TH WORLD DAY OF THE SICK | FEBRUARY 11 ...continued from the previous page

The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development offers these 2026 materials:
<https://www.humandevelopment.va/en/news/2025/mensaje-del-papa-para-la-jornada-mundial-del-enfermo-2026.html>

Over the last several years the National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC) has provided support materials for this celebration:

<https://www.nacc.org/resources/spirituality-and-prayer-resources/world-day-of-the-sick/>

LENT BEGINS | WEDESDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Lenten Communal Penance Service Materials

The Diocesan Office of Worship provides Lenten 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 here for the materials:

<https://catholicdos.org/communal-penance-services>

Rules on General Absolution

Pastors are reminded that use of General Absolution (or "Form III") of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is forbidden except in cases of grave necessity as defined by Canon Law and the Apostolic Letter Misericordia Dei. This form of the Sacrament may not be celebrated without explicit permission from Bishop James Powers.

A Guide for Lent, Holy Week, The Paschal Triduum and the Easter Season

This diocesan document includes regulations for fasting and abstinence as well as pertinent liturgical details for this timeframe:

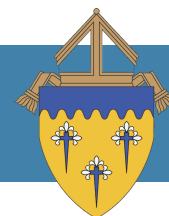
<https://catholicdos.org/lent>

RITE OF ELECTION / CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION (FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT) |

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

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 22nd at the Cathedral of Christ the King in Superior. The liturgy, which is not a Mass, begins at 3:00pm 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:

<https://catholicdos.org/rite-of-election-call-to-continuing-conversion>



OFFICE OF WORSHIP | [Paul Birch](#)

MASS OF CHRISM | TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026

Noon

Cathedral of Christ the King, Superior

More information will be available closer to the date of celebration

EASTER VIGIL | SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 2026

Earliest allowable start times by sunset:

45 minutes after sunset

This year, the celebration of the Easter Vigil occurs on Saturday, April 4th, 2026. In order to ensure sufficient darkness, at least 45 minutes (preferably one hour) should elapse after sunset before the Vigil may begin. The following sample is the listing of the time of sunset in key parishes in our Diocese (from East to West), and the earliest the Easter Vigil should begin there. Parishes to the North and South of these locations would use similar times.

City	Time of Sunset	Earliest Start Time
Rhineland	7:30 p.m.	8:15 p.m.
Merrill	7:31 p.m.	8:16 p.m.
Park Falls	7:34 p.m.	8:19 p.m.
Ashland	7:37 p.m.	8:22 p.m.
Rice Lake	7:39 p.m.	8:24 p.m.
River Falls	7:42 p.m.	8:27 p.m.
Superior	7:42 p.m.	8:27 p.m.

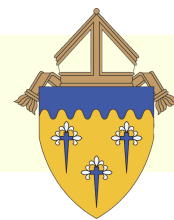
SYNOD ON SYNODALITY IMPLEMENTATION STAGE 2025-2028

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.

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 13th - 15th, 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.

MEN'S RALLY FOR CHRIST: THE CALL TO MASCULINE SAINTHOOD | FEBRUARY 28, 2026

A Major League Mission of Faith, Courage, and Holiness

7:00am Registration | 7:30am Rosary | 8:00am – 1:30pm Program
St. Bridget Catholic Church, River Falls WI



Mike Sweeney, Five-time Major League Baseball All-Star and disciple of Jesus Christ, will share baseball stories, his faith journey, and how to aim for sainthood. Mike and his wife, Shara, recently returned from a private audience with Pope Leo XIV, the first American pope. In a nod to the Holy Father, Mike presents: **Knighted by the Lion, the Call to Masculine Sainthood from the Chair of St. Peter.** This event includes presentations, prayer, small group discussions, and helpful take-home materials. A light breakfast and lunch will be served; goodwill donations are appreciated. Previously titled, "Knights for Dads," the event is expanding to include ALL MEN. Sponsored by Western Wisconsin Knights of Columbus Councils. Registration/Info: Scan the QR Code or go to: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/mensrallyforchrist#/>



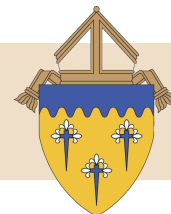
HANDMAIDS OF THE HEART OF JESUS COME & SEE OPPORTUNITIES | MARCH 13-15, 2026

The [Handmaids of the Heart of Jesus](https://www.hmh.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](https://www.hmh.org) for more info!



OUR LADY OF SORROWS SCHOOL SEEKING CRUCIFIX

Our Lady of Sorrows is looking for a crucifix for their school gym. They are hoping to find one about 24" by 48" to hang on the wall. Contact Bob Lecheler, rlecheler@catholicdos.org.



CLERGY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

BIRTHDAYS

1/04 Rev. Edwin C. Anderson
1/05 Mr. Scott Pederson (Seminarist)
1/06 Dcn. Arthur E. Gil de Lamadrid
1/06 Rev. Ronald Serrao
1/15 Dcn. Howard W. Cameron
1/17 Dcn. Lawrence E. Amell
1/18 Dcn. Robert King
1/24 Rev. John R. Long
1/25 Dcn. Jeffrey M. Mason

ORDINATIONS

1/11 Dcn. Craig J. Voldberg
1/18 Dcn. Lawrence E. Amell
1/18 Dcn. John E. Grek
1/18 Dcn. Thomas P. Rausch

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

PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

St. Joseph Parish Center, HAYWARD

November 18, 2025

11:00 AM – 2:00 PM

I. Preliminaries

- A. Welcome & Call to Order
- B. Prayer led by Bishop Powers
- C. Roll Call – Peggy Schoenfuss

In attendance: Bishop James Powers, Fr. John Anderson, Fr. Showri Jojappa Pasala, Fr. Jerome D'Souza, Fr. Aloysius Royan Anthony, Fr. Papi Reddy Yeruva, Fr. Patrick McConnell, Fr. James Tobolski, Fr. David Neuschwander

Guests Present: Fr. John Gerritts, Fr. Chris Kemp, Dan Blank, Chris Newkirk, Peggy Schoenfuss, Chris Hurtubise

Excused: Fr. Louis Reddy Maram, Fr. Andrew Ricci

II. Review and Approval of August 26, 2025, Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes – Fr. David Neuschwander, Second Fr. Papi Yeruva. Approved

III. Review and Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve agenda as amended - Fr. David Neuschwander, Second Fr. Jerome D'Souza. Approved

IV. Bishop Powers' Report

A. Catholic Charities

The State of Wisconsin attorney general is petitioning the WI Supreme Court to change the laws to take away tax exemption from everyone so it's not discriminating. The Beckett Firm will approach the US Supreme Court if the WI Supreme Court doesn't uphold the US Supreme Court decision.

B. Clergy Updates

Fr. Dave Oberts has been moved to assisted living in Rice Lake but is still concelebrating Masses in Rice Lake. Fr. Brost fell last week but is okay. He continues to decline, but is still celebrating Mass at the home he is in. Fr. Hayden is having a flair up of some hip issues and will be taking a break from his help-out position. He continues to mow lawn for Sacred Heart parish. Fr. Ron Olson is in good spirits. Fr. Andy Anderson is starting to help with things at Saint Patrick in Hudson. Fr. Gene Murphy is driving again. Fr. Virgil still has some significant health issues. Fr. Dennis Mullen is holding his own. Fr. Greg Hopefl is back to subbing. Fr. John Drummy is doing well. Fr. Bill Green is doing well and is saying Mass each week. Fr. Jim Brinkman is doing well. Fr. Pat Hardy is doing well. Fr. Bob Kazarak is doing well. Dcn. Arthur is up and around and assisting at Masses again. The deacons in Tomahawk are all doing well.

C. USCCB Meeting Items

- o Ad limina could possibly be in 2027.
- o Artificial Intelligence (AI) – we should possibly hold training for students within the next year. Could it possibly take the place of the Safe Environment lesson? The way the AI program works, the friending programs have proven to convince young people to take their life. There is a caution to not get sucked into AI more than we have to. The big danger is what it will be doing in the medical field. Many insurance companies are going to AI programs to approve procedures. Right now, what is going through AI is prejudiced against Blacks, Oriental and Women.
- o There was discussion to consecrate the U.S. to the Sacred Heart of Jesus the Summer of 2026.
- o The next Eucharistic Congress is scheduled for 2029.
- o The attorneys dealing with immigration are hopeful that there will be lessened time out of the country to thirty days rather than a full year. For someone applying for a green card today, it would be 2037 before it would be approved.

- D. Question from Bishop – is needing two exits from a confessional an issue? No presbyters thought it has been a problem to only have one exit. Discussion was had regarding how new structures have set up confessionals to be separate rooms or another exit from the confessional. The presbyters suggested to continue this discussion. Fr. John Anderson will have a discussion with Paul Birch about researching this need.

V. Managers and Finance Reports

- There should be a reminder about the 33-Day consecration sent out.
- Great to see the OCIA workshop.
- The UW-River Falls Newman participants in the Friends of the Bridegroom event thought it was great.
- March for Life will continue this coming year.
- It is very important that the Safe Haven Sunday information get out at the end of November as mentioned.
- Continue to try to get requests for letters of suitability to the Chancellor with enough time to get them issued.
- There was a Come and See weekend at IHM in Winona this past weekend. Fr. Dan Tracy took three young men from our diocese.
- Dates for upcoming ordinations are:
 - 2026, May 24 – Memorial Day Weekend Sunday, Carl & Scott Diaconate
 - 2027, May 30 – Memorial Day Weekend Sunday, Carl & Scott Priesthood
- The musicians' workshop in Amery went very well. Since then, the presenter had a serious stroke. He is improving but is in need of prayer.
- Paul Birch has four people to be on a committee to begin looking at moving forward with training for Eucharistic ministers or leaders of prayer at nursing homes.
- The December 28, 2025, closing of the holy year Mass is not going to be a special event in our diocese. Bishop encourages us though not to lose the hope of the year after this year is over. The theme of hope and mercy should always be part of the homilies. The message of mission can be that message of hope.
- The Penance service materials given out by the Office of Worship are very helpful.
- The Word of Life that is given out monthly is very easy to plug into intercessions each week.
- Thank to the Office of Administration for keeping an eye on succession planning in diocesan offices.
- The diocesan budget is well done. It is impressively lower than some parish budgets – for the amount the diocese does, Bishop is commended for keeping such an admiral budget.
- The workshop with finance people was very well done and it nice to meet other people doing the same work.

VI. Follow up from Previous Meetings

A. Three Lakes Chapel-Shrine

- Bishop, Fr. John Gerritts and Fr. John Anderson will set up a meeting with them. They will send the submitted questions prior to the meeting.

B. Policy on Electronic Giving and Electronic Paying of Bills

- Steve Tarnowski submitted a draft for electronic giving.
- Larry French is working on a draft in regard to electronic paying of bills.

C. Holy Communion Announcement

- Bishop handed out samples. The presbyters chose this statement:
 - *At this time, we are ready to receive the gifts of the Most Holy Eucharist, the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Catholics who are prepared to receive Holy Communion may do so in the usual manner. Those who are non-Catholic may remain in the pews or come forward with their arms crossed over their chest to receive a blessing.*
- This is to be said after the priest and deacons receive communion.
- Fr. John Anderson will talk with Paul Birch about any guidelines about blessings at the time of communion.
- A message will go out to the priests on directions for using this statement and giving the blessing prior to it being required.

D. Catholic Herald Update

- The order number that goes to parishes has been cut.
- A committee has been formed to review the Herald.

VII. New Items

L. Building Projects

- New Richmond Property Purchase - A duplex and piece of property across from the church has been purchased. The council has acknowledged the approval of purchase.

M. Goal Setting

- Chris Newkirk reviewed the combined dreams from the clergy workshop and pastoral council. One of the key items mentioned from both groups is communication – both how things are communicated within a parish as well as from the diocese. All of the diocesan offices will be reviewing the suggestions.
- Presbyters were asked to help narrow down the suggestions to move the diocese closer to setting specific goals. Their priorities were:

Diocesan-wide

- Communication
- Collaboration – within clusters and with neighboring clusters
- Greater sense of diocesan Church – one Body in Christ.
- Radical reprioritization of equipping for discipleship.
- Focus intentionally for equipping and supporting discipleship with leadership (lay and clergy) – Acts 3:42.

Diocesan Offices

- The loss of staff in the next few years needs to be addressed – succession planning.
- Is the diocesan staff modeling true discipleship – are they living it?
- Radically reprioritizing to support parishes on mission.
- Support for priests who go to new parishes – help the new priest connect with the parish – pastorally, missionally, financially, etc.
- Reorganizing priorities in regards to the evangelization letter and pastoral plan.
- Lay people to take up responsibilities, especially with strategic planning
- Communication

N. Re-clustering – the counselors went into Closed Session to discuss a possible re-clustering of some parishes.

VII. Time and Place of Future Meetings

February 17, 2026, St. Peter Parish Hall, Cameron, 11:00 AM

May 19, 2026, St. Joseph Parish Center, Hayward, 11:00 AM


August 25, 2026, St. Joseph Parish Center, Hayward, 11:00 AM

November 24, 2026, St. Joseph Parish Center, Hayward, 11:00 AM

VIII. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Closing Prayer -- adjournment at 1:58 – Motion to adjourn Fr. David, Second Fr. Jerome approved

A Prayer for Our Church



Heavenly Father,
In every age you have been our refuge.
Yet again and still, we stand before you
asking for your protection on your holy Church

For the victims of abuse and their families,
pour out your healing and your peace.

For the bishops of this country,
continue to inspire their decisions,
and guide them with your Spirit.

For the thousands of good and faithful priests,
who have followed your call to serve you and your people in holiness,
sustain them by your grace.

For the faithful who are angry, confused, and searching for answers,
embrace them with your love,
restore their trust,
console them with your clear Gospel message,
and renew them with your sacraments.

We place our Church in your hands,
for without you we can do nothing.
May Jesus, our High Priest and true compass,
Continue lead her in every thought and action –
to be an instrument of justice,
a source of consolation,
a sacrament of unity,
and a manifestation of your faithful covenant.

Grant this through that same Jesus Christ, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

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.

Scripture texts in this work are taken from the *New American Bible, revised edition* © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C. and are used by permission of the copyright owner. All rights reserved. Excerpts from *Samaritanus bonus (On the care of persons in the critical and terminal phases of life)* © 2020, Libreria Editrice Vaticana. Used with permission. All rights reserved. Models used for illustrative purposes only. Copyright © 2025, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C. All rights reserved.



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 1/2 PAGE (include this completed 1/2 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 1/2 PAGE (include this completed 1/2 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: _____

SAFE HAVEN SUNDAY

2026 YEAR 3: SAFETY THROUGH CONNECTION

1

PREPARE

Date

- Familiarize yourself w/ [Safe Haven Sunday: Year 3](#)
- Order ["Connected: How Strong Families lead to Internet-Safe Kids"](#)
- Order [Prayer Cards](#) (optional, printed locally)
- Download [Social Media Kit](#) (optional, use to promote event)
- Order Materials you want for Confessional and elsewhere
 - [You are Loved](#) [Are you Equipped For the Fight?](#)
 - [5 Keys to Freedom](#) [What's Wrong with Porn Anyway?](#)
 - [Strive](#) [Restored Vows](#) [Arise](#) [Reclaim](#)

As soon as possible

2

PROMOTE

Date

- Mention Safe Haven in bulletin using [Bulletin Blurb](#)
- Mention Safe Haven Sunday using [Social Media](#) (optional)

Jan 18/19

3

SEND

Date

- Circulate "Connected" book to families
 - **Principals:** Send w/ school students
 - **DREs:** Send w/ religious ed. students
- Send "Heads up" email for parents beforehand
- [Letter from priest](#) included w/ book in sealed envelope

Week of Feb 15-19

4

PREACH

Date

- Give Safe Haven Homily (Resource will be sent when ready)
- Use [General Intercessions](#) @ Mass
- Pray using [Prayer Cards](#) after intercessions @ Mass
- Continue promotion:
 - 2nd [Bulletin Blurb](#)
- Hand out **Connected** books to parishioners

Feb 21/22

Safe Haven Sunday

5

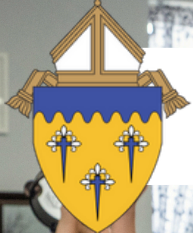
FOLLOW UP

Date

- 3rd & final [Bulletin Blurb](#)
- Post "thank you" on your social media (optional)
- Have resources available in confessional, etc

Feb 29 and Ongoing

A digital version of this document has been emailed to each pastor.
If you need an additional copy, email jjohnson@catholicdos.org



DIOCESE OF
SUPERIOR



Catholic Schools Week 2026

14 Schools – 1,900 Students

Catholic Identity

Our schools:

- Have a mission of faith
- Participate in daily prayer
- Display & use sacramentals
- Participate in their parishes
- Celebrate weekly Mass
- Celebrate reconciliation at least once a year
- Utilize curriculum that aligns with the Catechism of the Catholic Church
- Evangelize to 100% of students & families



Leadership & Governance

Our schools:

- Each have an executive school board
- Employ 193 teachers and principals, 30% of whom have a Master's degree or higher
- Employ 126 support staff
- Minister to 1,246 families



Catholic Schools
United in Faith and Community

Academic Excellence

Our schools provide regular, Catholic integrated instruction in:

- Religion
- Language Arts
- Social Studies
- Mathematics
- Science
- Health
- Physical Education
- Art
- Music
- Technology



All Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Superior are accredited through the Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools Accrediting Association (WRISA), a state chapter of the National Federation of Nonpublic School State Accrediting Associations which is recognized by the College Board and the Office of Non-Public Education, and office within the U.S. Department of Education. WRISA also holds a co-operative agreement with Middle States Association-Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CESSE).

OUR SCHOOLS



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE
Ashland | pre-k3 thru 8
215 Lake Shore Dr. E | Ashland, WI | 54806

Phone: 715-682-7622
Email: ollschooll@ourladycc.org
Website: ourladycs.org



ST. PATRICK
Hudson | pre-k3 thru 8
403 St. Croix St. | Hudson, WI | 54016

Phone: 715-386-3941
Email: office@stpatrickeducenter.org
Website: mysaintpatrickschool.org



OUR LADY OF SORROWS
Ladysmith | pre-k3 thru 8
105 E Washington Ave. | Ladysmith, WI | 54848

Phone: 715-532-3232
Email: olsladysmith@gmail.com
Website: olsladysmith.com



HOLY ROSARY
Medford | pre-k3 thru 6
215 S Washington Ave. | Medford, WI | 54451

Phone: 715-748-3336
Email: principal@hrmedford.org
Website: hrmedford.org/school



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
Merrill | pre-k3 thru 8
1708 E 10th St. | Merrill, WI | 54452

Phone: 715-536-2803
Email: cgenrich@stfrancismerrill.org
Website: stfrancismerrill.org



NATIVITY OF OUR LORD
Rhineland | pre-k3 thru 8
110 Conro St. | Rhineland, WI | 54501

Phone: 715-362-5588
Email: nativityparish@nativity.me
Website: nativityofourlord.net



ST. MARY
New Richmond | pre-k3 thru 8
257 S Washington Ave. | New Richmond, WI | 54017

Phone: 715-246-2469
Email: saintmary@st-marysschool.com
Website: st-marysschool.com



ST. FRANCIS SOLANUS
Reserve | pre-k3 thru 8
13885 W Mission Rd. | Stone Lake, WI | 54876

Phone: 715-865-3662
Email: schsis@cheqnet.net
Website: stfrancission.org



ST. JOSEPH
Rice Lake | pre-k3 thru 8
128 W Humbird St. | Rice Lake, WI | 54868

Phone: 715-234-7721
Email: j.mazourek@sjsricelake.org
Website: sjsricelake.org



ST. BRIDGET
River Falls | pre-k4 thru 8
135 E Division St. | River Falls, WI | 54022

Phone: 715-425-1872
Email: office@stbparish.com
Website: saintbridgets.org



ST. ANNE
Somerset | pre-k4 thru 8
140 Church Hill Rd. | Somerset, WI | 54025

Phone: 715-247-3762
Email: bwhynott@stanne-somerset.org
Website: stannecatholicsschool.org



ST. FRANCIS DE SALES
Spooner | pre-k3 thru 8
300 Oak St. | Spooner, WI | 54801

Phone: 715-635-2774
Email: sfdsschool@we3churches.org
Website: sfdsspooner.org



CATHEDRAL
Superior | pre-k3 thru 8
1419 Baxter Ave. | Superior, WI | 54880

Phone: 715-392-2976
Email: mainoffice@superiorcathedralschool.org
Website: superiorcathedralschool.org



ST. MARY
Tomahawk | pre-k3 thru 6
221 E Washington Ave. | Tomahawk, WI | 54487

Phone: 715-453-3542
Email: smsoffice@stmarystudents.com
Website: stmarysschool.biz

**Support the Collection
for Catholic Schools
at your local parish.
INVEST IN US!**



Celebrate

Catholic Schools Week
JANUARY 25-31, 2026

**Apoya la colecta para la escuelas
católicas en tu parroquia local.
¡INVIERTE EN NOSOTROS!**



catholicdos.org/schools