



## 'No hands but yours'

Statue restoration uses casting of artist's hands to replace damaged ones

BY SAM LUCERO | THE COMPASS

**INSTITUTE** — St. Teresa of Avila once said, "Christ has no body on earth now but yours, no hands but yours ..." Bruce Nufer, a retired art teacher from Menasha who restores religious statues, took the second part of this metaphor literally.

On June 16, Nufer, a member of St. Mary Parish in Menasha, completed a restoration project on a life-size statue of Jesus outside of SS. Peter and Paul Church. The statue's hands were damaged and Nufer had to make concrete castings of his own hands to replace the ones he removed.

"Apparently some vandals knocked off all of the fingers on the statue, leaving it looking damaged and awkward," Nufer told The Compass prior to making the trip to Door County.

"This job is unlike any restoration I've attempted before," he said. "Probably my biggest challenge was casting a new pair of hands for the statue. That's not something I do every day. Fortunately, my own hands were a close match in



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Bruce Nufer, a member of St. Mary Parish in Menasha, holds the two concrete hands he created to replace the ones damaged by vandals.

size, so that was a good start."

The most difficult part of creating new hands for the statue was pouring the concrete.

"I bought a foam-like casting material, but concrete doesn't pour that well into a mold with features like this," Nufer said. "I probably cast six sets of hands (to create) the right consistency so that the new hands would have enough details and enough strength."

The project was also compli-

cated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Al Birnschein, finance chairperson at SS. Peter and Paul Parish, said the project was delayed more than a year due to the pandemic. When the parish began plans to restore the statue, Birnschein said someone told him about Nufer, whose restoration work was featured in The Compass in 2016.

Our full story appears in the July 2 issue.

## FRANKLY, FRANCIS



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are delving into the Letter to the Galatians, a little at a time. We have seen that these Christians find themselves in conflict on how to live the faith. The Apostle Paul begins writing his Letter by reminding them of their past relationship, his unease at being far from them, and the unchanging love he retains for each one of them. However, he does not fail to point out his concern that the Galatians should follow the correct path: it is the concern of a father, who has generated the communities in the faith. His intention is very clear: it is necessary to reaffirm the novelty of the Gospel, which the Galatians received through his preaching, to build the true identity on which to base their existence. And this is the principle: to reaffirm the newness of the Gospel, which the Galatians had received from the Apostle.

+ Pope Francis, June 30, 2021

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## Bishop Ricken lifts dispensation for Sunday Mass attendance

BY SAM LUCERO | THE COMPASS

**ALLOUEZ** — Bishop David Ricken has announced that he is lifting the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass. The obligation will return on Sunday, Aug. 15, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven.

Bishop Ricken stated that while the COVID-19 pandemic "brought great sufferings of

illness and loss of life among our families, ... we now find greater health returning to our communities."

"Since we are experiencing greater health in our communities and our parishes, after much discernment and consultation, I have decided to lift the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass," he wrote.

Bishop Ricken first granted the dispensation on March 13, 2020, as the spread of the

COVID-19 virus grew throughout northeast Wisconsin. The initial dispensation was granted for the last three Sundays of March. Four days later, he announced that the dispensation would be extended "for the next four to eight weeks."

On Aug. 31, 2020, the bishops of Wisconsin issued a statement announcing plans for an end to the dispensation in all five dioceses.

Our full story appears in the July 16 issue.

# 5 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

## Clare of Assisi

BY PATRICIA KASTEN | THE COMPASS

**1** St. Clare is honored on Aug. 11. Also known as "Chiara," she founded the Poor Clares.

**2** Clare heard St. Francis preach and, at 18, fled her home to his Portiuncula chapel. Francis accepted her vows and, 16 days later, her sister, St. Agnes of Assisi, joined her.

**3** The Poor Clares' monastery became part of San Damiano Church in Assisi. Her remains lie there today.

**4** In artwork, Clare holds a monstrance. When Saracens invaded Assisi, she ordered the Blessed Sacrament raised so the invaders could see it. They fled.

**5** In 1958, Pope Pius XII made her patron of television because, in 1251, as she lay ill in her cell, she heard and saw mid-night Mass at the basilica across town.

# The greatest gift Jesus left his church

Dear friends and followers of Jesus:

**T**he greatest gift Jesus left his church was the gift of the Eucharist, the very gift of God himself.

We encounter the Word through hearing it proclaimed, and through doing what Jesus asks us to do during the eucharistic prayer, when the priest repeats the words of Jesus:



## BISHOP'S CORNER

Bishop David Ricken

"... He took bread and, giving thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: 'Take this, all of you, and eat of it, for this is my body, which will be given up for you.' In a similar way, when supper was ended, he took the chalice and, once

more giving thanks, he gave it to his disciples, saying: 'Take this, all of you, and drink from it, for this is the chalice of my blood, the blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in memory of me.'"

Every Sunday, at your parish, the Eucharist — the greatest gift given to humanity — is celebrated. What a gift!

In the last several months, the pandemic has brought great sufferings of illness and loss of life among our families, and much uncertainty in

understanding the full ramifications of the virus. This uncertainty led to a cautionary pause in public celebrations of "in-person" Masses.

Last summer brought a return to "in-person" Mass once again, with proper precautions installed to help provide a safe environment for all in attendance. The Mass attendance numbers slowly began to increase as the people returned to the pews.

Thankfully, we now find greater health returning to our communities and people are returning to Mass in larger and larger numbers each Sunday for public, in-person celebration of the holy Eucharist.

Since we are experiencing greater health in our communities and our parishes, after much discernment and consultation, I have decided to lift the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass, effective on Aug. 15, the solemnity of the Assumption of Our Lady into heaven.

The Sunday Mass obligation fulfills, in part, the basic moral obligation which God has given us in the third commandment — to "Keep holy the Sabbath." As Catholics, we believe that to miss Mass on any given Sunday without a serious reason is a serious and grave sin. Why? Because it violates one of the Ten Commandments and, second, it can give a clear indication that our relationship with God is not really that important to us.

Read the entire column in the July 16 issue.

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## Parish SNAPSHOT



On Sunday, June 6, 2021, Holy Trinity Parish in Oconto, celebrated the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ with a eucharistic procession. Leading the vehicle procession throughout the City of Oconto was Fr. Francis Nusi, who carried the Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance. The procession began at Holy Trinity Church, made four stops throughout the city, and concluded at the church. Hymns of praise and thanksgiving were sung throughout the procession, along with benediction and a blessing at each stop.

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