

# Blessed Sacrament Parish

Offering Transformational Encounters with Jesus

**2275 Diamond Avenue NE Grand Rapids, MI 49505**

Phone: (616) 447 - 7554 | [bsacrament.net](http://bsacrament.net) | [church@bsacrament.net](mailto:church@bsacrament.net)

**Mass Times:** Sunday 10:30 a.m. | Tuesday 8:30 a.m.

**Fr. Christopher Epplett** | Canonical Administrator | [cepplott@stalphonsusgr.org](mailto:cepplott@stalphonsusgr.org)

**Bulletin submissions:** [communication@stalphonsusgr.org](mailto:communication@stalphonsusgr.org)



June 29, 2025 | Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles



## Vacation Bible School July 21-24 | 9 a.m. to noon

All Saints Academy in collaboration with Blessed Sacrament and St Alphonsus parishes will offer **Wilderness Adventure through the Sacraments**. Vacation Bible School will be available for children who are 4 years old or entering grades K-5 in the upcoming school year.



**Join the VBS Team:** Adult and Teen volunteers are welcome for many roles. Teens entering grades 6-12 in the upcoming school year are invited to serve on the music, art, or skit teams. We also need Trail Guides and assistants at the craft, games, snack or faith station. Join the fun!



**Please donate to support the Wilderness Adventure Vacation Bible School** this summer. We need various supplies and appreciate your help. Check the VBS Donation area after Masses or contact Rebecca at [rebecca@stalphonsusgr.org](mailto:rebecca@stalphonsusgr.org) or (616) 821-4899 for details. Thank you!

To register, volunteer, donate, or questions please contact Rebecca at [rebecca@stalphonsusgr.org](mailto:rebecca@stalphonsusgr.org) or (616) 821-4899

## Parish Schedule

**Saturday, June 28**

**Sunday, June 29 – Sts. Peter & Paul**

10:30 a.m. **Mass** | Mt 16:13-19

+Deacon George & +Virginia LeMire

**Monday, June 30**

**Tuesday, July 1**

8:30 a.m. **Mass** | Mt 8:23-27

+David Wrona

9:15 a.m. **Bible Study**

5:45 p.m. **Children's Choir**

6 p.m. **Pickleball**

6:15 p.m. **Honor Choir**

**Wednesday, July 2**

**Thursday, July 3 – Office Closed**

7:00 p.m. **Revive Ladies Basketball**

**Friday, July 4 – Office Closed**

**Saturday, July 5**

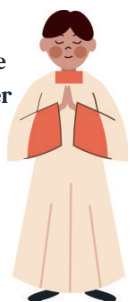
**Sunday, July 6 – Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

10:30 a.m. **Mass** | Lk 10:1-12,17-20

+David Dodge

## Altar Server Training

We are seeking to train new altar servers to serve at the weekend Masses. Those entering fourth grade or higher are eligible to learn how to serve in this important role. To express interest, parents can email Fr. Christopher, including the best days/times for training, [cepplott@stalphonsusgr.org](mailto:cepplott@stalphonsusgr.org). Please also include child's age, grade, parish(es), and any other relevant information. Training will occur later this summer



## Interested in Catholicism?

Are you searching for a deeper relationship with God? Fulfillment of your purpose in life? Are you attracted to the truth, beauty, and goodness you've experienced in the Catholic Church? Interested in becoming Catholic? Contact Fr. Christopher at [cepplott@stalphonsusgr.org](mailto:cepplott@stalphonsusgr.org)



Phone: 616-447-2997

Website: [asagr.org](http://asagr.org)

Blog: [asatoday.blogspot.com](http://asatoday.blogspot.com)

### School Sponsors Are Needed!

If your business or a business you know of would like to sponsor our school for the 2025-2026 school year, please direct them to our sponsorship form found on our website at [asagr.org/sponsors](http://asagr.org/sponsors). There are many sponsorship levels available, or we can customize one to fit your business' desires! Sponsors will receive recognition in our weekly email newsletters, on our website, in our Eaglefest and musical booklets and in other ways as possible throughout the year. Additionally, sponsors will receive complimentary tickets to Eaglefest in November and the musical in January.

## Evangelization

Following the vision set forth by our bishop, the mission for our parishes is to evangelize. This means we ourselves must experience life-changing encounters with Jesus as we journey towards discipleship. To restate and be clear, the vision statement is: "Offering every person in our community transformational encounters with Jesus." This must begin with our own ongoing transformation as we grow in a deeper relationship with God.

The three ways we see this growth are in the stages of encounter, enrich, and engage. These terms mean we experience these things in a cycle of continued growth. We do not simply encounter Jesus once, though there should be an initial encounter we can recall that began to make our faith real. Jesus invites us into various life-altering experiences of him throughout our lives.

Looking at enrich, this means we are being continually formed in our faith. There is so much to know and understand about Catholicism, the role of the Church, and how all this impacts our outlook on life and the world in which we live. Opportunities to learn must be a regular offering in our parish life. Finally, we engage in many ways, primarily through evangelizing. Often we want to skip to acts of service and charity and presume these actions are going to translate into sharing the faith.

While our actions should match our beliefs, we cannot rely upon them solely without words, without sharing about why we act and live our lives the way we do (however imperfectly at times). Though it is often quoted, St. Francis never said the phrase: "Preach the Gospel always, when necessary use words." Words are always necessary – God created the world through words (He spoke and it was!).

For us to be successful in this vision and renewal of mission, the pastor needs to be supported by a well-functioning staff. Ongoing work is being done to move from being a staff to being a team. We appreciate all prayers as we experience the pains and joys of this process. My hope is to balance personnel with experience working at each parish as well as on board new staff members with fresh perspectives and particular gifts helpful to our functioning.

Recently this has resulted in realigning our departments and moving some staff to new roles. We have also added new personnel, most recently Whitney Doane, who begins in July as our Co-Director of Mission and Youth Evangelization. Whitney brings more than a dozen years of successful parish experience to our parishes. Carol Fedewa is sharing as Co-Director of Mission as well as Director of Evangelization and Discipleship, while Gabe Groh is shifting into the role of Worship Director. Marie Lemire's work in Pastoral Care continues to expand to meet the needs of parishioners. In the coming weeks, our staff will be introducing themselves in the bulletin so that you know more about them as things are reshaped to effectively carry out our vision and mission.

Peace,  
Fr. Christopher

ALL ARE INVITED TO

# CAMPFIRE CATECHISM

An evening of Q&A with Fr. Christopher answering questions on our Catholic faith.

Bring a lawn chair and a beverage and join us for a bonfire outside at the circle drive outside the rectory.

**July 9 | 6:30 p.m.**  
St. Alphonsus Parish

With the change in priest/pastoral assignments in July, it means we will need to make some changes and reevaluate overall. There are three changes foreseen.

The first change is a more unified pastoral vision. Since I am now pastor of both parishes, the staff and operations are being realigned to create better unity and cohesion. To order things better with staffing, our department are being realigned to better fit the pastoral vision and meet the needs of parishioners. As this takes shape over the summer, please pray for our staff members and this process. There will be a parish vision meeting in the fall to explain the vision, mission, and key focus areas as we move forward (to be held at Blessed Sacrament for both parishes).

Secondly, with both Fr. Eugene and Fr. Colin receiving new assignments, I no longer have extra help for daily Mass. I want to make sure we have at least one daily Mass at Blessed Sacrament, so we will make Wednesdays that day. Eventually, we will be ending the Tuesday morning Mass, but we will have a Wednesday Mass in the summer months going forward (year round). I had considered other options to balance between the two campuses, but the traffic for Confession and daily Mass at St. Alphonsus has too much momentum and popularity to justify changing locations.

Lastly, we will consolidate into one larger bulletin. This will allow better communication and more clearly advertise the various options for spiritual growth, faith formation, community, Christian service, etc across both campuses. Streamlining our communication is also more cost effective and will lead to less confusion with our internal communications.

We will be implementing these changes over the summer.

**Card Ministry:** Please remember in your prayers parishioner Virgil & Margaret Baker. They are both celebrating their birthdays this month. Cards can be sent to 2431 Forest Hill Ave SE, Apt 3202, Grand Rapids, 49546.

## Weekly Offertory - June 22

Adult Envelopes: \$7,413.85  
Automatic Envelopes: \$1,036  
Youth: \$1  
Loose Stewardship: \$216  
**Total Stewardship this week: \$8,666.85**

YTD: \$470,421.44  
Budget YTD: \$487,547.17  
Last YTD: \$488,084.19  
5% Tithe this week: \$433.34  
Tithe YTD: \$23,521.07

June 29, 2025 | Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles

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# DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

*Office of the Bishop*

June 29, 2025

Dear Friends in Christ,

Throughout history, the Church has continually responded to societal changes with apostolic faith and steadfast hope. On the ancient Solemnity of Saints Peter & Paul, we honor these formidable Apostles and their martyrdom. Unique in their own way and filled with the Holy Spirit, through many trials and tribulations, these Apostles enabled a fledgling church to take root and grow. As a Church, we are inspired by their courageous witness in steadfastly proclaiming the Gospel to the world. This same mission of evangelization is entrusted to us, yet we know how challenging it can be.

More than a year ago, I invited you to join me in a diocesan-wide initiative to pray for an increase in vocations, especially by praying the diocesan prayer for vocations at every Mass. In 2024, we had one priestly ordination. In 2025, seven pastors were either granted senior priest status or reassigned outside the Diocese of Grand Rapids, and there were no priestly ordinations. Given this reality, the Presbyteral Council and priests of the diocese urged me to take a hard look at the well-being of our priests and parish communities. Where do we see vibrant parish communities characterized by active participation, steady attendance, and financial health?

I am grateful to our pastors who have generously taken on the responsibility of shepherding two or three parish communities, but this is not a sustainable long-term model of parish administration. We must make the administrative burdens and sacramental responsibilities more manageable, which requires reducing the footprint of our physical structures within the diocese.

To guide us through this necessary transition, the diocese engaged the services of Meitler, a Catholic consulting group that has led pastoral planning processes in dioceses across the country. They have helped us formulate a data-driven pastoral plan that will provide crucial direction for the years ahead. The first step involved collecting relevant, self-reported data from every parish in the diocese. This data gave us an eight-year overview of parish vitality. Meitler then analyzed these figures alongside community demographic data – such as population trends and religious affiliation – to reveal how each parish and its surrounding community are evolving.

In addition to collecting and analyzing data, the consultants visited every parish and



interviewed pastors to provide important context. Each parish designated two diocesan liaisons who could engage parishioners and collaborate with Meitler to integrate local perspectives. These individuals led local meetings and contributed feedback at deanery-wide gatherings, ensuring broad participation from the lay faithful. I am deeply grateful to the diocesan liaisons and parish leadership for their insight and commitment to this process.

I also wish to extend my gratitude to our priests, who have worked together to review each draft of the plan and offer feedback on its potential impact on their parish and the diocese as a whole.

The report is the culmination of a year of dedicated effort and reflects the gravity of the moment we face. I recognize that change is difficult and takes an emotional toll, especially when that change occurs in places and communities where key moments in our life of faith occurred. Yet, we risk stagnation and even decay if we do not make adjustments. Each parish is a communion of persons extending beyond the confines of a building. Sometimes, in order for that communion of persons to be healthy and continue to grow, the administrative and physical structures of that community must transform.


It is providential that this process has taken place during the Jubilee Year of Hope. As Pope Francis reminded us in the bull of indiction introducing the Jubilee Year: "In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring. Even so, uncertainty about the future may at times give rise to conflicting feelings, ranging from confident trust to apprehensiveness, from serenity to anxiety, from firm conviction to hesitation and doubt" (*Spes non Confundit*, 1).

The first Christians experienced a similar range of feelings as they set out to grow the early Church. Saint Paul encourages the Colossians, "So, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in him, rooted in him and built upon him and established in the faith as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving" (Col 2:6-7).

Let us take the words of Saint Paul to heart and remain rooted in Christ, overflowing with gratitude for all He has given us. Be assured of my prayers for you and your parish community as this plan is implemented.

**The full report can be found on the diocesan website: [GRdiocese.org/rooted-in-christ/](http://GRdiocese.org/rooted-in-christ/)**

Sincerely yours in Christ,

  
Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak  
Bishop of Grand Rapids



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our community.

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