

## Dear Parishioners:

**Annual Catholic Appeal 2024:** “We are One Body in Christ”: The theme for the 2024 Annual Catholic Appeal of the Diocese of Madison is “We are One Body in Christ.” Taken from Paul’s Letter to the Romans 12:5, this simple phrase expresses our solidarity with our Lord and with one another, united in both faith and mission.

We ask that God give us the ability to put our faith in Him, and to allow us the capacity to love and care for those in our parishes, our Diocese, and the Church throughout the world. The Lord wants us to know the Eucharist as the source and summit of our unity in Him and as the flowing source of the graces we need to embrace the challenges we face.

Each pledge to the Annual Catholic Appeal supports Diocesan ministries, education and services and assures a strong future for the Diocese of Madison and the people that it serves. This year each of us is asked to consider making a pledge, payable over six months. Your gift will help enable the Diocese to reach its goal and provide for the ministries supported by the appeal.

Here is the breakdown of goals as given by the Diocese to each parish in our Pastorate.

1. St. Joseph Baraboo - \$101,577.00
2. St. Cecilia, Dells - \$69,094.00
3. Sacred Heart, Reedsburg - \$57,228.00
4. Holy Angels, LaValle - \$14,665.00

If everyone gives according to their ability, each of our parishes will make their goals. Any amount received over and above the goal, the Diocese will return to the parish for their use. Let us unite to support this year’s ACA. If you received your pledge form in the mail, please complete it and mail it back. Thank you for your prayerful consideration and generous response.

**The Season of Lent:** The season of Lent runs from Ash Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> until the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on March 28<sup>th</sup>. Lent traditionally has been a time of fasting, abstinence, and prayer, in order to draw our hearts and minds closer to the Lord (*see information below regarding the Church’s teaching regarding fasting and abstinence*). Lent is a time that we are encouraged to show more charity to people, especially the elderly, the sick, and the marginalized. The Alleluia is not sung during Lent and is replaced by the Lenten Gospel acclamation, and musical instruments are limited to only necessary support for singing during Mass. During Lent, the sanctuary is not decorated with flowers to help bolster the austere season of Lent.

### Rules about Fasting and Abstinence:

**Abstinence-** All Catholics from age 14 through their lifetime are obliged to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, all Fridays in Lent, and Good Friday. This rule does not preclude the use of eggs, dairy products, meat broth, gravy, and sauces.

**Fasting-** All Catholics from the day after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday to the day after their 59<sup>th</sup> birthday are expected to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The law of fasting allows one full meal only and small amounts of food at the other mealtimes; however, the combined quantity of food taken at the two lighter meals should not exceed the amount at the full meal.

**Are there exceptions to the rule of fasting?** Those who fall within the age of fasting but have a medical condition that requires them to take pills and foods at specific times are not obligated by this rule. They should follow their doctor’s recommendations regardless of their age.

**Ash Wednesday, and Stations of the Cross during Lent:** I invite everyone to begin their Lenten journey by attending an Ash Wednesday service within Pastorate 7. Mass times are published in this weekend's bulletin or can be viewed at: [www.pastorate7.com](http://www.pastorate7.com). Please also see the Parish and Pastorate bulletin for the schedule for weekly Stations of the Cross by location.

### **Pastorate 7 Into The Deep Updates:**

1. On Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, I submitted the potential Pastorate Names to Bishop Hying as directed by the Into the Deep committee. When the Parish Leadership met, their choice according to preference were St. Francis, St. John Paul II, St. Kateri Tekakwitha and St. Isidore. When I opened it up to the whole pastorate to participate, the order of preference changed to: (1<sup>st</sup>). St. John Paul II, (2<sup>nd</sup>). St. Francis, (3<sup>rd</sup>). St. Isidore and (4<sup>th</sup>). St. Kateri Tekakwitha. The bishop will be announcing his selection on or before Easter Sunday. It bears repeating that the current names of our Church Buildings and School will not change. We will however get a new pastorate name to replace "Pastorate 7".
2. Transition Team: I am pleased to announce the members of the Transition Team that is charged with helping me in bringing our Pastorate to the merger. These men and women were chosen from all the parishes in our pastorate. The members are as follows: Marietta Reuter, Mary Klingenmeyer, Cheryl Gerow, Brenda Bergman, Ben Borchert, Tim Chaptman, Den Terry, Michael Zeihen, Nick Kinsman, and Pat Finnegan.
3. Per the "Into the Deep" guidelines, we are to form subcommittees headed by members from this group that will oversee:
  - Mission (Go Make Disciples, Discipleship/Faith Formation)
  - Worship and Sacraments
  - Administration/Finances/Human Resources
  - Facilities and Buildings
  - Catholic Schools
  - Parish Activities

The Transition Team will be reaching out to staff and others as needed to gather the necessary data to aid in the decision process. How do we organize our resources and people to serve the needs of our new parish? What are the opportunities that our coming together will bring? Are we willing to overcome past competitions and differences for the sake of our common vision of building a new parish where faith grows, people are united, our children and young people are formed, and resources are realigned for the sake of mission? While maintaining some of our good traditions like festivals, dinners, Christmas Markets, etc., are we ready to pour new wine into new wine skins? These, and many more, are some of the questions we must answer as we move along in the "Into the Deep" process. I have faith that the Holy Spirit will guide us in all our deliberations. We will keep everyone informed as we move along through the process.

God bless,

Fr. Paul