

St. James the Greater

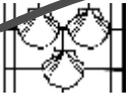
Where All Are Welcome

The Baptism of the Lord ✚ January 10, 2020



“I HAVE BAPTIZED
YOU WITH WATER; HE
WILL BAPTIZE YOU
WITH THE HOLY
SPIRIT.” - MK 1:8

THE BAPTISM
OF THE LORD



Message from Fr. Tom

It's my last shot at saying "Merry Christmas" to everyone, since in the Church the season ends with the last celebration of Sunday Mass this weekend, the feast of the Lord's Baptism. I'm thrilled to say that at the **8:00 mass Joel and Amanda Clark will present their second child to us for a baptism!** It's always good to have a baptism on this feast day. Perhaps I've mentioned before that this feast day is very important to me because when I was on my pre-ordination retreat back in 1991, Fr. Heagle asked me to meditation day after day on the story of Jesus's Baptism. He wanted to make sure I made the connection between Jesus being a "Beloved Son" called to serve the world and myself as a priest knowing myself as a "Beloved Son" also called to serve. Priests and people serve in different ways, but I firmly believe that the same is true for each of you. You are each a "Beloved Daughter" or "Beloved Son" called to serve the world.

A lot of you know I also like icons a lot. **When I was in Jerusalem for the first time in 1994, an icon of the Lord's Baptism caught my eye** at the Abbey of the Dormition. I didn't have enough money to buy it at the time, but after I got home I was able to contact the abbey and eventually, after about three months, this treasure arrived at St. Patrick's Church in Onalaska where I was serving. Here it is:



Can you see the Father's love?? That is what drew me so strongly to this image. In fact, in my phone conversation with the monk at the abbey, for whom English with far from his first language, it was a bit of a struggle to make sure that the icon I wanted was the one he said was still on the shelf. I said, "Does it have God the Father at the top of the image?" "Yes, yes, God the Father, yes, he is there." This, by the way, is unusual, for good reason in iconography, but in this case it was important to me. Further, I had to clarify, "Is God the Father smiling?" He didn't understand what smiling was. I rephrased, "Is God the Father does he look happy?" "Happy? Oh, yes, yes, God is very very happy!" **Then I knew I had the right one** and sent off a cashier's check to Jerusalem. I prayed in front of this icons with some parish staff and we all remarked how it shows the People of God in all their diversity looking at the Lord with hope. The pious man kneeling behind the Baptist, the young mother trying to keep her child from running away, and the lost and forlorn figure almost lost in the trunk of the tree.

So it is in a healthy Church, and in a healthy parish. If we are really living our vocation to be a welcoming community then our community should have all sorts of people in it, and in as much as this is the case, we should be very happy.

From the sublime to the grinding reality of life, **Bishop Callahan is asking all the faithful of the Diocese of La Crosse for funds to restore the Cathedral of St. Joseph the Workman, which is literally crumbling.** Last year, stonework from the steeple started falling from a very high point onto the sidewalk below. Since then the sidewalk has been closed, restoration architects have come up with a plan, and some other needed work inside the cathedral has been tacked onto this project, that totals about \$6 million dollars. Why should we with our own parish to support consider supporting this far-away project at another parish? Well, even though the cathedral is its own parish, it is not a large parish, about half the size of St. James, and, more important, our Cathedral is just that. It is more than a parish church, but a diocesan church where priests like me are ordained and where the holy oils for use throughout the diocese are blessed during Holy Week.

A couple **things to note:** Even with relatively few parishioners, the cathedral parish has generated over \$1 million dollars, and there is a matching grant offer of \$3 million from St. Ambrose Financial Services which administers parish savings accounts and has accumulated through its investments in excess of what parishes have on deposit with them, making this gift possible. Also, would you believe that all the priests in the diocese are being asked to give \$3600 over three years? So, if all of that falls into place, a stream of modest gifts from parishes like ours throughout the diocese should be able to fund this project. Either this week or next, we will make a push to get the word out and let you know how you can contribute, if you are able. As always, our sustaining gifts to support St. James should be our priority, as I see it, and then the Diocesan Appeal, and finally extra important projects like this one. Thank you and Peace.

3 January 2021, Fr. Tom's Homily Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord

Matthew 2:1-2

Today's feast is called the Epiphany of the Lord because something is revealed to the visiting magi, and to us today. Theologically, we say that Jesus revealed himself as more than the messiah of the Jewish People; he is also the Light of the World, for all people.

I wonder if the magi came to that conclusion right off, or if they had a more immediate emotional reaction to seeing the Christ child in that cave with Mary and Joseph and animals nearby. **Whatever profound experience they had, they could only have it because they were open to it. They came as seekers, with the belief that something new and important had happened in the world beneath that star. They were hungry to find out what it meant that a new King of the Jews was born.**

This is of course in contrast to Herod and "all of Jerusalem" who were not curious and seeking, but who were troubled that something new was coming to change the state of things. Herod clearly doesn't want any competition since he is the current King. And the religious leaders whom he consults have found a peaceable relationship with the Roman occupiers such that if they didn't make any waves they could go on practicing their religion. **Things were just fine as they were. As a result, they would receive no Epiphany or revelation; they were not open to one.**

We might ponder this **during our Covid times**. Probably all of us pine for pre-Covid days and getting back to "normal." Could we also use this time for deeper insight into life and how we should live? Might these days reveal something to us? Things like the importance of relationships, the importance of caring for one another, the difference between needs and wants, and putting more energy and into providing for the needs of ourselves and others and less into satisfying our wants. That could be an example of someone's Epiphany during these months.



Beholding the Christ child in the crib can be a catalyst into these sort of reflections. Can you imagine yourself as one of the magi, finally having arrived under the star and directly to this holy family and baby in swaddling clothes? What would that be like? We can try to imagine this, or we can also spend time in front of an actual Nativity scene here or at home. **St. Ignatius instructed his Jesuits to do this imaginative exercise. So, I wasn't surprised when I read Pope Francis' Christmas Eve homily, which I think was the fruit of such a meditation. He concluded his homily with these words:**

To us a son is given. Jesus, you are the Child who makes me a child. You love me as I am, not as I imagine myself to be. In embracing you, the Child of the manger, I once more embrace my life. In welcoming you, the Bread of life, I too desire to give my life. You, my Savior, teach me to serve. You who did not leave me alone, help me to comfort your brothers and sisters, for, from this night forward, all are my brothers and sisters.

I felt the power of that meditation immediately. Can you see yourself encountering Jesus in the manger looking at you, and having your heart melt like that? Loved as you are, not as you imagine yourself to be, acknowledging and loving your true and vulnerable self as Jesus a vulnerable baby loves you. And being filled with the desire to give your life to others as he will do when he has a bigger body like yours.

Now the fear-dominated crowd, Herod and the rest, all who liked things just as they were—**none of them will see anything like that in the Christ child. Why? They will not make the journey to Bethlehem. They will not get close enough. It is from a safe and controlled distance that they make their conclusions. They will not get close enough to enter the cave and look into the manger and see, with the eyes of faith, a disarming, a revealing, a life-altering love that causes our hearts to melt and our lives to change.**

Mass Intentions & Schedule

Weekday masses are at 9:00 AM Tuesday-Friday.
 Wednesday and Friday are School Only while school is in session.
 Saturday 4:30 PM, Sunday 8:00 and 10:00 AM.
 Masks & social distancing are required.

Sat.	Jan. 9	4:30 Bob Krumenauer
Sun	Jan. 10	8:00 People of St. James 10:00 Eddie Barnett
Tue.	Jan. 12	William Hollern
Wed.	Jan. 13	Lyle and Arlee Berg
Thu.	Jan. 14	Edward and Ruth Hollern
Fri.	Jan. 15	Charlie Martenson
Sat.	Jan. 16	4:30 Bob Krumenauer
Sun	Jan. 17	8:00 People of St. James 10:00 Eddie Barnett

Regis Events

- January 12: Jeans for Jesus (Bob's House for Dogs)
- January 13: Early Release at 1:30 p.m.
- January 18: No School, Staff Development
- January 19-29: Virtual Learning, No in person class

Church open for prayer

Just a reminder that the church is open for private prayer Monday-Thursday 9-5. Enter through parish office.

COMMITMENT TO PARISH LIFE

Quarterly statements were recently mailed. Please look over the left side and let Anne know if you want to make any adjustments to your CPL for 2021. Changes could include the amount, frequency or method of payment. These statements are for *your* information but the right side can only be helpful if the numbers are correct on the left.

NOTE:

If you are signing up for automatic bank withdraws to make your donations to St. James, please use your envelope number as your account number. This saves our money counters a tremendous amount of time and helps to assure you get proper credit for your donation.

Catholic Schools Week is Feb. 1 - 5 - watch for bulletin insert on events!

Sermon on the Amount

December 27, 2020

Sunday Adult Envelopes (126)	\$15,351.000
2019 same week (166)	\$12,103.00
Students	\$2.00
Plate	<u>\$13.00</u>
Total	\$15,366.00
Christmas (2019—\$14,418.00)	\$7,595.00
Christmas Plate (2019—\$3,861.42)	\$1,506.00
Year to date Adult Env./CPL Income through Nov. 30, 2020:	
Actual (July 1-Nov. 30)	\$257,364.00
Budgeted (July 1-Nov. 30)	\$263,515.00

Long term maintenance & facilities improvement fund and *Past*Present*Future Campaign* income for Dec. 27 was \$315.00 for a total since July 1, 2020 of \$40,052.60.

Parish Directories are in

If your photo is in there, you can pick your copy up at the parish office Monday-Thursday 9-5.

The Diocese of La Crosse, through its policies and procedures, seeks to provide a prompt, appropriate and compassionate response to reporters of sexual abuse of a child by any diocesan agent (bishop, priest, deacon, employee, religious, vendor or volunteer). Anyone wishing to make a report of an allegation of sexual abuse should send that report to Mrs. Karen Becker, Complaint Intake Agent, at the Diocese of La Crosse, P.O. Box 4004, La Crosse, WI 54602-4004. Alternatively, you can contact Mrs. Becker at 608.791.0179 or intakeagent@diolc.org. The reporting form is available through the Diocese of La Crosse Office of Safe Environment or on the diocesan website at: diolc.org/safeenvironment/reporting. Individuals are also encouraged to take their reports directly to civil authorities. Copies of the diocesan policy are available through your local parish and on the diocesan website. If you have any questions about the Diocese of La Crosse and the implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, please contact Teresa Brown, Diocese of La Crosse, at 608.791.2679 or tbrown@diolc.org.

SCRIP Available

Contact Anne during the week, or go to Regis Central Office. This is a no-cost fundraiser for the Parish.

Parish Staff Phone: 715-835-5887

Fr. Tom Krieg	Pastor	tom4664@aol.com
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Jacky Miller	Pastoral Minister	jacchuck@yahoo.com
Anne Henriksen	Office Manager	stjameseac@aol.com
Mary Kolstad	Crđ. of Liturgical Music	kolstadmary@gmail.com
Kelly Beaudrie	Dir. of Religious Ed.	beaudrie.kelly@gmail.com
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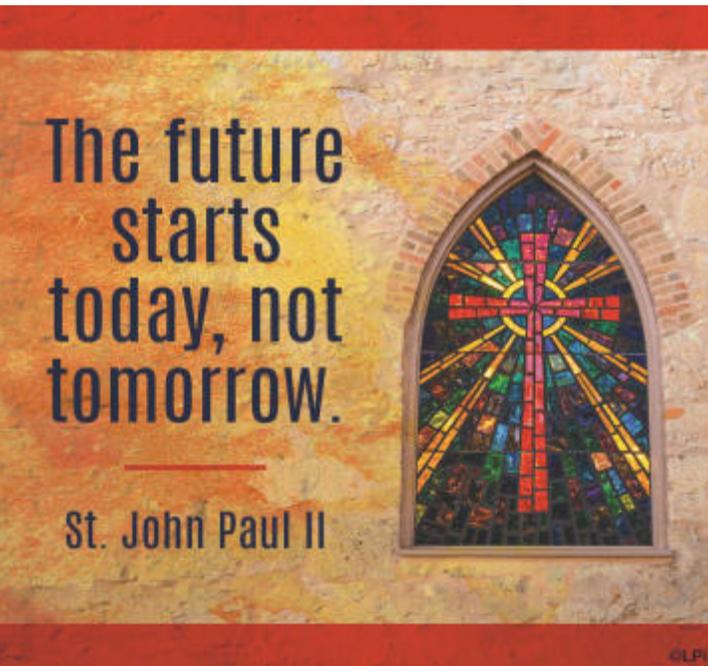
St. James School Phone: 715-830-2277

Jackie Lutz Principal,	jlut@regiscatholicsschools.com
Shanna Donkers, Administrative Assistant,	sdonkers@regiscatholicsschools.com
Linda Schultz, Commission Rep.-RCS,	linda1735@gmail.com
Bulletin deadlines: end of day Mondays.	

Religious Education will resume in person elementary classes on January 6 with Group B from 6:15-7:30. Middle School will continue to be virtual.

Mass Sign Up

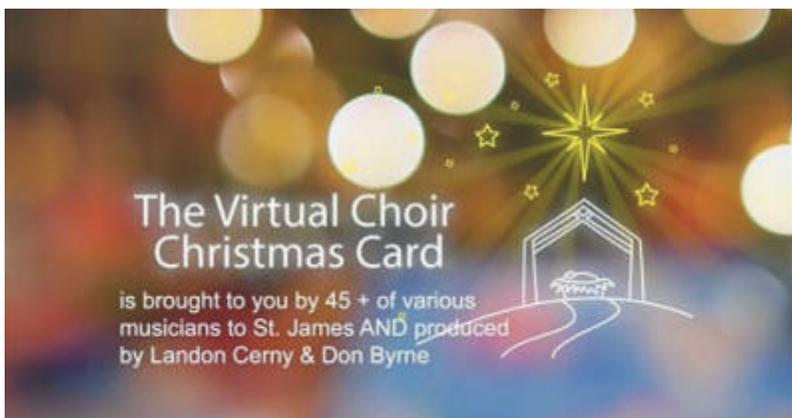
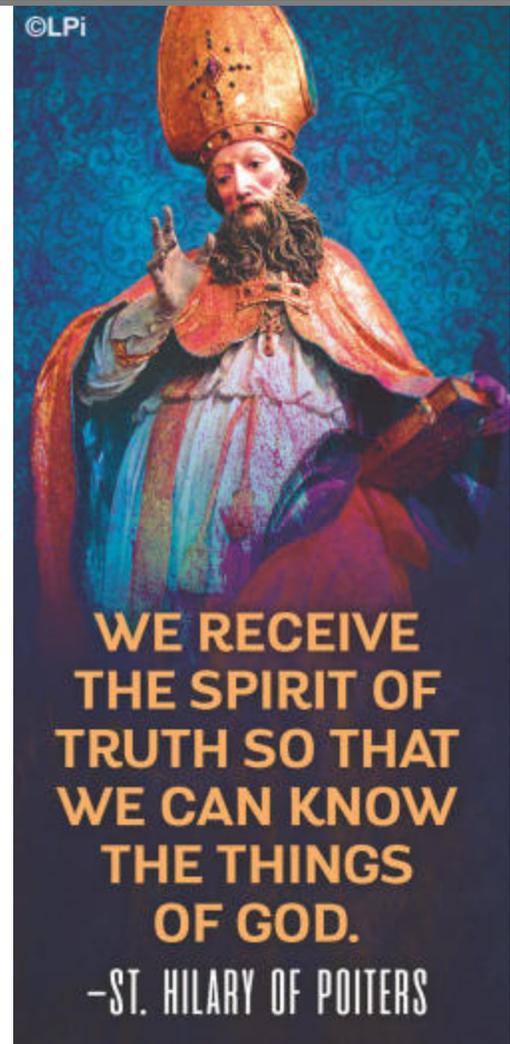
For help signing up for weekend masses, or if you have questions on the system, please contact Kelly Beaudrie at beaudrie.kelly@gmail.com, or 715-828-8313.



Thanks for giving to the Retirement Fund for Religious! “We are conscious of the great generosity of the many benefactors who support the Retirement Fund for Religious each year,” says a Catholic sister. “Support from the fund has been a tremendous blessing to our retired sisters.” Thank you for donating in the envelopes in the pews.

Feed the Hungry

Thanks to the persistence of Mary Kolstad, we now know the hours at St. Francis Food Pantry, and can now resume collecting donation for the food pantry. Bins are at the entrances. Hunger is a big issue in Eau Claire during Covid times. Please help if you can.



The Virtual Choir Christmas Card

was a collaboration of Love of Music, of our Faith and of the need to BRING A BIT of JOY to St. James through our choirs. I want to THANK ALL of those musicians involved who were able to give freely of their time and energy.

THANK YOU Landon Cerny and Don Byrne for your continued dedication to help the musicians SING and PLAY together again, even if it was “VIRTUAL”.



Hearing the recording swells my heart. THANK YOU everyone for your part in this ADVENTURE.

To ALL of the Parishioners and To ALL of the musicians, THANK YOU for your commitment to St. James and bringing your beautiful spirit to the music.—Mary Kolstad (bulletin editor note: thanks to Mary as well for your hard work on this!)

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