

St. James the Greater

Fifth Sunday of Lent ✚ March 21, 2021



*Assorted Quotes of
Blessed Julian of Norwich*
c.1342-1416

“All shall be well,
and all shall be well,
and all manner of
things shall be well.”

“The greatest honor
we can give Almighty God
is to live gladly because of
the knowledge of his love.”

“God loved us
before he made us;
and his love has never
diminished and never shall.”

“...the goodness of God is
the highest object of prayer
and it reaches down
to our lowest need.”

—Assorted Quotes of Julian of Norwich

All Shall Be Well

Parish Staff

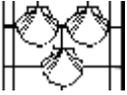
Phone: 715-835-5887

Fr. Tom Krieg	Pastor	tom4664@aol.com
Christine Warloski	Pastoral Associate	christine@stjameseauclaire.org
Jacky Miller	Pastoral Minister	jacchuck@yahoo.com
Anne Henriksen	Office Manager	stjameseac@aol.com
Mary Kolstad	Coord. of Liturgical Music	mkolstad@charter.net
Kelly Beaudrie	Dir. of Religious Ed.	beaudrie.kelly@gmail.com
Beth Cerny	Crd. of Religious Ed	elizabethcerny@hotmail.com

St. James School Phone: 715-830-2277

Jackie Lutz Principal,
jlutz@regiscatholicschools.com
Shanna Donkers, Administrative Assistant,
sdonkers@regiscatholicschools.com
Linda Schultz, Commission Rep.-RCS,
linda1735@gmail.com

Bulletin deadlines: end of day Mondays.



Message from Fr. Tom

It was just a few days over one year ago, on March 18, 2020, when here at St. James “the music died,” to quote Don McClean’s “American Pie.” By this I mean that not only did our choirs stop singing but our public masses ceased as well. I set up a little chapel in the rectory for daily mass celebrations, and on Sunday we had the great fortune of Don Byrne expertise and eagerness to serve, so that even that first weekend with locked doors the mass went out via YouTube to all our homes with internet capability. Some weeks after, Landon Cerny added his own video production skills and the team of “Don and Landon” was born, joining the likes of “Jan and Dean,” “Mantle and Maris,” and “Abbot and Costello.” Thanks to their service, there have been just short of 100,000 views of videos on the parish YouTube channel that Don created on March 19, 2020. That is a great success story in the midst of all the challenges this past year.

It was not until May 31, Pentecost Sunday, that we opened our doors again for public worship. Preparing for this re-opening involved a tremendous amount of work by our entire parish staff, particularly Christine who was in charge of all things Covid. Honestly, these were challenging times for both staff and parishioners as we tried mightily to both accommodate people’s desires and maintain virus precautions to keep the spread of Covid to a minimum within our walls. Some people left St. James because of frustration that we were playing it “too safe.” Others joined St. James because they appreciated all the precautions that made them feel safe here.

While Christine had a major role in this, the entire staff worked on our worship protocols, with weekly, sometimes pained, discussions. Our custodian Brian Schwechel, who is also head of maintenance at CVTC and lives, breathes, and dreams about virus precautions every day, kept us equipped with state of the art sanitation supplies and has not missed a single Saturday of checking people in for the 4:30 mass. I can’t say enough for the whole staff, the others being Kelly, Anne, Jacky, Mary, and Beth. I do want to single out Kelly for all the love and research puts into the weekly email that goes out on Fridays. When she was a reader at mass recently, I pointed out that she was the source of those Friday emails and the applause was immediate.

All of our council meetings and staff meetings have been done via the now necessary technology that I never heard of before April 2020: Zoom! Also through Zoom we were able to have group discussions during our YouTube retreat in the month of June with Jesuit priest Mark Thibodeaux (still online for anyone to see). In recent months, I have used Zoom to interview our Confirmation candidates, and this has worked very well. Of course, we won’t want to cancel all in-person meeting until the Second Coming of the Lord, but I suspect we will continue to use this technology in some fashion for quite some time. I’m really hoping the Diocese of La Crosse continues to have its committee meetings via Zoom since sometimes I would drive four hours (two there and two back) for an hour meeting. I eased my frustration with this by loading up on bakery items from the La Crosse Food Co-op, though.

The next “big thing” in our Covid year was on what would have been our Summer Fest weekend. We always had mass outside on the Saturday of Summer Fest—so we figured, “Why not do that still?” The only reason, as it turned out, was because a summer storm decided to pour down sheets of rain fifteen minutes before mass was to begin. However, the seed was planted (and watered) and we started having outdoor mass, or “Mass on the Grass,” every other week or so, until we started having it weekly until the piano keys, and Nick Poss’ fingers, were in danger of frostbite. Though our last couple frosty masses in November garnered only about twenty people, the earlier ones always had well over a hundred as people who felt uncomfortable coming for indoor worship jumped at the chance to worship outside.

Will this be another lasting change that comes from Covid? I don’t know about lasting. When the pandemic settles down the diocese is sure to give direction on the suitability of mass outside, but in the short-term we can expect weekly outdoor mass. It’s even looking like we will make the 10:00 mass an outdoor mass starting after Easter. St. Anne in Wausau has been doing this to good effect. The advantage is that it is much easier to staff three masses with volunteers than it is to staff four of them.

Continued on next page....

Financially, I just can hardly believe the generosity and commitment of our people. When we prepared the budget last April for this coming year, we made some big cuts and offered no raises to our staff, in anticipation of a decline in giving. I've been so relieved and grateful that this decline was nowhere near what we anticipated. Thank you.

Our music program, like a tree finding root in the desert, could not be restrained by the virus times. In new and inventive ways that took a lot of time and effort, our singers, musicians, and Don and Landon found their way to make an incredible Christmas video and soundtrack, and more such work is on the way for our Holy Week. We don't have our big choirs singing together now, and we miss that, but the music has gone on and kept our hearts awake to the beauty only it can bring.

Kelly and Beth in religious education have been so creative and techno-savvy in keeping our program going and giving families the option for both in-person and virtual religious education. It's one thing for a school system with all its resources to be able to do this, and quite another for two people for whom all this was new to put something beautiful together.

St. James School and all of Regis Catholic Schools, because of our smaller class size, was able to be open for our students five days a week starting in September. Incredible. There were some bumps along the way, and some classes were closed, especially in the middle school and high school, for short periods of time. But I have to say that the leadership, very much including our principal Jacki Lutz, has been excellent and our children had as close to a normal year as possible, masks and all.

Speaking of masks, all our ushers and support staff have been so grateful for the cooperation of people who have come to mass and worn a mask. We know anecdotally and from our survey that for some this requirement was enough to keep you away from church. I'm sorry for that and just hope everyone appreciates the reason we require masks and will until the health department saying it's OK not to: We think that people can pray and receive Eucharist with a mask and it helps mitigate the spread of the virus.

Each week in church we rely on the good will of one another. We know that the complications of having to sign up for mass and going to an assigned seat is not as pleasant as just coming in a sitting wherever you want. Honestly, there have been times when this became very stressful for both parishioners, volunteers and our staff. Decisions about our worship will continue to please some and aggravate others, I'm sure. Please know we are trying to do what is best for all. The good news is that Jesus is Risen, yes, but also the good news is that we survived.

So, where does that leave us, twelve months after the shock of Covid drastically changed our parish life? We survived; we surely will survive; further, I hope we will thrive. I remember a webinar for pastors that I attended via Zoom at the end of March last year. The presenter said, "After these Coronavirus times, parishes will either be weaker or stronger but they will not be the same." Is it possible that we can be stronger after this? What would that look like? I know that good things will flow from: An even greater charity and kindness to one another at church; a deeper joy among us when we can again gather in full force; a greater appreciation of what belonging to a parish and Sunday mass means to us; a reordering of priorities now that we know with greater clarity that life is fragile; a greater awareness of our need for God and our need for one another.

I think we will thrive when we all realize that what we have here at St. James is precious. Peace.

St. James Mission Statement

We, the people of St. James the Greater Parish in Eau Claire, are a community of Catholic believers. We nurture our relationship with God and others through prayer, worship, Scripture, evangelization and education. We are committed to spiritual growth, service and stewardship. We embrace the diversity of gifts and needs of all people.

Fish Fries

Mar. 26 - Immaculate Conception
St Raymond
Apr. 9 - St Olaf
Apr. 23 - St Olaf

Kylie Pope Memorial Fund

On March 5, Kylie Pope, a 7th grade student at Regis Middle School, died unexpectedly. We ask you to please keep the Pope family in your prayers during this most difficult time and the journey they are embarking on. As we come together as a community to support the Pope family, Regis Catholic Schools has set up a memorial fund in Kylie's honor for those who would like to make a financial donation.

To donate, please bring cash or check to your school's office or to the Regis Catholic Schools Central Office, located at 2728 Mall Drive in Eau Claire. (Please include a note that you are donating in support of the Kylie Pope Memorial Fund. Checks should be made out to Regis Catholic Schools.)

You can also donate online using PayPal. (You will have the option to indicate your willingness to offset the cost of the PayPal processing fee as you make your online donation.)

All donations will be directed to the Pope family.

A Regis Catholic Schools parent has also organized a Meal Train in support of the Pope family. Please contact Regis if you would like to show your support to the Pope family in this way.

SCRIP: Scrip is available at Regis Central Office Mon.-Thu. from 8:00 AM-4:00 PM, and Fridays 8:00 AM-12:00 PM. A limited supply of Scrip will be available at the School Office Monday-Thursday—and will be offered the third weekend of the month after all of the masses (starting this weekend). During Spring Break, the box will be available in the Parish Office.

Parish Photo Directories

Have you picked yours up yet? You can get them after mass (find Christine) or at the parish office.

New Parishioners/Pastoral Visitations/Prayer Tree/

Elizabeth Ministry: Please contact Christine if you would like to join the parish, be visited at home or at the hospital (within Covid guidelines and restrictions), have a prayer request, or if you or someone you know is expecting and would like to be supported by volunteers.

Sacrament of Baptism: A required Pre-Baptism class is offered by zoom; please contact Christine to be set up.

Sacrament of Marriage: Please contact Fr. Tom six months in advance of setting a date.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturdays 3:30-4:00 PM by the Last Supper sculpture or by appointment.

Mass Intentions & Schedule

Weekday masses are at 9:00 AM Tuesday-Friday.

Wednesday and Friday have limited seating when school is in session.

During Spring Break, Mar. 26-Apr. 5, there will be no students.

There will be an additional Monday Mass offered on Mar. 29 for Holy Week.

Saturday 4:30 PM, Sunday 8:00 and 10:00 AM.

Masks & social distancing are required.

Sat.	Mar. 20	4:30 Peter Klaver
Sun	Mar. 21	8:00 People of St. James 10:00 Eddie Barnett
Tue.	Mar. 23	Arnold Bauer
Wed.	Mar. 24	Barb Vinck
Thu.	Mar. 25	Carl Robelia
Fri.	Mar. 26	Yvonne Brown
Sat.	Mar. 27	4:30 Jim and LaVonne Kelley
Sun	Mar. 28	8:00 Pat Johnson 10:00 People of St. James

Notre Dame Parish in Chippewa Falls, WI seeks a Director of Music and Liturgy

Notre Dame Parish in Chippewa Falls, WI, is seeking an up-to-full-time Director of Music and. This position can be filled by a single individual or shared. The Director of Music plans for all liturgies; coordinates and rehears all choirs and musicians. The Director of Music manages worship aids and other duties.

The Director of Liturgy assists the pastor and staff in planning liturgies; and oversees liturgical ministry volunteers, coordinates with staff and volunteers to beautify and maintain the worship space; and other duties. Please send a cover letter and resume to Fr. Jesse Burish (pastor@thechurchofnotredame.org).

March at St. James Elementary School (Regis):

Mar. 25 - Battle of the Books
Mar. 26 - No School, Diocesan In-Service
Mar. 29-Apr. 5 - No School, Spring Break
April 5 | NO SCHOOL | Easter Monday
April 15 | Wisconsin Parental Choice Program
Enrollment Closes

Sermon on the Amount

March 7, 2021

Sunday Adult Envelopes (151)	\$15,522.50
2020 same week () \$	
Students	\$0.00
Plate	<u>\$91.00</u>
Total	\$15,613.50

Year to date Adult Env./CPL Income through Feb. 28, 2021:

Actual (July 1-Feb. 28)	\$436,032.14
Budgeted (July 1-Feb. 28)	\$417,320.00

Long term maintenance & facilities improvement fund and Past*Present*Future Campaign income for Mar. 7 was \$1,557.92.00 for a total since July 1, 2020 of \$48,841.36.

Sign up for Mass Cancellations

If you have a sign up for mass and cannot make it, PLEASE let Christine know. Masses are filling up, and no-shows are preventing someone else from being able to come to church.

Sign up Waiting List

We now have waiting lists for all weekend masses, which will be opened up as each mass gets full. Please use them!

We can often get a seat for you when there is a cancellation, and it helps us know demand.

American Red Cross Blood Drive TOMORROW

March 22, NOON to 6, in the . Gathering Space. Sign up on the Red Cross website, or through the parish office.

Easter Egg Hunt—we are looking for parishioners to donate plastic Easter eggs, filled or unfilled, or donate candy to use to fill them, for a parish-wide Easter Egg Hunt.

If you choose to fill them so ideas: small candy, a quarter, a prayer, a gift certificate for an ice cream cone...).

You can bring them to the Gathering Space.

The Easter Egg hunt will be for all families on Easter Sunday, in front of the church, after the 10:30 AM outdoor mass.

Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies...

Social Time!

The first social zoom went great—it's not too late to join us! Right now we are zooming at 11 AM on Sundays, but are open to change. Contact Christine to be invited to the zoom.



Holy Week Liturgies

Palm Sunday:

4:30 PM (inside or outside TBD)
8 AM (inside)
10 AM Mass (outside)

Holy Week

Mass 9:00 AM Monday-Wednesday (no school)

Triduum:

Holy Thursday Apr. 1 7:00 PM
Good Friday Apr. 2 1:00 PM (inside) and 6 PM (outside)
Easter Vigil Apr. 3 8:00 PM

Easter Sunday

Easter Sunday Apr. 4 8:30 AM (inside)
10:30 AM (outside)

Services will be on YouTube

Please sign up for the liturgies on our parish website, or by calling Christine at 715-579-1523. *If you've signed up and cannot attend, please let Christine know so she can make room for someone else. Outdoor masses do NOT need to be signed up for, although for now you can if you like. Thanks!!*



Here they are, from left to right, the famous parish videographers, Landon and Don, training in new volunteer, Steve.

Thanks you guys for making our virtual worship possible these past twelve months!

One of our 2nd graders, Natalie, doing her Lent in a Box.



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