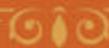


# St. James the Greater

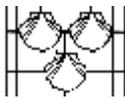
Where All are Welcome



## 14<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



When the sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands!" - Mk 6:2



Message from Fr. Tom

There was quite the commotion on the roof above the music sacristy last Monday, so I went outside to take a peek at what was going on, thinking it might be Santa and his reindeer in search of a chimney. Instead, what I saw were Mike Baier, Ed Gonstead, Tim Olson, Tom Kempen, and Tom's nephew Kyle Pozarski—all engaged in the project of removing old Plexiglas that had aged and grown opaque over our church windows. Jerry Whalen has the new Plexiglas in his garage, and this will be cut and installed perhaps already by the weekend. I hope I didn't leave out any key players in this beautifying project. I know that Jerry Olson, Terry Griffin and Steve Steinmetz have been an important part of all these window replacements in the past couple years. I so appreciate and admire the "We can get this done" attitude that these men have.

There are lots of other physical improvements to our church and building underway. The KC's are paying to extend our "Loop" hearing assistance in the church so that people with T-coils in their hearing aids can seat in a much wider area than currently. Also, the staff is having a vote for the color of our new kneelers that will soon be arriving. New toilets are coming! Mostly for the school, but there are some other water-leakage offenders that will be swapped out. This project will—*deo volente, inshalla, God willing*—before school starts, and the new kneelers put in this Fall, hopefully in September.

I've seen Coach Niese regularly these past many months, but in his humility he neglected to tell me that his Regis baseball team was off to the state tournament this week! Unfortunately, after traveling to Appleton for the tournament, they lost a close one to Colman HS, 4-6. I think those who play for Coach Niese are really lucky because he is both a baseball man par excellence and a man par excellence. He also plays for the Eau Claire Rivermen in the Chippewa River Baseball League—a catcher, no less. I don't know his age, but let's just say he's the George Blanda of the league. Some of you will know what that means.

Speaking of sports, it's been a lot of fun following the Milwaukee Bucks during these playoff weeks. I don't get the tv channel that broadcasts these games, so I have been relying on the hospitality of others, which has been a great experience. So far, people have been very tolerant of my game-watching antics that perhaps show a side of me not apparent in church. I have to say I get pretty riled up. Things like giving up an offensive rebound that leads to a chippie for the other team—well, I find that pretty upsetting sometimes. **It's a challenge to get equally as riled up about following Jesus. Or maybe that's not the kind of energy he is looking for.**

In case people are wondering, the funeral mass for Mary Lou Nowak will be at St. Mary's in Altoona on July 6. Our PCCW women will be praying a rosary there before the mass begins. Mary Lou was a lovely part of St. James, always faithful, and a juggernaut of prayer for the needs of individuals and the world as a whole. She took an active interest in the lives of those who cared for her and prayed for their needs. We can confidently rely on her continued prayers for us. May she, who suffered much both from grief and from her own physical afflictions now be fully immersed in the light, happiness, and peace of heaven.

As devoted as Mary Lou was to the rosary and the Blessed Mother, she would have reveled in the places my fellow pilgrims and I visited early in June during our walking along the "Wisconsin Way." Our first destination was to Our Lady of Good Help near Green Bay where Mary appeared to an immigrant from Belgium, Adele Brise, and instruct her to go out and "gather the children from the wild country to teach them what they needed to know for salvation.... [including] the catechism, how to make the sign of the cross and how to approach the sacraments." She concluded by telling Adele, "That is what I wish you to do. Love God and fear nothing. I will help you." It's a lovely thing to sit in a place where heaven spoke to earth. After several other pilgrim stops, we ended at Holy Hill, more formally known as "The National Shrine of Our Lady, Help of All Christians." Atop a high hill from which on a clear day you can see the tall buildings of Milwaukee, this church is impressive in beauty and for all the faith and help God has provided to those who have prayed at this shrine. A collection of old crutches on display stand in testimony of the healing people experienced here. So, those were a couple of the highlights. I can share some other thoughts on this journey in days ahead. Perhaps you were able to read the short article I wrote for the *Leader-Telegram* which was scheduled to appear this past Thursday.

Wishing all of you a Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July and a Blessed Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle (July 3)! This latter feast marks the completion of seven years as your pastor. Thank you for your support and collaboration during all this time. Peace.

## 27 June 2021, Fr. Tom's Homily, The Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Wisdom 1:23-15, 2:23-24; 2 Corinthians 8:7-15; Mark 5:21-43

I love healing stories. I don't like healing stories.

I love 'em because they show us that God cares, that God is powerful, and probably more importantly, that God cares about us in our suffering. As it said in the first reading—God does not will our destruction but made us to be imperishable. Healing speaks to me not just of not being sick but of being whole and fully alive. There is real intimacy in the idea of being healed by Jesus. I love that. And when I feel out of sorts and lacking a vital felt connection to God, I sometimes have the grace to remember the John Michael Talbot song “Healer of My Soul,” and that always brings me back to life.

Did I say I don't like healing stories? Well, they do make me squirm. My main worry is simply this: That many good people who are hurting severely and who have called out to Jesus with deep faith for healing, but whose suffering continues—that they hear Jesus say “Your faith has healed you,” and conclude that they don't have enough faith or they would be healed, too. And so laid on to their burden of physical pain is the spiritual pain of guilt and feeling unheard, perhaps unwanted, by God, by Jesus.

Here it helps me to see two levels of healing: the physical and the spiritual. Physical healing is obvious and it's what we all want for ourselves when we or people we love are sick. We want the cancer gone, the eyesight and hearing to get better, to be able to run and jump again. Spiritual healing is harder to describe, but I think it has to do with finding deep consolation of the truth that God is with us in our pain and even unending illness, and that God's presence can lead us to acceptance and peace and generosity and love. Again, I don't mean to set us up for feeling faithless and guilty if we neither experience physical healing nor the spiritual healing as described. I just want to hold out to you that healing can happen to us even when the body remains sick or impaired. **You will never be perfect, and you don't have to be in order to be healed. Part of being healed is realizing that you have everything you need, just as you are, to be in loving communion with God and his people.**

I saw a film on Prime which I'm happy to recommend to anyone, called *The Sound of Metal*. There's some adult themes, so beware, but it was nominated for best film this year, and it's about a drummer in a hard rock band, Ruben, who loses his hearing overnight. His world falls apart. He can't accept his loss. The only thing he wants is to get his hearing back and starts planning right away for ways to get enough money to have an expensive medical procedure that will bypass the ear canal and give some hearing back.

In the meantime, at the behest of others, he becomes part of a deaf community that helps its members adjust to a world without hearing. The philosophy of the place is that being deaf is not a handicap—not something to fix. And one of the activities Ruben's mentor gives him is to go into a room alone and just sit quiet for as long as he can, and when he can't sit any longer, to write in a journal.

Ruben finds joy in this community, but his drive to get his life as it was back leads him to sell everything he has to get this operation. There are four weeks between the surgery and the activation of his new implants and during this time he goes back to his mentor and asks for money and to continue staying at the community for the four weeks. The mentor, calmly and without judgment, refuses, saying it would be harmful to the community whose members have chosen to accept their deafness, and need daily reminders that they are not deficient because they cannot hear. Then they have an intense exchange where Ruben expresses his frustration saying “Everything passes, nothing matters, if I disappeared, nobody would care. Nobody else is gonna save me, so I gotta do this.” His mentor takes a breath and says:

“I wonder, all these mornings you were in my study sitting...have you had any moments of stillness? Cuz you're right: the world does keep moving and it can be a [very] cruel place, **but for me these moments of stillness, that place of peace, that's the Kingdom of God, and that place will never abandon you.**”

Well, Ruben heard it but left, and basically the operation didn't give him back his old life. He didn't get his band back and he and his girlfriend broke up. The movie ends with him sitting on a bench on a busy urban street with loud and confusing sounds all around. He gets the idea to quickly detach all the hardware on his head, and **suddenly all is silence.** He must then have remembered what his mentor told him about the Kingdom of God in that place of stillness, for even though everything that had given him a sense of purpose and happiness was now gone, he looked out at the world and for the first time in the whole movie, he experienced joy. **Though he still could not hear, he experienced healing.**

**BACK TO SCHOOL EVENT****Drive for School Supplies in July**

sponsored by We Care Eau Claire, churches in Eau Claire and the St. James Social Concerns Committee

Walk-up event at Phoenix Park on Monday, August 16 from 4:30-7:30 PM. Rain Date is Tuesday, August 17. Each student gets a backpack filled with the appropriate grade level school supplies. These backpacks will be packed ahead of time. *Volunteers will be needed to do the packing.*

- Supply lists are available in the Gathering Space, as well as a separate bin for school supplies for St. James school.

-All items can be donated or given in bulk. These items need to be in by July 15 so that We Care Eau Claire can order the rest in bulk.

**Thrift Sale**

8 AM—5 PM, Thursday-Friday, July 15-16  
3007 Otis Street (Sharon Bussard's house)  
Proceeds go to JONAH, a local interfaith justice/advocacy organization. Sponsored by the St. James Social Concerns Committee.

Sale will include household items and some furniture. No clothing.

Come by and shop for a good cause! You never know what treasures you'll find.

**Ice Cream Social** at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Elk Mound on Wed., July 14 from 4-8 PM. Serving BBQ Sandwiches, Hot Dogs, Beans, Potato Salad, Chips, Pie, Ice Cream, and beverages. Silent Auction and Grocery Raffle, too! Come, relax, and feed the family!

**Calling all able-bodied worker bees!** On Saturday, July 10, starting at 9 AM, we're going to finish the mulching project, both in front of school, and at Fr. Tom's house, and the new butterfly garden on the Marshall St. side of church. We can use all kinds of help, not to mention equipment! Mulch forks, wheelbarrows, and if someone has a motorized go-cart, that makes spreading the mulch so much easier! If you have any questions, please give me a call (715-831-3352), or send me an email (whitelroach@gmail.com). Thanks, St. James! You always step up! Hoping to see a small army! - Louise Roach

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Beth Cerny	Crd. of Religious Ed	elizabethcerny@hotmail.com

**Mass Intentions & Schedule**

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

Rosary and Adoration are available after the Tuesday Mass until 10:30 AM.

Sat.	July 03	4:30 PM George Hanson
		6:30 World Peace
Sun.	July 04	8:00 AM People of St. James
		10:00 AM Eddie Barnett
Tue.	July 06	Tom and Lois Biesterveld
Wed.	July 07	Carol Porn
Thu.	July 08	Margie Wendt
Fri.	July 09	Catherine Hepp
Sat.	July 10	4:30 PM Tom Bye
Sun.	July 11	8:00 AM People of St. James
		10:00 AM James Connolly

**Raffle Tickets!**

Sell or buy your raffle tickets already?

Come get some more!

There are extra raffle tickets at the school entrance, in the Gathering Space, and in the parish office.

Thanks for participating in this great parish fundraiser!

**Commitment to Parish Life**

FYI—if you set up your Online Giving account yourself, we cannot make changes to it from the parish office; you have to make the changes yourself. If we set it up for you then we can make changes.

If you have any questions call Anne at the parish office 715-835-5887.

**Sermon on the Amount**

June 20, 2021

Sunday Adult Envelopes (168)	\$19,545.50
2020 same week (154)	\$14,104.50
Students	\$2.00
Plate	<u>\$109.00</u>
Total	\$19,656.50

Year to date Adult Env./CPL Income through May 31, 2021:

Actual (July 1-May 31) \$607,947.64

Budgeted (July 1-May 31) \$572,310.00

Long term maintenance & facilities improvement fund and *Past\*Present\*Future Campaign* income for June 20 was \$1,137.92.00 for a total since July 1, 2020 of \$66,195.12.

**St. James School** Phone: 715-830-2277

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Shanna Donkers, Administrative Assistant,  
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Linda Schultz, Commission Rep.-RCS,  
linda1735@gmail.com

**Bulletin deadlines:** end of day Mondays.

**Grace on the Grass**

July 7 at 7:00

Sacrament of Reconciliation available outside, location still TBD but potentially on the corner of 11<sup>th</sup> and Marshall. At least six confessors will be present. More details to come. Weather date: July 21.



Parish bike ride all the way to Altoona Beach!

**Growing Through Grief Group –**

Our next group for Growing Through Grief starts on July 9 at 1:15 PM in the gathering space

**Summer Book Club:**

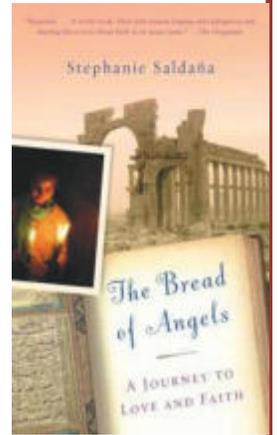
*Bread of Angels: A Journey to Love and Faith*, a memoir by Stephanie Saldana.

Raised in San Antonio, Texas and now living in Jerusalem, the author has a keen sensitivity to the spiritual life and is skilled at expressing it in words.

Fr. Tom met Stephanie during his sabbatical, and knows she is the “Real Deal.” Her articles appear regularly in America Magazine. You can anticipate an experience of

reading that is thoroughly enjoyable and heightens your own sensitivity to both the challenges and the beauty of love and faith.

Discussion will be Wednesday, July 14 at 6:30PM.

**Underwear Drive**

Wow, the drive was a smashing success! Thanks to all who donated!! A nearly full carload was brought to the Eau Claire School District for their homeless kids! What a generous parish we have.

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