

# St. Joseph Congregation

*A family devoted to experience Jesus through prayer, formation and service.*

## SEPTEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER



Dear God,  
As we send our children back to school, we pray for Your protection and guidance. Keep them safe from harm, both physically and emotionally. Help them to find friends who will support and encourage them. Give them wisdom as they face challenging situations. And help them to always remember that You are with them, no matter what.

St. Joseph Congregation  
12130 W. Center Street  
Wauwatosa, WI 53222  
Parish Office 414-771-4626  
Website: stjoetosa.com

**Pastor**

Rev. Justin Lopina  
Email: lopinaj@archmil.org  
Phone Extension 105

Deacon José Gonzales  
Email: joseuugon@yahoo.com

Deacon Kurt Peot  
Email: peotk@stjoetosa.com

**Catholic Formation Staff**

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Admin. Assistant: Lisa Marynik  
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**Parish Staff**

Parish Admin. Assistant: Nikki Claas  
Email: parishadmin@stjoetosa.com  
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Director of Liturgy &  
Business Admin. Asst.: Suzzanne Silman  
Email: silmans@stjoetosa.com  
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Maintenance Director: Matt Adams  
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Pastoral Council Chair: Joe Herro  
Email: joeherro@yahoo.com  
414-469-7261

St. Joseph School  
2750 N. 122nd Street  
Wauwatosa, WI 53222  
School Office 414-771-5577  
Website: stjosephschooltosa.com

Principal: Bryanna Van Vreede  
Email: vanvredeb@stjosephschooltosa.com  
Phone Extension 120

Admin. Assistant: Wyatt Cupp  
Email: sjsoffice@stjosephschooltosa.com  
Phone Extension 119

**Parish Information**

Parish Office Hours:  
Monday –Friday 8:00am to 3:30pm

**Parish Registration:**

Registration for the parish can be done at the Parish Office during normal business hours or after Mass on Sunday in the Welcome Center at the Center St. entrance of church. *Young people out of college school are requested to register as adult members.*

**Hearing Impaired:**

St. Joseph's Church has an "Audio Loop" for use by people who have a hearing aid equipped with a "T switch". We also have an FM radio system.

**St. Joseph Chapel:**

Hours: Monday– Friday 7:00am to 8:00pm.



**Prayer for St. Joseph Congregation**

*Lord Jesus Christ, we love you, we  
adore you and we hope in you.*

*We ask for our mercy and love to be  
abundant within St. Joseph Parish.  
We humbly, yet boldly pray that Your  
Holy Spirit shower us with wisdom  
clarity and courage as we discern  
Your call and Your Will for the  
revitalization and future of  
St. Joseph Parish.*

*Enkindle in us a fire to love, know and  
serve You like we've never done before  
and let that fire spread to one another  
inside and outside the boundaries of  
St. Joseph. Through intentional reading  
and praying with Scripture, and by  
frequent participation in the  
Sacraments of Holy Eucharist and  
Reconciliation, may we grow deeper in  
understanding and love of the treasures  
of the Catholic Church, so that we may  
never wander from You.*

*Amen.*

## **PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

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Meeting Location: St. Joseph Room

Date/Time: August 20, 2025 – 6:30 p.m.

Notes By: Sarah Navis

Attendees: Father Justin Lopina, Joe Herro, Alanna Wilgus, Kelly Ciriacks, Sarah Navis, Mike Smrz, Sandy Schmitt, Tom Zimmerman, Suzzanne Silman, Rachel Blackwood, Jeremy Blackwood, Paul Petrides, Jill Pitterle, Joel McCool, Karen Bartel, Megan Harney, Jennifer Mendoza, Larry Barbian, Carol Polivka and Duane Filtz

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Meeting started at 6:30 p.m. with an opening prayer by Joe Herro.

The agenda was approved.

New Pastoral Council members were welcomed

### **Committee Reports:**

**Buildings and Grounds:** Carol Polivka started the meeting with a report on the storm damage sustained at St. Joseph. The school took on the most water damage. Thankfully the water was clean water and not sewage. The cleanup happened right away, and Insurance has been contacted and already viewed the affected areas. The areas have all been cleaned and sanitized and are safe for the start of school. B&G committee will be working on follow-up to areas impacted by water damage and possible options to improve drainage.

B&G will be working with Matt to stencil and paint necessary handicap access designations on all parking spaces on the circle drive. The work will take place on a Wednesday, August 27<sup>th</sup> following the 8:15am Mass to allow dry time before Friday morning Mass.

Numerous other small projects were undertaken in the school including installing screens, experimenting with cleaning lockers, installing Clevertouch boards in two classrooms and increasing plantings in gardens. Worked with volunteers to paint stained glass design on Parish Center porch windows facing Center Street.

We are also looking at possible ways to reduce operational costs including working with Focus on Energy to look at decreasing the electric bill.

**Prayer and Worship:** Suzzanne Silman reported everything is ready for Fr. Justin's installment Mass on Thursday, August 28<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.

**Human Concerns:** Karen Bartel reported the Human concerns subcommittees continue to run themselves in their ministries. Some of the committees are the Sandwich committee, St. Ben's meal program and Food Pantry, all provide food to those in need in various locations around the city. The Bereavement Committee works with those who have lost loved ones and plan the annual Mass of Remembrance which takes place in November with a special recognition to those who have passed in the last year. The Outreach Committee meets twice a year to designate and distribute monies to local and state organizations in need. Tree of Life, Respect Life and



Repairers of the Breach committees do work with those in need in our community by donating gifts in collaboration with Catholic Charities. They collect winter apparel which is distributed to various centers. Respect Life conducts a pro-life baby shower in the fall and is a part of the Milwaukee Life Chain. The Human Concerns ministry is looking for volunteers to assist with the drop-off of the Coats and Repairers of the Breach collections, contact Karen Bartel if interested.

**Stewardship and Communications:** Donut Sunday will be held after Mass on Sunday, August 24, 2025.

**Home and School Association:** Rachel Blackwood reported they are getting ready for the start of school. The Back-to-School Picnic will take place August 21<sup>st</sup>. Biergarten organization is underway. It is September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Sign-up Genius will be going up for volunteers shortly.

**School Committee:** Jeremy Blackwood reported elections were held at the end of the school year and 4 new members were elected. The main goal of the School Committee this fall is to have the marketing plan in place before Christmas. The committee has been working with the new principal Bryanna VanVreede to ensure a smooth start to the new year. To address safety concerns a Safety subcommittee has been formed.

**Athletics:** Paul Petrides updated us with the date for the Golf outing, which is October 12<sup>th</sup>. Bulletin will have more details. The gym floor was resealed at the end of July and is ready for the volleyball season to begin.

**Parish Life:** Mike Smrz reported Bingo is being scheduled for November, stay tuned for the date. Also looking at having the Soup and Chili cookoff in January. More to come on that.

**Faith Formation:** For those who are not aware, Colleen Rooney has left to pursue other opportunities. Her position will not be replaced at this time. Larry Barbian reported they will be working on the Catechism program for the upcoming school year.

### **Continuing Business**

The quote for the grave marker replacement for Fr. Holzhauer was received and sent on to Father Justin for consideration.

### **New Business**

Biergarten: Rachel Blackwood reported that work is underway for Biergarten which will take place on Saturday, September 13, 2025, starting around 5:00 p.m. after the 4:00 p.m. Mass. The Athletic Department is working in conjunction with the Home and School Association for this event. Sign-Up Genius should be available shortly for volunteers to sign up work the event. There will be more information forthcoming in the bulletin.

Fr. Justin addressed the committee regarding the recent financial audit. We are not able to meet the August payroll with the money collected. To cover the cost, we needed to take out money from our line of credit. He will be addressing the Parish this weekend, August 23-24 with this update. Further details will be forthcoming in September.

### **Miscellaneous**

Next Pastoral Council meeting will be September 17, 2025

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m. with a Closing Prayer.



## *From the Desk of Father Justin*

Here, in early September, I welcome you all to the Religious Education issue of our newsletter. By the time this newsletter arrives at your home, we will have about a week before our deadline for religious education for the coming year.

Here and now, I wish to offer my most sincere wishes that as many of our youth as possible join the program... assuming, of course, that they're not already getting religious education classes at their day schools. I know that COVID hit churches hard, with respect to such activity - my last assignment was certainly no exception. I know it's just easier to stay at home and not make the effort. I'm also sure that some of you, statistically, have had bad experiences in the past... for one reason or another. I'm sorry for that, if it's the case.

However, in spite of anything that may or may not have happened in the past, one thing is certainly true: we are all called to grow as close to Christ as possible. That task is never invalid, and it's always worthwhile. Even when life beats us up somehow, we are called to remain true as disciples of Christ. Sometimes that damage comes from outside the church: the difficulty of daily life, essentially. Sometimes the damage comes from those who are called to represent Christ, and they fail in some way. That pain can feel crippling at the time, but it should never fool us into turning away from Christ or turning away from the salvation that only He offers.

For our youth in religious education, we are trying to keep classes as straightforward and accessible as possible. We want to meet people where they're at in their spiritual journey, and that means offering a degree of flexibility with respect to the necessary steps involved with this year's program. So if you, or someone you know, has not been class for a year, or have some other extenuating circumstance, I truly hope that you reach out to us at the office. Let us work with you, and let's grow in our faith to the best of our ability. To be a true disciple of Christ is not a question of perfection, it's a question of one's willingness to move forward as best they can. The rest, as they say, is in the hands of the Holy Spirit.

For those of you who are too old for the standard religious ed program, I have a continual goal to offer more adult formation here at the parish. We have a good amount of Bible studies, and I deeply enjoyed our group of folks considering Confirmation or full communion with the Church between our Sunday Masses this summer. I also have my First Saturday's Table Talk, which I admit has settled into a fairly regular group of folks. As we continue to move ahead as a parish, I hope that I can get as many of you around a table as possible so that we can share our faith (and our understanding of said faith) in a helpful and supportive environment. Faith-sharing groups are absolutely wonderful ways for us to spend time together: we get to know one another on a deeper level, and we can add as much or as little official theology as is necessary or appropriate at any given time. So for this newsletter, I have no concrete and immediate plans for such things, but I am committed to the idea if I can only find a way to find a time and place that works for the most people as possible.

May God bless you all for being a part of Saint Joseph parish. Let's all seek to make this coming academic year as powerful and glorious as possible!

Sincerely,

Father Justin

# Back to School!



*The Theme for the 2025-2026 School Year is  
"We are One"*



## Who Are We Called To Be?

Living the Fullness of the Christian Life  
Three Catholic Ethicists Share Resources and Foster Group Discussion  
The Second Insights and Advice Series

Tuesdays, October 7, 14, 21, 6:30–7:30 PM,  
St. Joseph Church, 12130 W. Center St., Wauwatosa

You are invited to attend these sessions on insights and advice for living the fullness of the Christian life by embracing our call to love God and neighbor in our personal, familial, and social lives.

Session 1, Tuesday, October 7, 6:30 –7:30 pm in St. Joseph Church



Dr. Conor Kelly, Marquette University

### “Who Are We Called to Be as Catholic Persons?”

How do we flourish as human beings? What is the role of conscience in the moral life? How do we form and follow conscience? How can we practice moral discernment in our lives?

Session 2, Tuesday, October 14, 6:30 –7:30 pm in St. Joseph Church



Dr. Jon Metz, Marquette University

### “Who Are We Called to Be as Catholic Families?”

What has your family taught you about faith?  
The “family” is referred to as the “Domestic Church.”

What does that mean to you?  
How can Pope Francis’ “The Joy of Love” help our families grow in love?

Session 3, Tuesday, October 21, 6:30 –7:30 pm in St. Joseph Church



Dr. Christine Dalessio, Marquette University

### “Who Are We Called to Be as a Catholic Community?”

What does it mean to be called as a Catholic Community?

Who is my community and does that matter?

How does community engage moral discernment in circles of community?

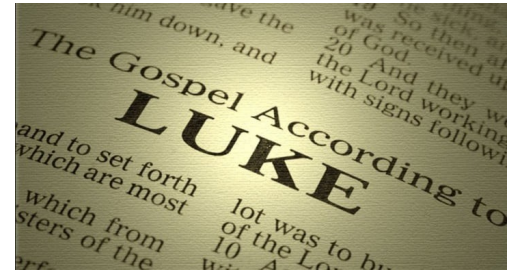
How do I practice community in meaningful ways?

## ADULT & CHILD/YOUTH MINISTRY UPDATES

### The Gospel of Luke Bible Study

Beginning September 16

Tuesdays, 9:00 – 10:30 AM in the St. Joseph Room  
or Tuesdays, 7:00 – 8:00 PM Online



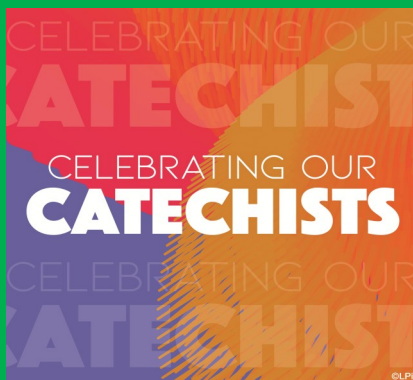
From September through May, with a brief holiday recess, there will be a weekly Bible study on the Gospel of Luke. This gospel has amazed people for two millennia with its breathtaking perspectives on where God is in our lives, how God acts in them, and the implications that this has for one's prayer and love of others. The study explores how Luke sensitizes us to the divine presence in our lives and to how we live with God by living for others. Through these standpoints the power of the divine presence and its profound and transformative implications in our lives comes into view. The third gospel – noted for its amazing passages on the Holy Spirit, prayer, commitment, and stories of women and men succeeding each other and inviting comparison – takes on a new light when viewed through the lens of the larger Lukan emphasis, to which they contribute, on God's accompanying us so that we can accompany God and others. For questions or more information please contact Dennis Sylva at 414-771-4626.



Saturday August 23<sup>rd</sup> several members of our Religious Education program (Bob Haas, Sandy VanMaastricht, Jennifer Mendoza, and Ann Higgins) had the opportunity to attend the Catechetical Conference with the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. They listened to keynote speakers and choose different workshops to attend learning skills and ideas to bring back to the classroom. They were encouraged to become beacons of hope to our parish community!



This year's Vacation Bible School theme took students on a virtual wilderness trip to Alaska. Children from St. Agnes and St. Joseph's met every morning for a week at the end of July to learn about their faith in a fun and engaging way. Thank you to the St. Agnes Formation Team for planning and hosting a great event!



As our Religious Education Program begins on September 14th, we ask that you keep our catechists and students in your prayers as they begin their faith journeys!

*Loving God, we thank you for the gift of faith and for the call to share and learn it. We pray for our catechists, granting them the Holy Spirit's gifts to help them teach with love, truth, and patience. We pray for our students, that their hearts and minds be open to Your Word. May they grow in faith, hope, and charity, becoming loyal disciples of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Guide us all in Your grace to grow in relationship with You and one another.*

*Through Christ, our Lord. Amen*





St. Joseph Bereavement Ministry invites you, your family, and friends, to join us as we remember our loved ones who have died.

## Mass of Remembrance

Saturday, November 8, 2025  
10:00am

All are welcome to join us!

### RUMMAGE SALE UPDATES



In 2025, St. Joe's celebrates 170 years of sharing faith and 55 years of the Christian Women Rummage Sale.

In the past 29 years we have raised close to \$1,000,000 to support unbudgeted parish items—the replacement of the church carpeting two times, everything in the Parish Kitchen and Hall including draperies, tables, chairs and wall coverings; donations to pave the parking lot; art and environment; albs and vestments; the playground equipment; school and religious programs; the handbells and new piano; the Gather books and more.

We have implemented a year around recycling program and donate to other charitable organizations. Many thanks to everyone who has donated items, cash, time and talent to make this important fundraiser a success.

**Items are collected for the Rummage Sale year-round, please see below for where items can be left:**

- ◆ Please leave children's clothing, toys, adults & children's books in the Welcome Center.
- ◆ Bikes can be left between the west parking lot garages with a note attached: "Rummage".
- ◆ To donate furniture contact Fran, [dntolly@aol.com](mailto:dntolly@aol.com) Subject: Rummage
- ◆ Help us recycle & make money for St. Joe's—Currently collecting crushed aluminum cans and Christmas Lights. Leave outside the 2 single car garages in west parking lot.
- ◆ Join the great jewelry collection! Thousands of pieces of jewelry are needed! Ask every one you know if they can donate! Please leave the jewelry in the Welcome Center or Parish Office.

Collecting items now for the  
2026 sale!

*2026 Dates: June 18th, 19th & 20th*

*Thank you for your continued support of our annual Rummage Sale!*

## HUMAN CONCERNS UPDATES

There's a lot going on with respect to **Human Concerns**, especially at this time of the year. Some upcoming opportunities that may interest you are the following:

Donations to our **Food Pantry** will take place on September 21 – St Rose; October 19 – House of Peace and November 16 – Hope House. Thank you for your continued support of these pantries which are very much in need and very grateful for monetary and food donations from St. Joseph's parishioners.

**If anyone is interested in assisting with delivery of donated food we would appreciate it. Please call the Parish Office at 414-771-4626.**

The **Respect Life** Committee will be conducting a pro-life baby shower in fall as well as the opportunity to stand as a group in the Milwaukee Life Chain.

**Fr. Matt Ruhl** from our sister parish, **St. Peter Claver, in Belize** will be at St. Joe's in October to give us an update on his Lighthouse Ride for Belize and other happenings in Punta Gorda. There will be a reception when he is here at NO COST to those attending. More information will be forthcoming in the bulletin.

**Coat Collection:** From November through March, after cleaning out your closets, any gently used winter coats, jackets, scarves, hats and gloves that are no longer needed are collected in the Welcome Center. These items are distributed to various centers in our area to those in need.

**If anyone is interested in assisting with this ministry, please call the Parish Office at 414-771-4626.**

The **Tree of Life** collection of donated gifts for needy families in the archdiocese in collaboration with Catholic Charities is scheduled to be held in early December. PLEASE KEEP AN EYE OUT for upcoming sales on the following items:

- Christmas Gifts
- Care Packages for children – blankets, perfumes, fuzzy socks, lotions, footballs and basketballs for older boys.
- Babies – tummy time mirror, stacking rings, sucking cups, rattle socks, rattles, chew books, musical toys, push cars/trucks, soft blocks teething toys
- Toddlers – mega blocks, Black/Latina baby dolls, cars/trucks, sorting/stacking toys, puzzles, board books, push/pull toys, books, Xylophone/drums/instruments
- Older children/teen gifts – art projects, drawing, painting, or coloring items
- For Mom: fuzzy socks, fuzzy blankets, nail polish, body lotion, bath bombs/bubble bath, journals, adult coloring books and colored pencils/pens; Books online from Target: "Self-Love Workbook for 1<sup>st</sup> Time Moms" and "The Postpartum Depression Journal"
- For Dad: Male oriented journals, warm hats, gloves/scarfs, nice wool socks, body wash/cologne, headphones, travel water bottle/coffee cup, sports items
- Clothing – winter coats in sizes between 12 months old to size 16; kids boots, hats, gloves, and mittens; maternity clothing basics: leggings, tanks/t shirts, shorts, work pants
- Preschool to middle school age/sized clothing and pajamas
- Hygiene Items – shampoo/conditioner (especially Shea Moisture/Cantu/Pantene), deodorant/antiperspirant, feminine hygiene products, toothpaste, toothbrushes, mouthwash, lotion, body wash; towels and washcloths, dish soap and rags/sponges, dish towels and hot pads; laundry detergent
- Basic kitchen utensils
- Cleaning products
- Newborn baby supplies – baby wipes, wash, lotion, and shampoo; baby powder and diaper rash cream; nursing pads, nipple cream, breast milk storage bags; post partum pads; baby thermometers, baby nail clippers; outlet covers and other child Proofing; backpack style diaper bags; Moby wraps or other baby carriers

I cannot thank you, the parishioners of St. Joseph's Parish, enough, for the overwhelming response that has been given to these causes in the past. Because of your support, many individuals have food and warm clothing which they may not have been able to afford.

*"I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink... I was naked and you gave me clothing..."*  
Matthew 25:35,36

Karen Bartel  
Human Concerns Committee

# The St. Joseph Parish and School Annual Golf Outing

*Presented by the Athletics Association*

Come support the St. Joe's Athletics Association, have a fun time, and make memories

**When:** October 12<sup>th</sup> at 1pm (Arrive at 12pm)

**Where:** Ironwood Golf Course : W270 N6166 Moraine Drive, Sussex, WI

**Who:** All parish members, school families, and acquainted community members. All ages. All experience levels. Bring a friend, neighbor, family member, daughter, son, or parent.

**What:** 9 hole scramble with a shotgun start, catered dinner from Alioto's, raffle and auction. If you want to just come for the dinner, raffle, and auction you can do that too.

**How to Register:** [www.stjoeathletics.com](http://www.stjoeathletics.com) Fill out the google form. Register as a single, partial team, or full team.

**Cost:** Golf and dinner: \$75 per adult, \$50 for a student K-8, \$50 for student alumni in high school or college. Dinner/Auction only: \$20

**How to Pay:** Pay online at the square site or drop of a check to the parish office with the attention of Paul Petrides. Make all checks payable to "The St. Joe's Athletics Association" <https://stjoeathletics.square.site/>

**Interested in sponsoring the outing?**

Hole sponsors and other donations will help make the outing great and support the Athletics Association.

**8<sup>th</sup> grade parents**

Aliotos has graciously offered to donate all profits from the food to support the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class trip to Washington D.C.

Clubs are available to rent at Ironwood.

Questions: [paul.f.petrides@outlook.com](mailto:paul.f.petrides@outlook.com)







# *Unmask The Magic*

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AUCTION

03.07.26



*More Details To Follow*