The Parish of St. Felix







Renewing Our Community

A Case for St. Felix Parish & School, Wabasha, Minnesota



St. Felix is a Valuable Part of the Wabasha Community

For more than 160 years, St. Felix Parish & School has been a steady, faithful presence in Wabasha. A place where families worship, children learn, and generations find belonging. Today, that mission continues with strength and renewed energy.

St. Felix is experiencing real signs of renewal—in worship, in youth engagement, in volunteerism, in baptisms, and in the life of our school. Now is the time to match that spiritual renewal with the physical spaces that will allow our parish to flourish

> “In a world that is full of division, we can find the hope at St. Felix that only Jesus can offer. Please journey with us as we prepare the way of the Lord for today and generations to come.
> — Fr. Tom Loomis

A Parish Growing in Faith and Participation

St. Felix is home to 550 families with Mass attendance growing annually. In recent months, parishioners have stepped forward in new ways: more Eucharistic ministers, more readers, more volunteers caring for the church. Twelve young women now gather monthly for a mother's Bible study. Baptisms have increased since Father Tom arrived, as families find a pastor who is approachable, present, and eager to welcome them.



29% Increase
in Mass Attendance
from 2023 to 2025

A School Forming Children in Faith and Character

St. Felix School served **89 students** in the 2025-26 school year and is anticipating **95 students** for the 2026-27 year! With experienced teachers, St. Felix school offers a strong Catholic education rooted in faith, community, and academic excellence. Many of the families who come to the school find their way into the life of the parish, a quiet but powerful form of evangelization that strengthens the whole community.

Youth Growing in Faith and Engagement

Faith formation is experiencing real renewal with youth engaging more deeply than in previous years:

- **Grades 7–10 now participate in youth groups every month or so**, growing in faith together through activities like volunteering, youth choir, Masses, fishing and making Christmas cookies. **All grades K-10 meet for weekly formation** which has been a wonderful blessing and way to connect with students. Students meet in a mixture of different settings across the St. Felix campus.
- After a long period without participation in diocesan youth events, **St. Felix has seen meaningful growth in the last two years.** Camp Summit attendance increased from 8 students in 2025 to 11 in 2026, and Steubenville drew 10 students last year with a dozen expected this year. This momentum is one more sign of the renewed energy among our young people.
- **Confirmation class sizes are strong,** with 17 ninth and tenth grade students preparing this year. St. Felix helped lead a county wide confirmation retreat attended by youth from every parish, something long time leaders say they've never seen.

> "I've been part of St. Felix my whole life, and now I get to watch my grandchildren serve, learn, and pray here. It fills me with pride to see their faith taking root in this community. — Sharon Reister

St. Felix is a parish in **renewal.**

As Deacon John shared:

> “People here care about our faith and the faith of our children and grandchildren.”

That spirit is alive and growing.



A Community Rooted in Service and Hope

St. Felix is a parish where people show up for one another—at funerals, at school events, at parish gatherings, and in quiet acts of service. We see this hope in the commitment of parishioners who visit the homebound, in our dedication to keep our Catholic school thriving, and in the many active committees and parish groups:

- 3 teams who visit to 10-12 homebound parishioners weekly
- New St. Elizabeth Ann Seton widows group monthly gathering launched in 2026 *(photo to right)*
- Anticipating 95 students expected enrolledment for ‘26-’27 school year with a strong preschool class
- Numerous active parish groups support all aspects of parish life: Parish Councils (Pastoral and Finance), Social Concerns Committee, Knights of Columbus, Serra Club, St. Joe’s, 1891 Financial Life Ladies Group, Quilters Group, Church ladies who serve funeral luncheons, Contemporary Choir and Traditional Choir
- These groups have connected the parish across generations for common goals such as fundraising for everything from youth activities to our Winter Coats for Kids drive as well as helping pay for the phase 1 parish and school renovations
- Social Concerns committee has co-sponsored event on Scam prevention at Faith Lutheran, brought speaker on Catholic Social Teaching to St. Felix and sponsored an informational event for various Wabasha help agencies





The Hope and Community We Seek to Create

As St. Felix grows in participation and ministry, our facilities must support the life of the parish we are becoming.



> **Father Tom often says that our mission is to meet people where they are:** to welcome families returning to the Church, to accompany seniors, to support young parents, and to offer a place where faith can grow. To do this well, we need spaces that are accessible, welcoming, and functional.

A More Accessible, Family Friendly Church

Families are returning. Young children are present. Seniors are active. To welcome them well, we need a Church building that is easy to navigate for all ages, including:

- **Accessible entrances**
- **New flooring and repaired interiors**
- **Additional restrooms**
- **A family/greeting space**
- **A hearing assist loop**
- **Improved lighting and seating**



A School and Auditorium That Are Safe, Reliable, and Well-Maintained

St. Felix School is a vital part of our mission, and caring for the building is essential to serving families well. Replacing the aging boiler and air conditioning system, along with updating the school bathrooms, are the minimum required to ensure a safe, reliable, and welcoming environment for our students. These improvements also support the wider Wabasha community as our auditorium is used year-round.



A Gathering Space for All Generations

As we consider our future and seek to create a more vibrant parish community, we are exploring the possibility of a Gathering Center: a space that could serve parish life and the wider community. We welcome your thoughts on whether this should be a priority for St. Felix. This space will:

- **Strengthen our faith life** — flexible rooms for Bible studies, prayer groups, small group gatherings, adult formation, and parish ministries that help people grow together in faith.
- **Support spiritual growth for all ages** — dedicated areas for youth ministry, Confirmation preparation, OCIA, sacramental preparation, and programs that form children, teens, adults, and families.
- **Welcome and accompany parish families** — areas designed for funeral hospitality, parish meals, Lenten suppers, and gatherings that bring comfort, connection, and care.
- **Serve parish leadership and ministries** — meeting rooms for councils and committees, storage for liturgical and seasonal needs, and improved circulation that supports the daily work of the parish.
- **Benefit the wider community** — a well maintained campus, including an auditorium used regularly by local groups, offering a place where the parish and community can gather, learn, and support one another.

This is not about expanding for the sake of expansion. It is about renewing our community for those of all ages: spiritually, relationally, and physically.



> **As Deacon John put it:**
> This is about the good of the parish, the good of the community, and what we wish to create for the future.





What It Will Take to Bring This To Life

St. Felix has developed a thoughtful plan to renew our parish campus. Some work is already underway; other elements will move forward as funding allows. The full vision may be completed as a single project or in phases, depending on philanthropic support.

Phase 1:

Immediate Repairs—Recently Completed

Why: Repair existing buildings and ensure safety

- Church boiler and sound system updates
- Church main entrance repairs, brick repairs, fascia painting and security locks
- Structural repairs in the attic
- Sidewalk replacement and foundation repairs
- Gymnasium roof and brick repairs
- New fencing for the school playground

Invested since 2022: **$570K**

Phase 2:

Campus Interiors, Utilities & Accessibility

Why: Increase accessibility, improve hospitality, and address needed repairs

- Accessible 3rd Street entrance and sanctuary
- Bluetooth hearing assist loop
- New family/greeting space with bathroom
- Church plaster, painting, pews, and flooring
- Adoration chapel and music room
- Lighting upgrades
- Heating, cooling for the auditorium
- School bathroom updates

Estimated Investment: **$2.5M**

Phase 3:

New Gathering Space

Why: Create a place for parish and community life to flourish

- Large open hall with seating for 70 persons
- Accessible meeting space connecting church and office
- Serving kitchen
- Mult-purpose meeting room
- Additional restrooms and storage

Estimated Investment: **$2.9M**

Phase 4

Office Renovations

Why: Retrofit old rectory

- Accessible entrance, bathroom
- Offices, shared workstations
- Heating, cooling, plumbing, electrical
- Meeting rooms

Estimated Investment: **$430K**

Estimated Investment

The multi-year plan is estimated to cost $6.0M today.

The timing, scope and actual project cost of each phase will be known when the funds are raised and final drawings and bids are obtained.

Why Your Gift Matters

Your generosity will:

- Make our parish more welcoming and accessible
- Support youth and families as they grow in faith
- Create a gathering space that serves all generations
- Provide space for parish small groups, weddings, funerals, retreats, and more
- Ensure that St. Felix remains a strong Catholic presence in Wabasha for decades to come





> We should remember the financial sacrifices that past parishioners have contributed for all of us to currently enjoy the beauty of St. Felix Church and St. Felix School. As a finance committee member and parishioner, it is our goal with this project to protect and maintain St. Felix Church and School for future parish generations to use. Those who invest in this project will be investing in our faith, in our legacy in Wabasha, and in the faith of our children and grandchildren. — Larry Stenzel

A Parish Wide Discernment

As we move forward, we welcome your feedback on the scope, sequencing, and priorities of this project. Leadership is committed to responsible stewardship and will move at a pace that honors both mission and financial prudence.

A Call to Renew Our Community

St. Felix is experiencing real signs of renewal: in worship, in youth engagement, in volunteerism, in baptisms, and in the life of our school.

Now is the time to match that spiritual renewal with the physical spaces that will allow our parish to flourish.

We invite you to join us in renewing our community—for today, for our children, and for the generations who will follow.













“In a world that is full of division it is of the utmost importance to be a place where, all of us at St. Felix and the surrounding communities can find the hope that only Jesus can offer.

Please join us as we continue to meet Jesus everyday through the celebration of the Sacraments and gathering in his name. Please journey with us with your presence, prayers, and financial support as we prepare the way of the Lord today, and for generations to come.

— Father Tom Loomis

Catholic Foundation of Southern Minnesota

The Parish of St. Felix

Created in partnership with the Catholic Foundation of Southern Minnesota

Our Mission: **Strengthen Yours.**