

December 7, 2025

ST. PAUL the APOSTLE CATHOLIC PARISH

511 N. Conrad Street
Peotone, IL 60468-9290

CHURCH OFFICE TELEPHONE: 708 258-6917
CHURCH OFFICE FAX: 708 258-3061
CHURCH OFFICE E-MAIL:

ParishOffice@stpaulpeotone.org

PASTOR: Rev. Thomas Theneth, CMI
815 468-1954 / Theneth52@gmail.com

DEACON: Mr. James Kelly
815 412-0565

DEACON E-MAIL: jimk3163@sbcglobal.net

PARISH BUSINESS MANAGER: Paula Prium

PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON:

CCW PRESIDENT: Marge Harms

GRAND KNIGHT of K of C: Ron LeClaire

BUILDING & GROUNDS: Steve Maltese

FINANCE COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON: Al Leffelman

WORSHIP COMMISSION: Paula Prium

CHRISTIAN FORMATION / EDUCATION COMMISSION:

SOCIAL SERVICES COORDINATOR: Mary Ann Battermann

MINISTERS OF CARE: Barb Egelski

DIRECTOR of RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Dcn Jim Kelly

RE OFFICE E-MAIL: StPaulRE@att.net

RE OFFICE PHONE: 708 258-9580

FAITH FORMATION (RELIGIOUS ED) CLASSES:

Grades 1 through 8: Wednesday from 6:15pm—7:30pm

Find us—

Facebook: "**St. Paul the Apostle Peotone**"

Website: **StPaulPeotone.org**

YouTube: **Saint Paul the Apostle Peotone**

SACRAMENTS

BAPTISM: Please contact the Parish Office
RECONCILIATION: Thursday: 7:15pm to 7:45pm
Saturday: 3pm to 3:45pm
Any time by appointment

FIRST RECONCILIATION: To be announced
FIRST COMMUNION: To be announced
CONFIRMATION: May 9, 2026 at 11am
MARRIAGE: By appointment only

Please call at least 6 months in advance

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK: Call anytime
Please call the parish office to inform us of an illness or hospitalization of a parishioner or family member. Privacy laws prohibit hospitals from releasing information to clergy about hospitalized church members without the specific consent and request of the patient or their immediate family.

ORDINARY MASS SCHEDULE:

Saturday: 4pm

Sunday: 11am

Daily Mass: Tue, Wed and Fri 8:30am

Communion Services: Mon and Thrs 8:30am

Holy Days of Obligation: Please see the bulletin

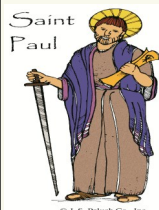
Eucharistic Adoration: Thursday 6pm to 8pm

Communion Calls: If you or someone you love is ill or homebound and would like to receive Communion, please call the parish office to make arrangements for regular visits.

Office Hours: Monday thru Friday 12:30pm to 5pm
Regular time to make appointments, registrations, etc.

Regular bulletin deadline: Wednesday by 12pm

WELCOME BISHOP HICKS and GUESTS!



The Mission Statement of St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Parish
As disciples of Jesus Christ, we strive to grow in relationship with Him,
live the Faith, and share His Good News with others.

Mass Intentions For The Week

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Sat	12/6	3:00 pm—	<u>NO CONFESSION</u>
		4:00 pm—	<u>The Intentions of</u> <u>Fr. Thomas Theneth CMI</u>
Sun	12/7	11:00 am—	+ <u>Paul Dee</u> req by Family
Mon	12/8	8:30 am—	+ <u>The Eternal Salvation</u> <u>of Stanley & Mary Litak</u> req by T.R. Litak
Tue	12/9	8:30 am—	<u>COMMUNION SERVICE</u>
Wed	12/10	8:30 am—	+ <u>Charles Janus</u> req by Arnie & Julie Szudarski
		6:30 pm—	<u>CONFESSION--RE STUDENTS</u>
		7:00 pm—	<u>CONFESSION--PARISH</u>
Thr	12/11	8:30 am—	<u>COMMUNION SERVICE</u>
		6:00 pm—	<u>ADORATION</u>
		7:15 pm—	<u>CONFESSION</u>
Fri	12/12	8:30 am—	<u>Birthday Blessings</u> <u>on Mrs. Lupita Novoa</u> req by Family
Sat	12/13	3:00 pm—	<u>CONFESSION</u>
		4:00 pm—	+ <u>Peter Claxton</u> req by Marge Brooks and <u>People of the Parish</u>
Sun	12/14	11:00 am—	+ <u>Timothy Julian</u> req by Marsha Henning

If you are attending a Mass that you requested an intention to be said for, please sign the gift bearer book in the rear of the church and let an usher know you are here if you wish to bring up the gifts.

Advent Reconciliation Service!

Prepare for the
Christmas Season by
celebrating the
Sacrament
of Reconciliation
during Advent!

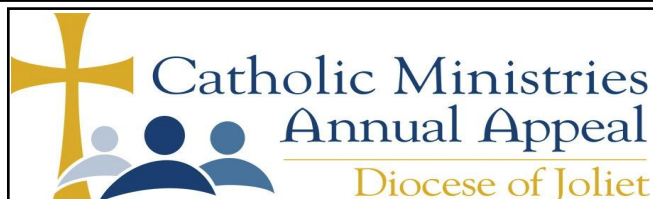


Wednesday, December 10, 2025

Religious Education 6:30pm-7pm

Parish 7pm

There will be 3 priests available.



CMAA Pledge Report for St. Paul the Apostle

Monthly pledge payments for CMAA pledges should be made in the next few days. It is very important that these pledges be paid. Since we have reached our goal in paid pledges, 70% of the amount over goal will be returned to our parish for our needs. As of 11/30/25:

PARISH GOAL:	\$15,600
AMOUNT PLEDGED:	\$35,992
AMOUNT PAID:	\$34,922
REMAINING BALANCE:	\$ 1,070
NUMBER of DONORS:	122
2025 REBATE:	\$13,525

A lifetime of service deserves care in return

"Thanks to your generosity, we can provide the very best care to the sisters in our community," says Sister M. Stephanie Belgeri, 73, a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George in Alton, Illinois.

Donations to the **Retirement Fund for Religious** provide housing, medical assistance, and essential support for thousands of aging religious.

Please give generously next week.

Our CCW will be participating in **Christmas in the Village** this Saturday, December 13 from 8am—Noon with a children's ornament craft table at Peotone High School. Please stop by!

Thanks to the 31 ladies who participated in the **CCW Christmas Bunco Party** on Tuesday. We had a great evening of fun, food and getting to know each other.



BUNCO

POPE'S INTENTIONS for DECEMBER 2025

For Christians in areas of conflict

Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.



Knights of Columbus St. Paul the Apostle Council 11232 invites all to attend our **"Donuts with Santa"** following the Sunday December 7th 11:00 AM Mass.

All are invited to attend a **Silver Rose Ceremony** following the Saturday December 13th 4:00 PM Mass, and following the Sunday December 14th 11:00 AM Mass. The **Silver Rose** is associated with the Culture of Life initiative, and Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The Knights of Columbus continue to collect non perishable food items in boxes in the lobbies. Please be especially generous during this holiday season. Donations support local pantries like Helping Hands and others.

DECEMBER 2025 RAFFLE WINNERS

\$150.00	#99	Darlene Kabas
\$100.00	#132	Joe Celebucki
\$ 50.00	#761	Tony Formato
\$ 50.00	#163	Robert Astroth
\$ 25.00	#193	John and Tammy Bush
\$ 25.00	#569	Tom Lagiglio

Monday, December 8, 2025 is the

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION of the BLESSED VIRGIN MARY,
patronal feast day of the United States of America
—a Holy Day of Obligation

MASSES WILL BE CELEBRATED AT:

St. Joseph (Manteno)	7am / 7pm
St. George (Bourbonnais)	8am / 6:30pm
St. Paul (Peotone)	8:30am
St. Boniface (Monee)	8:30am / 7pm Spanish
St. Liborius (Steger)	8:30am
St. Patrick (Wilton Center)	5pm

You can find a Mass at www.MassTimes.org.

The following is the **St. Paul Choir Schedule** through 2025:

Saturday, December 13: 2:30-3:30 p.m. rehearsal

Saturday, December 20: 2:30-3:30 p.m. rehearsal

Wednesday, December 24: Christmas Eve Mass

9:00 p.m. ~ Practice with Brass

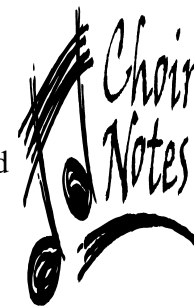
9:30 p.m. ~ Brass / Choir Sing Along

10:00 p.m. ~ Mass begins

Thank you to all choir members for sharing your time and talent with St. Paul's congregation!

If you are able to attend practices and would like to be part of the choir, we'd love to have you!

Contact Sue Williams at 815 370-6287 if you would like to join, or have any questions about this music ministry.



**American
Red Cross**

**Blood
Services**

St. Joseph Manteno K of C Blood Drive

This Christmas give something that means something, give the gift of life.

St. Joseph Knights of Columbus Council 11358, in conjunction with the American Red Cross, will be hosting a blood drive on *Friday, December 26 from 2PM until 6PM* in the church hall.

Come give blood and get an exclusive long-sleeved Red Cross t-shirt.

To schedule an appointment, call 1 800 RED CROSS (1 800 733-2767) or visit **RedCrossBlood.org**, sponsor code **Manteno**.

Contact Ed Leeson (815) 468-7419 for more information.

A limited supply of **OPLATKI** will be available next weekend.

2026 **WALL CALENDARS** "are expected to ship anytime this month."

Second Sunday of Advent
Is 11:1-10; Rom 15:4-9; Mt 3:1-12.

Today's Gospel centers on the urgent call to repentance, the prophetic mission of John the Baptist, and the profound transition to the new covenant established by Jesus Christ. The passage introduces John the Baptist preaching in the Judean wilderness, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah: "A voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths'". His message, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," is an immediate and powerful command. Repentance (Metanoia): The Greek word for repentance, metanoia, means more than just being sorry; it signifies a fundamental "change of mind" or a total turning around of one's life. It is an invitation to re-orient our entire existence toward God and His coming Kingdom, bearing fruit worthy of repentance.

When John encounters the Pharisees and Sadducees, he issues a stern warning, challenging their presumption of salvation based merely on their ancestry (having "Abraham as our father"). John reminds us that true faith requires more than religious affiliation or lineage. We must "produce good fruit as evidence of our repentance." This challenges every Catholic to examine his/her life and ensure the actions reflect the inward change of heart he/she professes. The image of the ax lying at the root of the trees and the tree that does not bear good fruit being cut down and thrown into the fire highlights the seriousness and imminence of God's judgment. It is a reminder that procrastination in repentance is a grave risk. We are called to ongoing conversion, not just a one-time action.



The Christ is the one who baptizes with Holy Spirit and Fire. The climax of John's message is the distinction between his baptism and that of the one who is coming after him. John's baptism with water was a preparatory sign of repentance. Jesus, however, will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. The gift of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Baptism, is the cleansing from sin, which makes us children of God, and enables us to live a new life (a new creation). Fire is image that signifies either the purifying power of God's grace or the separating force of God's. This power to be at work in the Sacraments and the life of the Church, continually purifying us and calling us to holiness.

John's call to repentance is perfectly realized in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, where we confess our sins, express true contrition, and receive the grace to truly "turn around" and bear better fruit. This passage is urging us to prepare our hearts for Christ's threefold coming: historically (at Christmas), mystically (in grace, daily), and finally (at the end of time). The "fruit" demanded is a life of charity, justice, and love—the moral demands summarized by Christ in the Beatitudes. Our faith must be evident in concrete actions and a transformed lifestyle.

John expresses profound humility, stating he is "not worthy to carry his sandals." This models for us the proper attitude of a servant of Christ, always pointing beyond ourselves to Jesus.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Thomas Theneth CMI



The St. Paul Council of Catholic Women invites you to join them in the **50th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY** for the **FRANCISCAN SISTERS** of the **SACRED HEART** living at St. Francis Woods (Frankfort) **THIS Tuesday, December 9 from 1-3PM**. If you have any questions, please call or text Clem at 708 710-1831.

Please try to join us--the good sisters love company!

Bingo Prize Suggestions:

- *Candy all kinds – especially chocolate (there are three sisters who are diabetic)
- *Snacks--individually packaged
- *Small plants--Christmas ones are very popular—Christmas cactus, pine tree, holly
- *Stamps / *Lotion / *Hot chocolate--individual packages
- *Starbucks bottled coffee
- *Christmas decorations (not religious), wall hangings, wreaths, ornaments
- *Many of the sisters wear street clothes, holiday socks, jewelry (no earrings)

Some bingo prizes are "re-gifted" by the sisters to their friends / family.



Each sister has her own room and bathroom

- *Decorative towels
- *Decorative pillows
- *Holiday soaps
- *Decorative soft soap dispensers
- *Adult coloring books

We would like to give each of the 29 sisters and 1 priest a \$20 gift card from any of the following stores: **Walgreens, Walmart, Dollar Tree**

Gift cards can be placed in the boxes at each of the entrances to the church. Checks should be made out to the CCW with a note in the subject line "sister's Christmas party."

Bingo prizes can be placed in the boxes near the two church entrances.

There is a sign-up sheet for **cookie donations** for this much appreciated and fun afternoon in the lobby. Please have cookie donations at church **by 9am THIS MONDAY, DECEMBER 8!**



COLLECTION SUMMARY: November 29—30, 2025

Budgeted	\$3,205.53
Sunday Offertory*	\$1,444.00
Minus	(\$1,763.53)
Envelopes used / distributed	41 / 531
<i>*Includes 6 Online Givers</i>	
Providing for Our Future	\$ 10.00
Seminarians	\$ 575.00
CCHD	\$ 25.00

Secure and convenient
ONLINE GIVING is
 available at
GiveCentral.org.



Please put in zip code **60468** to find the St. Paul portal. A credit card or bank account can be linked.



If you would like to bring a copy of the **2025 *Heritage Missal*** or ***Misal del Dia*** home with you, please take a copy from the box in the rear pew of the church.

Please keep Jan Leffelman, Laura Jacques, Nancy Pilotto, Rev. Tom Ewing, Michael Doyle, Mary Ellen Hanlon, Ashley Doody, Luke Payne, Dave Castaneda, Greg Nalepka, Kathleen Callahan, Deacon Mark Otten, Jeff Furtek, Charles Claxton, Mary Jane Szewka, Elaine Doyle, Dorothy Simikowski, Joe Ladislav, Arline Clark, Mary Jo Fry, Gerald Adcock, Laura Valenti, Samantha Digiacomo, Julie Szudarski, Sue Gomez, Aris Tomac, Bob Johnson, Pete Henrisey, Claudia Merrifield, Harry & Pam Carpenter, Ray Romito, Francesca Librera Biondo, Mike Wilczynski, Fran Rewers, Geri Mokry, Pastor Richard Young, Jeanne Vinezeano, Frances Librera, the Adamsick Family, Laverne Sigrist, Charlie Kooy, Rita Hall, Rose Bailey, Julie Hayes, Emily Klamkin, Lorianne Mihelic, the Robert Polacek family, Rich Harms, TJ Stefanski, Linda Galica and those that go unnamed in your prayers.



Please note that only names given with permission of the person or by a family member will be added to the list.

CHRISTMAS EVE**Wednesday December 24, 2025**

No 8:30am Mass

Mass at 3pm

Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long 9:30pm

Mass at 10pm

CHRISTMAS DAY**Thursday, December 25, 2025**

No 8:30am Communion Service

Mass at 11am

Friday, December 26, 2025

No 8:30am Mass—there will be a Communion Service

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY RECOGNITION

On the second weekend of each month, Fr. Thomas will offer a **special blessing** to couples celebrating an anniversary in that month. Couples who want to participate will be asked to stand at the end of Mass for the blessing

If you would like your names and anniversary date **printed in the bulletin**, you need to register in the **registration book in the lobby**. Couples who register will also receive an anniversary card.

**DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES**



Bishop Hicks' Column, Dec. 2025



**Finding Hope Behind Bars:
Becoming Disciples Who Make Disciples in Unexpected Places**

We celebrate Advent and Christmas as seasons of light and joy, yet sometimes the brightest hope appears in the places we least expect. Over the years, I have found that ministering to those in prison is one of the most unexpected ways to live out the call of my pastoral letter MAKE to be disciples who make disciples.

My first encounter with prison ministry goes back to my volunteer year in Mexico in 1989. A female catechist invited me to join her in visiting a large prison. I remember the surprise of walking in with barely any formal checks and feeling a bit baffled and nervous about how I would get out. Yet what stayed with me most was her simple reminder: *"They all have names. They are often forgotten, but if you become a priest, remember they exist. See the face of Christ in them!"*

Years later, as a seminarian accompanying Cardinal Bernardin to the Cook County Jail for Christmas Mass, I saw that same spirit of discipleship. He had no family in Chicago, yet he found joy in bringing the Eucharist to those often forgotten. He showed me that prison ministry is not simply a duty but a moment of grace. It is a chance to be a disciple who brings Christ's hope to others.

Someone once told me that one of the humbling aspects of ministering in prisons is that the people you serve can never repay you. You do it simply because Christ calls us to recognize His presence in them. In that pure act of service, we quietly plant seeds of faith in hearts that society often overlooks.

Two weeks ago, I had the privilege of celebrating the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and First Holy Communion for four inmates at the Joliet Detention Center. Their deep desire and reverence reminded me again of that woman's wisdom from years ago. They have names, they exist, and they are just as worthy of God's grace. After the Mass, each newly minted Catholic offered a testimonial, thanking those

who brought Christ to them and sharing how lost they felt before being introduced to God and the Church. Their desire to cling to hope and live out their newfound faith inspired me deeply as we gathered in that makeshift prison chapel.

Let me highlight the ministry of the growing number of laypeople, deacons, and priests in our Diocese who are living out this call and bringing Christ's love to the incarcerated. And they do it with no fanfare. Truly, no one is writing them thank you notes or sending them gifts for their ministry. We as a Church and as a Diocese should be proud that so many are putting their faith into action through this ministry.

In Catholic social teaching, we uphold the dignity of every human being, even those who have sinned or been cast aside by society. As Jesus says in Matthew's Gospel: *"Whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me."* This is the heart of our mission. To see Christ in the prisoner, the hungry, the thirsty, the unborn, the immigrant, the person with disabilities, the stranger, and all in need. It is a true Christian hope. It is the conviction that Christ is with us always and that every person is worth seeing, knowing, and loving in His name.

In a few weeks, I will celebrate Christmas Mass at the DuPage County Correctional Facility. As I prepare for that Mass, please know that I will carry your intentions with me in prayer. Also, join me in prayer as together we carry that hope not only into the prisons but into every place where Christ's light is most needed. Our homes, our parishes, our workplaces, our neighborhoods, and all the hidden corners of our lives and our world.

May we never overlook the unexpected places where God's grace, hope, and light are waiting to break through and transform us all. For when we see the face of Christ in every person we meet, we fulfill the mission of being disciples who MAKE disciples.

Let's **MAKE** Disciples for Jesus!

Download and read Bishop Hicks' new pastoral letter, **MAKE**, to discover how you and your loved ones can live as disciples and help make other disciples in your community.



MAKE.diojoliet.org



MAKE

A Pastoral Letter for the People
of the **Diocese of Joliet**

¡Hagamos discípulos para Jesús!

Descargue y lea la nueva carta pastoral del Obispo Hicks, **MAKE**, para descubrir cómo usted y sus seres queridos pueden vivir como discípulos y ayudar a hacer otros discípulos en su comunidad.



MAKE.diojoliet.org



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