

January 18, 2026

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
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:

StPaulReligiousEd@stpaulpeotone.org
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

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: December 10, 2025

FIRST COMMUNION: **April 12, 2026 at 11am**

CONFIRMATION: May 9, 2026 at 11am
at St. Anthony (Frankfort)

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 Thurs 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

Please pray for the pilgrims attending the 53rd annual **MARCH FOR LIFE** in Washington, D.C. this Friday, January 23. Live coverage will be found on EWTN.



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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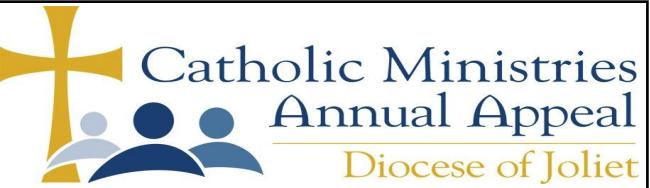
Sat	1/17	3:00 pm—	<u>CONFESION</u>
		4:00 pm—	+ <u>Peter Claxton</u> (from 12/28/25) req by Dolly Farmer
Sun	1/18	11:00 am—	+ <u>Betty Knickrehm</u> req by Tom & Lou Hagemaster and <u>People of the Parish</u>
Mon	1/19	8:30 am—	<u>COMMUNION SERVICE</u>
Tue	1/20	8:30 am—	<u>COMMUNION SERVICE</u>
Wed	1/21	8:30 am—	<u>COMMUNION SERVICE</u>
Thr	1/22		<u>Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children</u>
		8:30 am—	<u>COMMUNION SERVICE</u>
		6:00 pm—	<u>ADORATION</u>
			<u>NO CONFESION</u>
Fri	1/23	8:30 am—	<u>COMMUNION SERVICE</u>
Sat	1/24	3:00 pm—	<u>CONFESION</u>
		4:00 pm—	+ <u>Irvin Weiss</u> req by the James Kelly Family and <u>People of the Parish</u>
Sun	1/15	11:00 am—	+ <u>Bill Kosky</u> req by the Braun Family

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.



Additional volunteers are needed to assist in the reverent cleaning of our **altar linens** (purificators and corporals). Laundering / ironing is done at home and instructions will be given. Please contact the Parish Office or Mrs. Betsy Richter 903 918-9305 for details.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to the family and friends of **MRS. ALICE STEPHENS**, 94, who passed away January 10. A funeral Mass was celebrated on January 15, 2026.
+ May she rest in peace. +



The 2026 Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal has begun!

The Diocese of Joliet invites all parishioners to support the 2026 Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal (CMAA). Together, we can make a profound difference.

This year's theme is *Beyond all Expectations: Faith that Elevates!* Through the CMAA, we ensure Christ's mission and ministries reach everyone. We provide shelter for the homeless, feed the hungry, support vocations, and educate the next generation of Catholics. Our parish cannot accomplish this alone. As a diocese, we can do so much more.

Our parish goal is **\$16,700**. We receive 70% of any amount raised over goal to use within our parish. Please review your mailing from the Diocese and prayerfully consider your gift.

If you do not receive a CMAA mailing, please contact the parish office. Thank you!

2025 CMAA Pledge Report

for St. Paul the Apostle as of 1/11/26:

PARISH GOAL:	\$15,600
AMOUNT PLEDGED:	\$36,342
AMOUNT PAID:	\$35,862
REMAINING BALANCE:	\$ 480
NUMBER of DONORS:	123
2025 REBATE:	\$14,183

Next weekend we will take up the **Collection for the Church in Latin America**. Many in Latin America and the Caribbean find that a rising secular culture, difficult rural terrain, and a shortage of ministers all present obstacles to practicing the faith. Your support for the collection provides lay leadership training, catechesis, priestly and religious formation, and other programs to share our Catholic faith with those who long to hear the Good News of Christ.

To learn more about how your gifts make a difference, visit usccb.org/latin-america.

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Is 49:3, 5-6; 1 Cor 1:1-3; Jn 1:29-34

Today's Gospel passage delves into the theological significance of John the Baptist's witness and its profound implications for Christian faith. John's electrifying declaration, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" is the central phrase of today's Gospel reading. To a Jewish audience, the "Lamb of God" immediately recalls the *Passover Lamb*—the sacrificial animal whose blood protected the Israelites from death. This connection signifies Jesus as the ultimate, once-for-all sacrifice that delivers humanity from the slavery of sin and death.

It also strongly echoes the *Suffering Servant* described in Isaiah (Is 53), who is "led like a lamb to the slaughter" and "bears the sin of many." Jesus is identified as the one who will willingly endure suffering to bear the burden of the world's sin. The phrase "takes away" is a powerful word, emphasizing a complete and final solution to the problem of sin—not just covering it, but removing its guilt and condemnation. This is the core purpose of Jesus' coming.

John the Baptist, the powerful and popular prophet, willingly steps aside and minimizes his own role in favor of Jesus, which clearly declares his humility. John reiterates that Jesus "was before me," acknowledging Jesus' pre-existence and superior divine nature, despite appearing later in public ministry. John is the herald; Jesus is the King. John states that his baptism with water was simply to reveal Jesus to Israel ("that He might be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water"). His entire purpose was to prepare the ground and then point the spotlight away from himself. John's attitude is a perfect model of humility for all who serve God. Our goal should always be to direct attention to Christ, allowing him to increase while we decrease (as John says elsewhere).

John's testimony is not based on mere opinion or guesswork, but evidence; it is grounded in a supernatural

sign given by God. The Spirit Descends and Remains with him. John reveals the sign that God gave him to identify the Messiah: the one on whom he sees the Spirit descending and remaining. The key detail is that the Spirit "remained" on Jesus. This signifies that Jesus is permanently and fully endowed with the Holy Spirit for his ministry. Unlike the temporary anointings of Old Testament prophets and kings, Jesus possesses the Spirit fully and continuously.

This anointing confirms Jesus as "the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." His baptism is not just a ritual washing with water, but a cleansing and empowering rebirth with the Spirit, a gift

He grants to all who follow Him. Based on the evidence he witnessed—the descent of the Spirit and the heavenly mandate—John concludes with the ultimate testimony: **"And I have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God."** This is the highest declaration of Jesus' identity, proclaiming His unique, divine relationship with the Father. The entire passage serves as the opening statement of John's Gospel, introducing Jesus as the divine sacrifice, the greater one, and the Spirit-giver.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Thomas Theneth CMI

Fr. Thomas will return for Confession / Mass on Saturday, February 14.

There will be no 8:30am weekday Masses celebrated at St. Paul during this time—Communion services will be held Monday through Friday at 8:30am.



Confession will be offered on Saturday from 3pm-3:45pm and weekend Masses will be celebrated as usual at 4pm and 11am.

There will be no Confession offered on Thursdays; Adoration will be held as usual from 6-8pm.

9 Days for Life (January 16-24, 2026) is an annual novena for the protection of human life. Each day's intention is accompanied by a short reflection and suggested actions to help build a culture of life. Download the novena or sign up to receive the daily prayers via email or text message! (www.respectlife.org/9-days-signup)



2025 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS will be available by request only. Please use the form in the lobby, contact the parish office at 708 258-6917 or email your request to: parishoffice@stpaulpeotone.org.

We welcome our celebrants this weekend:

Rev. J. Rodolphe "Dof" Arty, CSC of St. John Paul II Parish (Kankakee) and Most Reverend Dennis E. Spies, Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Joliet.



COLLECTION SUMMARY: January 10—11, 2026

Budgeted	\$3,205.53
Sunday Offertory*	\$2,753.00
Minus	452.53
Envelopes used / distributed	73 / 531
*Includes 7 Online Givers	
Providing for Our Future	\$ 10.00
Solemnity of Mary	\$ 40.00
First Offering	\$ 5.00
Christmas	\$ 50.00

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.



Religious Education

A mandatory
CONFIRMATION
RETREAT will be held
 at St. Anthony
 Catholic Church

© J. S. Paluch Co., Inc. (Frankfort) this

Tuesday, January 20, 2026 from 6pm-8pm or this
 Wednesday, January 21, 2026 from 6pm-8pm;

A STUDENT / PARENT MEETING will be held on
 Sunday, January 25, 2026 at 10am. Please plan on
 staying to celebrate 11am Mass;

FIRST COMMUNION is scheduled for Sunday,
 April 12 at 11am Mass



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

Council 11232 Pasta Dinner @ Saint Boniface

Friday, February 13, 2026 4:30 - 7:00pm

Donation: \$12 per person

Proceeds benefit Knights supported charities.

**On Sale After
All Masses**

Please keep Ed Kulish, Jan Leffelman, 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 Ladislas, Arline Clark, Mary Jo Fry, Gerald Adcock, Laura Valenti, Samantha Digiocomo, Julie Szudarski, Aris Tomac, Bob Johnson, Pete Henrisey, Claudia Merfield, Harry & Pam Carpenter, Ray Romito, Francesca Librera Biondo, Mike Wilczynski, Fran Rewers, Geri Mokry, Pastor Richard Young, Jeanne Vinezeano, Frances Librera, the Adamsick Family, Lavergne Sigrist, Charlie Kooy, Rita Hall, Rose Bailey, Julie Hayes, Emily Klamkin, Lorianne Michelic, the Robert Polacek family, Rich Harms, TJ Stefanski, Linda Galica and those that go unnamed.

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

The Diocese of Joliet has scheduled a "Vianney Visit" for February 12-14, 2026, to provide high school juniors and seniors (ages 17-18) the opportunity to take a closer look and experience college seminary. Attend Mass, prayer and spiritual conferences with SJV priests and hear testimonies from SJV seminarians.

St. John Vianney College Seminary in St. Paul, MN, is the largest collaborative college seminary in the United States, representing 18 dioceses through the nation, including ours, with more than 100 undergraduate men in formation this year!

Questions / Concerns / Registration: vocations@dioceseofjoliet.org or call 815-221-6171.
There is no cost for this trip and the Diocese of Joliet will provide all meals and transportation.

Discerning? We can help you foster your vocation to fatherhood...

Because God Still Calls...

 Join us for an upcoming "Vianney Visit"
 February 12-14, 2026
 St. John Vianney College Seminary, St. Paul, MN

Prayer for Priests on Vacation

Loving and gracious God, We lift up to You the priests who are traveling for rest and renewal. Bless their journeys with safety, peace, and joy. Refresh their minds and hearts as they step away from their daily responsibilities, and surround them with the quiet grace that restores the spirit. May this time of renewal strengthen them for the ministry to which You have called them, and may they return refreshed, protected, and filled with Your light.

Amen.



**POPE'S INTENTIONS for
JANUARY 2026: For prayer with
the Word of God**

Let us pray that praying with the Word of God be nourishment for our lives and a source of hope in our communities, helping us to build a more fraternal and missionary Church.

Thank you for all of your hard work during practices. I thought that we added a lot to the Christmas Night Mass, especially with not much turn around time between Father's Installation Mass and Christmas!



Several of you have asked when we would be meeting next. You will find the practice schedule below. Note that we will be taking the month of January off and will start back up with rehearsals on February 7. Please mark your calendars of the dates, and text or email me with any conflicts.

There's plenty of room for more choir members. If you have the dates below and think that you'd like to be part of the St Paul Choir, we'd love to have you. Please contact Sue (815 370-6287) if you have any questions, or would like to join.

**St. Paul the Apostle
2026 Winter / Spring Choir Rehearsals**

Saturday, February 7, 14:	2:30-3:30pm
Saturday, February 21:	NO REHEARSAL
Saturday, February 28:	2:30-3:30pm
Saturday, March 7, 14, 21, 28:	2:30-3:30pm

Easter Liturgies

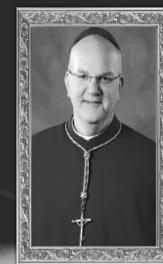
Thursday, April 2	Holy Thursday
Friday, April 3	Good Friday
Saturday, April 4	Easter Vigil
Sunday, April 5	Easter Sunday

Thank you for giving freely of your time to enhance the church liturgy through music.



*SUNDAY
MARCH 1, 2026*

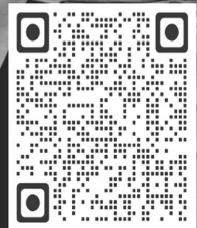
DisABILITIES Mass



*Most Reverend
Dennis E. Spies*

OUR LADY OF
MERCY CHURCH
701 S. EOLA RD.
AURORA, IL

Reception to Follow



*Scan to
Register!*



Our CCW will again observe **NATIONAL MARRIAGE WEEK** and have a wedding photo display in the lobby beginning on Saturday, January 31 and ending on Sunday, February 15. On Sunday, February 15 we will celebrate **Snack & Chat** after 11am Mass with a wedding cake.

CANDLEMAS is a Christian holiday celebrated annually on February 2. You are invited to bring candles to Mass to be blessed for personal and family use on January 31 / February 1.

Examples of when blessed candles can be used at home—during prayer or spiritual reading, during severe weather, when undergoing a trial or hardship and Divine guidance is wished, during a Communion call or when death is near.

To observe the feast day of **St. Blaise**, Bishop and Martyr (February 3), patron saint of throat ailments, a throat blessing will be offered at Masses on January 31, February 1 and February 3.



SOUPER BOWL of CARING:

Our parish will once again participate and collect \$1 (or larger!) bills at our exits after Masses on February 7 / 8 to benefit the Helping Hands Food Pantry.

Remember—every \$1 donated translates into \$8 of purchasing power for the Pantry!



Bishop Hicks' Column January 2026

One Last Column, Ever Grateful



For more than five years, I have been blessed to share my thoughts with you in this monthly column. When I first began writing, it took me a very long time to craft each reflection. I often wondered if anyone was reading them or if they would make any difference at all.

But at parish visits and events, many of you told me that you read these reflections and that they helped you understand my mind and my heart. Some of you offered positive comments and others offered constructive suggestions. All of that feedback helped me grow in gratitude. I stopped seeing these columns as a task and started seeing them as a privilege. They became one of the ways we shared our faith journey together.

Now I write my final column. It is a bittersweet moment. I am excited for my next steps to New York. At the same time, I am going to miss this ongoing exchange with you.

As we come to the conclusion of this written dialogue, I would like to reflect with you on a few thoughts [I shared at my farewell Mass on January 11, 2026.](#)

In my homily, I expressed my sincere gratitude for the faith and love you have shown me throughout my years as your bishop. Together we have shared significant moments. We have celebrated the sacraments. We have strengthened our mission to be a vibrant and evangelizing Church. Through Confirmations, ordinations, graduations, the Chrism Mass, baptisms, funerals, community service, and our care for the most vulnerable, I saw Jesus Christ revealed in you. And each time we gathered for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, you strengthened my faith and drew me closer to God. And I pray that I have done the same for you.

I am deeply grateful to our priests who faithfully serve with pastoral hearts and leadership. To our deacons, wives, and families, thank you for your steadfast ministry of charity and your service. To our religious women and men and consecrated virgins, your prayerful presence and collaborative ministry have been a constant blessing. I am grateful for every sacrifice and every quiet act of love that often goes unseen but never goes unnoticed by God.

I also want to thank our diocesan staff and all employees who work as a vocation to ensure that the Church continues its mission. Our administrators, teachers, catechists, and youth ministers form disciples in classrooms and parish halls. Our musicians, liturgical ministers, and countless volunteers give life and beauty to our worship and mission. And to every parishioner across our seven counties, please know how grateful I am for your generosity and witness to faith in your homes, parishes, and workplaces.

Through baptism, we are all called to continue living the mission of Jesus Christ. I now move forward to serve in New York, trusting that the good work we have begun together will continue to bear fruit here in the Diocese of Joliet.

Many have asked who will become the next bishop. Soon, an administrator will be appointed who will continue to guide and govern the diocese while the apostolic nuncio and the Dicastery of Bishops offer recommendations to our Holy Father, Pope Leo. In due time, he will appoint the seventh Bishop of Joliet. Please join me in prayer for that discernment process.

Even though my ministry will continue in another place, I believe that prayer keeps us close. Every time we pray for one another, we remain closely united in Christ. So let us keep lifting each other up before God. I will carry you with me in my heart and in my daily prayer, and I humbly ask you to remember me in yours.

I also encourage you to be disciples who make disciples. Please continue to embrace my pastoral letter entitled **MAKE**. Pray with it. Reflect on it. Share it. Put it into practice every day. The Church grows when every one of us answers the call to live the Gospel with conviction and joy.

You remain in my heart and in my prayers with great love and deep gratitude. May God bless you and bless us always with His Spirit of peace and all good things. *Paz y bien.*

[Scan the QR code below to listen to the bishop's homily from his January 11th Mass of Thanksgiving.]

