



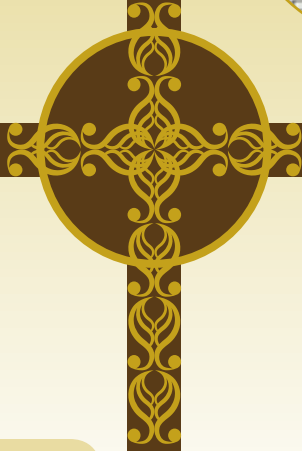
St. Alexius



Our Lady of the Angels



St. Paul's



Lynn and Doug Peterson *“Bring Everything Back to God”*

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After the students of Holy Family School have gathered in their separate classrooms to begin their daily studies, Lynn Peterson sometimes takes a quiet moment to walk the halls and listen to their voices lifted in prayer.

“In Catholic education, you not only offer students strong academics, but those academics are also intertwined with faith and prayer,” says Mrs. Peterson, Holy Family’s Principal. “We bring everything back to God.”

Mrs. Peterson and her husband, Doug, moved to Sauk Centre in 1980, when they began teaching at Holy Family. They first met in a film class at a community college and then attended St. Cloud State University together.

“Lynn went into Elementary Education, and I followed her,” says Mr. Peterson, who teaches sixth grade. “We started teaching right across the hall from each other in the intermediate wing at Holy Family.”

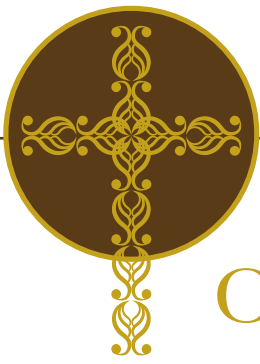
They immediately fell in love with the quiet atmosphere at Our Lady of the Angels, and made it their parish home. They also frequently attend Mass at St. Paul’s. For the Petersons, the move to join Sauk Centre’s Catholic community was like “coming home.”

“Years ago, when the parishes joined together, they came up with the name ‘Holy Family School,’” Mrs. Peterson says. “The wisdom they had when they labeled the school was a gift from the Holy Spirit. You feel like you are part of a family.”

Approximately 10 years ago, Mr. Peterson joined the Church and soon felt that he wanted to do more for his church family.



Doug and Lynn Peterson



Our Annual Stewardship Renewal

Lift Up Your Hearts

“Lift up your hearts!”
“We lift them up to the Lord!”

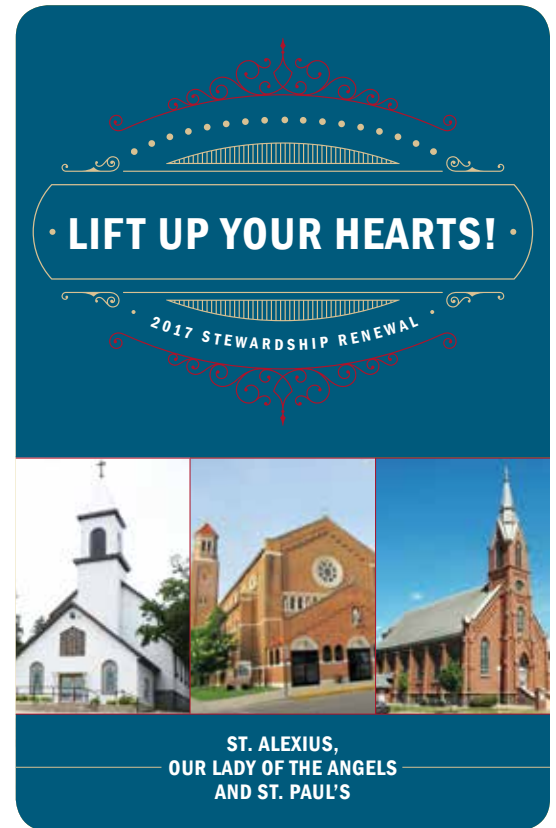
These words bring us into the central prayer of our Mass – the Eucharistic Prayer, where Christ’s Body and Blood are made present. When we pray this prayer – or *any* prayer – we are lifting our hearts and minds to God.

Every day, our actions can be built on a foundation of mindful and heartfelt prayer. And with each prayerful daily action, we are inviting God into our lives. In turn, we are filled with a confidence and peace. Most of us would certainly desire more peace in our lives – and we can truly have that peace by spending more time with God.

During our Stewardship Renewal, this is our focus – spending time with God. We encourage all parishioners to listen to God’s call, and to challenge ourselves to live a more prayerful, Christ-centered existence.

Periodically, we need to re-examine the ways in which we’ll answer this call, which is the reason for this Stewardship Renewal. You will be receiving in the mail your Stewardship Renewal packet. Enclosed in this packet is a brochure that will lead you through that self-examination. It is a time to ask how we can better use our time, talent, and treasure.

- Do I make time for prayer? By myself and with my family?
- Are my prayerful actions – my talents – at work in my parish actively building the Church?
- Do I give a proportionate amount of my treasure to the weekly offertory?



Commitment Weekend at St. Alexius and Our Lady of the Angels is Sept. 23-24, and Commitment Weekend at St. Paul’s is Sept. 30-Oct. 1. Don’t forget to bring your Commitment Card to Mass!

How do I use my Commitment Card?

Your Commitment Card allows you to make commitments to prayer, parish ministries, and offertory giving. It is designed to be used by the whole family.

Time Section: Except for the ill and homebound, everyone should be able to check “Come to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days.” Try to check at least a few other items. Daily prayer should be a priority for every person trying to grow closer to God.

Talent Section: You can either sign up for new ministries or re-commit to your current ministries. Be sure to write your first name next to the ministry! This is especially important if more than one person is using the card.

Treasure Section: Clearly print how much money you plan to give each week or month to your parish. Try to take a step toward giving five percent of your income to your parish.

A Letter From Our Pastor

Save Room in Your Busy Schedules for Stewardship

Dear Parishioners,

I don't know about you, but I still get a surge of adrenalin as the beginning of September approaches. Even though I'm no longer in school, I feel a sense of anticipation when I see the shelves filled with brand-new notebooks, composition books, and all the assorted items students use. I'm aware once again of the great hopes, exciting dreams, and good intentions that a new school year holds.

Even for those parishioners not directly involved in school, September marks new beginnings. Labor Day traditionally marks the unofficial end of the summer vacation season, and our calendars may reflect that. Many of you have calendars a lot like mine — they're full year-round with appointments and obligations. But even for us, things get busier in September as various organizations that took a break during summer begin their regular round of meetings again.

Nevertheless, I have a request for you as you fill up your fall schedules. First thing, please put in some time to share the talents God has given you. As you are aware, as Christian disciples — as stewards



— we are called to return to God a portion of the Time, Talent, and Treasure He has entrusted to us. We should make our commitments to God when we begin our planning, so that we don't offer Him just the scraps of time and energy left over after everything else.

Make this September the month you make a commitment to sing in the choir, including attending rehearsals. Or begin working with our parish religious education in one way or another. Or decide to launder altar linens once a month.

Or volunteer to help with parish office work one morning a week. Or help care for the parish grounds. Or join the Knights of Columbus. Or join a social service ministry. Or... well, you get the idea.

There are many ministries and groups within the parish where you can serve, and you'll find that you receive even as you give. Hardly anyone in our parish communities can't find at least one activity in which they can participate and which fits their schedule. If you aren't involved, make this September the month to change that.

Thinking about commitments, some people say they don't have Time for prayer. Again, it's a matter of priorities, and I challenge any one of you to demonstrate to me that you can't pray at least one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and one Glory Be during the course of the day. That's at least a beginning.

In our Father's hands,

Fr. Greg Paffel

Many of you have calendars a lot like mine — they're full year-round with appointments and obligations. But even for us, things get busier in September as various organizations that took a break during summer begin their regular round of meetings again.



“A Gift o

St. Paul’s Miller Family Reflects on Th

When we talk about service and sacrifice, it is often within the framework of the “three Ts” – time, talent, and treasure. But there are some ways of giving that seem to defy categorization. This is certainly the case with the incredible gift that parishioner Jessie Miller recently gave to her brother when she donated part of her liver to him this past March. As is so often the case, it would seem that the greater the gift given, the greater the reward received. Indeed, reflecting on their experience with organ donation, Jessie and her family feel that they have been exceptionally blessed.

The story of Jessie’s journey as a liver donor is marked by ups and downs, starts and stops, and a lot of waiting. Through it all, the story is also one of hope and trust in the Lord. And in the end, it ultimately reveals itself to be a story of answered prayers and boundless joy.

As Jessie recalls, this story had its beginning years ago, when she and her four siblings were children.

“My brother, Tim, has been sick since we were kids,” Jessie explains. “He was diagnosed with a couple of different things – basically all intestinal – and in 2010, they noticed that he had liver damage. When he was 27, they told him that he would need a liver transplant by the time he was 30. That was really hard on him.”



The Miller family – Mark and Jessie with their children, Jazlyn and Christian

Jessie and Tim – only 15 months apart in age – have always been particularly close. So, in the face of his grim medical outlook, the two traveled together to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. in June 2016 to see if it would be possible for Jessie to become Tim’s liver donor. At the end of a week of testing, the siblings received confirmation that Jessie was both a good match and healthy enough for the transplant surgery. From that moment, the rest of the year became a waiting game for the whole family. For Jessie, waiting also meant diligently preparing, as she was required to quit smoking, abstain from alcohol, and lose 10 pounds.

Jessie’s husband, Mark, remembers those long months of waiting well.

“There was a long time leading up to [the surgery], not knowing when it would be scheduled,” he recalls. “So about a year ago, Jessie really began to prepare for it even though we didn’t have a date. It was hard not knowing if or when it was going to happen, especially with our teenage kids, and feeling their concerns and worry about their mom and their uncle.”

It was important for both Jessie and Mark to know that their children – 15-year-old Christian and 14-year-old Jazlyn – were comfortable with what was going on, so they talked things over as a family a lot in

of Love”:

their Experience with Organ Donation



Jessie visiting with her brother, Tim, three days after the successful liver transplant in March 2017.

the months leading up to the transplant. As Mark points out, one of the most difficult things for an organ donor and his or her family to come to terms with is the idea of an already healthy person going into a surgery that will lead to a painful recovery and uncertain outcome. When Tim became too ill to undergo the originally scheduled transplant surgery in September, another period of anxious waiting began.

Facing the unknown, the Miller family found themselves leaning heavily on their faith in the months, days and hours leading up to the surgery, which finally took place in March 2017.

“The night before, Mark and I did a lot of talking, and I think

that’s when I felt, deep down, that it was almost like I was being carried through,” Jessie says. “I was still scared, but just felt like this was God’s plan, and if it was to be, it was going to happen. And that’s how my brother felt, too.

“I definitely realize now how little control we actually have over things,” she continues. “You just have to trust God, because there are things that are going to come up in life and His will will be.”

Several months after the transplant, Jessie is doing great and is back to work as a nurse. Enough of her liver has already grown back to allow her a normal, healthy life. And her brother, Tim? Having been at the end

stage of liver disease without much time left just a year ago, he is now doing well with his new, healthy liver!

Reflecting on the past year, the Millers still have a hard time putting their experience into words. The family, which has always been active in the parish – Christian and Jazlyn attended Holy Family School, serve at Mass, and participate in youth group and Vacation Bible School – has found an even deeper connection to their faith.

“One thing this did was it showed our kids how strong their mom is, to trust in her faith and be able to do this,” Mark says. “It’s been quite an example for them.”

In addition, the Millers have been overwhelmed by the remarkable support they have been shown by our parish over the past year. Throughout the entire process of preparation, surgery and recovery, they have felt grateful for the love and prayers of Fr. Sudhansu and Fr. Greg and all their fellow parishioners.

In quite literally giving of herself as a liver donor, Jessie found that she and her family have been blessed in truly indescribable ways.

“It’s amazing what God can do, honestly,” she says. “He deserves a lot of praise. I do believe that this was God’s gift to Tim. And His gift to me, in a lot of ways. I can’t even begin to describe the reward for me. It’s a gift of love that God gives us, to be a donor or a recipient. It’s just love.”



A Call to Love: Sr. Sharon Rose Goellner, OP

“Do whatever you do with love.”

These simple words – taken from the writings of St. Therese of Lisieux – are displayed each year in the classroom where Sr. Sharon Rose Goellner, OP teaches. For her, they are an important reminder of what Christianity is all about.

“To me, these words are crucial because if I’m not loving in my vocation as a sister, then what’s the point?” Sr. Sharon Rose says. “And that’s what each of us is called to do, no matter what our particular vocation. Jesus calls us to love others in the big and small ways in life.”

Love, in many ways, is where Sr. Sharon Rose’s vocation story begins. Growing up here in Sauk Centre, she was taught from an early age the

importance of loving God with one’s whole heart. Faith was always an intricate part of her family’s daily living.

“Growing up, my family just really loved the faith,” Sr. Sharon Rose says. “My dad particularly was such a teacher of the faith, mostly through his example but also through his instruction. I really attribute my own vocation to him. He just really encouraged us to discern and be open to a religious vocation, though never in a pushy way.”

Blessed by this faith-filled and loving environment, Sr. Sharon Rose first began desiring the religious life at a young age. As a third-grade child, she can remember watching a family movie with a religious sister in it and thinking, “*This will be me someday.*” Then, later as she matured into her teenage years, those thoughts and de-

sires continued to deepen and solidify. Meanwhile, she began visiting Our Lady of the Angels’ Perpetual Adoration Chapel regularly and teaching Religious Education classes, both of which would later become key parts in her discernment process.

“Looking back, I can see how my vocation was really nourished through the faith community,” Sr. Sharon Rose says. “The people of the parish really encouraged me to try teaching Religious Education, thinking I would be good at it. I taught the younger grades for three years, and through that experience I grew to really love that aspect of spreading the faith to young children.”

As a junior in high school, Sr. Sharon Rose began visiting and corresponding with various religious orders in order to begin discerning God’s plan for her. Eventually, she encountered two sisters from the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia in Nashville, Tenn. Attracted to what she witnessed in these two women, Sr. Sharon Rose later attended one of the order’s vocation retreats. And while she was deeply attracted, Sr. Sharon Rose still held off making a commitment to enter, fearing the dramatic change and leaving her family behind.

“I continued to struggle during my senior year in high school with questions about what I would do next,” Sr. Sharon Rose says. “Finally, in frustration I went to my mom and said, ‘I don’t know what God wants me



Sr. Sharon Rose Goellner, OP, with her family.

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A Call to Love: Sr. Sharon Rose Goellner, OP

continued from page 6

to do.' And my mom just asked me point-blank if I had actually thought about joining after high school. I thought I was open, but when I was faced with that question, I realized that I hadn't really pursued the answer to that question because I was afraid of leaving my family and such a drastic change. So, I just rested with that question and the more I thought about it, the more called I felt to accept that possibility. And the more that I did, it was the only decision that was bringing me peace."

Deciding to visit the Dominican Sisters one more time, Sr. Sharon Rose was overwhelmed with a sense of homecoming as she walked through their doors. Suddenly, she knew with clarity that this was the Lord's plan for her, causing her to officially enter the order in August 2005. Sr. Sharon Rose spent the next several years further discerning her vocation and attending schooling before professing her final vows in 2012.

Since then, Sr. Sharon Rose has spent the past six years of her life teaching second grade at various schools in Virginia. Starting this year, she will be teaching at St. Croix Catholic School in Stillwater, Minn. Her hope is to continue saying "yes" to God's plan by spreading His love to others, most especially her young students.

"Seeing the students grow in their love for the faith is just beyond words," Sr. Sharon Rose says. "Teaching second grade for all of these years, I've

loved being able to teach them about the sacraments because they are so open. By default, it ends up touching their parents because that's what the students come home talking about. It's such a gift to be part of this process and to be able to serve Him."

Sr. Sharon Rose remains deeply grateful to the many parishioners who helped form and support her during her vocation journey. Her prayer is that others will courageously embrace God's call and trust in His plan, "even when it's scary or intimidating."

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– Sr. Sharon Rose Goellner, OP



Watching her young students' love for God grow and evolve has been one of the greatest blessings of teaching for Sr. Sharon Rose.



St. Alexius · Our Lady of the Angels · St. Paul's

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Mass Schedule

Saturday 4:00 p.m. - St. Paul's
Saturday 5:00 p.m. - Our Lady of the Angels
Saturday 8:00 p.m. - St. Paul's
Sunday 8:00 a.m. - St. Paul's
Sunday 8:30 a.m. - St. Alexius
Sunday 10:00 a.m. - St. Paul's
Sunday 10:30 a.m. - Our Lady of the Angels

Reconciliation Schedule

Thursday 4:00 p.m. - St. Paul's
Saturday 3:00 p.m. - St. Paul's
Saturday 4:00 p.m. - Our Lady of the Angels
Sunday 8:00 a.m. - St. Alexius

Lynn and Doug Peterson *continued from front cover*

"I became an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion about three years ago," he says. "I get a sense of peacefulness when I give the Eucharist to others."

The Petersons are both involved in the Teen Intercessory Prayer ministry, and Mrs. Peterson feels particularly called to the Stewardship Pillar of Prayer.

Many community members reach out to the school with prayer requests regarding an upcoming surgery, a sickness or a particular struggle. The students, faculty and staff lift these requests up in prayer.

"Prayer is the greatest gift," Mrs. Peterson says. "I remember on Sept. 11, that the different classes took turns praying in the chapel and in adoration. We turn to God in prayer."

Over the years, Mrs. Peterson has witnessed the stewardship of the teachers and staff, who see their work as a mission, and our priests, who keep the school ever in their prayers.

Also, she has seen the incredible generosity of the countless parishioners who volunteer at the school and give of their time, talent, and treasure.

"We have men and women who have volunteered here for over 30 years," Mrs. Peterson says. "People come in regularly to work in the lunchroom, the library or the classroom. Others come in and ask if anything needs to be done."

If parishioners wonder how to take those first steps and give back to the faith community, Mr. Peterson would encourage them to attend a Stewardship Ministry Fair and to ask questions.

"Many people ask how they can volunteer at Holy Family," he says. "Don't be afraid to ask questions. You'll never regret volunteering."

The Petersons and all of Holy Family's faculty and staff are grateful for the people who live stewardship through giving back to the school.

"They each have a gift that they use to serve God and to serve others," Mrs. Peterson says. "Any time they use that gift, we are humbled and grateful for them. They are what makes us a Catholic school, and they are part of our identity."

"In Catholic education, you not only offer students strong academics, but those academics are also intertwined with faith and prayer. We bring everything back to God." – Mrs. Lynn Peterson, Principal of Holy Family School