



ST JAMES ST MARY OF MOUNT CARMEL PARISHES

453 S. Main St. P.O. Box 280
Amherst, WI 54406
(715) 824-3455

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
8:30AM—1:00PM

Parish Website: sjsmcc.weconnect.com



Fr. Jerzy Rebacz; Pastor | Deacon Art Schaller

December 28, 2025

Mission Statement

We, the stewards of St. James and St. Mary of Mount Carmel Parishes
in the Diocese of La Crosse, strive to live as disciples of Christ.



Vision Statement

As Parishioners of St. James and St. Mary of Mount Carmel Parishes, we are called as stewards to celebrate the
presence of Christ in our life as we worship together in prayer, in liturgy and in the Sacraments.

We endeavor to strengthen our Catholic faith and Christian service
as individuals, as families, and as a parish community as we seek to spread the teachings of Christ
through our words, through our witness, and through our actions.

Mass Intentions FOR THE WEEK

Tuesday, December 30th 8:15AM @ SJ
+Dale & Paula Shulfer

Wednesday, December 31st 4:00PM @ SJ
+Delphine Shulfer

Thursday, January 1st 10:00AM @ SJ
+Tom Rzentkowski

Friday, January 2nd 8:15AM @ SJ
+Carl Repinski; Living & Deceased Family Members

Saturday, January 3rd 4:00PM @ SJ
+Scot Martin

Sunday, January 4th
8:30 AM @ SJ Parishioners of our Two Parishes
10:30AM @ SJ +Robert E. Lea Jr.



New Dawn, New Birth

Lord, I know that you
always give us the chance to
start again with you. In spite of
all our failings, all our neglect
of you and your love. You are
always ready to forgive, to
take away our darkness and
give us a fresh hope.

Your birth was a sign of new
hope, like the new dawn fresh
in the morning sky.

Let the splendor of your birth,
the miracle of your being-with-
us, light up our hearts and
minds, to bring us the blessing
of your love always.

Amen

Adoration Schedule

First Thursday of the month after morning Mass at St. James
First Thursday of the month 4:30-5:30PM; First Friday of the month after morning Mass at St. James

Confession Schedule

After weekday Masses and Saturday at 3:30 PM at St. James.
Sunday after 10:30 AM Mass at St. James.

The Meaning of the **12 Days of Christmas**

Catholics celebrate the Christmas season 12 days, from Jesus' birth, December 25th, until the day before the Epiphany. The Epiphany is the celebration of when the three wise men visited Joseph, Mary, and Jesus in Bethlehem. Since the Church continues to celebrate, it is a great opportunity to leave your Christmas decorations up a little longer!

The religious wars in sixteenth century England made it dangerous to be a Catholic. Many people practiced their faith in secret. As the legend goes, Catholic families courageously developed unique ways to secretly pass the faith onto their children, like the song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas." The well-known song was used to teach children about the Catholic Church. Although the lyrics may sound like nonsense, the song actually contains hidden references.

1st Day of Christmas: A Partridge in a Pear Tree. A partridge is a bird that is known to sacrifice its life for its babies. This bird represents Jesus, who is willing to give his life for us. The pear tree symbolizes the Cross.

2nd Day of Christmas: Two Turtle Doves. The two turtle doves represent the Old and New Testament.

3rd Day of Christmas: Three French Hens. The three French hens signify the three theological virtues: faith, hope, and love (or charity).

4th Day of Christmas: Four Calling Birds. The four calling birds symbolize the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which spread the good news of Jesus' life and teachings.

5th Day of Christmas: Five Golden Rings. The five golden rings represent the first five books of the Old Testament, also known as the Pentateuch or the Torah. These books include: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

6th Day of Christmas: Six Geese A-Laying. The six geese a-laying symbolize the six days of creation, emphasizing God's power as the creator of the world.

7th Day of Christmas: Seven Swans A-Swimming. The seven swans a-swimming represent the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

8th Day of Christmas: Eight Maids A-Milking. The eight maids a-milking symbolizes the eight Beatitudes preached by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

9th Day of Christmas: Nine Ladies Dancing. The nine ladies dancing represents the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

10th Day of Christmas: Ten Lords A-Leaping. The ten lords a-leaping signifies the Ten Commandments, which provide guidance for how to live our lives and obey God.

11th Day of Christmas: Eleven Pipers Piping. The eleven pipers piping represent the eleven faithful disciples of Jesus: Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the Younger, Simon, and Jude.

12th Day of Christmas: Twelve Drummers Drumming. The twelve drummers drumming represent the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles' Creed, which summarizes the core beliefs of Christianity.

St James

Week Ending December 21, 2025



Received \$3,280
 Budget \$3,462
 (\$182)

	Month of Nov 2025	Current Fiscal YTD Nov 2025	Prior Fiscal YTD Nov 2024
Received	\$14,385	\$73,481	\$62,038
Budget	<u>\$15,000</u> (\$615)	<u>\$75,000</u> (\$1,519)	

St Mary of Mount Carmel

Week Ending December 21, 2025

Received \$5,039
 Budget \$3,923
 \$1,116

	Month of Nov 2025	Current Fiscal YTD Nov 2025	Prior Fiscal YTD Nov 2024
Received	\$15,955	\$67,447	\$68,516
Budget	<u>\$17,000</u> (\$1,045)	<u>\$85,000</u> (\$17,553)	

Final Reminder. For tax purposes, please have any contributions you would like reflected on your 2025 giving statement to the parish office, or postmarked, by this Wednesday, December 31st. Thank you for your financial support this past year. It is very much appreciated!

Scrip Gift Cards

SMMC Scrip Update

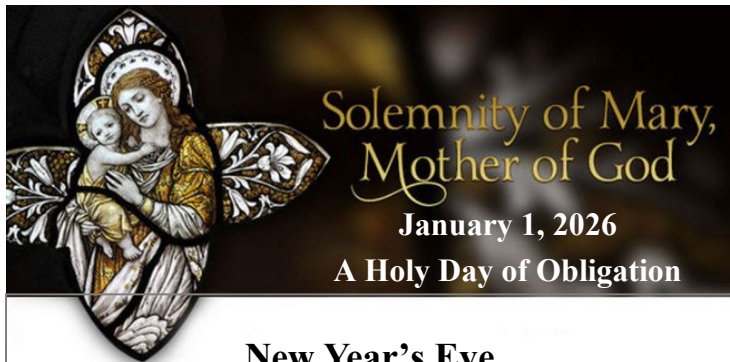
Our next sales will be on January 4th at the 10:30 Mass, at the 4:00 Mass on January 17th and the 10:30 Mass on Jan 18th. Cards can be purchased at any time by calling Pat Zielinski a (715) 824-3762.

St. James Scrip Update

Contact Hydrie Laidlaw at (715) 347-3544 or stop by the parish office to purchase cards during the week.

Thank you for your support!

The parish office will be closed this Wednesday and Thursday in celebration New Years Eve and the Solemnity of Mary. Wishing you and your families a New Year filled with peace and love...and may God continue to bless you this year and throughout all your days.
 Happy New Year 2026!



New Year's Eve
Wednesday, December 31st
 4:00pm Mass (SJ)

Thursday, January 1st
 10:00am Mass (SJ)

Please note there will be no 8:15am morning Mass on December 31st or January 1st.

There will be no First Thursday of the month Adoration on January 1st. Please join us for Adoration on New Year's Eve →

First Friday (January 2nd). Join us for Exposition and Benediction after the 8:15am Mass.

Thank you! ❤️ Every year we are astounded by the generosity as well as the quality of the gifts you provide for our families who receive the Holiday Baskets. At times, it brings me to tears when I see what you contributed to this cause anonymously. God bless you! Many thanks!

Coffee and Doughnuts January 4th. Please join us after 8:30am Mass next Sunday, January 4th for coffee and doughnuts! If you would like to host a first Sunday coffee and doughnut social this winter or spring please contact Misty Prater at (785) 633-5206 or mistyp Slater@gmail.com. We have easy to follow instructions and Misty is always available if questions arise.



Available for all parishioners! *The Fountain of Youth – Confession: The Only Key to Living Forever.*

The book, 'The Fountain of Youth' by Dave Durand will be available for all parishioners this New Years. Fr. Mike Schmitz tells us, "Dave Durand has written a book on Confession that needs to be read. So many people have objections to going to Confession. With clarity and winsomeness, Dave has wisely and gently broken down the walls that keep people from the forgiveness God wants each person to experience".

Make a New Year's resolution to go to Confession often. Read this book to help you understand God's love and mercy each time we confess our sins.

Ring in the New Year with Our Lord Jesus Christ!



Make plans to attend Adoration on New Year's Eve at St. James.

Spending time with our Lord is a perfect way to begin a New Year! Adoration will begin at 5:00pm this Wednesday, December 31st and will conclude with Benediction at 12:00 Midnight.

Sign-up Sheets are available at both entryways.
Be sure to sign up.

Jesus will be waiting for you!

Did you Know?

From Our Sacred Worship Committee

Have you heard that catch phrase: "I was this many years old when I found out...."?

Well, when I received my Diocesan Appeal info in the mail, I actually reviewed the information and did some digging to find out how some of our dollars are being spent.

Under the subheading of 'Charity, Missions and the Wider Church', the distribution for Catholic Charities is \$480,000 for the 2025-2026 year. Within this ministry, as well as other deserving entities, our Diocese contributes to homeless shelters in La Crosse, Eau Claire and Wausau.

I spoke with Greg Hansel, who is spearheading the effort under "Partnering Together" for the homeless in Portage County. He explained to me that Catholic Charities has committed to hiring a case manager for the newly created 365 day/year shelter in Stevens Point.



Perhaps some of you read through the booklet entitled, "Fueling Missions of Hope". For additional information regarding the distributions made to various entities, see the website diolc.org/stewardship. The knowledge is enlightening and inspiring.

Our Catholic Church does wondrous things for the people in our communities.

Enjoy this blessed season of Christmas!



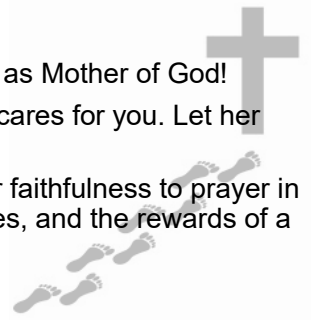
Faith Step

How fitting that we conclude the Octave of Christmas and begin a new year by celebrating Mary as Mother of God!

As you begin a new year, take Mary as your mother. She prays for you, she loves you, and she cares for you. Let her teach you how to say yes to God.

Your yes might seem like nothing extraordinary: someone to care for, someone to encourage, or faithfulness to prayer in the midst of a busy day. But Mary knows that they all add up to an extraordinary life in God's eyes, and the rewards of a faithful life.

God sent his Son, born of a woman.
Galatians 4:47



Area Events

Trip to Croatia. Join Father Janusz on a trip to Croatia! Mark your calendar for June 15-26, 2026 (12 days and 10 nights). He will be visiting Medugorje, the site where visionaries first claimed to see the Blessed Mother in 1981. There will be time for meditation, praying, and Mass. Other cities visited will feature museums, national park, an abbey, a mosque and the beautiful coastline of the Adriatic Sea. For more information contact Father via email: frjkttrips@gmail.com or call St. Therese Parish Office at (715) 359-2421.

St. Wenceslaus PCCW Drive Thru Soup Sale serving from 2 to 4pm. Saturday, January 10th. \$8/quart with dinner rolls. Soup options include: Chicken with Homemade Noodles, Potato and Sausage, Italian Meat Ball, and Beef Barley.

St. Mary-Torun Ponczka Sale. Place your order today by calling (715) 344-9665 or emailing ponczka@toruncatholic.org. Cost per dozen \$14. Choices: Unfilled, Raspberry Jelly, or Prune. Pickup Jan 24th. Between 3 & 6pm.



Marriage

Couples requesting the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage should contact the office at the time of engagement, at least six months prior to the anticipated date of marriage. If a couple wishes to be married as a registered parish member, they must actively participate in the faith (Sunday worship) and be a registered member of our parish at least 3 months prior to requesting the Sacrament of Marriage. Weddings are not celebrated during Lent.

Baptism

Parents may request the baptism of their infant at least two months prior to the anticipated date of baptism. Family should be members of our parish, they must actively participate in the faith (Sunday worship) and be a registered member of our parish. To request baptism, please call the parish office at (715) 824-3455.

Anointing of the Sick

If you or a loved one is in need of the Anointing Sacrament especially before a hospital stay or procedure - please contact the office.

United Prayers to Heaven Prayer Chain

If you, or anyone you know, is in need of prayers, please let us know. We will keep your name & prayer request confidential. Names are included only if you so desire.

Contacts for Prayer Chain

Laurie.....plhintz5@gmail.com
Darlene.....(715) 592-4443
Barb.....(715) 824-3649

Parish Staff

Office

Veronica Bruske(715) 824-3455
catholiccentral54406@gmail.com

Please send your ambo announcements into the office via email by 4:30pm Tuesday.

Parish Life Administrator

Ann Hemmy.....sjsmparishlife@gmail.com

DRE

Michelle Shulfer.....sjsmdre@gmail.com

Bulletin.....bulletininfo06@gmail.com

Please send your bulletin requests via email by 4:30pm Tuesday.

Church Councils

Pastoral Council

Cindi Borski SM
Justen Pacocha SM
Barb Gutschow SM
Judy Zinda SM
Michael Juris SJ
Michelle Shulfer SJ
Christine Thompson SJ

Finance Council

Mark Doll SM
Gilbert Patoka SM
Sandy Trzebiatowski SJ
Pat Kwiatkowski SJ

Committees Chairperson and Co-chairs

Family Life....Laura Gould

Sacred Worship....Judi Marquard | Barb Groholski

Social Concerns... Pat Zielinski | Laura Trzebiatowski-Przekurat