



ST. JAMES ST. MARY OF MOUNT CARMEL PARISHES

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

Fr. Jerzy Rebacz; Pastor
Deacon Art Schaller

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

Parish Website: sjsmmcc.weconnect.com



December 7, 2025

Mission Statement

We, the stewards of St. James and St. Mary of Mount Carmel Parishes
in the Diocese of LaCrosse, 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

Monday, December 8th

8:15AM @ SJ For the Parishioners of our Two Parishes
6:00PM @ SJ +Andy O'Brien

Tuesday, December 9th 8:15AM @ SJ
+BJ Trzebiatowski

Wednesday, December 10th 8:15AM @ SJ
+Richard Rzentkowski

Thursday, December 11th 8:15AM @ SJ
+Tony Bronk

Friday, December 12th 8:15AM @ SJ
+Dave Kannel

Saturday, December 13th 4:00PM @ SJ
+Jim Ostrowski

Sunday, December 14th
8:30 AM @ SJ +Jason Trzebiatowski
10:30AM @ SJ For the Parishioners of our Two Parishes

Advent Prayer

Turn to us, O hidden God,
And show us your unending love.
As we wait in hopeful expectation
And prepare for your coming
To be with us now.

Fill us with the joy of your presence,
Change our lives and transform us
Into images of your Son Jesus,
So that through us,
Everyone we meet can
Come to know your unending love
And be invited into your presence.

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.

St. Mary Renovation Update

The towers are up on the upper portion of the scaffolding. Work has begun on the high points of the walls.

As the painters began, they mentioned plaster would just fall from the walls. Fortunately this did not happen while parishioners were sitting in the pews.

Thank you to all who continue to support this project through their continuing pledge payments. Please consider donating to the restoration if you have not already done so.

If you have questions, please contact the parish office.

Thank you!



St James

Week Ending November 30, 2025

Received \$2,780
Budget \$3,462
(\$682)

	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 November 30, 2025

Received \$3,361
Budget \$3,923
(\$562)

	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)	

Scrip Gift Cards



SMMC Scrip Update

Gift cards are on sale this weekend. Our next sales will be at the 4:00 Mass on December 20th and the 10:30 Mass on Dec 21st.

Need gift cards for Christmas presents? Call Pat Zielinski at (715) 824-3762 to place your order and set up delivery. Cards can be delivered to your home if you wish.

Thank you to everyone who supports our Scrip Program!

St. James Scrip Update

St James will be selling scrip this weekend at the 4:00pm and 8:30am Masses.

Special orders for Christmas gift cards should be placed early. Cards available for special order through Pacelli are listed on the back of the St. James order form. Contact Hydrie Laidlaw at (715) 347-3544 with any questions.

Thank you for your support!

Mark your calendars!

Monday, December 8th

Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception

This is a Holy Day of Obligation

Mass Schedule (SJ): 8:15AM and 6:00PM

Monday, December 15th

Confessions at Saint James beginning at 6:00PM

Wednesday, December 24th - Christmas Eve (SJ)

Masses will be celebrated at 4:00PM and 10:00PM

Thursday, December 25th—Christmas (SJ)

Mass will be celebrated at 10:00AM



FAITH STEP

This Advent, Jesus wants you to know the joy of saying yes. He is ready to remove every barrier in your heart.. big or small, that keeps you from living a deeper yes and receiving his life more fully.

And so he invites you to come to him in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

As you prepare to celebrate the sacrament, ask yourself a few questions, like: Is Jesus the Lord of my time, money, and other resources? Is there anything that needs cleaning up, like foul language, gossip, complaining, verbal abuse? Am I harboring anger, resentment, or hatred toward someone? Am I focused on building a comfortable life for myself than on caring for others?

Say yes to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, let Jesus remove every barrier in your heart, and feel the joy of receiving him this Christmas!

Then the King will say to those at his right hand,

"Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"

- Matthew 25:34-



It's time for Holiday Baskets again! This year we will have two trees with ornaments—one for St. James and one for St. Mary, both located in the St. James gathering space. Please choose an ornament and return your unwrapped gift by December 14th. Thank you for your generosity in helping these families from Portage County who need our help.

Are you, or someone you know, homebound?

Please contact the parish office this week to have your name placed on Father Jerzy's list for a December visit.

Did You Know?

From our Sacred Worship Committee

On December 8th, we celebrate the feast day of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is not to be confused with the celebration of Jesus' virginal conception on March 25th with the Solemnity of the Annunciation.

The gospel from Luke tells us of the truth of Mary's immaculate conception. As the angel Gabriel approaches Mary, he proclaims, *"Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you."* He sees that this flesh and blood woman is simultaneously grace-filled from the beginning of her existence. The term "full of grace" in Greek comes from the word *xarito'o* which tells us of a preexisting, grace-filled status. This is important as we understand through this form of the verb that Mary is grace-filled prior to her encounter with Gabriel and not made holy as she conceives Jesus. Her status is established by God, not Mary. The Lord comes to dwell not only with her, but within her. However, her assent *"May it be done to me according to your word"* is purely from her own will.

St. Pope Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception *ex cathedra* in 1854 proclaiming that from the first moment of her (Mary's) conception,..... she was preserved immune from all stain of original sin. (see CCC 491)

Though not what this feast day is about, we Catholics believe that, among other things, Mary was "ever-virgin". In the gospel of Luke for this holy day, the angel makes nine statements to Mary. The one question Mary asks of the angel Gabriel is "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?". Note that the angel does not tell her when she will conceive, though we know that it is in the future. This question from Mary makes sense only if she never intends to "know a man" even in marriage. She has made a vow to God to be a virgin all her life and is questioning why God would ask her to break this vow. This vow is a type of abstinence reviewed in Numbers 3: 14-15, with the assertion that the husband, in this case Joseph, accepts this establishment of her vows. Mary's concern with breaking this vow is relieved when she is told by the angel that the Holy Spirit will come upon her to accomplish this conception. With thorough study of Greek grammar and cultural context, scripture scholars have provided us with great understanding of the teachings of scripture.



Please join us on Monday, December 8th as we celebrate this Holy Day.



The Advent Wreath

Many Christian households celebrate Advent with daily prayers around an Advent wreath. The Advent wreath is a circular garland of evergreen branches arranged with four candles (and often a fifth, called the Christ candle, in the center). The circular wreath reminds us that God has no beginning and no end. The lighting of the Advent candles represents the promise of the coming of Jesus, the light of the world. The four candles are lit, one each week during Advent beginning on the first Sunday of Advent. Three of the candles are purple – royal colors to remind us that we are watching and preparing for our Lord and King. The fourth candle is rose or pink, expressing the joy on the Third Sunday in Advent, Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete comes from the Latin word for “rejoice”. It is a day of joy and celebration because the midpoint of Advent has passed and the birth of Jesus is near. When there is a fifth white candle in the center, it represents Christ and is lit on Christmas Eve.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath. As we begin each Mass during Advent, parishioners will be invited to process up with Father and the servers and light the Advent Wreath candle. This is a beautiful tradition in our parishes. A special **Thank You** to the families who are participating in the lighting of the Advent wreath.

Advent Material. Please check out the Advent material at the entryways to help you prepare your heart for the coming of the Christ child. This year we have the *Little Blue Book for Advent and Christmas*. Be sure to take a copy for yourself! We encourage you to visit the Sacred Worship Advent Tree or Candy Cane Basket where you will find a spiritual exercise attached to each ornament or candy cane. Take an ornament or candy cane each week during Advent to help you in your faith journey.



May you have a Blessed Advent Season!



Faith in Action for Advent! This advent as a parish family, we invite you to do acts of kindness, offer prayers/small sacrifices for others, or give alms. For each action, we invite you to place a piece of straw in the manger placed in front of the altar. Together, let's fill the manger with love in action for Jesus' coming!

Area Events

St. Peter Parish Family Life Presents their 22nd Annual Christmas Cookie Walk on Saturday, December 13th from 7:30 am - 10:30 am at Kolbe Hall - located in the lower level of St. Peter Church, 800 Fourth Avenue, Stevens Point. Cookies and Candy. \$10 per pound.

St. Bronislava Holy Name Society “All You Can Eat Breakfast” will be held Sunday, December 14, 2025 from 8:30AM to Noon at St. Bronislava Catholic Church located at 3200 Plover Rd in Plover. Cost is \$10.00 for ages 13-adult, \$4 for ages 5-12 & Free for ages 4 & under. The meal is cooked by the men of Holy Name and table service is provided by St Bron's Boy Scout Troop. Proceeds from the breakfast go towards the Parish, School & Youth Needs.

Lessons & Carols. An evening of scripture, music and prayer. December 19th. Service starts at 6:00PM. Reception to follow. St. Bronislava parish.

St. Andrew's Christmas Novena

A popular tradition is a Christmas novena that begins on St. Andrew's feast day
Pray the following prayer 15 times each day from November 30 to December 24.

*Hail, Blessed be the hour and moment
at which the Son of God
was born of a most pure Virgin,
in the stable, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in the piercing cold.
At that hour, vouchsafe, I beseech Thee, O my God,
to hear my prayers & grant my desire
through Jesus Christ, & His most Blessed Mother.
Amen*

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
Michelle Shulfer SJ
Michael Juris 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