

Father Joe? Oh yes, we remember him fondly ~ ~ ~

Father Joseph Aufdermauer grew up on a small dairy farm in Wisconsin, the son of Joseph and Loretta Aufdermauer. He always wanted to become a priest.

"I always remember we prayed before every meal, but not after meals," he said. "Once, as a kid, that got me upset, because the nun said you're supposed to pray before and after."

Happy 100th Birthday, Mom!



Father Joe, on the left, with a classmate
Class of 1968
St. Francis Seminary

St. Catherine's Parish
5101 W. Center Street, Milwaukee
Associate Pastor, 1968-1975

St. Catherine's Church was incorporated as a parish of the Milwaukee Archdiocese on November, 13, 1922. On June 26, 2011, Blessed Trinity Parish merged with St. Catherine's to form one new faith community.





Father Joe, marrying Jim and Molly Strachota, May, 1970



Rev. O'Brien - Pastor
 Rev. Aufdermauer - Associate Pastor
 Rev. Draeger - Associate Pastor
 Rev. Jesudasan - In Residence

"I recall that at least two of Father Joe's Christmas homilies told the story of "The Master's Touch." I don't recall if he read the story or simply told it, but I believe it went like this: someone found an old battered violin. It looked like it was past fixing, but there was a beauty about it. At one point, someone brought it to an old man who looked lovingly at the violin, picked it up, and played such music that it brought people to tears. People couldn't believe this old instrument was capable of making such beautiful music. But "the master's touch" brought out its deep natural beauty. And so it is with God. We may think someone, even ourselves is incapable of being or creating beauty, but God, the master, longs to bring out the beauty that is naturally ours."
 Peace, Bernadette Davel

"Father Joe, as he was comfortable being called, had a patient listening ear. I think people responded to that. He also had a beautiful smile, which would make a person feel like they were welcome to approach him. I can believe that he has been a good pastor." Mary Utschig

"... one of my favorite memories of Joe goes all the way back to seminary days; we were in the student body together. Joe was a member of a marvelous barbershop quartet (with Tom Knoebel, Mike Murphy, and Bill Feeley, I think). They found occasions to sing to us, and we always enjoyed it loads!!! Blessed 50th Anniversary, Joe!" Tom Suriano

St. Albert the Great Parish
35th Street and Florist Avenue
Now, Thurston Woods Public School
Associate Pastor, 1975-1981

Founded in 1955, the parish, in 1991, merged with St. Nicholas and Holy Redeemer Parishes to form Blessed Trinity Congregation. Blessed Trinity has now merged with St. Catherine's Parish.



"The next associate priest, Fr. Aufdermauer, was much more outgoing. He was all for implementing the Vatican II changes: getting lay people involved (he invited Ms. Guy to be a lector), having Eucharistic ministers distributing wine at Mass, giving homilies on the three new penance rites...." Gregory S. Corrao, Parish Profile Paper



Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish
1212 S. 117th Street, West Allis
Now part of Tri-Parish with St. Aloysius
and Mary Queen of Heaven Parishes
Associate Pastor, 1981-1987

"December 19, 1948. This is the date set for the dedication and everything is ready.... June 11, 1950. Sunday collection was \$282.31. A Holy Hour will be held at Big Bend, Wis., on July 9th between 3:00 and 4:00 pm. Families are invited to bring their lunch and spend the day...." (1973 parish anniversary booklet)



Father Joe with first
communicant

Father Joe at wedding
of Colleen and Allen
Kirkley, July, 1983



"Father Joe:

Well, congratulations on this wonderful milestone, 50 years serving the Lord and bringing countless people to Christ!!! That is worthy of praise and thanks and recognition, even if your humility may make it a little awkward.

We met you many, many years ago and still have fond memories of you officiating our wedding in July of 1983. Needless to say, that was a great start to our time together and laid an important foundation for the marriage we have enjoyed over all these years. Looking back at the pictures, your hair was darker, but the smile and the energy were the same and have not diminished over the years. You have such a positive attitude. And that is infectious and one of many reasons we love being in your presence. You embody and live the scripture "This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it."

You were there when Colleen's dad died and presided over his funeral ceremony as only you can. Helping bring peace to a family at a time of loss is probably one of the more difficult tasks you must perform routinely, and we are sure you have always done so reflecting the Lord's grace and mercy and love.

And finally, we had to twist your arm a little (sorry about that), but we got you to New Orleans to officiate the wedding of our daughter Kelley to her husband Michael in October of 2017. What a weekend, what a ceremony, what a wonderful message you delivered to the newlyweds as they begin what will hopefully be the same wonderful journey together that we have enjoyed. "Only God can fill the hole in our soul" is a powerful message to everyone present and we thank you for your time and wisdom.

We love you, we congratulate you on your milestone and career and hope our paths continue to cross going forward. Please never be a stranger when your journeys bring you to New Orleans and we will worship with you in Milwaukee as long as you continue in your capacity there on our future visits.

Thanks again and may you continue to make a difference in people's lives wherever you go."
Colleen and Allen Kirkley

"Greatest Homilist in the state - - -

Back in the early 1980's, we, at IHM were extremely blessed with a spirited and congenial associate pastor, namely Fr. Joe.

A few of us who attended daily Mass, sometimes gathered in the sacristy after to watch Father scrape the old wax off of the candle holders. He was always so meticulous. Then we followed him to the rectory for a cup of coffee.

Fr. Joe has an incredible speaking and singing voice which always enhances the liturgy. Back then, he was an active part of a barber shop quartet, which provided super entertainment!

*Fr. Joe, I wish you many more priestly years as you continue to minister to God's people - - -Congratulations!"
Eunice Kelly*

Sabbatical in Israel
September, 1987 through January, 1988



**Assigned by the Archdiocese as a Temporary Administrator,
Father Joe assisted 12 parishes who were experiencing difficulties
1988-1993**

St. Stephen's Parish
Original Location: 5880 S. Howell Avenue, Milwaukee
Built new church in 2009, 1441 W. Oakwood Road, Oak Creek
Temporary Administrator, Pastor, 1993-1999

St. Stephen's history began in the new territory of Wisconsin, in a beautifully wooded area just 90 miles west of the lake. In this area, a group of German immigrants started clearing the land. They built a church that was completed in the fall of 1847.

"The parishioners remarked that Father Joe came as a 'breath of fresh air'; the parish began to come together around prayer and scripture. In June, 1992, the church mortgage was \$130,000. On January 14, 1994, the mortgage papers were burned to officially signify that the parish at long last was out of debt!"



Father Joe, the Wizard,
burning the mortgage papers



Circa 1946

St. Mathias Parish
9306 W. Beloit Road, West Allis
Associate Pastor, 1999-2006

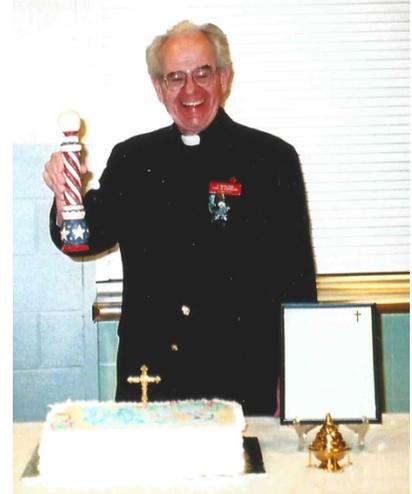


St. Mathias Parish had its beginnings in about 1845, when the Catholic community in this area was known as Holy Cross. These German Catholics were first served by itinerant priests, and then by Fr. Mathias Steiger. In 1850, the church was re-named St. Mathias (it is thought for Father Steiger).

"The best was your communicating with us while you were over in the Holy Land. We felt as if we were a part of your experience ... another thing we will never forget! Thank you!"

"You did so much for us and so much more! And you did so much for so many, many others. We will never be able to thank you!" A Parishioner

Father Joe at his party
as he leaves St. Mathias



St. Aloysius Parish
1405 S. 92nd Street, West Allis
**Now part of Tri-Parish with Immaculate Heart
of Mary and Mary Queen of Heaven Parishes**
Temporary Administrator, 2006-2008

The parish was established at this site in November, 1920, in two old military barracks which housed both the church and the school. In January 1926, a decision was made to take down the barracks and to build a custom two-story brick building on the existing concrete foundation of the building.

"I must thank Fr. Joe for his insightful mind. Every time someone in our family asks, 'Why me?' he said the answer is 'Why not?' Also, he once said, 'God doesn't give you more than you can handle."

These phrases have helped us through many difficult situations.

*Thank you, Fr. Joe!
Sincerely, Virginia Brekke"*



Father Joe commemorating the 50th wedding anniversary of John and Beverly McCarthy, at Mass, on August 10, 2007



St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish
12700 W. Howard Avenue, New Berlin
Pastor, 2008-

The first Mass was celebrated on December 24, 1982. Archbishop Weakland dedicated the new church on January 23, 1983. The parish was a small one. In fact, the whole community could meet in the church at one time. A certain “feeling” began to develop. People got to know each other through “Renew,” the parish festival and just the small size of the parish. People called this “feeling” the “Spirit of Seton.”

“Fr. Joe, thank you for leading me to Catholicism after 78 years. Your down to earth testimony of Jesus, mostly through your homilies, did the trick for me. Our first conversation, years ago after Mass, you explained to me, “I’m just a farmer boy from central Wisconsin.” That experience was an outstanding foundation for the excellent priest you have become. God bless you.” Ken Nigel



*“When I reflect on Fr. Joe, a word keeps coming back to me again and again. It’s short and sweet and may not be useful but it’s just one word. Fantastic! Whenever I ask how he is doing or how his day is going – Fr. Joe always replies, ‘Fantastic!’ with the most genuine smile. I’ve asked, ‘Really?’ a few times and his answer again is, ‘Yes!’ His outlook on life, faith, fellowship, kindness, charity, etc... - will always reverberate with the word ‘Fantastic’ to me. It makes me want to be Fantastic!”
Donna Poehlmann*

“I first met Fr. Joe while attending school at St. Catherine’s in Milwaukee in the early 70’s. He was a short, young, plump priest with dark black curly hair and a lot of energy. Even then, I remember enjoying his entertaining homilies. Having worked in the office during Funfest, I watched as Fr. Joe transformed from pastor to Lottery Ticket Seller. I have always been amazed at the apron full of crumpled up currency that he would drop into the table to be counted. I was able to see, at the end of the night, how tired he was; yet the next day, he was back at It with the same energy as the day before. He is one amazing person! I will forever remember his many readings of “The Touch of the Master’s Hand.” Mark Nennig



“Fr. Joe came to visit me when I was in the hospital about a year ago. It really touched my heart because I was feeling very alone, and unable to feel God’s presence at that particular time in my life. He was there only a short time, and we prayed together. Once he left, my heart felt lighter, and I felt more at peace. He is a wonderful person and pastor. When I pass him on my way out of church, he is always smiling; that smile tells me that he is a person who is at peace with himself.” Julie Derra