



AUGUSTINIANS OF THE MIDWEST

Province of Our Mother of Good Counsel

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August 29, 2026

To the St. Rita Parish Family,

What a joy it is to celebrate 100 years of this faith community! St. Rita Parish has been a true pillar of faith for Racine and its surrounding area. We are blessed as Augustinians to have been part of it for so many years.

When the parish was founded in 1926 by the Canadian-based German Augustinians, it was a simple frontier mission. However, it grew into a community that has endured to this day and has seen multiple generations pass through its doors, including a future Pope! Think of all the sacraments that have been administered in the last 100 years, as well as all the students who have attended St. Rita School, and all the Novices who prepared for their vows on these hallowed grounds. Not to mention the visits a then-Fr. Robert Prevost would have made as Midwest Provincial and then as Prior General of the worldwide Augustinian Order.

Our Midwest Province officially acquired the parish from the Canadian Augustinians in 1979. The Canadian connection came full circle when the Midwest Province began to oversee the Canadian Province in 2002, eventually merging into one province many years later. Fr. Francis Galvan, formerly of British Columbia, is one of the Augustinians representing me today.

It was heartrending when the Augustinians withdrew from the parish in 2019. This was a difficult decision that was made due to decreasing personnel and the move of the Novitiate to the east coast. Though we have been separated geographically over these past few years, we still treasure St. Rita Parish as part of our Augustinian family and heritage.

I join with my Augustinian brothers in sending you our celebratory greetings on this momentous occasion of your centennial. I think with gratitude of those who served so faithfully, including Fr. Donald Brennan, Fr. Joseph Stobba, Br. Gary Hresil, Fr. Kevin Mullins, Fr. Jack Flynn, Fr. Jerry Knies, Fr. James Paradis, Fr. Richard Young, Fr. Richard O'Leary, and Fr. David Cregan, just to name a few. I also think with gratitude of the countless parishioners and lay Augustinians who were true friends and companions throughout the decades and inspired us every day by their faith and devotion, including you who are currently celebrating this centenary.

I am sorry I can't be there in person, but several Augustinians will be representing me and sharing my gratitude and joy with you.

I hope you have a blessed celebration that lasts throughout the whole year. We are with you in prayer. May God bless you as you embark on your next 100 years of journeying together in faith.

May St. Augustine, whose feast we celebrated yesterday, help us all continue to have "restless hearts until they rest in God."

Sincerely,

Fr. Thomas R. McCarthy, OSA

Very Rev. Thomas R. McCarthy, OSA
Prior Provincial