



DIOCESE of LA CROSSE
Serving the 19 counties of West Central Wisconsin

Chancery Bulletin - Vol. 10, No.12.2 | December 9, 2025

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Officials

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Chancery Office

Chancellor Very Rev. William Dhein | wdhein@diolc.org

No items this week.

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Rebuild My Church

Director: Fr. Derek Sakowski | dsakowski@diolclergy.org

Rebuild My Church Updates—Please Share:

We will be issuing regular updates for your bulletins or other forms of communication. Would you please create a standing space for these updates, using the logo and QR Code? The QR code will always bring you to the latest updates, which [will be posted here](#). The [link to QR code is here](#).

For Your Parish Bulletin (or other communication channels):

This summer and fall, 3,622 of our people participated in 40 listening sessions to help launch Rebuild My Church, an ongoing effort of renewal and pastoral



planning for our Diocese. Stay tuned for regular updates. You can view the recording of the listening sessions, and [see the latest updates here](#).

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Office for Catechesis & Evangelization

Director: Ann Lankford | alankford@diolc.org

For your Parish Bulletin:

Advent: Jesus is Our Hope (1 Tim. 1:1)

The Advent hymn *Come, O Long Expected Jesus* is about hope as it refers to Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah promised throughout the Old Testament. Jesus is “the hope of all the earth” because He brings salvation to each and every person, fulfilling God the Father’s universal plan for redemption. Jesus is the “dear desire of every nation” because He is the ultimate answer to the deepest longings and needs of every person.

The second verse of *Come, O Long Expected Jesus*:

Israel’s strength and consolation, You, the *hope* of all the earth,
Dear desire of every nation, come, and save us by Your birth.

Let us make a good confession before Christmas to purify our hearts for the celebration of the Incarnation—God becoming man to save us from Satan, sin and death.

The *Jubilee Year of Hope* officially ends on January 6th when Pope Leo XIV closes the Holy Door at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. A Mass to close the Jubilee Year in the Diocese of La Crosse will be celebrated at the Cathedral of St. Joseph the Workman by Msgr. Richard Gilles, 10 a.m. on December 28th. All are welcome.

(Reminder) Bulletin editors: Additional bulletin announcements for the Jubilee Year of Hope were developed and added on Dec. 1, for Advent, Christmas and New Year—entries [found here](#).

For Church Pews:

Christmas Welcome Card

A Christmas welcome card may be downloaded and placed in the parish pews for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. It is a convenient way to find out who is seeking God in the vicinity of the parish. A call from a parishioner or a letter from the pastor is a beautiful way to make contact with them and invite them to further participation. The card is available in PDF and JPG by clicking [here](#).

Parish Leaders: Small Group Study for the New Year:

An engaging faith study for small groups is entitled “Rescued” by Fr. John Riccardo of Acts XXIX. This will be the focus for the New Year. FREE videos, a compelling book for a greatly reduced price, discussion questions and other FREE materials are available. [Click here for information](#).

(Reminder) Bulletin Insert:

How Real is Jesus to You?

Do you have a personal relationship with Jesus? We Catholics tend to dismiss that as a Protestant question. If we answer it at all, we have learned to say that of course we have a

personal relationship with Jesus, because He comes to us through the sacraments, and most profoundly in holy Communion.

But the question goes deeper. It asks: do we have a sense of connection, of familiarity, with Jesus, like the feeling of connection we have with a spouse, a family member or a close friend? The bulletin insert is available in PDF and JPG by [clicking here](#).

(Reminder) “Called and Gifted” Workshop | March 21, 2026 | Our Lady of Peace Parish in Marshfield:

An in-person “Called and Gifted” workshop will be offered on Saturday, March 21, 2026. The Office for Catechesis & Evangelization and the Marshfield parishes will be hosting the workshop. The “Called & Gifted” discernment process offered by the Catherine of Siena Institute has been used since 1993 by over 200,000 Catholics around the world. It is designed to help Christians discern specific charisms in their lives. Charisms, or spiritual gifts, are special abilities given to all Christians by the Holy Spirit. God calls each of us to (and gifts us for) the work that we most love. We want to know what gifts God has given to us because when we use them, our life is enriched with purpose and joy. The “Called and Gifted” workshop will be held at Our Lady of Peace Parish in Marshfield. Further details to follow.

Catechetical Leader Information:

Engage, Inspire, Ignite Youth: Webinar with Jim Beckman | December 10 | 12 noon

Jim Beckman is a nationally recognized youth ministry consultant and author of *The Search Begins: Leadership Guide*. He’s helped parishes and dioceses around the country increase youth and teen engagement. More than theory, he offers practical advice and a wealth of experience for topics such as:

- How do you get more kids through the door?
- How do you get parents involved and keep them engaged?
- How do you train new adults to lead teen small groups?

To register for this webinar provided by the Augustine Institute, [click here](#).

Catechist Formation in early January:

Are you looking for engaging and inspiring content for catechist formation or a retreat-like setting right after Christmas, check out a workshop on *Franciscan at Home* in the catechist track. If you would like to experience a one-hour session with a group of fellow catechetical leaders online to get a “taste” of Franciscan at Home, contact Ann at alankford@diolc.org. A group meets on Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. and a group meets on Thursdays at 3:30 p.m. The 10-minute videos and discussion that follows is compelling. Simple directions to register for Franciscan at Home are [available here](#).

Bishop’s Education Endowment Trust (BEET) Grants:

The 2025-26 BEET grant application window is now open. The method for applying for the BEET grant for the 2026-27 fiscal year is to complete an online Google form (application). The deadline for submission is Friday, Jan. 16, 2026, with the online application being disabled by 4:30 p.m. A required part of the process is approval by your pastor or dean. The approval deadline for pastors or deans is Friday, Jan. 23, 2026.

Please note that you must include the name and affiliations of any speaker. Only grants with a named speaker, completed and signed speaker policy will be considered. The speaker policy is through the Chancery Office and [can be found here](#) by scrolling to the bottom of the page, under “Keep in Touch.”

The instructions and the application form are on the Office for Catechesis & Evangelization main webpage, and [by clicking here](#). Since the online application form must be completed in one sitting, the questions on the application form are included with the instructions so that you can prepare your answers ahead of time. Please call with questions.

(Reminder) Examinations of Conscience for Grade Levels included Adult Version

It was requested that an examination of conscience be developed for grades 2-3, 4-5, 6-9 and 10-12. An adult examination of conscience was added. These will be helpful for children, young people and parents as they prepare to make a good confession before Christmas. [Click here](#) to download each of these examinations of conscience.

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Office for Communications

Director: Erik Archer | earcher@diolc.org

New Issue of *Catholic Life*:

The Winter 2025-2026 issue of *Catholic Life* is arriving in mailboxes this week and [can be found digitally here](#) or by using your smartphone's camera to scan the QR code to the left. Feel free to share this QR code in your parish bulletin or Flocknote messages—giving your parishioners instant access to these rich faith stories online. This issue also marks the 10th anniversary since the people of the Diocese of La Crosse began sharing their faith stories on the pages of *Catholic Life*. A heartfelt and profound “thank-you” to our talented writers and the countless people who helped to share so many faith stories across these 10 years. Thank you!



Hiring for Two Positions:

The openings for the Diocesan Graphic and Media Designer position and the Digital Evangelist position will post this week at the [diocesan open position webpage](#) and on Indeed. Please pass this along within your parishes and in your bulletins!

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Office for Consecrated Life

Director: Sr. Donna Krzmarzick, ISSM | dkrzmarzick@diolc.org

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Office for the Diaconate

Director: Deacon Robert Riedl | rriedl@diolclergy.org

No items this week.

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Office for Marriage & Family Life

Director: Christopher Rogers | crogers@diolc.org

No items this week.

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Office for Ministries

Director: Christopher Ruff | cruff@diolc.org

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Office for Missions

Director: Father Woodrow Pace | wpace@diolc.org

No items this week.

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Office for Sacred Worship

Director: Christopher Carstens | ccarstens@diolc.org

(Reminder) Bishop Battersby Christmas Greetings to OCIA Participants

Pastors, pastoral associates and OCIA coordinators - Bishop Battersby wishes to send Christmas greetings to those currently participating in the OCIA process. Please return [this form](#) by December 15 requesting the names of catechumens preparing for entry into the Church at the Easter Vigil and candidates seeking full communion.

(Reminder) Online Course: Introduction to the Sacred Liturgy

Adoremus joins the Avila Institute in offering “[Mystery and Mission in the Sacred Liturgy](#),” a series of four introductory courses on liturgical prayer and the sacraments, and taught by Adoremus staff and contributors. The first of these four courses, [Introduction to the Sacred Liturgy](#), is taught by Christopher Carstens, Director of the Office for Sacred Worship. The course follows the lead of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and considers how the Church celebrates the Christian Mystery—the plan of God to restore all things in Christ. Christ’s Paschal Mystery—his suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension—carried out in the flesh during his earthly life continues today in the Church’s sacred liturgy.

After seeing how the Trinity works in the liturgy, we will explore how its work is made present today through sacramental signs (such as objects, actions, language, music, etc.). It is by these signs that men and women of every age come face to face in a most powerful way with Jesus. This six-week course meets live online Thursdays, 6:30–8:00 p.m. Central, from January 8–February 12, 2026. Faithful from the Diocese of La Crosse will receive a 25% discount and can take the course for \$150.

Anyone interested in participating should [apply at the Avila Institute for Spiritual Formation](#) and enter the discount code LACROSSE to waive the application fee. Once a participant has been accepted for the course, a representative from the Avila Institute will follow up by assisting in enrollment, which includes processing the 25% discount. Consider joining us!

(Reminder) The Blessing of the Home on Epiphany:

The Solemnity of the Epiphany will fall on January 4th in 2026. It is customary for pastors and deacons to observe the custom of an annual visit to the homes in their parish(es) (see *Book of Blessings*, nos. 68-69). The “Blessing for Homes During the Christmas Season” can be found in the *Book of Blessings*, nos. 1597ff (recall that *Traditionis Custodes* has restricted the use of the preconciliar *Rituale Romanum*).

In addition to the text in the *Book of Blessings*, the inscription of the Cross, the year, and the initials of the three wise men (20+C+M+B+26) is suitably added as an act of popular piety (*Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy*, Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, December 2001, no. 118). As there is no blessing of chalk in the 1989 *Rituale Romanum* (*De Benedictionibus*), unblessed chalk should be used.

It would be laudable to compile a list of parishioners who would like to have their homes blessed at the start of the new year and to travel from home to home, blessing each one on the Solemnity of the Epiphany and throughout the Christmas season. If the number of homes is too great to reach by a priest or deacons during this time, they may be blessed throughout the year, especially during the Easter Season.

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Office for Safe Environment

Director: Teresa Brown – 608.791.2679 | tbrown@diolc.org

DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING INSTANCES OF CHILD ABUSE:

The Diocese of La Crosse, through its [policies and procedures](#), seeks to provide a prompt, appropriate and compassionate response to reporters of sexual abuse of a child by any diocesan agent (bishop, priest, deacon, employee, religious, vendor or volunteer). Anyone wishing to make a report of an allegation of sexual abuse should send that report to Mrs. Teresa Brown, Complaint Intake Agent, at the Diocese of La Crosse, P.O. Box 4004, La Crosse, WI 54602-4004. Alternatively, you can contact Mrs. Brown at 608.791.0179 or intakeagent@diolc.org. The reporting form is available through the Diocese of La Crosse Office of Safe Environment or on the diocesan website at: diolc.org/safe-environment/reporting. Individuals are also encouraged to submit their reports directly to the relevant civil authorities. Copies of the diocesan policy are available through your local parish and on the [diocesan website](#). If you have any questions about the Diocese of La Crosse and the implementation of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, please contact Teresa Brown at 608.791.2679 or tbrown@diolc.org.

Diocesan Office Closures:

The Diocesan Center will be closed December 24 through January 1. The State of Wisconsin and Selection Offices are both closed December 24, 25, 31 and January 1. No fingerprints or background checks will be processed during this time. Please plan ahead if you have new staff or volunteers who will begin in January.

Parish spreadsheets, along with the annual report form, have been sent to all parishes. If you need help completing the March 1 report, please contact Teresa. You don't need to wait til the due date to send them in.

Online training [can be found here](#). It is vital to enter your name at the end of training. If a name is not entered, there is no way to give credit to the person who completed training. As of today, there are more than 900 entries in the online training database without a name assigned to it.

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Office for Catholic Schools

Superintendent: Thomas Reichenbacher | treichenbacher@diolc.org

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Office for Social Concerns

Director: Christopher Ruff | cruff@diolc.org

For Your Parish Bulletin:

(Reminder) Jan. 17 Pro-Life Workshop with Emily Geiger:

Effective Dialogue with 'Pro-Choice' People - What we've learned from talking with thousands

Join us for this outstanding workshop with Emily Geiger of the Equal Rights Institute. Emily's winning approach to pro-life dialogue has been tested and proven on college campuses all over the country. A dynamic speaker, she has appeared on MSNBC,



EWTN, Relevant Radio, Focus on the Family, Christianity Today, and more. The Jan. 17 workshop will be held from 10:00 AM-3:30 PM at Our Lady of Peace Parish, 1414 W 5th St., Marshfield 54449, with lunch included. Visit diolc.org/respect-life for complete details and to register, or scan the QR code to the right.



For Your Parish Bulletin:

(Reminder) Pope Leo XIV's *Dilexi Te* ("I Have Loved You") - Resources Available

Dilexi Te is Pope Leo XIV's first Apostolic Exhortation. Building on a theme dear to Pope Francis and bringing to completion a document he was working on when he died, Pope Leo focuses on the preferential love for the poor so prominent in the Gospels and in Catholic Social Teaching. To read *Dilexi Te* and for links to a variety of resources on it from the Holy See and from the USCCB, visit the diocesan [Social Concerns website](#) or scan the QR code to the right. The resources include a [reflection](#) suitable for small group study and discussion.



For Your Parish Bulletin:

This Christmas, Help Catholic Charities Love our Neighbors in Need:

Catholic Charities reaches out to our neighbors in need in so many ways, from providing shelter to the homeless in our midst (especially in winter) to giving hope and support to moms before and after birth to working with married couples looking to adopt, to assisting the poor and people with disabilities. Especially in this holy season of Christmas, find out how you can help by visiting cclse.org, or by scanning the QR code to the right.



For Your Parish Bulletin:

Action Alert on Behalf of our International Priests: Urge Congress to Support Foreign-Born Religious Men and Women and the Communities They Serve

An increasing number of priests, religious sisters and brothers and others serving the Church throughout the United States will be forced to abandon their ministries if policymakers do not act soon. Unfortunately, many parishes, schools and other Catholic institutions have already had to part with men and women who served them for years because of challenges with the Religious Worker Visa Program. To learn more, and to make your voice heard in favor of the bipartisan Religious Workforce Protection Act, visit [this website](#). The Diocese of La Crosse is grateful for the ministry of nearly 30 international priests.



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Office for Stewardship & Development

Director: Jeff Reiter – 608.791.2653 | jreiter@diolc.org

Diocesan Annual Appeal:

As of 12/3/2025, our latest mailing (11/25/2025) shows a delivery rate of 97.3% for the 47,424 households mailed, with an average transit time of 3.7 days.

Nine parishes have already exceeded their fundraising goal with funds received, and one additional parishes, totaling 10, have pledges and received funds and is also over its goal. The number one contributing factor to the success of the Annual Appeal is the support and effort of

the Pastor and his staff. We have assembled helpful materials for the diocesan annual appeal, including the prayers of the faithful and plans for executing a successful appeal on our appeal portal.

Five parishes still have not completed their Annual Reports. Because delays affect the curia and other parishes' planning and budgeting processes, a 10% penalty will be added to your parish's Diocesan Annual Appeal if the Annual Report is not completed and submitted by December 31, 2025.

Stewardship:

This summer, the Leadership Roundtable surveyed more than 3,000 Catholics to measure the progress the Church has made in restoring trust and building a culture of transparency, co-responsibility, and accountability. Our goal was to understand if we are making progress in our mission, as well as understand what matters to Catholics today as we shape the work we'll provide to the Church in the years ahead.

The survey results highlight a moment of great hope. Catholics today are engaged and show strong and deep trust, particularly in their local parishes and leaders. But their trust and engagement are tenuous, and they hope to see continued progress in building transparency and accountability within their Church.

- 77% of Catholics—across ALL ages and ideologies—say building transparent and accountable leadership is a top priority for the Church's future.
- 61% of regularly giving parishioners would give MORE to their parish if the Church demonstrated greater financial transparency.
- Young adults are engaging with the Church at unprecedented levels—but their support is fragile, and many are considering leaving.

You can download and read the report here: [2025 Survey Report](#)

Stewardship Bulletin Reflections: [12/14/2025](#) - [12/21/2025](#) - [12/28/2025](#) - [01/04/2025](#)

Spanish Stewardship Reflections: [12/14/2025](#) - [12/21/2025](#) - [12/28/2025](#) - [01/04/2025](#)

Hmong Stewardship Reflections: [12/14/2025](#) - [12/21/2025](#) - [12/28/2025](#) - [01/04/2025](#)

Stewardship Homily Reflections: [12/14/2025](#) - [01/04/2025](#)

Stewardship Prayers of the Faithful for December: [English](#) - [Spanish](#) - [Hmong](#)

Planned Giving—Empower Parishioners to leave a Lasting Legacy through Wills, Bequests and Endowments:

Did you know that from 1638 to 1755, among 1,656 wills filed in Manhattan (beginning with Dutch rule in New Amsterdam), 5.7% included charitable bequests? Today, an estimated just under 7% of people include such gifts in their wills—a small but meaningful step forward! Notably, over 70% of these bequests come from wills written within the last five years of life.

Most people who leave a charitable bequest are in their mid-to-late 80s, often motivated by a lifetime of philanthropy or a late-in-life wish to make a difference. Personal experiences,

accumulated wealth, and a passion for giving back influence these choices, especially as they get older.

We provide tools and resources to help parishes assist individuals in leaving a legacy. Contact our office to learn more or to arrange a presentation for your parish.

Planned giving bulletin ads: Download [ready-to-use bulletin ads here](#) to inspire your community.

Our ancestors entrusted us with the precious gift of vibrant parishes. It's our duty to ensure that future generations experience the same reverence and beauty. We can secure that future together through capital campaigns and education on endowments, trusts, and bequests.

Save on estate planning costs: Our estate planning guide can help you save hundreds of dollars in legal and financial fees. We've mailed out hundreds of copies upon request, and every parish has received one. Need more? Contact our office!

Explore more at diolclegacy.org: visit our Planned Giving website for calculators, estate planning guides, newsletters, and instructions on IRA rollovers, donor-advised funds (DAFs), beneficiary designations, and stock transfers. [Visit this page](#) to get started.

For support with legacy giving, presentations, or bulletin ads, contact Jeff Reiter at jreiter@diolc.org to learn how you or your parish can build a lasting legacy.

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Office for Temporalities

Diocesan Finance Officer: James Reider | jreider@diolc.org

Conference for Catholic Facility Management:

The Diocese of La Crosse is a member of the Conference for Catholic Facility Management (CCFM). The purpose of CCFM is to promote the spiritual and professional development of its members who work for the Catholic Church in facility management, construction, real estate, security and sustainability. They provide a collaborative forum for their members to share knowledge and develop professional relationships, and host an annual conference in the spring.

Please take advantage of this opportunity. You can join for free under the Diocese of La Crosse. Members have access to the CCFM website resources, receive the industry quarterly newsletter, and can post queries to the discussion board, which is shared with the entire membership for feedback. Also on the website is a link to previously recorded educational webinars – all free to members!

Go to the [CCFM website](#), click on 'Join' and select the 'Arch/Diocesan Membership.' After clicking 'Next,' you'll be prompted for an 'Organization Code.' Enter 1003827855.

You cannot change the organization name, but you can list your church/school as the 1st address, then add your address as the 2nd line, making sure the city, state, and zip are correct. Add your email, name, title, and phone as well. This information is not sold – it's only part of the

CCFM community. Contact Kathy Haverland with any questions. Phone number 608.791.2692 or email khaveland@diolc.org

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Office for Vocations

Director of Vocations: Father Steven Weller 608.791.2666 | sweller@diolc.org

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Office for Vicar for Clergy

Director: Father Samuel Martin | smartin@diolc.org

No items this week.

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Office for Youth & Young Adult Ministry

Director: Christopher Rogers | crogers@diolc.org

No items this week.

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Events

As of December 9.

Thursday, December 11

6 – 7 PM

Sacred Heart of Jesus - St. Patrick Parish
Jubilee Mass - Eau Claire

Thursday, December 11

7 – 8 PM

Live Nativity Tour - Casa Hogar via ZOOM

Friday, December 12

10:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Holy Family Parish PCCW Holiday Bazaar -
Arcadia
223 Maple St, Arcadia

Saturday, December 13

All day

St. Peter Parish Cookie Walk - Stevens Point
800 4th Ave, Stevens Point

Saturday, December 13

7:30 AM – 1 PM

Mary, Mother of the Church Parish Cookie
Walk & Craft Sale - La Crosse

Saturday, December 13

8:30 – 10:30 AM

Sacred Heart Parish Christmas Candy and
Bake Sale - Marathon (Cassel)

Friday, January 9

4 – 7 PM

St. Olaf Men's Club Fish Fry - Eau Claire

2407 North Ln, Eau Claire

To have your parish events listed on the diocesan calendar, diolc.org/calendar, and in *Catholic Life* magazine, please send an email to datebook@diolc.org. Make sure you include the following details: date, beginning/ending times, event location, description, menu and cost, etc. If you have any questions, please email Pam at pwiller@diolc.org (Pam rejoined the Office for Communications and Public Relations on a part-time basis!) for more information.

Diocese of La Crosse | 3710 East Ave S | La Crosse, WI 54601 | 608.788.7700

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