



The Worker

SAINT JOSEPH THE WORKMAN

Cathedral

Front Door Ministry Receives Parish’s St. Joseph the Workman Award

The Cathedral Parish’s Front Door Ministry program and those who have helped it are the recipients of this year’s St. Joseph the Workman Award.

The award was announced at Masses on the weekend of May 5-6, Monsignor Charles Stoetzel said. The annual award recognizes a person, people or group who have done something unselfish for the parish.

Priests within the Diocese of La Crosse have a Custodial Fund in their parish for offerings given to them when they celebrate a baptism, wedding or funeral, and the money is used at the discretion of the pastor for charity, tuition assistance and similar needs.

At the Cathedral, this fund today is known as the Cathedral Charitable Works Fund and also includes the donations of parishioners, friends and visitors. Envelopes for donations to the fund are available in the Cathedral’s pews. Besides providing the money for the Front Door Ministry, the fund also provided monetary support to the local WAFER Food Bank. Those in need of food are referred to WAFER.

After Monsignor Michael Gorman became Rector of the Cathedral in 2003, parishioner Jean McDonnell offered to help meet with the many people coming to the Cathedral Rectory’s front door seeking help.

Fifteen years later, more than 22,000 visits have been made by people requesting help of one kind or another from the Front Door Ministry. And more than a half-million dollars in assistance has been provided, McDonnell said. She added that the ministry hasn’t had to turn away anyone who met the program’s guidelines for help.

McDonnell stepped down from her position with the Front Door Ministry at the end of April, and was succeeded by Deacon Tom Skemp. “She has done an outstanding job to field and provide assistance to those who need it most,” Monsignor Stoetzel said.

The program helps people with such things as payments for utilities, rent and travel. Checks are written to utility companies and landlords, and no money is given directly to the individual. The ministry does provide them with gasoline cards and bus tokens for such things as getting to work or a medical appointment, or looking for a job.

Those who need help from the Front Door Ministry can stop at the Rectory between 9 and 10:30 a.m. Monday through Friday. Gasoline cards are available only on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

“It’s a parish outreach that is supported by our parishioners, friends and visitors to the church,” McDonnell said of the ministry.

“The Front Door Ministry has helped many people with the kind donations given by many people, some who are not members (of the parish) and others who are not Catholic,” Monsignor Stoetzel said.

“They appreciate the work done to help those who are truly in need. For some who have received, it can be a life-changer. All they need is a little help to get back on their feet.” ❖



First Communion



Five Cathedral parishioners received First Communion at the 10:30 a.m. Mass on April 22. They are:

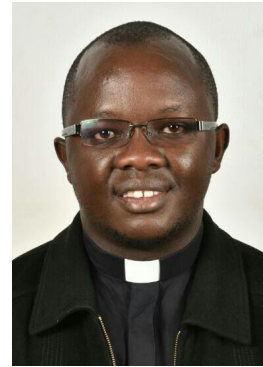
Anna Binsfeld,
Nicholas Kotnour,
Chiadikobi Nduka,
Eric Emineth and
Ryan Wilder.



Kenyan Priest to Speak at Cathedral's Annual Mission Co-op Weekend

Father Dominic Wambui, a priest and friar from Kenya, will speak at Masses at the Cathedral on Aug. 25-26, for the Cathedral parish's annual Mission Co-op Weekend.

He is a member of the Conventual Franciscan Friars order, as is Bishop William Callahan of the Diocese of La Crosse.



Father Dominic Wambui

"Father Dominic will be speaking about the missions of the Conventual Franciscans throughout the world with an emphasis, obviously, on the friars in Kenya and what they are doing to build up the Kingdom of God there," said Brother Joseph Schenk, mission promoter for the Conventual Franciscans of St. Bonaventure Province. The province is comprised of the Upper Midwest in the United States and Australia.

"Thanks be to God, our order is doing very well (in Kenya) and the Kenyan friars are expected to become their own province (independent jurisdiction) quite soon," Brother Joseph said. "The friars there operate a primary school for poor children in a rural region of the country as well as in the coastal area near Mombasa, provide retreats at the National Shrine of Mary, Mother of God in Subukia and have a number of parishes throughout the country. The Kenyan friars are a wonderful demonstration of the youth and vitality of the Church in much of Africa."

Father Dominic serves as treasurer for the friars in Kenya and lives at St. Catherine of Alexandria parish in Nairobi. He previously lived and ministered at the National Shrine of Mary, Mother of God.

He will accept monetary donations at Mission Co-op Weekend. "The donations will be going to two main areas – the formation and education of our young friars throughout the developing world, and for the various ministries of the friars in Kenya," Brother Joseph said.

"As to the first area, we as an order are being blessed with many vocations in Africa, Asia and some other parts of the world," he said. "As wonderful as this is, it is very expensive to house, feed and educate large numbers of young men and the friars in these areas of the world don't have the financial resources to cover this on their own."

As for the second area, Brother Joseph said, "The friars are really touching the lives of many people in Kenya through the sacraments, faith formation, education and social outreach." ❖

Congratulations!



❖ ❖

Six Cathedral parish members received the Sacrament of Confirmation conferred by Bishop William Callahan on April 15 at the Cathedral.

They are Theresa Charlene Gundersen, Marissa Anne Kleman, Avery Elizabeth Miles, Dane Jess Ondell, Nicholas Isaac Studinger and John-Luke Szyzkiewicz.

Pfizinger is Organizing Cathedral Handbell Choir

If you're interested in being part of a new Cathedral handbell choir, Scott Pfizinger would like to hear from you.

Pfizinger has been composing, directing and/or playing handbell music since the early 1990s, and is organizing a handbell choir at the parish. The Cathedral has had a five-octave set of handbells for many years.

The handbell choir would play for one 4 p.m. Saturday Mass each month from September to May. "We would perform sacred music in a style fitting the liturgy," Pfizinger said.

"I'm thinking we would have two or three practices a month, probably on a Saturday afternoon before Mass," he said. "But we'll talk about what we want to do and how much time we want to invest."

Pfizinger has a bachelor's degree in music composition from Cornerstone University in Grand Rapids, Mich., and a master's degree in music composition from Butler University in Indianapolis, Ind. He grew up mostly in Arizona but has lived in the Upper Midwest since his college years.

He and his family moved to La Crosse in January 2017 after he was hired as access services librarian at the Murphy Library at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. "I've also played in the Great River Ringers" community handbell choir since moving to La Crosse, Pfizinger said.

He joined the Cathedral parish and its choir, the Cathedral Gallery Singers, in January of this year. "The combination of the visual beauty of the Cathedral and the aural – the music that I was hearing – was really moving and brought a new reality of the beauty of our faith," he said of his decision to join both.

Anyone interested in being part of the parish's handbell choir can email Pfizinger at pfitzburg@gmail.com or telephone him at 234-600-6432. "Interested people should also look for announcements about an organizational meeting in early September," Pfizinger said. ❖

Registration is Under Way for RCIA With New Coordinator Deacon Joseph Richards

Registration is under way for the 2018-2019 session for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults at the Cathedral, for those who wish to become Catholic.

Deacon Joseph Richards of the Cathedral parish is the new coordinator of the parish's RCIA program. He succeeds Dr. Dean Stroud, who had worked with the Cathedral's RCIA program for 11 years and who had coordinated it for the past five years.

"He volunteered to take the position when he heard that Dean Stroud was stepping down," Monsignor Charles Stoetzel said of Richards.

"He wants to do something more academic which is not only good for the catechumens and candidates but for him as well," Monsignor Stoetzel said. "It gives him a chance to share the Catholic faith with others."

The session's first class probably will be in September, as it has been in the past. "I suspect we would gather on a certain day each week, most likely on Wednesday," Richards said. But the class schedule hasn't been finalized.

Anyone interested in registering for the session that begins this fall can call Richards at 608-780-1669.

RCIA sessions are intended for those who have never been baptized, those who wish to enter the Church from another Christian tradition, and Catholics who have not completed their initiation sacraments.

"The first of the three Rites of RCIA is that of Acceptance," Richards said, when asked what kinds of topics will be covered in the classes. "Topics will relate to whatever are the unique needs of this phase. Ideally then, a more systematic approach will come with the Rites of Election, and then of Initiation, taking up liturgy, Scripture, the Catechism, the Saints – in the heritage of our heroes who have gone before us, and other things of the Church's patrimony."

Richards won't be doing all of the teaching himself. "For many sound reasons, a team of people would be put together, all with a dedication toward the Rite's common mission," he said. "By this mission, much more than academic, 'RCIA

needs to love people into the Church,'" Richards said, mimicking recent words of a well-known catechetical formator.

At least in recent years, each session of the Cathedral's RCIA program has ended with the celebration of the Easter Vigil in the spring. "Everything anticipates the Easter Vigil that brings RCIA to its hiatus," Richards said. "However, I must state a principle here: Each person will have been called in their own unique way. Each potential candidate will progress at whatever unique pace the Holy Spirit sustains them. Time frames will be subjected to this movement – conceivably even waiting for completion until a later Easter Vigil."

Richards, who was ordained a permanent deacon in 2007, is a carpenter by trade. "Since 2011, I have been director of the Diocesan Center, in a way being Bishop Callahan's facilities manager there," he said. Before that, he had been director of buildings and grounds at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse since 2008. And before that, he was director of building and grounds for all Coulee Catholic Schools.

Richards and his wife, Carol, have three children, John, Jeanette and Joseph.

"It is a good time in the life of a deacon," Richards said, when asked why he volunteered to become the parish's RCIA coordinator. "I expect to retire from the workforce in the next couple years and by then I will have been in one sort of Church administrative position or another for the previous 20 years. The Church will have provided for me and my family all of this time. As my physical energies wane I want to give back for the many years that the Church has invested in me. And in my 10 ordained years, I have longed to work in the parish. That the Church wants me to do it came when Monsignor Stoetzel let me take the previous director's place" when Stroud retired from the position. "I find it thrilling to anticipate what marvelous ways Christ will use us to grow His Church," Richards said. "It is thrilling, but it is humbling." ❖



Deacon Joseph Richards



Anointing of the Sick to be Offered at July 22 Mass

The Cathedral parish's annual communal sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick will be offered during the 10:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday, July 22.

"It is for Catholics who are seriously ill, preparing for major surgery, aging and the dying," Monsignor Charles Stoetzel said. "Its purpose is to pray as a Church for healing physically, emotionally and spiritually." Participants are anointed with the Oil of the Sick, which is blessed at the annual Chrism Mass.

Monsignor Stoetzel also will do private anointings for people in places such as their home, a nursing home or a hospital. Parishioners can contact the parish office to set a date, time and place for the anointing. ✕

Four Persons are Elected to Cathedral Parish Pastoral Council

Four persons were elected to the Parish Pastoral Council during Masses the weekend of May 5-6. Jessica Skemp, Sara Taggart and Tammy Becker were re-elected to serve another two-year term on the council. And Jim Savoldelli was elected to his first term.

Becker owns an accounting firm and uses her financial background to assist the parish as a member of the Finance Council. She has streamlined financial statements and composed detailed reports to facilitate discussion.

During her first term on the council, Skemp became its president. She also serves on the Cathedral Education Committee, where she participates in the Lenten Soup Suppers as a cook and has redesigned its annual Soup-a-Rama.

Taggart also is on the Cathedral Education Committee, where she organized the servers and their transportation for the daily morning Mass, revitalized Scrip, developed the First Communion reception and organized gifts for the communicants, and instituted the Acolyte Appreciation event.

Savoldelli is a civil engineer with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and is an usher at the Cathedral. He and his wife have four children and their sons also serve as acolytes; the older boys also serve as Eucharistic Ministers.

The Parish Pastoral Council advises the Cathedral's Rector, Monsignor Charles Stoetzel, on matters pertaining to the parish's mission, vision statement, budget, upcoming events and awards. The council meets four times each year. ✕

