



# The Worker

SAINT JOSEPH <sup>THE</sup> WORKMAN | *Cathedral*

## Weinbergers Receive Cathedral Parish's Family of the Year Award

Active in the Cathedral parish since they joined it more than 18 years ago, the Pat and Tammy Weinberger family received the parish's annual Family of the Year award on December 29. The Weinbergers received the award at a Mass on the day of the Catholic Church's Feast of the Holy Family.

Pat and Tammy have owned Pickerman's Soup & Sandwich in downtown La Crosse for more than 15 years. Tammy also recently began a part-time para-professional job at Blessed Sacrament School.

The parish's Family Life Committee chose the Weinbergers for the honor, with the approval of the Parish Pastoral Council.

The award is given to a family whose members give selflessly of themselves to the activities of the parish, said Jessica Skemp, chair of the Parish Pastoral Council.

"The Weinberger family contributes to the heart of our parish family, and they exemplify service to both church and the community," Skemp said. "We are grateful for their contributions, strengthening our parish home."

"We are very honored to have been chosen" for the Family of the Year award, Tammy Weinberger said. "We have three children, Connor Mruz (an Aquinas High School graduate), Gavin (a junior at Aquinas High School) and Maya (in eighth grade at Aquinas Middle School)," Tammy said. "All have been and are currently Mass servers. Gavin ushers and recently became a Eucharistic minister after his Confirmation as well."

"My husband, Pat, is an usher and has done so even back in grade school," Tammy said. "He's also a member of the Knights of Columbus. We both belong to a Mardi Gras group that raises money for Aquinas Catholic Schools."

While they've been members of the Cathedral parish for more than 18 years, Pat and Tammy go back even farther with it. "St. Joseph the Workman has always been a part of our lives," Tammy said. "Pat and I attended St. Pius X and Blessed Sacrament grade schools and are both Aquinas grads. We would gather here for many important events, since it is the Mother Church of the diocese. We look forward to celebrating sacraments here at the Cathedral." ✠



From left, Gavin, Connor Mruz, Tammy, Maya and Pat Weinberger received the Cathedral parish's Family of the Year award at a Mass on Sunday, December 29, which was the Feast of the Holy Family.

## PCCW Christmas Bazaar & Bake Sale – YUM!



From left, Betty Hayden-Tauscher, Joan King and Anh Pham display cookies at the Cathedral Parish Council of Catholic Women annual Christmas Bazaar and Bake Sale on December 7 in the Cathedral's Undercroft.



## Repairs Are Being Planned to Stop Falling Stone Chunks, Roof Leakage

This last summer the need to fence off the courtyard from public use became necessary in front of the Cathedral. For the previous year, chunks of stonework had been observed falling to the ground from up the steeple. There is also roof leakage going on.

A local construction company was called in to do drone video surveillance of why this was happening. It was discovered that the limestone, used to outline defining features of the tower, is deteriorating. Roof leaks are due to a failed roof flashing system.

An architectural consulting firm was called in, that specializes in such stone construction. They describe the event like this: "God makes this limestone over many millennia by compressing micro-layer upon micro-layer of sediment into massive stone structures. Stone masons then come in and cut out workable chunks that once removed are turned up on end for building purposes, much like standing up a laying book. This exposes to the elements the newly cut cross-section of all those layers. Over time, freezing and thawing causes chunks to spall off. Then gravity has its way."

Now, while they work from cranes and bucket lifts to temporarily stabilize things, the specialists are developing a strategy to address a long-term solution to the building's problems. Finally, in the end funding will have to be raised to bring about such repairs.

In early January 2020, a meeting will be convened with the master architect, from InSite Consulting Architects, LLC, the Diocese of La Crosse and the Cathedral parish to hear and discuss considerations for the restoration of the Cathedral steeple, which will be a cooperative process amongst the three entities. This important meeting will outline the direction and scope of work to be undertaken in the restoration process. Stay tuned to future issues of *The Worker* for further updates. ❖

## Education Committee to Hold Soup-a-Rama and Lenten Soup Suppers

The Cathedral Education Committee will once again hold meatless Lenten Soup Suppers after the Stations of the Cross on the Fridays of Lent, committee Chair Sandy Perpich said.

And for the eighth year in a row, the committee will hold a winter Soup-a-Rama on Saturday, January 25, in the Cathedral's Gathering Area. It will begin after that evening's 4 p.m. Mass and continue until 8 p.m.

Interested Cathedral parishioners, as well as people from other parishes, are invited to enter the soup competition. Soups in that event can contain meat or be meatless. Donations of bread or desserts also are encouraged.

Anyone planning to enter the soup competition or donate bread/desserts can contact Perpich at 787-1775 for details.

At Soup-a-Rama, for a small fee, people can sample soups and then vote for their favorite. The winning soup maker will be recognized. As always, proceeds will be used to purchase resources for struggling learners at Aquinas Middle and High Schools, Perpich said. ❖

## Father Rebacz Reflects on His First Few Months as Cathedral Rector



Bishop William Callahan appointed Father Jerzy Rebacz as the Cathedral's Rector effective July 16. He succeeded Monsignor Charles Stoetzel, who after eight years as the parish's Rector became Pastor of Holy Family Parish in Prairie du Chien.

Below, Father Rebacz, who is a native of Poland, reflects on his first few months as Rector, in a question-and-answer interview with *The Worker*.

### Q: When did you become the Cathedral parish's Rector?

**A:** On July 2, 2019, I was appointed Judicial Vicar of the Diocese of La Crosse and a week later I was also appointed Parochial Administrator for two parishes: St. Joseph in St. Joseph and St. Peter in Middle Ridge.

Driving to these two beautifully located parishes around La Crosse I enjoyed very much the landscape. It reminded me so much of the south part of Poland. However, this assignment was a "short-lived" one. I managed to celebrate only one weekend of Masses there when Bishop Callahan asked me to consider taking a new assignment at the Cathedral and on July 16, I was appointed Rector of the Cathedral parish for one year as well as retaining my position as Judicial Vicar. However, maintaining these two assignments for almost six weeks indicated that even for one year it would be a real challenge if not difficult, especially facing new challenges at the parish such as restoration of the Cathedral and restructuring the parish office.

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## Military Veterans Honored at Cathedral Reception



In keeping with an annual tradition, military veterans were honored at the Veterans Day Hospitality Sunday at the Cathedral on November 10, the day before Veterans Day.

Memorabilia loaned by five families of military veterans – such as the parish's Roger and Joan King family – was on display on tables during a reception in the Gathering

Area after the morning Masses that day. And a special blessing was offered for veterans at all the Masses that weekend.

The event was hosted by the parish's Family Life Committee, and was organized by committee member Carol Ballas. She and Eunice Helgeson served refreshments and treats and visited with people about the memorabilia.

This year's display had special meaning for the Kings. It included a photo of retired Navy veteran Roger King in his uniform, and a photo of retired Air Force veteran Timothy King of Onalaska (Roger and Joan's son) in uniform.

It also included a black-and-white photo of Joan's brother, John T. Lynch, who was in the Army and was killed in France a few days after the June 6, 1944, D-Day invasion that was launched by U.S. military forces and their allies. And near Lynch's photo and the Purple Heart medal that his family received after his death, was a color reproduction of a page from a Paris, France, newspaper about this year's 75th anniversary commemoration of the invasion, which had a photo of Timothy King and his son Alex at Lynch's

grave in France. Next to the reproduction was an English translation of the French newspaper story.

### Q: How did you feel about being appointed the Cathedral parish's Rector?

**A:** Every change brings some fears. If I said that I am not afraid of the recent change in my priesthood life at all, I would not be honest.

Bishop Callahan entrusted to my care an important parish, which is the Mother of all churches in our Diocese, and at the same time the largest monument and cultural asset of La Crosse. So it's hard to look at the tasks ahead of me carefree.

However, I hope that, with God's help, the kindness of parishioners and other people of goodwill, and using my previous priesthood and academic experiences, I will be able to meet these tasks and I will not disappoint the trust placed in me by our Bishop.

### Q: What are the biggest challenges you face as Rector?

#### And what do you hope to accomplish as Rector?

**A:** Pastoral issues are always a priority. The role of Cathedral's Rector is to serve and represent the true Pastor of the Cathedral parish – that is the Diocesan Bishop – and pursue his vision of leadership. Therefore, after several joint meetings between our Pastoral and Finance councils, I have presented Bishop Callahan a proposal of the future vision of the parish structure (office and pastoral plan).

The Cathedral parish, however, is also a physical building and like any other requires ongoing maintenance and renovation. What are the most urgent

works in this area?

1. Restoration of the steeple and the bell tower.
2. Renovation – preservation of the entire structure of the building as well as the parish rectory building.

Every penny counts in parish reality. That is why I also hope that there will be individual donors and sponsors who, even with the proverbial widow's penny, will support the work carried out here at the Cathedral. At this point, I would like to state clearly that it is a plan for the next few years and that the parish alone is not able to bear the financial burden associated with the work at the Cathedral.

Therefore, these projects require coordinated cooperation between the Diocese and the parish to address these necessary tasks. The Cathedral parish has already established the Restoration Committee to represent our parish in further cooperation with the Diocese. I hope that the future of the La Crosse Cathedral, which is one of the most valuable cultural heritage places in our city and the surrounding area, will interest many people of goodwill and even more institutions. ❖

grave in France. Next to the reproduction was an English translation of the French newspaper story.

Joan told *The Worker* that Timothy, Alex and her nephew traveled to France in June for the commemoration of the invasion's 75th anniversary.

"This is the second time that (Timothy) has been to my brother's grave," Joan said. "He's the one who found out the information about my brother and how he was killed in Normandy. He had just turned 19 years old, when he was killed by shrapnel" shortly after the D-Day invasion.

Joan and her brother were raised in Austin, MN.

She said her family wanted to loan the memorabilia related to her brother for this year's Cathedral reception "Because this year was the 75th anniversary of D-Day. I thought this would be the perfect time to do this. Because a lot of young people don't have a lot of knowledge about World War II."

The Purple Heart medal had belonged to Lynch's and Joan's sister, Margaret Mullen, after their mother passed away. After Margaret died, it belonged to her son, John Mullen, who was named after John Lynch.

John Mullen gave the medal to Timothy King in September, in recognition of the research he had done about Lynch and his two visits to Lynch's grave. ❖



Five families of military veterans loaned memorabilia that was on display in the Cathedral's Gathering Area during a reception honoring veterans on Sunday, November 10, the day before Veterans Day.



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From left, Jack Horsfall transfers to plates pancakes he had made, and James Murray does the same with omelets he had made, during the November 3 Pancake/Omelet Breakfast held by the Cathedral Men's Club.

### Men's Club to Hold Pancake & Omelet Breakfasts in February, March

The Cathedral Men's Club will hold Pancake/Omelet Breakfasts from 7:30 a.m. to noon on **Sunday, February 16**, and **Sunday, March 15**, in the Undercroft. The public is invited to the breakfasts, which raise money for particular causes.

The club held the first two of its four scheduled breakfasts for the fall and winter on September 29 and November 3, both to raise money for Cathedral Elementary School. The September breakfast drew 165 customers and raised \$411, Men's Club President Geoff Wilhelmy said. The November breakfast had 170 customers and raised \$408, he said. The February breakfast also will raise money for Cathedral Elementary School, and the March breakfast will raise money for the Aquinas High School Junior Prom.

Prices are \$3 for a pancake breakfast, \$4 for an omelet breakfast, and \$12 for a family.

The club's breakfast-making lineup usually has Jack Horsfall cooking the pancakes, Jim Noelke making the omelets, Joe Noelke making the batter for the pancakes and Wilhelmy bringing in the supplies and collecting the receipts. Aquinas Middle School and High School students are volunteer servers at the breakfasts. ✕

