



The Worker

SAINT JOSEPH ^{THE} WORKMAN

Cathedral

Dominic Carstens Named to New Post of Public Relations/Missionary Advancement

Dominic Carstens is looking forward to beginning his new **Public Relations and Missionary Advancement** position at the Cathedral on October 15. The position was created recently to help promote the parish through marketing and advertising by taking pictures and videos and writing content for parish events, and posting them on social media.

“More fully, it’s about telling Cathedral’s story and how the Holy Spirit is continuing His mission to build up the Kingdom of God here through people responding to the Spirit’s summons and guidance,” Monsignor Richard Gilles said.

“This position is about telling the parish (and the broader) community about all the good that’s happening here through the lens of evangelization and invitation,” Monsignor Gilles said. “It’s about telling our story to inspire others to come into a deeper friendship with Christ through His Church and the Sacraments. We want to increase the size and strength of Cathedral Parish – not by ‘poaching’ parishioners from other parishes but by outreach to those who need a spiritual home, whoever they may be.”

Other responsibilities for the new job include building the parish with a focus on the youth, young adults and overseeing religious education, including sacramental preparation. “That’s all a developing concept as we go along,” Monsignor Gilles said. “This is a new position and not a ‘canned position’ but one that will respond to the pastoral needs of the parish as this parish continues to evolve and grow.”

Carstens was raised on a hobby farm near Rolling Ground, WI, and grew up attending St. Philip Catholic Church near Rolling Ground. He graduated from Wyoming Catholic College in Lander, Wyoming, in May 2024 with a bachelor’s degree in liberal arts. That degree involves theology, philosophy, science, math, language, art, rhetoric and more, he said.

Last year, Carstens participated as a perpetual pilgrim in the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage that culminated in the 10th National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis. He joined the pilgrimage’s Seton Route, which started its journey in New Haven, Connecticut.

After that, he became an educator with the Catholic Ecology Center near Neosho, Wisconsin. The center’s mission is to deepen faith and foster a stewardship ethic through hands-on encounters with the natural world. This is done at the center’s campus through educational programming, retreats, stewardship projects, recreational outings and partnerships with schools and parishes. Carstens left that position September 19 for his new job with the Cathedral.

“The Cathedral’s mission to lead people to Christ through the liturgy, community and personal relationships attracted me to apply” for the position, Carstens said. “I have felt called to go to the highways and byways to bring people to the fold of Christ and the Cathedral shares in that mission!”

In the new post, he said, “I hope to continue to promote the growth and fruitfulness of the parish in its zeal for saving souls! I am looking forward to doing that by encountering all of my neighbors, parishioners and non-parishioners alike.” “I look forward to being a member of your parish family,” he said.

It was important to create this new position “Mostly because we have a great story to tell and it needs to get out there!” Monsignor Gilles said. “The people of the world need the good news of the gospel to be told. We all need to be inspired – both those within the household of faith and those who are not yet among us. No matter where any one of us is on the spectrum, our faith life in the Church needs to be encouraged, supported and strengthened.”

Monsignor Gilles added that the position was created “because the workload here is significant for all of us. Parish growth is demanding. It takes a lot of time and energy.

“There’s a cultural shift. Ministry is far more labor intensive than what it used to be. I’ve personally seen that over the last 31 years of my priesthood. People in general need more accompaniment. Also, building community. We are not a one-horse parish town in a rural area where community comes way more organically and naturally. Here at Cathedral, we need to be deliberate about it. As a downtown parish, people come to us from all over the city of La Crosse and from surrounding cities/villages/areas. We need to be intentional about connecting people. It is in that connection where faith thrives and lives are transformed.”

Monsignor Gilles also said that “We really want to increase our civic, public profile in the community – especially downtown, but not restricted to downtown.” ✠



✠ **Dominic Carstens,**
✠ **Public Relations / Missionary Advancement**



Cathedral Pancake Breakfast to Benefit Alliance Women’s Clinic

The Cathedral will host a pancake breakfast after the Masses on Sunday, October 12, with all proceeds going to the Alliance Women’s Clinic of La Crosse.

A presentation about Alliance Family Services and its clinics was scheduled to be given at Cathedral Masses on Saturday and Sunday, October 4-5.

“My husband, Mike Hackworth, will be sharing during the Masses, and I will be at a table in the Gathering Area afterward to answer any questions,” said Colleen Hackworth, director of public relations for the Alliance Women’s Clinic–La Crosse. “Mike will be highlighting the work of the La Crosse clinic and the services we provide, as well as sharing that we are part of a larger national network.”

Alliance is a nonprofit Christian, pro-life organization that advocates for preborn children and promotes strong families through compassionate reproductive healthcare and supportive services. Those services are free, and the Alliance’s clinics are able to do this work because of the generosity of individuals, churches and other organizations.

“We acknowledge that every human life begins at conception and is worthy of protection,” Hackworth said. “We are committed to walking alongside women, especially those facing unexpected or unplanned pregnancies, by providing a safe, welcoming environment where they can explore their options and access resources without pressure or judgment.

“Our goal is to empower women with accurate information, compassionate care, and practical support so they can make informed decisions about their health and future,” Hackworth said. “While we do not provide or refer for abortion services, we are here to offer a broad spectrum of care designed to meet both immediate and long-term needs.”

All services are free and confidential, including pregnancy testing, limited ultrasounds, options counseling and support, referrals to community resources, STI (Sexually Transmitted Infection) testing and treatment, prenatal and breastfeeding support, parenting education and mentorship for both women and men, and material assistance such as diapers, clothing and other baby essentials.

For more information, visit www.alliancefamily-services.org or www.allianewomensclinic.org.



Crucifix from Villa St. Joseph Now Hangs in Blessed Sacrament Chapel

A large crucifix that was in the chapel of the Villa St. Joseph retirement home for the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration now hangs above the altar in the Cathedral’s Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

The crucifix was installed there on August 5 after being given to the Cathedral by FSPA. The religious order closed Villa St. Joseph (in the unincorporated community of St. Joseph, east of La Crosse) in 2023 after a renovation of its St. Rose Convent in La Crosse to accommodate all of its retired sisters. A sale of Villa St. Joseph is pending; the prospective buyer’s name has not yet been announced. The crucifix is much larger than the one that it replaced in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, Monsignor Richard Gilles said.

With the pending sale of the Villa St. Joseph, Monsignor Gilles said, “It became necessary for them to remove the religious/liturgical items. They called me and I was asked if I wanted to come up and take a look to see what the Cathedral could use. When I walked into the chapel, I saw that beautiful crucifix suspended from a canopy behind the altar. Instantly and with full force, I just knew that it had to come to the Cathedral.”

Nathanael Rhody, the Cathedral’s maintenance director, suggested placing the crucifix in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. “That made quick perfect sense to me,” Monsignor Gilles said. “It truly is fitting that this Hackner carved piece ‘come back home’ to the Mother Church of the Diocese. It looks like it was always there – meant to be there. Thank you, good Sisters, for this splendid addition to the Cathedral of St. Joseph the Workman! Once again, you have enriched us!”

The wooden crucifix was carved by Michael Bayer of the E. Hackner Co. in La Crosse and had been in the Villa St. Joseph chapel ever since the chapel was completed in 1940, said Meg Paulino, FSPA archivist. Founded by Egid Hackner, the E. Hackner Co. built altars, statues and furnishings for churches.



A large new crucifix hangs above the altar in the Cathedral’s Blessed Sacrament Chapel. It came from the chapel of the Villa St. Joseph retirement home for the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, which is selling the Villa as FSPA retired sisters now live in St. Rose Convent in La Crosse.

Cathedral Increases Involvement in Downtown Community

The Cathedral is becoming more involved in the community, especially the downtown La Crosse community. Monsignor Richard Gilles and Kevin Decker, the Cathedral’s parish mission associate, met with Mayor Shaundel Washington-Spivey on September 9 to discuss the issue of the homeless, what the Cathedral has been doing to help (such as providing volunteers and assistance with meals at the Catholic Charities Warming Center) and possible ways to reduce homelessness. The Cathedral also joined the Downtown Mainstreet Inc. organization earlier this year.

“The Cathedral needs to be considered a major stakeholder in the downtown community,” Monsignor Gilles said. “Who else brings in over 1,000 people downtown every week?”

“People may come (to the Cathedral) for something spiritual,” Decker said. “But if the downtown is a nice place, they’ll stay for ice cream and everything else that’s there. So it benefits everybody for the Cathedral to be here.”

Decker said the Cathedral also is increasing its visibility by running promotional advertisements about the parish on local radio station WKTY. The ads began airing with the start of the Green Bay Packers preseason games.

Veterans to be Honored After November 9 Masses

Military veterans will be honored at a reception at the Cathedral after Masses on Sunday, November 9. Veterans Day is November 11.

“We will be serving refreshments in the Gathering Area, and will have a display table for any military memorabilia that you might like to share from your time, or a family member’s time, in service,” said Carol Ballas, who organizes the annual event.

Cathedral Ministry Fair to be Held on October 18-19

The second Cathedral Ministry Fair will be held after the Masses on Saturday and Sunday, October 18-19. Information on several Cathedral ministries will be available at several tables, from members of the ministries.

The parish’s first ministry fair was held November 16-17, 2024.

The purpose of the ministry fair is “Just to get everybody involved, and to continue building community,” said Kevin Decker, the Cathedral’s parish mission associate.

Decker and Monsignor Richard Gilles, the parish’s rector, said they were pleased with the turnout at the first ministry fair and with the number of people who signed up to become involved in the ministries.

Some of the ministries featured at that event included social justice opportunities, women’s faith formation, cooking club, sacred liturgy, Parish Council of Catholic Women, homebound ministry and altar linens/church cleaning.



Schwandt and Winterfeldt to Perform in Cathedral Organ Recital Series

Organists Dr. Daniel Schwandt and Dr. Chad Winterfeldt are performing in the next several weeks as part of the parish’s 2025 Organ Recitals series, said Dr. Brian W. Luckner, Cathedral director of sacred music.

Schwandt will perform on October 26 and **Winterfeldt** on November 16. Each performance will be at 3:30 p.m. in the Cathedral on a Sunday afternoon. Admission is free although freewill offerings will be accepted.

Organist Gabriel Rivera Bird began this year’s series with his September 28 performance.

Schwandt is the cantor of Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. He also serves as university organist and lecturer in music at the Lawrence University Conservatory of Music in Appleton, Wisconsin, where he teaches organ and harpsichord. He holds organ and sacred music degrees from St. Olaf College and the University of Notre Dame. He has served congregations in Minnesota, Indiana and Chicago, where for 12 years he served as seminary cantor of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

Winterfeldt is cantor of Christ Chapel at Gustavus Adolphus College, where he oversees music in the chapel, teaches music theory, directs the handbell ensembles, and maintains an active organ studio. He also is director of music ministry at Grace University Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. He holds degrees in organ performance from the University of Nebraska, Yale University and Concordia College, Moorhead.



Dr. Daniel Schwandt Dr. Chad Winterfeldt

Men of St. Joseph will hold Italian night, steak fry

The Men of St. Joseph club at the Cathedral is making plans for two meal events for parishioners that haven’t been held in several years.

One is an Italian night that will be held after the 4:30 p.m. Mass on Saturday, November 8. The other is a steak fry that will be held after the 4:30 p.m. Mass on Saturday, March 7. Both events will be held in St. Joseph Hall. Watch upcoming weekend parish bulletins for more details.



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BEACON OF LIGHT

parish picnic

Monsignor Richard Gilles pulls a winning ticket for a raffle basket during the fourth annual Beacon of Light Parish Picnic on Sunday, September 14, at Myrick Park.

PCCW Christmas Bazaar & Bake Sale Set for December 6

The Parish Council of Catholic Women will hold its annual Christmas Bazaar and Bake Sale from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, December 6, in the Cathedral's St. Joseph Hall.

"Featured items will be a jewelry table, unique Nativity sets and beautiful religious items, handmade gift cards and gifts for the entire family as well," said Ruth Wettstein, one of the event organizers.

Sale items can be brought downstairs and left on the table by the elevator at any time. Parishioners are encouraged to bring their favorite holiday baked goods to St. Joseph Hall on Thursday or Friday, December 4-5, before 4 p.m.

The bazaar also will have a special section featuring the works of creative parishioners such as crafters, artists, photographers, woodworkers, etc., Pat Stellflue said. Call Stellflue at 608-792-9858 if you would like to contribute pieces, and she will gladly pick them up.

Anyone with questions can call Wettstein at 608-785-0062 or Lynne Ostervich at 608-792-6933 ✕



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Cathedral

Come *Holy Spirit*
Fill the Hearts of *Your Faithful*



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