

# ST. ISIDORE THE FARMER PASTORATE

OUR LADY OF FATIMA  
Darlington

ST. PHILOMENA  
Belmont

ST. MATTHEW  
Shullsburg

ST. JOSEPH  
Gratiot

ST. JOHN  
South Wayne

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## THE SEEDS AND THE SOWER NEWSLETTER

2025 VOLUME, ISSUE 1, LENT

### IN THIS VOLUME:

- **Introducing Our Lenten Theme**
- **Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, & Easter Schedule**
- **School Events**
- **Faith Formation & Youth Ministry**
- **Homebound Visits**

### INTRODUCING OUR LENTEN THEME: “BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD.”- PSALM 46:11

This Lenten season, throughout St. Isidore the Farmer Pastorate, we are focusing on the theme, “Be still and know that I am God”. This verse, from the forty-sixth chapter of Psalms, focuses on the mighty power of God. Psalm 46 begins as such: *“God is our refuge and our strength, an ever-present help in distress. Thus we do not fear, though earth be shaken and mountains quake to the depths of the sea, though its waters rage and foam and mountains totter at its surging...”*. The beginning of this chapter helps set the tone and gives even more meaning to verse 11.

Where is fear striking you in your life? Where is there restlessness, anxiety? Whichever form distress may take in your life, whether very evident or more underlying, we can trust that the Lord is our refuge and strength in our times of need, and may the Lord find us wanting! Wanting for nothing but Himself. During this season of Lent, let us put aside our wanting for earthy things, and re-orient our lives around the living God, only wanting for Him and Him alone. *“Though earth be shaken and mountains quake to the depths of the sea...”* These are the powers of this world that may seem

overwhelming to us. In these moments we can calm ourselves, be still, and know that He is God and that He has power over everything in our lives. Trust and humility are two accompanying aspects within Psalm 46:11. Taking time to be still can be a challenge for all of us as we navigate daily life. Can we take the time to be still, even for a brief moment, to trust that the Lord will take care of everything that we are not doing when we take the time to be still with Him? Can we practice humility by understanding that He is God and we are not? That He has power over everything and that we can trust Him even with the littlest things in our lives? Take some time to reflect on this bible verse and the passage as a whole and see how God transforms your heart this Lenten season.

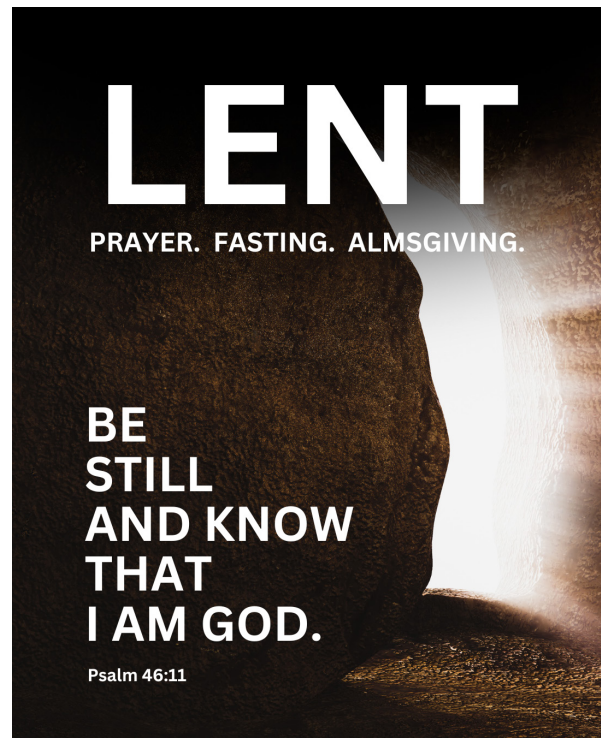
The image of the stone being rolled from the tomb used for our Lenten theme is seemingly an Easter image, but do not let that deceive you. There is a Lenten connotation behind the image. Though there is light shining from behind a stone that is partially rolled away, there is still great mystery in this image. Ultimately, we know what happens in the story of salvation - God wins. God can win in our own lives if we give Him permission and place our hope and trust in Him. Consider the darkness of stone. There are some aspects of our lives where we do not know how God is working, or we find it difficult to see Him being able to work. We don't know what God is doing, but look at the light - we know that He is present. We are waiting for what is to be revealed to us, just like the apostles were after the crucifixion and death of Jesus. Like them, we may not know to expect from the Lord, but we can trust that whatever He is doing for us is going to be more than we can ever imagine!

# LENT

PRAYER. FASTING. ALMSGIVING.

## BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD.

Psalm 46:11





# LENT 2025

IN ST. ISIDORE THE FARMER PASTORATE



# HOLY WEEK

## ASH WEDNESDAY

- 8:30 am Mass at Holy Rosary, Darlington
- 3:30 pm Mass at St. Philomena, Belmont
- 5:15 pm Mass at St. Matthew, Shullsburg
- 6:30 pm Mass at Holy Rosary, Darlington

## STATIONS OF THE CROSS

- After 8:15 am Mass Fridays at St. Matthew
- After 8:30 am Mass Fridays at Holy Rosary
- 5:15 pm on Fridays at St. Philomena

## CONFESSION

- 30 minutes before all Masses
- 6:30-8:00 pm on March 12 at St. Isidore the Farmer Lenten Retreat at Holy Rosary, Darlington
- 6:30-8:00 pm on March 26 at St. Isidore the Farmer Lenten Retreat at St. Matthew, Shullsburg
- 2:30-3:30 pm on Good Friday (April 18) at Holy Rosary and St. Matthew

## HOLY THURSDAY

- 7:00 pm Mass of the Lord's Supper at Holy Rosary
- 7:00 pm Mass of the Lord's Supper at St. Matthew
- \* Following the Masses, the Altar of Repose will be open for private prayer at both churches. Night Prayer will be offered at 9:30 pm in both locations.

## GOOD FRIDAY

- 3:00 pm Divine Mercy Chaplet at Holy Rosary
- 3:00 pm Divine Mercy Chaplet at St. Matthew
- 3:30 pm Good Friday Service at Holy Rosary
- 3:30 pm Good Friday Service at St. Matthew

## EASTER VIGIL IN THE HOLY NIGHT

- 9:30 pm Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord at St. Matthew

## EASTER SUNDAY

- All Masses on Easter Sunday will be held at their typical Sunday times and locations.

## ENGAGE YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE THIS LENTEN SEASON

St. Isidore the Farmer

# LENTEN RETREATS

### Holy Rosary

March 12th  
6:30-8pm

- Lenten Reflection given by Venessa Udelhoven

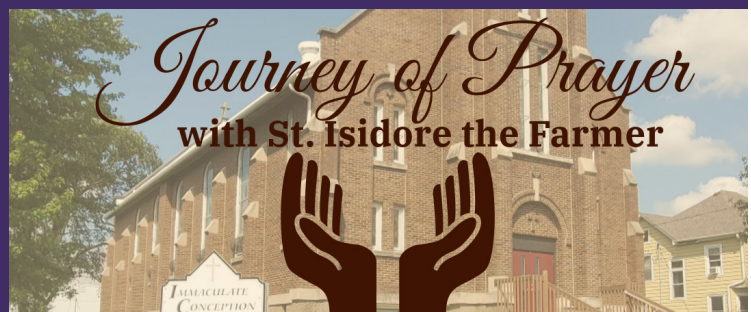
- Prayer

- Confessions by our own priests and visiting priests

### St. Matthew

March 26th  
6:30-8pm

- Worship Music
- Social to Follow



## Journey of Prayer

with St. Isidore the Farmer

### Come Pray with Us!

### Thursday, March 20

### 7:00 PM

### Immaculate Conception, Truman

*Refreshments Provided after Adoration*

*Be still and know that I am God. - Psalm 46:11*



# CONTINUING OUR MISSION OF CELEBRATING THE SAINTS AT HOLY ROSARY

This past month, we had the joy of celebrating Catholic Schools Week at Holy Rosary School! It was a wonderful opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the mission of Catholic education. Throughout the week, we engaged in special activities that highlighted the importance of faith, learning, and service in our daily lives. Thank you to all the teachers, staff, students, and families who helped make it such a meaningful experience for everyone.

As part of this celebration, we also continued our school's tradition of honoring the Saints. We were blessed to have Fr. Michael visit after lunch to provide a special blessing for our students. In honor of St. Blaise, whose feast day is celebrated on February 3, Fr. Michael performed the blessing of the throats for each student. According to tradition, St. Blaise is the patron saint of those suffering from throat ailments. The blessing, given with two crossed candles, invokes St. Blaise's intercession for protection from illness and injury.

Moments like these remind us of the beauty and richness of our Catholic faith. By learning about and honoring the Saints, we inspire our students to grow in holiness and strive to follow Christ in their daily lives. The Saints provide powerful examples of courage, compassion, and faith, guiding us as we continue our mission of educating the whole child—spiritually, academically, and morally.

We are incredibly grateful for the vibrant faith community at Holy Rosary and for the continued support of our families and parish. Let's continue to grow in faith together as we honor our Catholic heritage and nurture the next generation of Saints in our school!



## FAITH FORMATION, SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION, & YOUTH MINISTRY ARE CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS ACROSS OUR PASTORATE

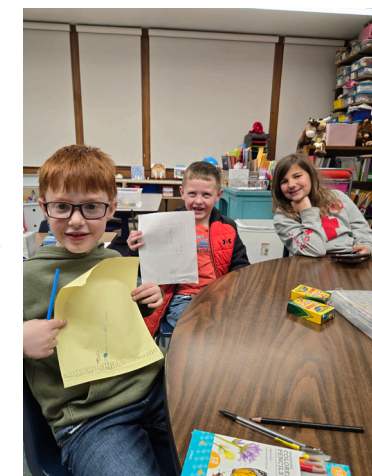
Pastorate-wide faith formation is creating lifelong friends and connections for many in our communities! This year, faith formation, youth ministry, and sacramental preparation for Reconciliation, Communion, and Confirmation have been a joint effort amongst familiar faces in your communities. Diane Weiskircher, Jamie Dreger, Sarah Allen, Fr. Chris, and Fr. Michael have been working together to share resources and provide the youth and adults in our communities with robust opportunities to learn and grow in our Catholic faith this year. We have seen friendships flourish and curiosity about the Catholic faith blossom amongst the youth who attend Emmaus Evenings, sacramental preparation, and youth ministry.

This past month, the young ones who attend Emmaus Evenings learned about the Sacrament of Baptism and how this sacrament makes us sons and daughters of God. You'll see a picture of kindergarteners who drew an image of what they think their baptism looked like.

The middle school teens who attended St. Izzy Ministries this month learned that the Church is a place to call home, that there is a spot for them, and here they can find rest. You'll see the teens got to create their own forts - a fun activity that was used as a catalyst into the lessons this month. The high school teens have been focusing on learning about morality: right from wrong, is anyone really bad, and why we need a savior. This topic doesn't just end there. It continues on the rest of the semester with forgiveness, Confession, and answering the question, "is being good boring?". Just in time for Lent!

We have 9 students who have received the Sacrament of Reconciliation and are now preparing for the Sacrament of Holy Communion which they will be receiving on May 4th. You will see a picture of a student practicing how to go to Confession with Father Michael!

We have 16 students preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. They have applied, gone through two interviews to determine readiness, chosen sponsors, researched saints, written a letter of intent to Bishop Donald Hying, and now will attend a confirmation retreat on March 8th as they finish up their preparation. The confirmands have been working very hard to prepare themselves for this beautiful sacrament. Their leaders



are very proud of each and every one of them for the time and effort they have put in and those in the pastorate community should be as well! The Mass for Confirmation will be held on March 29th at 7pm at Holy Rosary Catholic Church. Please come join us at this Mass and pray for our confirmands, their sponsors, and their families! Show your support to the future of our church by joining us for the Confirmation Mass this year.



## HOME BOUND VISITS: BRINGING COMMUNION, COMMUNITY AND COMPASSION TO THE “WEAK” MEMBERS OF ST. ISIDORE THE FARMER PASTORATE.

One of the heartfelt and most extremely important aspects of the Church’s ministry is the visits to the aged, the home bound, the sick, and the dying. This singular act of charity constitutes prayers and Anointing of the Sick, sharing of the Word of God, Reconciliation, companionship, and above all, the reception of the Holy Communion or the offering of the holy Mass, as the case may be, for their spiritual nourishment and sustenance.

APPRECIATING THE IMPORTANCE: Home bound or shut-in members in our communities are often elderly or dealing with chronic health challenges, making it absolutely difficult for them to participate in Church activities as they would ordinarily desire. This might instigate a feeling of isolation and abandonment in them, missing the companionship and spiritual nourishment they once experienced through regular participation and worship with the rest of the members of the church community. Many of the home bound suffer the pangs of isolation and would always appreciate our cares, our visits, and also our prayers. Some of them are our siblings, friends, schoolmates, old time colleagues who need our affections and we can’t continue to wait until they are no more. We cannot forget so quickly the feeling of Elizabeth when the Mother of Our Savior, Our Blessed Virgin Mary, paid her a visit and rendered her some grace-filled assistance in her sixth month (cf. Lk 1:39-56).

THE IMPACT: Very significantly, this compassionate outreach aims at sustaining the bond and the love that is shared in the faith based Christian Communities with those unable to attend regular masses and have less access to the sacraments of the church. Home bound visits ensure that no member is left behind. These initiatives not only offer spiritual nourishment but also a sense of belonging and being valued. It’s about extending the Church’s reach beyond its walls and embodying its mission of compassion and community care. It is always a feeling of excitement when we present them with the Pastorate Bulletin and Newsletters and they have the opportunity to give their inputs on some topical issues in the pastorate right from their homes. One of the home bound ladies once insisted on giving me \$2 and assured me it was her own appreciation and support to this kindness being shown them by the church. Such a beautiful soul!

May I acknowledge the availability and the sacrifices of Emmette Reilly and Jimmy Fitzpatrick who have always physically and spiritually accompanied me to this apostolate with great dedication. More people are always welcome to be part of this evangelizing work of the church. You and others can be the “hands and feet of Jesus” that show home bound adults in our pastorate and communities that we truly love and care. - Fr. Michael Chika

## TOPICS IN THE NEXT VOLUME

We will have another edition coming as we approach Memorial Day with more information:

- Pastorate Financial Update
- New Logo for St. Isidore the Farmer Pastorate
- Questions and Answers
- ... and much more!

