



ST JAMES ST MARY OF MOUNT CARMEL PARISHES

453 S. Main St. P.O. Box 280
Amherst, WI 54406
(715) 824-3455

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
8:30AM—1:00PM

Parish Website: sjsmcc.weconnect.com



Fr. Jerzy Rebacz; Pastor | Deacon Art Schaller

December 21, 2025

Mission Statement

We, the stewards of St. James and St. Mary of Mount Carmel Parishes in the Diocese of La Crosse, strive to live as disciples of Christ.



Vision Statement

As Parishioners of St. James and St. Mary of Mount Carmel Parishes, we are called as stewards to celebrate the presence of Christ in our life as we worship together in prayer, in liturgy and in the Sacraments.

We endeavor to strengthen our Catholic faith and Christian service as individuals, as families, and as a parish community as we seek to spread the teachings of Christ through our words, through our witness, and through our actions.

Mass Intentions FOR THE WEEK

Tuesday, December 23rd 8:15AM @ St. SJ
+Bert & Helen Trzebiatowski

Wednesday, December 24th
4:00PM @ SJ +Philomena Selensky
10:00PM @ SJ +Max & Rose Trzebiatowski,
Living & Deceased Family Members

Thursday, December 25th 10:00AM @ SJ
+Connie Jastromski

Friday, December 26th 8:15AM @ SJ
+Deceased Members of the Dcn Art & Kathy Schaller Families

Saturday, December 27th 4:00PM @ SJ
+Theresa Kitowski

Sunday, December 28th
8:30 AM @ SJ +Jim & Arlene Domaszek
10:30AM @ SJ Parishioners of our Two Parishes

Advent Comes to an End

As the season of Advent draws to a close, we find ourselves on the threshold of Christmas – the celebration of Christ’s birth. Over these weeks, we have journeyed with hope, peace, joy and love as we prepared our hearts for the savior. Advent has reminded us that waiting is not wasted time. It is a sacred invitation to trust God’s timing and to live in readiness for His promises.

Now, as we step into Christmas, may we carry the spirit of Advent with us. May we continue to wait with hope, live in peace, rejoice in God’s goodness, and love with open hearts.

*The Light has come,
and He is with us always.*



Adoration Schedule

First Thursday of the month after morning Mass at St. James
First Thursday of the month 4:30-5:30PM; First Friday of the month after morning Mass at St. James

Confession Schedule

After weekday Masses and Saturday at 3:30 PM at St. James.
Sunday after 10:30 AM Mass at St. James.



"The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world (...) He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him. But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God..." (John 1:9-12)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Evangelists Matthew and Luke record that the first to discover this Light through an angel were the shepherds, and after them, following the light of a mysterious star, the wise men from the East. Finding the Child and his Mother, they worshiped Him and offered gifts.

Every year we too set out to encounter Jesus during the Christmas season, contemplating the mystery of God who became man for our salvation. We believe that Jesus, the true Light, shines in the mystery of the Church until the end of the world, and that the darkness of sin will not overwhelm it.

Once again, we have the opportunity to experience the events of Christmas. It is an opportunity to pause for a moment and, in the signs and symbols of the Bethlehem nativity scene, perceive and experience the truth that God, in His power, becomes small and defenseless – ready to welcome Him into our lives and daily reality. He wants to be close to us, and therefore He becomes Emmanuel – allowing Himself to be found in the Eucharist, in the Church, in the family, and in the community.

The Mother Church presents Christmas to us as a special sign of God's love for humanity and the world. This is another loving gaze of God. A gaze in Jesus Christ, upon each of us. This is the same truth of faith, hope, and love that we experience in the community of believers – in the Church – during every Eucharist.

Let us open ourselves to this gift of grace.

God and humanity met in Bethlehem and gazed into each other's eyes. The first to see the Son of God were the eyes of Mary, then the eyes of St. Joseph met the eyes of the Child, followed by the shepherds and the wise men.

During these celebrations, we too look with the eyes of faith at God in the Child Jesus, and He—the Divine Child—looks at us. Mary, who held the Child in her arms, gazed upon Him; she saw heaven descending, like Emmanuel, to earth.

We too long to embrace the Divine Child. The Blessed Virgin Mary herself encourages us to do so. In this way, Jesus is born within us, and we become children of God. As St. John says, *"To all who received Him, He gave power to become children of God."*

Let us discover the mystery of Christmas during this special time. May it be shared by each of us. Let us also be witnesses of this Tiny Love and share it with others.

May the celebration of Christmas abound in God's gifts: joy, peace, hope, and mutual kindness.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2026!

With the gift of prayer and pastoral blessing,

Fr. Jerzy



St James
Week Ending December 14, 2022

Received \$2,312
Budget \$3,462
(\$1,150)

| | Month of Nov 2025 | Current Fiscal YTD Nov 2025 | Prior Fiscal YTD Nov 2024 |
|----------|----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Received | \$14,385 | \$73,481 | \$62,038 |
| Budget | <u>\$15,000</u> (\$615) | <u>\$75,000</u> (\$1,519) | |

St Mary of Mount Carmel
Week Ending December 14, 2025

Received \$6,300
Budget \$3,923
\$2,377

| | Month of Nov 2025 | Current Fiscal YTD Nov 2025 | Prior Fiscal YTD Nov 2024 |
|----------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Received | \$15,955 | \$67,447 | \$68,516 |
| Budget | <u>\$17,000</u> (\$1,045) | <u>\$85,000</u> (\$17,553) | |

Just a friendly reminder—



The calendar year-end is quickly approaching! For tax purposes, please have any contributions you would like reflected on your 2025 giving statement to the parish office by December 31st.

Scrip Gift Cards

SMMC Scrip Update

Gift cards are on sale this weekend.

Our next sales will be on January 4th at the 10:30 Mass, at the 4:00 Mass on January 17th and the 10:30 Mass on Jan 18th.

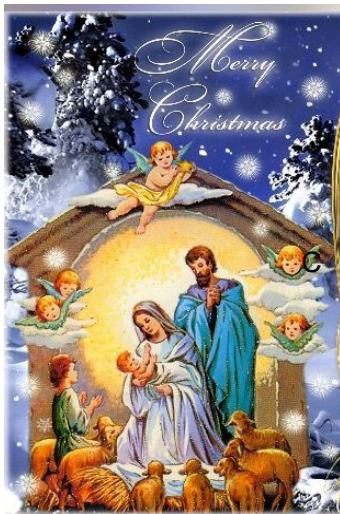
Cards can be purchased at any time by calling Pat Zielinski a (715) 824-3762.

A big THANK YOU to all the families who purchased Scrip gift cards this year!

St. James Scrip Update

Gift cards are also on sale this weekend, December 20th-21st at the 4pm Mass and the 8:30am Mass.

Contact Hydie Laidlaw at (715) 347-3544 or stop by the parish office for your last minute cards.



Christmas Eve
4:00pm Mass
10:00pm Mass

Christmas Day
10:00am Mass

Please note there will be no 8:15am morning Mass on the 24th or the 25th.

Oplatki (Christmas Wafers) Tradition

The Oplatki can be used just before your family's Christmas Eve meal or other Christmas gathering.



As you share the Christmas wafer, beginning with the eldest member of the family, offer a blessing prayer for the coming year for each other.

Take an envelope with the Christmas wafer for your Christmas family gathering and continue this beautiful religious family tradition.

The Christmas wafers can be found in the entryways.

Advent—Christmas Blue Book. Be sure to pick up and use the Blue Book for Advent and Christmas to help you close the Advent Season and celebrate the Twelve Days of Christmas.

May you and your family have a most Blessed Christmas!



Looking Ahead—

The Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God
(A Holy Day of Obligation)

Wednesday, December 31st 4:00pm (SJ)
Thursday, January 1st 10:00am (SJ)

Faith Step

Jesus is just about to appear!

Contemplate the light that will break upon the world. It's the light of joy, of peace, of tranquility, that came when God first entered the world as one of us.

As you wait, keep praying for those lost in darkness.

Pray that the men and women who have not yet encountered the light of the gospel will be touched by its good news during this Christmas season.

Pray that those who have closed themselves off from the light will now be open to receiving it.

May we all be set on fire with the light of Christ' love! God longs to shine the light of his love into every person's heart.

"The dawn from on high shall break upon us too give light to those who sit in darkness and to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Luke 1:78

Ring in the New Year with Our Lord Jesus Christ!

Make plans to attend Adoration on New Year's Eve at St. James.

Spending time with our Lord is a perfect way to begin a New Year! Adoration will begin at 5:00pm on December 31st and will conclude with Benediction at 12:00 Midnight.

Sign-up Sheets are available at both entryways. Be sure to sign up.



Jesus will be waiting for you!

If you ordered a subscription to The Word Among Us, the January edition with your name on the label can be found on the shelf in the gathering space entryway.

The parish office will be closed this Wednesday and Thursday in celebration of Christmas. Father Jerzy, Deacon Art, and the entire staff of St. James and St. Mary of Mount Carmel wish you a Christmas filled with the peace and love of Christ!



Christmas—God is With Us

For the Church, Christmas is not just a one-day event but a full 12-day season that begins with the Christmas celebration of God's incarnation in Jesus of Nazareth and then progresses to the Epiphany as he is gradually manifested to John the Baptist, to his disciples, to the magi and finally to us and to the whole world.

The Twelve Days of Christmas have roots in early Christian tradition, marking the period between the birth of Jesus and the visit of the Magi. The early church established this period as a time of celebration and reflection on the Incarnation and the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles. Christmas is not just about a baby in a manger but about how the God who promised to be with us comes to be with us in Jesus, our "Emmanuel, which means God is with us" (Mt. 1:23). God continues to be with us by dwelling in us and in our community, the Body of Christ.

During this blessed season, we are constantly reminded of God's love and desire to be with us so that we can share in the divine life and share this life with others. Celebrating the full Christmas Season provides us with a period of calm in which the spiritual meaning of the manifestation of Jesus, God with us, can be explored and celebrated.

Area Events

Trip to Croatia. Join Father Janusz on a trip to Croatia! Mark your calendar for June 15-26, 2026 (12 days and 10 nights). He will be visiting Medugorje, the site where visionaries first claimed to see the Blessed Mother in 1981. There will be time for meditation, praying, and Mass. Other cities visited will feature museums, national park, an abbey, a mosque and the beautiful coastline of the Adriatic Sea. For more information contact Father via email: frjktrips@gmail.com or call St. Therese Parish Office at (715) 359-2421.

St. Wenceslaus PCCW Drive Thru Soup Sale serving from 2 to 4pm. \$8/quart with dinner rolls. Soup options include: Chicken with Homemade Noodles, Potato and Sausage, Italian Meat Ball, and Beef Barley.



Marriage

Couples requesting the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage should contact the office at the time of engagement, at least six months prior to the anticipated date of marriage. If a couple wishes to be married as a registered parish member, they must actively participate in the faith (Sunday worship) and be a registered member of our parish at least 3 months prior to requesting the Sacrament of Marriage. Weddings are not celebrated during Lent.

Baptism

Parents may request the baptism of their infant at least two months prior to the anticipated date of baptism. Family should be members of our parish, they must actively participate in the faith (Sunday worship) and be a registered member of our parish. To request baptism, please call the parish office at (715) 824-3455.

Anointing of the Sick

If you or a loved one is in need of the Anointing Sacrament especially before a hospital stay or procedure - please contact the office.

United Prayers to Heaven Prayer Chain

If you, or anyone you know, is in need of prayers, please let us know. We will keep your name & prayer request confidential. Names are included only if you so desire.

Contacts for Prayer Chain

Laurie.....plhintz5@gmail.com
Darlene.....(715) 592-4443
Barb.....(715) 824-3649

Parish Staff

Office

Veronica Bruske(715) 824-3455
catholiccentral54406@gmail.com

Please send your ambo announcements into the office via email by 4:30pm Tuesday.

Parish Life Administrator

Ann Hemmy.....sjsmparishlife@gmail.com

DRE

Michelle Shulfer.....sjsmdre@gmail.com

Bulletin.....bulletininfo06@gmail.com

Please send your bulletin requests via email by 4:30pm Tuesday.

Church Councils

Pastoral Council

Cindi Borski SM
Justen Pacocha SM
Barb Gutschow SM
Judy Zinda SM
Michael Juris SJ
Michelle Shulfer SJ
Christine Thompson SJ

Finance Council

Mark Doll SM
Gilbert Patoka SM
Sandy Trzebiatowski SJ
Pat Kwiatkowski SJ

Committees Chairperson and Co-chairs

Family Life....Laura Gould

Sacred Worship....Judi Marquard | Barb Groholski

Social Concerns... Pat Zielinski | Laura Trzebiatowski-Przekurat