

Monthly Newsletter

✦ SAINT SEBASTIAN
CATHOLIC CHURCH



From the desk of Fr. Peter Patrick:

It's often said that time flies: I can't believe we're nearing the end of summer in just a few weeks and will soon welcome fall. The warm days of summer will soon fade, replaced by the subtle chill of autumn; we find ourselves at another transition in the rhythm of the year. The lazy days of vacations and leisurely gatherings give way to the routines of school and the busyness of fall activities. This change of seasons offers a valuable opportunity to pause and reflect on God's presence throughout it all.

Summer was a blessing. We thank God for the time spent with family and friends, moments of rest and renewal, and the blessings of a slower pace. Whether the summer was spent traveling or close to home, we hope to experience God's grace and provision in new ways. I hope you made good use of the summer holiday. My heart goes out to everyone affected by the floods. I pray for your quick recovery, even though I know it's not an easy transition.

Saying goodbye to summer also serves as a reminder that time is a gift from God. At the start of the third chapter of the book of Ecclesiastes, it states: "There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens." Eccl. 3:1. The end of one season prompts reflection on how time has been used. Has space been made for prayer, service, and study? Now is a perfect time to take a spiritual inventory and reconnect with the faith community.

The arrival of fall invites a new season of growth and ministry. The changing leaves and crisp air serve as a beautiful reminder of new life being prepared. With children going back to school, ministries resuming their

schedules, and new studies beginning, there is a **renewed** call to **action**. Let's use this time to **reconnect** and **serve**. Maybe God is inviting you to join a ministry, teach Sunday School, or volunteer with youth: gather in community. As schedules fill up, let's prioritize being fully present with one another.

On Saturday, September 13, St. Sebastian School alumni are encouraged to come back HOME for our ALL School Reunion. On Sunday, September 14, everyone is invited to our annual Outdoor Mass, now called SebsFest. It's a great way to reconnect with our Saint Sebastian community after a long summer break and to usher in the new academic year. Don't miss out on lots of food and fun. Seek and trust that even amid new routines and uncertainty, God's steadfast love never ceases.

The fall calendar is packed with chances for fellowship, learning, and service. I encourage you to explore upcoming events and find ways to get involved. Let us step into this new season with joyful anticipation for what God will do.

Let us pray for all the students returning to school and for their safety, for those who have already returned, as well as their teachers and staff. Thank you for being a member of St. Sebastian. Let us always remember and find comfort in the truth that God is good all the time; all the time, God is good! This steady belief in God's goodness should guide our work and interactions, reassuring us and keeping us connected to our faith in all that we do. See you at Mass.

May God bless you and your family this fall.

See you at Mass!

~ **Fr. Peter-Patrick**

In this newsletter you will find information about:

- KofC Brat Fry
- Catholic Class
- Accompanying New Catholics
- Volunteering with St. Vincent de Paul
- Faith Formation and Sacrament Preparation
- A Taste of Teosinte
- Sponsoring a Hymnal
- Parish Senior Lunch
- St. Sebastian School Reunion
- Sebsfest
- Buildings and Grounds Updates
- Fall Women's Retreat
- Delegation to Teosinte
- Friends of L'Arche Milwaukee
- St. Sebastian Choir Trip to Kenya
- Upcoming Canonizations
- Life Fair
- SEA Literacy
- The Welcome Group
- The Craft Group
- Spiritual Direction Opportunities
- Catholic Social Teaching



Knights of Columbus®

SAVE THE DATE: KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS BRAT FRY OCTOBER 11



Save the date for the
2nd Annual Knights of Columbus Brat Fry
to be held at St. Sebastian's on
October 11, from 4 - 6:30 pm.

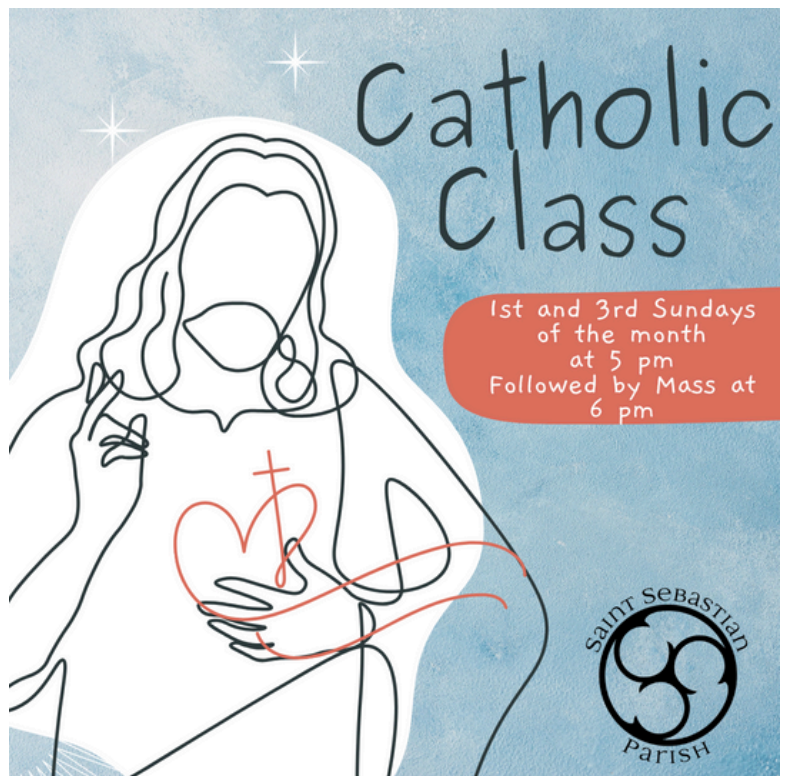
CATHOLIC CLASS!!

Introducing Catholic Class!

Are you interested in learning more about what it means to be Catholic? Are you ready to take the next steps toward becoming Catholic? Are you Catholic but feel a need to deepen your faith or a calling to walk with those who are new to the faith? Then this class is for you!

Saint Sebastian will offer Catholic Class on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at 5 pm, **beginning on September 7**, with the option of attending Mass together at 6 pm. Come find out what being Catholic is all about!

Contact **Jessica Quintanilla** at
jquintanilla@saintsebs.org for more info.



A CALL TO ACCOMPANY

Do you feel called to welcome others? Perhaps you've been looking for a way to give back to the church or meet new people? **Adult Formation is looking for volunteers to help with our Family baptism preparation and Adult Initiation processes.** Please **contact Jessica Quintanilla at jquintanilla@saintsebs.org** for more info. The first Catholic Class will be on Sunday, September 7, at 5:00 p.m.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL MEAL PROGRAM

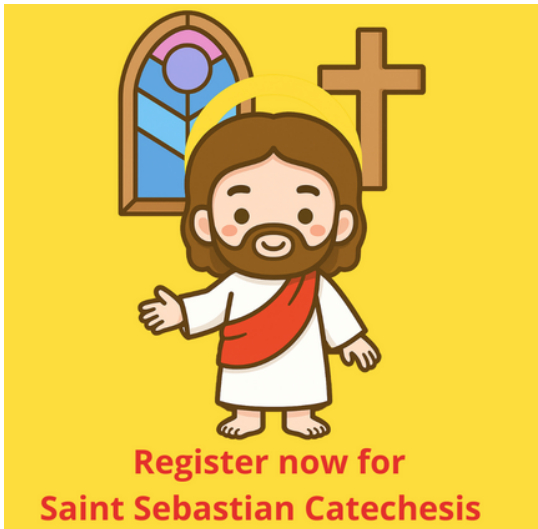


St. Sebastian will once again be helping with the **SVDP Meal Program** on **Friday, October 24**. **Volunteers are needed** to help cook or to serve the meal. Cooks meet in the church hall kitchen at 8 am, servers at 4 pm. Servers will load up the food to bring it down to All People's Church (2600 N. 2nd Street) to serve the meal.

Donations of apples/oranges, cookies/desserts, and lettuce for salad (bags or heads cut up and ready to go) are also appreciated and can be dropped off in the church hall kitchen anytime on Friday, October 24 before 4 pm.

For more information or to donate food or to volunteer **contact Phil Bielefeld at 414-559-0996 or pjb0469@gmail.com**. Monetary donations are accepted as well to help offset the rising cost of purchasing groceries.

Thank you to all of the cooks, servers, and donors who helped at the meal program on August 22 where we served 88 meals that evening with plenty of leftovers to feed more the following days that they were open. All who were served were very appreciative and thankful for our efforts.



FALL CATECHESIS BEGINS SOON

The Faith Formation team is ready to get children and youth registered for the coming catechetical season. Both catechesis classes for grades K-10th grade and sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation/First Eucharist (2nd graders) and Confirmation (grades 11 & 12) will be available on our parish website at www.saintsebs.org. Please contact Margaret Lee, Joe Sheehan or Morgan Frank with any questions.

We are also looking for interested catechists. If interested, please let us know by reaching out. More details will be available soon through social media and Mass announcements.

A TASTE OF TEOSINTE AT SEBSFEST



A taste of Teosinte will be available (for free) at SebsFest on Sunday, September 14 after the Outdoor Mass. If you have ever wondered what life is like in our sister parish of Teosinte, El Salvador, here is a chance to "taste and see." **Fresh and hot pupusas** (with meat or vegetarian) will be available to sample. Information about our upcoming delegation to El Salvador in January 2026 will also be available. The deadline for delegation applications is fast approaching; in fact it is September 15. However, you may want to learn about ways you can support the delegates even if you are not able to go yourself.

**SCAM
ALERT!**

Scam Warning Reminder

If you get an email or text that looks like it's from Fr Peter Patrick BEWARE. He will **never** send you an email or text asking for money or gift cards or making the request URGENT. Scammers are praying on your good intentions. **Do not hesitate to contact the parish house for verification, 414-453-1061 or email jperleberg@saintsebs.org** first before taking any action. Protect yourself from these unscrupulous people.

HYMNAL PLACARDS AVAILABLE!



Have you seen the new Gather IV hymnals? They are beautiful and filled with outstanding music! **We invite you to purchase a placard to be placed inside the front cover a hymnal in honor of or in memory of someone special.** Forms are available at the kiosk in the Gathering Space. You can also order your placard directly on our website! **Each placard is \$25** and those funds will go toward purchasing additional hymnals. We are grateful for your support! To donate, visit [here](#).

SENIOR LUNCH

This summer's Senior Lunch kick-off was well attended and full of energy around bringing back this beloved ministry. Those that participated gave lots of fantastic suggestions as to what they would like to see the ministry accomplish. There will be opportunities for special presentations and social activities, as well informational articles in the monthly newsletter. Please watch for more details this fall. **Anyone wanting to participate and stay informed about senior ministry, should send an email or give a call to Margaret Lee, at mlee@saintsebs.org** as she begins to create a communication list for participants. **Save the date for our next senior lunch, to be held on Tuesday, September 23** in the St. Sebastian church hall. **Parishioners and friends, 50 and up, are all welcome to join us. Lunch begins at Noon!**



ST. SEBASTIAN ALL-SCHOOL REUNION



Calling All St. Sebastian School Alumni!

Get ready for a weekend of music, memories, and magic at the St. Sebastian ALL-School Reunion!

When: Saturday, September 13 - Sunday, September 14, 2025

Where: St. Sebastian School, Milwaukee

Saturday's Schedule of Events

4:30 pm: Prayer Service at Church

5 - 9 pm: Food, Drinks, Live Music, School Tours, Memorabilia, Photo Slideshow, 50/50 Drawing

9 pm - ?: Vliet Street Pub Crawl

Sunday's Schedule of Events

10 am: Outdoor Mass (on the school playground)

11 am - 1 pm: SebsFest

Whether you graduated last year or decades ago, come relive the good times and make new ones with fellow alumni from across the generations!

- Recall the beauty and sacredness of St. Sebastian Church with a prayer service to welcome back alumni (Saturday)
- Rock out to live music from the always-awesome Hot Off the Grill band (Saturday)
- Treat your taste buds with a variety of food trucks offering something for everyone (Saturday)
- Take a walk down memory lane with school tours (Saturday)
- Reminisce with decades of photos, memorabilia, and more! (Saturday)
- Participate Outdoor Mass on the playground (Sunday)
- Enjoy food, activities and fun with the Sebs community at SebsFest (Sunday)

Bring your stories, your school spirit, and your appetite—we'll supply the fun, flavor, and flashbacks. This is your chance to reconnect, rediscover, and celebrate everything that makes St. Sebastian School such a special place.

We can't wait to welcome you home! **Please RSVP at <https://saintsebs.org/events/all-school-alumni-reunion>** so we can plan accordingly. **Questions? Reach out to Maria Watson at mwatson@saintsebs.org.**



SEBSFEST

Sunday, September 14

10 AM: MASS

11 AM - 1 PM: SEBSFEST

FEATURING

LIVE MUSIC • GAMES •
FOOD AND DRINKS AVAILABLE FOR SALE •
ROASTED CORN • BOUNCE HOUSE •
50/50 DRAWING • MINISTRY INFO

SAINT SEBASTIAN
PARKING LOT

SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER OR
BRING A SIDE DISH HERE:
[BIT.LY/SEBSFEST2025](https://bit.ly/sebsfest2025)

COME CELEBRATE
ALL THINGS SEBS!

Limited
seating
available.
B.Y.O.C



BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS UPDATE

Cool the School

Electrical conduit was run to 30 locations during the 2024 window/façade project along with a new service panel that houses the circuit breakers for the classroom AC units. (The 4 remaining locations were installed this summer). Frigidaire brand room air conditioners were purchased directly from the manufacturer and delivered in June. Staff Electric Co. completed installation of the wiring/electrical outlets in July. Bryan Kirkpatrick and Rocky Marcoux built PVC enclosures/mounting systems and installed 34 air conditioners in the classrooms, library and 2 small offices in the admin area. Tom Ticcioni and Carl Sherer drilled the holes in the counters/shelving units and installed wire grommets to accommodate the power cords. A separate meter to monitor energy consumption will allow us to accurately track the cost of electricity used to power the AC units.

Masonry Restoration East & West Elevations

Recently the Finance Council, Pastoral Council and Pastor approved contracts for the remaining construction work that is being funded by the current LOA capital campaign. Included are a new floor membrane for the bell tower cupola, extending the interior bell tower scaffolding/stairs to reach the cupola and the restoration of the arches, steel lintel beams, coping stones and tuckpointing of the East and West elevations of the church similar to the recent work on the south elevation. These projects will begin this fall, pause for the winter months and finish in 2026. Upon completion of this phase, the entire exterior masonry of the main church building will have been inspected, tuckpointed, rebuilt where necessary and cleaned. This restoration represents a significant investment in the longevity of this magnificent structure. Landscape restoration will take place upon completion of the exterior masonry work in 2026.

2025 Stop the Auction

The school playground/ parking lot was patched, seal coated and striped in August. The balance of the funding (approximately \$7,000) will be used to install a bank of switches to control the church hall lighting in lieu of using the circuit breakers.

Church Sound System Replacement

The contract has been executed and components have been ordered by our contractor. Work will begin upon delivery of components and is expected to last 6-10 days. The goal is to try to complete in 6 days or less in order to limit any impact on services but that will be determined by site conditions. The goal is to have the system installed prior to the Christmas season. Patrick Schley, Michelle Klotz, Bryan Kirkpatrick, Fr. Peter Patrick and Rocky Marcoux have been keeping the project moving.

Recent Roof Issues

The recent deluge of water plaguing the metro area also impacted our campus. We had some water infiltration in 1 lower-level classroom which resulted in some contents damage. The school roof had no observable leaks. The Gathering Space had low volume leaks in multiple areas that were previously known. The church had multiple low volume leaks at areas also previously identified tied to the cupola above the altar and/or the flat roofs under the church RTU units and the flat roof adjacent to the SE entrance to the church. More significant leaks occurred at the intersection of the west wall and the bell tower. This is not a new leak but was exacerbated by the high volume of rain. This leak will be remedied upon completion of the west elevation masonry restoration project. The cupola leak above the altar will be fixed this fall. The remaining roof leaks will continue until we move forward with the roof replacement work funded by LOA II and are priority #1 (along with replacing the HVAC units) in the updated Master Campus Renovation Plan.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS UPDATE CONTINUED



2025 Stop the Auction Playground/Parking Lot Improvements



BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS UPDATE CONTINUED

South Elevation of Church Before Restoration



South Elevation Restored





FALL 2020 WOMEN'S RETREAT

Trusting God's Grace: Becoming Transformed

You are invited to step away from the busyness of life and deepen your faith through reflection, prayer and shared meals. Come be refreshed, inspired, and transformed by God's grace!



Friday, October 17 – Saturday October 18, 2025

Redemptorist Retreat Center

1800 N. Timber Trail Lane

Oconomowoc, WI 53060

Redemptoristretreat.org

Trusting God's Grace: Becoming Transformed

Transformation happens in the mundane and through miracles. Tiny shifts in awareness that allow us to open to God's work in our lives. Grace is found, trust develops, and we are transformed right where we are as our relationship with God deepens and unfolds. In this workshop, we'll explore the obvious places of transformation & growth while, at the same time, revealing the quiet work done in the shadows. Our wholeness isn't defined by duality but by the both/and of life. There is the external change that we choose and the internal transformation that finds us in our dark days when we honor the Sacred within us.



Our Facilitator

Julia Gray is a Spiritual Director & Supervisor, Leadership Coach, and non-profit consultant specializing in organizational change. Her focus is on the messy middle of our lives.

She believes we create our HOME, within, in alignment with Spirit. We are all invited to listen deeply to the movement of God in our lives and develop a relationship for Divine expression through our human self. Julia will help guide us on our sacred journey as we navigate the Wilderness WITHIN! The unknown Mystery is the precise place where God's Grace is found.

Full Retreat: Friday, October 17 from 4 pm through Saturday, October 18

concluding with Mass at 4:30 pm

❖ Overnight cost: \$220 (all private rooms)

Saturday Only Option: Check in at 7:15am, breakfast at 8 am

❖ One day cost: \$75

Use the QR code to access the St. Sebastian website for more details.

Registration is open from August 18 through September 22



2026 Delegation to Our Sister Community of Teosinte

Would you like to know more about the people of Teosinte that we pray for each week during Mass? Have you dreamed about making a meaningful pilgrimage?

You are invited to join other parish members on delegation to Teosinte, El Salvador from January 14 to January 21, 2026. This is an incredible opportunity to deepen our parish's relationship with our friends in Teosinte and experience their vibrant faith and culture firsthand.



"Often times people go on mission trips to build something or provide a service. People traveling to and from Teosinte are building something more fragile, yet more enduring, than any building. We are building relationships. Our work is driven by the commitment to sustain a reciprocal relationship in which we all learn from each other." - Seb's delegate Beth

This will be a life changing experience.

Online applications for this delegation are being accepted now through September 15th at

<https://www.share-elsalvador.org/sistering-delegations.html>

The Share-El Salvador website has additional delegation information.





Friends of L'Arche **MILWAUKEE**

Friends of L'Arche Milwaukee is a group of people with and without disabilities who share life at monthly gatherings and quarterly community outings. It's a growing community with a newly formed Board of Directors, recently achieved non-profit status, and the dream of bringing a L'Arche home or two to the Milwaukee area. It's different than other models where people with disabilities are considered "clients." With L'Arche, everyone works together, achieves together, and celebrates together.

WOW! is the theme of our **3rd annual walk – Walk Our Way**. We invite everyone to support our mission of creating a less lonely world for people with disabilities. **The Walk Our Way event will be held at St. Sebastian on September 28, following 10:30 Mass.** Join us! We will start with a shared lunch. Please bring a sandwich and a dish to share that can be dropped off in the Multipurpose Room before Mass. Following lunch, we'll walk!

Ruby, the restored VW van Sippie Hippie Mobile Espresso Bar will be parked outside after both morning Masses. Owner Chris Gagne is a board member and supporter of individuals with disabilities. Come meet some of our group!

Everyone is always welcome to join us for **our monthly gatherings on third Sundays, at St. Matthew's, 1615 Wauwatosa Avenue from 3:30-5 pm.**

For more information about Friends of L'Arche Milwaukee, our community gatherings, the walk, or ways to support our group, **contact parishioner Diane Dray 414-315-0947 or 4drays@wi.rr.com.**

I have said to anyone who asks that it was a time in my Jesuit formation I most clearly saw a glimpse of the Kingdom of God: where all are welcome, all are celebrated, where meals, tears, laughter, and affection are shared with ease and equal measure.

-Fr. Matt Wooters of his time at L'Arche Heartland



ST. SEBASTIAN CHOIR TRIP TO KENYA

Have you heard the exciting news? **The St. Sebastian Choir is headed to Kenya**—and you are invited to be part of this unforgettable journey! Whether you're a longtime member of the adult choir or simply joining the "Kenya Choir" for this special tour, we welcome spouses and significant others to come along.

After much thought and prayer, we've chosen to set our sights on **August 2027** for departure. This gives us the gift of time: time to raise funds, fine-tune our musical and outreach plans, and build a team ready to share faith, culture, and music across continents.

Imagine celebrating Mass in vibrant Nairobi, going on safari, performing in concert, exploring the beauty of Kisumu and Lake Victoria, and diving into rich Kenyan traditions and flavors. The estimated cost of \$5,000 covers your airfare, housing, in-country transportation, and two meals a day, as well as entry into planned tours.

Spots are still open, and we'd love for you to be part of this life-changing journey. **Reach out to Michelle Klotz, Director of Liturgy and Music, to express your interest or ask questions.**

Together, let's make this dream a reality for our choir, our parish, and our brothers and sisters in Kenya. Your prayers, support, and presence will make all the difference.

HELP BUILD THE ST. SEBASTIAN ARCHIVES AND YOUR FAMILY STORY

In 2019, a dedicated group of volunteers developed the St. Sebastian Archive Team, a.k.a. the A-Team, a ministry that gives attention to the who, what, and when of parishioners and alumni alike. The A-Team has categorized and systemized thousands of documents and images into a manageable and accessible format.

It is evident that the stories of parish involvement, like small newspapers of yesteryear, give one a window into the life of family members. Times when young'un's were busy attending school, passionate parents invested in their child's school community, while others whose children had grown or joined because of the vitality of the parish, dedicated themselves to a lifetime of service to their home parish.

Parish and school resources are rich in filling in the family story gaps, but few parishes are able to develop a system that is secure, yet story filled managed by volunteers. Privacy protections are in place to confirm a researchers' identity, and the archive team, much like librarians, conduct the actual research.

How can you help us build our story?

What parish documentation or pictures can you pass on from your family archives? By dropping off your files, binders, or boxes of related materials, you will help us build our resources.

Be a parish archivist. We welcome folks who love history to lend a hand. Onsite and 'home' projects available. School is back in session. What a great time for an adult history lesson, one that focuses on Sebs history, and all that made us who we are today.

Sebs archives is always looking for a few more history lovers to add to our A-Team. All types of projects await your help. Contact Mary at sebsarchives@saintsebs.org.

How can we help you build your story?

By submitting your family name(s), years of membership or alumni years, and what information you are researching to sebsarchives@saintsebs.org we will do our best to provide you with family history information we may have in our files.

UPCOMING CANONIZATIONS

SEPTEMBER 7, 2025

On **Sunday, September 7, 2025**, Pope Leo XIV will officially canonize two beloved young lay Catholics:

- **Carlo Acutis**, often called the first Millennial saint.
- **Pier Giorgio Frassati**, a passionate advocate for the poor and an adventurous spirit.

This joint ceremony will take place in St. Peter's Square and marks the first canonizations of Pope Leo XIV's pontificate.

Who They Were — and Why They're Being Canonized



Carlo Acutis (1991–2006)

- Born in London, raised in Milan, Carlo was a teenager who demonstrated remarkable devotion to the **Eucharist** and used his computer skills to promote faith online.
- He created a website cataloging Eucharistic miracles, cleverly combining his digital talents with deep spirituality. A physical representation of the **Eucharistic Miracles** was presented at St. Sebastian earlier this year.
- The Knights of Columbus council at St. Sebastian is named after this Saint.
- Diagnosed with leukemia, he died at age 15. Two miracles have been attributed to his intercession, fulfilling the Church's requirement for sainthood.
- He is widely beloved by young Catholics, who resonate with his joyful faith and tech-savvy evangelism.

Why he stands out: Carlo shows how authentic holiness can look familiar and modern—and how technology can be a powerful tool for evangelization.



Pier Giorgio Frassati (1901–1925)

- Hailing from Turin, Italy, Pier Giorgio came from a prominent family but lived simply and generously, joining the **Dominican Third Order, Catholic Action, and St. Vincent de Paul Society**.
- A lover of mountains and nature, he was also fervently dedicated to serving the poor and the suffering.
- He died at age 24 from polio—possibly contracted while caring for others. Beatified in 1990, his canonization has been eagerly anticipated for years.

Why he stands out: Pier Giorgio bridges faith, action, and joy—his motto “to the heights” encourages youth to strive for spiritual and moral peaks.

Voices from the Saints: Their Words

Carlo Acutis

- “People who place themselves before the sun get a tan; people who place themselves before the Eucharist become saints.”
- “The Eucharist is my highway to heaven.”
- “Find God and you will find the meaning of your life.”

Pier Giorgio Frassati

- “I urge you with all the strength of my soul to approach the Eucharist Table as often as possible. Feed on this Bread of the Angels from which you will draw the strength to fight inner struggles.”
- “The higher we go, the better we shall hear the voice of Christ.”
- “In a world gone astray from God there is no peace, but it also lacks charity, which is true and perfect love.”

Closing Thought:

These canonizations remind us that sanctity isn't confined to one era or personality—it can emerge through digital creativity or mountain-top adventures, provided the heart is set on service and devotion.

CELEBRATE THE GIFT OF LIFE



On **October 5, which is Respect Life Sunday**, Friends for Life members will be hosting a **Life Fair** at St. Sebastian for all our Parish Families (Kid, Teens and Adults) from St. Sebastian and St. Catherine's. It will take place at **St. Sebastian Church after the 8 and 10:30 am Masses and prior to the 6 pm Mass**. Life Fair provides a display that promotes God's gift of Life, in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church. It is a Family Event where parents are encouraged to attend with their children so they can be part of the teaching about Life issues. It includes educational posters, literature, games, prizes and giveaways related to respecting life across the lifespan. Our intent is to celebrate life, educate and motivate families and individuals to uphold the dignity of Life. It is a free event put on by Catholic lay people from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee (the Life Brigade) and recommended by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Office for Respect Life Ministry. **The Multipurpose Room and Adult Formation Room (just off the Gathering Space) will be utilized for the display of the Life Fair.**

Further details and information will be available at the Friends for Life table at Sebsfest on Sept 14, and in the bulletin and in our weekly updates for the parish prior to Respect Life Sunday on Oct. 5.

HUMAN CONCERNS MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT: SEA LITERACY

This month's St. Sebastian Human Concerns highlighted ministry is tutoring with the **Southeast Asia Literacy Project (SEA Literacy)**. Sebs parishioners have been supporting this important ministry since 2017, and SEA Literacy always needs more volunteer tutors!

SEA Literacy is a program of weekly tutoring for refugee students, mostly from Myanmar (formerly Burma) and more recently from Afghanistan, as well. The students range from Kindergarten to University levels, and tutors work one-on-one with students assisting them with homework, ESL (English as a second language) activities, and developing social skills. In the process, the tutors are also enriched by learning about the students' culture and their interests, talents and personal stories.

The Catholic Social Teaching principle that our parish has chosen as the focus for the upcoming year is Call to Family, Community, and Participation. Tutoring refugee students is a direct fulfillment of the Catholic social teaching of the Call to Family, Community, and Participation by actively integrating vulnerable newcomers into the fabric of their new society. The teaching emphasizes that the human person is sacred and social, and that the organization of society directly affects human dignity and the ability to thrive within a community. By offering a welcoming, one-on-one relationship, a volunteer tutor extends the bonds of family and fellowship beyond immediate kin, easing the acculturation stress and isolation that refugee students and their families often experience. This act of service provides academic tools and language skills necessary for students to fully participate in school and public life, ensuring they are not "passively abandoned as if they were non-members of the human race," as highlighted in Economic Justice for All. Through this process, tutoring facilitates the flourishing of the entire community, enriching it with the gifts and resilience of newcomers and working toward the common good.

Tutoring takes place at the Neighborhood House in Milwaukee on Tuesday evenings (6-8 pm) and/or Saturday mornings (10-Noon). More information, volunteer application and donation link can be found on their website at www.sealmke.org. For more information about the St. Sebastian participation in this ministry, feel free to **contact Chris Kometer at cmeter@sbcglobal.net or anyone on the Human Concerns Committee.**

ST. SEBASTIAN WELCOME GROUP

Join the **St. Sebastian Welcome Group** as we explore what it means to show up with courage in our communities—especially for those who identify as LGBTQ+. Inspired by the Harvard Business Review article "Building Everyday Bravery," we'll reflect on how small acts of bravery—like sharing your story, standing up for others, or simply being present—can transform lives and foster support while retaining our Catholic identity. The next meeting will be led by parishioner Jesús Villa, a human resources leader and equity and inclusion advocate. In addition to having served as Administrator of the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's Equal Rights Division, Jesús has helped establish numerous employee affinity groups, and is a sought-after speaker and trainer on equity and inclusion topics. He currently serves as Executive Sponsor of the Wisconsin Department of Administration's Rainbow Affinity Group supporting LGBTQ+ staff. **The next meeting will be on Tuesday, October 7 at 7 pm in the Adult Formation Room.**

WELCOME TO OUR NEW PARISHIONERS!

We warmly welcome all those who joined our Saint Sebastian parish family in August!

- **John Foley and Melanie Lawder and son Felix**
- **Emily Kuebker**
- **Gabriel Odunga**

≡Welcome≡

MONTHLY CRAFT GROUP MEETINGS

The **Craft Group** meets on a monthly basis on **the first Tuesday of each Month at 7:00 PM in the Multipurpose Room**. For September we will be meeting on **September 2nd**. This group gathers to make items to be sold at the Holly Berry Boutique Luncheon, which will take place on December 6, 2025. So far this year we have made Noodle Bead Bracelets, Epsom Salt Snow People, and Painted Glass Ornaments. For the month of September we will be making garlands with dried fruits. All materials will be supplied. Come and release your creativity in making a bracelet or two for the Boutique. It is a great time to spend with your fellow parishioners. **All are welcome.** Please check out the crafts that we will be working on in the coming months pictured.

September 2nd Laura
Fruit Garlands



October 7th Jackie
Twisted Wire Earrings



November 4th JoAnn
Bows & Ribbon Swag



November 18th Finish Up

December 5th Set Up

December 6th Boutique

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION AT ST. SEBASTIAN

As Catholics, we believe that God is present and active within our lives and yet, it's all too easy to miss. Spiritual direction offers an opportunity for you to intentionally slow down and notice that which reveals itself as Sacred within the concrete particulars of your days. In this paying attention, you can begin to savor and clarify your awareness of the way in which the Spirit is moving within you and within your world and thus deepen your relationship with the Divine Mystery.

Spiritual direction is also a place in which you can consider how your upbringing, your faith tradition, the joys and sorrows of your personal history, and your present-day reality connect you to the Sacred. It can be a place where you can navigate transitions, grieve, and discern. It's a place where you can question and engage and discover. As a monthly spiritual practice, spiritual direction seeks to illuminate and enliven this relationship between you and All That Is, thus distinguishing it from counseling, therapy or life coaching.

A spiritual director offers the experience of "holy listening" in that it takes you where you are at. Grace, healing, and growth are sought through these times of active listening, reflection, and prayer during the session and in the days that follow. Consider this an invitation to explore this as a spiritual practice for yourself.

The "Spiritual Reflection Room," on the second floor of the Parish House, hosts spiritual directors trained in various lineages (Jesuit, Franciscan, and Dominican, for example) to meet with individuals desiring to explore their own unique sacred journeys. These one-on-one sessions are generally scheduled once a month and last for about an hour. Compensation, intake information, and meeting times are negotiated individually between you and your chosen spiritual director.

The following parishioners are trained guides who offer spiritual direction here at the Saint Sebastian Parish House. Please contact via email to explore the opportunity to work together.

Julia Gray - juliagraylange@gmail.com

Deacon Jim Matthias - jmatthias@saintsebs.org

Rhonda Matthias - ListeningPostMKE.Rhonda@gmail.com

Nicki Nelson - nicki@nickinelson.com

Leah Sealey - leahsealey@hotmail.com

If you would like to explore spiritual direction outside of our parish, please check out www.mkespiritualdirectors.com. In 2019, Nicki and Leah helped establish this peer group of local spiritual directors. The group's website was established so that seekers could easily access the profiles of providers in the Milwaukee area. Currently nearly 30 directors are profiled on the site. Along with their contact information, each profile shares the director's background, type of training, and specific areas of interest in their practice.

Please feel free to contact Leah Sealey if you have any questions, leahsealey@hotmail.com.

HIGHLIGHTING OUR CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING: CALL TO FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND PARTICIPATION

Each year, our Human Concerns Committee selects one principle of Catholic Social Teaching to highlight. This year, we turn to **Family, Community, and Participation**.

The Church reminds us that every human person is both sacred and social. God created us to live in relationship with one another. At the heart of society is the family, rooted in the lifelong marriage of one man and one woman. When marriages are strong and families are supported, communities flourish and the dignity of each person is upheld.

This principle also calls us to recognize the duty each of us has to work for the common good. Every person should be able to participate fully in social, economic, and political life—especially the poor and vulnerable.

Much of the information we share here comes from the **Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC)**, the public policy voice of Wisconsin's Catholic bishops. From the time of the Apostles, the Church has sought to relate the Gospel to the conditions of each age. Inspired by Jesus's call to serve the hungry, welcome the stranger, and care for the sick and vulnerable (cf. Mt 25), the bishops urge lawmakers to shape policies that strengthen families and protect human dignity.

Some key areas the WCC highlights include:

- **Encourage and strengthen marriage.** Lifelong marriage is essential to the stability and prosperity of families and society.
- **Respect and promote family life.** Families need the flexibility and resources to care for their children, especially in times of illness, loss, or transition.
- **Protect children.** Every child deserves safety, dignity, and love. We must safeguard them from abuse, neglect, poverty, and anything that harms their natural growth.
- **Support adoption and foster care.** When families cannot remain together, children deserve supportive, loving homes and the care needed to thrive.
- **Uphold parental rights in education.** Parents are the first teachers of their children and should have the freedom to choose the educational path best suited to their family.
- **Promote strong schools and responsible formation.** Education—academic, moral, and spiritual—prepares children for full participation in society.
- **Accompany veterans and farmers.** Families who serve our nation and those who sustain our rural communities deserve ongoing support and respect.

As a parish, we will reflect on this principle throughout the year and look for ways to put it into practice. Together, let us commit ourselves to building a community where families are strengthened, children are cherished, and all people are able to participate in the life we share.

For more on Catholic social teaching and the WCC's public policy priorities, visit faithfulcitizenship.org

First Reconciliation & First Eucharist



St. Catherine Parish
St. Sebastian Parish

2025 - 2026

Updated July 28, 2025

- Process Details
- Schedules
- Registration Form

Sacramental Preparation

The preparation for Reconciliation and Eucharist (often called First Communion) is family-centered and shared between St. Catherine and St. Sebastian parishes. We invite children who have completed at least one year of Faith Formation, either through our parish schools or faith formation programs, to begin the formal process of preparing for Reconciliation and then Eucharist.

The sacramental process has three major elements:

1. Lessons and example **learned at home** within the family,
2. Activities and lessons **shared with other families** preparing to celebrate the sacraments, and
3. **Formal lessons** related to the sacraments which are part of the parish or school faith formation programs.

Family involvement is integral to sacramental preparation. Parents and families have an essential part in the preparation of children for sacraments:

- They make regular participation in parish liturgy and sacraments part of their family life.
- They model faith and religious practice for their children.
- They assist in the activities and lessons related to sacraments.
- They help determine whether their child is ready to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church.

First Reconciliation Preparation – Fall 2025

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a blessing and gift of God's peace. As sons and daughters of a loving God, we are all invited to celebrate the healing grace that is offered through this sacrament.

Reconciliation is a powerful example of God's presence in our lives. Jesus taught us through parables such as the Good Shepherd and the Prodigal Son that God longs for our presence and is always waiting for and welcoming us when we lose sight of God's way.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation grows out of the act of communal reconciliation we practice each Sunday at Mass. In this sacrament we come to God with the knowledge that we sin, that our sin hurts our community and ourselves, and that God is anxious to forgive and heal any broken bonds. Our emphasis on the family's role in reconciliation grows out of the reality that it is within the home that most of us learn to love, to forgive, and to be forgiven.



First Eucharist Preparation – Spring 2026

The celebration of Eucharist is at the heart of who we are and what we believe as Catholics. Eucharist teaches us who we are and what we should become. The process through which our children come to the Table and partake in the Body and Blood of Christ is both a parish and family celebration. This “food for the journey” unites us in many ways with Christ and those who share our faith.



The Sacrament of Eucharist is an intimate communion with Christ and with those who share our table. It is also a sign for us that we are all servants to one another.

Children who celebrate this sacrament are most often in 2nd grade and are at least seven years old. The parish communities of St. Catherine and St. Sebastian invite children who have completed at least one year of faith formation, either in the parish schools or a faith formation program, and who have celebrated Reconciliation, to begin preparation for First Eucharist. *It is the policy of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee that children preparing for First Eucharist must first prepare for and celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.*

Registration for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

Families who wish to have their children celebrate Reconciliation and Eucharist are asked to follow these steps:

- **Complete the Reconciliation and Eucharist registration.**
 - ★ Sunday Faith Formation & Sacramental Preparation ([click HERE to register](#)) **OR**
 - ★ Sacramental Preparation only ([click HERE to register](#)), if attending a parish day school
 - ★ If your child was baptized at St. Sebastian or St. Catherine, we can verify it internally.
 - ★ If your child was baptized at any other parish, please attach a copy of the Baptismal Certificate in the registration form or send a scanned copy via email.
 - ★ If you need assistance with registration, please contact Patrick Schley at pschley@saintsebs.org or 414.453.1061 x149.
 - ★ *N.B.: There is no cost to receive any of the Sacraments. The parishes do ask that families cover the fees for materials, administrative costs, etc. We do not keep children from Faith Formation due to financial needs. If you have a financial concern, please contact Joe Sheehan (jsheehan@saintsebs.org) about options and scholarships.*
- Participate in Sunday Mass regularly as a family.
- Participate in faith formation in either our parish Catholic schools or a faith formation program.
- Attend the two orientation sessions (Fall and Spring), at which all materials will be distributed.
- As a family, work through the sacramental preparation book and complete the review pages.
- Attend the Parent/Guardian & Child programs together.

2025 – 2026 Reconciliation and Eucharist Preparation

St. Sebastian & St. Catherine Parishes

(All events held at St. Sebastian unless noted)

First Reconciliation Preparation:

Meetings for Children and Parents/Guardians

Orientation

Sunday, September 28 (9 am) or Tuesday, September 30 (6 pm)

Formation Session

Sunday, October 26 (9 a.m.) or Tuesday, October 28 (6 p.m.)

Reconciliation Retreat & Mass

Sunday, November 23 (8 am – 11 am) at St. Catherine

Reconciliation Service

Tuesday, December 9 (6 pm at St. Sebastian Parish) or
Saturday, December TBD (at St. Catherine Parish)

First Eucharist Preparation:

Meetings for Children and Parents/Guardians

Orientation

Sunday, January 11 (9 am) or Tuesday, January 13 (6 pm)

Formation Session

Sunday, February 8 (9 am) or Tuesday, February 10 (6 pm)

Formation Session

Sunday, March 8 (9 am) or Tuesday, March 10 (6 pm)

First Eucharist Retreat

Sunday, March 22 (8:30 am – 11:30 am)

First Eucharist Liturgies

Sunday, April 26 (9 am at St. Catherine Parish) or
Sunday, May 3 (10:30 am at St. Sebastian Parish)

For ongoing updates, stay connected to www.saintsebs.org and [our Facebook page](#).

If you have any questions, please contact Joe Sheehan (Child Sacramental Minister) at jshcehan@saintsebs.org.

