

Assumption Church

Lenten Newsletter 2026

A Lenten Note From Father Don

Dear Parishioners, "We adore you, O Christ, and we and praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world." This refrain introduces us to each of the Station of the Cross, a Lenten Devotion. I grew up as an altar server, serving at the Stations of the Cross for many years. I admit that I particularly enjoyed lighting the charcoal for the incensing as the gunpowder would hiss as it burned around the small charcoal briquettes. But most importantly, as we reflect on the Passion of Christ we become acutely aware of the immense love and tremendous sacrifice Our Lord made for us sinners. I encourage you to commit yourself to joining us for this Devotion as we journey into Lent.



Member Spotlight



Helen Theis, 86, is a lifelong member of Assumption Parish and has been married to Francis (Fritz) Theis for nearly 65 years.

Together they have been blessed with 10 children, 11 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. They've also endured the heartbreak of losing a son and daughter. Through it all, Helen has navigated life with grace, strong faith, and a good sense of humor. Helen received all her sacraments at Assumption Church, including her marriage – which took place on a Tuesday. Why a Tuesday? Because it was a no school day at Assumption, which meant the church basement and kitchen was available. The dinner and supper were served in Assumption basement, the reception was held at home. Efficient, practical and very Helen! She attended the original Assumption parochial school through fifth grade, then moved to the new Assumption parochial school where all her teachers were nuns. She also witnessed the passing of Father Gruenes while he was helping to build the new parochial school.

When asked what has kept her connected to the parish, Helen simply says: Involvement. Her dedication shines through her many contributions. She taught preschool (ages 3-4) for 30 years, taught 4th grade religion for several years, and cook for bishops during confirmation visits at both St Peter's and Assumption Church's. Helen was instrumental in starting the adoration hour, she has been a member of the Christian Mothers and Assumption Guild. Helen was the cook at the TTT Summer Campgrounds for 25 years. Helen also has been the funeral lunch coordinator for the last 10 years.

Her faith has been her anchor through life's challenges. Her advice to the parish family is simple but powerful: "Put God first, and you can handle anything".

And of course, Helen knows how to have fun too. She once belonged to a knitting group affectionately known as the "So and Sews Ladies". This group also served as a support group, being several members had lost love ones in their family.

Helen's life is a beautiful blend of faith, family, service, and fun, and Assumption is better because of her.

Get to Know Your Pastor

What are you most looking forward to in retirement? I am most looking forward to continuing to celebrate the Sacraments of the Church minus the administrative responsibilities. I am also looking forward to spending more time with family and friends.

If you could travel to anywhere in the world, where would you go? I would like to travel back to Switzerland and take the train into the Alps. In 2027, if my health allows me I am hoping to take the Canadian Rail across Canada.

Favorite Hymn: Only a Shadow of Your Love for Me

Favorite Church Holiday: Easter... hearing the congregation sing, Jesus Christ is Risen Today!

Sacraments Celebrated (December- February)



Baptisms



Wyatt Clay Meyer
(son of Ryan & Abby)



Preparing for Marriage



Look Who's New!

The Assumption Church
welcomes new members:
Kristine Knisley Family
Avon Vossen

The Assumption
Church also welcomes
new members:
Cory & Kristen Salzl
Family

† Remember in Your Prayers

† Grace Gruenes (11/14/25) † Lawrence Wirtfeld (11/18/25)
† Mildred Wolf (11/26/25) † Rodney Salzl (12/16/25)
† Chloe Cutten (1/26/26)

Dear God, we remember all our loved after their passing. May their memory bring peace to our hearts. We thank you for the time we shared with them and ask for healing for our hearts. We entrust them to Your loving care, granting them eternal rest and welcoming them into Your light. We long to be reunited with them one day. Amen.



Youth Ministry

Dear Parish Families,

December and January tend to be the time of year where there's less happening in youth ministry, because we want families to spend time together, and it's a little early to advertise for summer events. We did have a youth night in December, but due to a rescheduled sporting event, it wasn't well attended. On January 17th, we celebrated the Feast Day of St. Anthony the Great with about 25 students by an all-nighter at St. Anthony. Students were able to have their fill of sugar before Lent starts.

During Lent we have two youth nights planned. February 23rd is focusing on fostering intimacy with Jesus with guest speaker Sarah Kostick. She works at the University of MN and has been a speaker the MN Catholic Homeschool Conference and has been on multiple podcasts. On March 26th, the topic getting rid of attachment to material things, so we can focus on Jesus. Renowned speaker, Fr. Augustine Wetta, will be giving his talk via video call to our students. We will also have a breakfast and silent auction at St. Anthony to support students attending summer camps and retreats on April 12th. I'm already getting some great donations and can't wait to start sharing what will be on the table come March.

During Lent, I'll be hosting students bi-weekly for small groups to give students an idea of what groups like our Bona Fide group is like. The hope is to connect with students from both locations that may not feel up to coming to youth nights or Bona Fide on a regular basis.

I also need your help to encourage students that you know personally to attend Steubenville this summer. Our numbers are looking lower than normal, and if you think Steubenville is important, students in your life should know that they would have your support. In general, students need to feel loved and supported in what they do, especially regarding their faith. I appreciate all the help and support I receive from Assumption. May the Lord bless you this Lent and Easter season.

Sam Mettler, EVW Youth Ministry

STEUBENVILLE 2026

Who: Grades 8th through 12th When: July 24th-26th

Where: St. Paul, MN Cost: \$325 for parishioners of St. Anthony and Assumption with many opportunities to bring that cost down. Cost will go down with fundraisers throughout the year.

Contact: Sam Mettler at evwyouthministry@gmail.com

Student Spotlight

Max Torborg



Grade 12th

Favorite Subject: College Welding

Favorite pastimes: Fishing and Hunting

Favorite Church activity: Youth nights

Memorable family trip: Booking a trip to Florida a week before we left

Favorite family activity: Bowling

Role model: My dad, Tony Torborg

Advice for younger students: get to as many youth activities through the church as you can, you will meet great people and make so many memories



Ever wonder how the church changes overnight?

One Sunday you arrive to find the Christmas décor glowing. The next Sunday, the church is beautifully simple—green vestments, a few flowers, and a whole new feel. Who does this? When does it happen? And why the change? Our church decorating team supports worship through visual beauty, helping the space reflect the meaning of each liturgical season. Working closely with the priest, they prepare the church to align with the Church calendar—Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and Ordinary Time—using color and design (purple for Lent, white for Easter, green for Ordinary Time) that honors the sacred space without becoming a distraction.

This transformation usually happens quietly, behind the scenes, between Sundays. It's one of those volunteer ministries that often goes unnoticed, yet it plays an essential role in our faith and worship.

Help is always needed with both setup and removal when the seasons change. When you hear a call for volunteers, please consider stepping up—even a small commitment makes a big difference.

To our dedicated decorators: thank you. Your time, care, and creativity are a beautiful support to our church community.

We Love Our Volunteers!

We Reach Out! Living the Gospel means looking beyond ourselves and responding to the needs of others. When we take a bird's-eye view of the past year, it is inspiring to see the many ways our parish and its apostolates have reached out in love to our community and beyond.

Locally, we supported our neighbors through both organized efforts and spontaneous generosity. We donated money to the food shelf and hosted food drives in March and November. Our parish served as a collection site for Christmas for Kids, Christmas bags for the nursing home, and a winter clothing drive. The Knights of Columbus breakfasts and parish garage sales helped support local families facing unexpected tragedies. We also sponsored the rosary on KASM radio and KYES radio, donated to post-prom events, and awarded scholarships. In May and June, we offered flowers and goodie bags for parishioners to give to their mothers and fathers.

Our outreach also included works of prayer, presence, and witness. Parishioners sang at the nursing home, spiritually adopted unborn babies, prayed for every request that came through the prayer line, and participated in sidewalk pro-life walks. We hosted a food stand at Valley Daze, sponsored a parade float, served families following funerals, and honored loved ones with luminaries in November.

Beyond our immediate community, we extended our support regionally and globally. We raised funds and collected items for Elevate Resource & Pregnancy Center in Waite Park. Through the Bishop's Appeal, we contributed to mental health services, crisis response, marriage and family support, and tribunal services. Donations were delivered to Sharing & Caring Hands in Minneapolis, and we sponsored a Mexican orphan named Alejandro. We also sent aid to the Holy Land, the Holy See, and Catholic Relief Services.

And beyond all these organized efforts are the countless, unseen ways parishioners reached out as individuals- in everyday moments of kindness, prayer, and compassion. These ordinary acts of love are a powerful witness to Christ at work among us.

Faith Formation

Lifelong Faith Formation "Growing in Faith Together"

Welcome to 2026! This is the year you are going to grow closer to the Heart of Jesus and begin your Personal Relationship with Him. What?.... Hold on!.... What are you talking about? "A Personal Relationship?" I ain't got time for that. I've got chores, tournaments, my own friends, laundry, kids activities, card parties, social events, wedding planning, doctor appointments.....you know all the things that take up time.

So, if I need this to be on my calendar, let's make it simple.

1. **Start with honesty:** Jesus isn't asking for fancy words. How about: Jesus, I'm opening my heart a little. Please meet me where I'm at.
2. **Talk to Him (like any person):** What are you grateful for? What are you scared of? What are you angry or confused about? Ask for help—even in small things. You can do this by speaking out loud, in your head or jotting it down.
3. **Get to know Jesus by learning who He is:** Read the Gospels – Start with John (very personal), Or Luke (clear and a good story line). While you read (or listen) ask yourself: What is Jesus like here? How does He treat people? What does this say about God's heart? You don't need to understand everything.
4. **Invite Jesus into your daily life.** Try thinking or saying things like: Jesus, help me handle this situation. How could I love this person in this situation? What are you asking of me today?
5. **Be patient with the process.** Think of any kind of relationship you have: it takes time, trust, willingness and openness. Relationships don't just fall into place automatically.

Jesus said: "Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened."

You are invited to events during this Lenten Season to grow in your relationship with Jesus alongside your FAMILY (church friends). See you there!

Assumption Church

LENT/HOLY WEEK

SCHEDULE

7AM @ ASSUMPTION

12PM @ ST ANNE

6PM @ ST. NICHOLAS

6:30-8:00 PM

@ ASSUMPTION

8AM-8PM

@ ST. AUGUSTA

6PM @

ST ANNE

12PM @ ST ANNE

5:30 PM @

ASSUMPTION

8:30PM @

ST. NICHOLAS

8AM @ ST. ANNE

10AM @ ASSUMPTION

FEBRUARY 18

Ash Wednesday Mass

MARCH 4

Parish Penance Service

MARCH 11

Confesfival

APRIL 2

Holy Thursday Mass

APRIL 3

Good Friday Service

APRIL 4

Easter Vigil Mass

APRIL 5

Easter Sunday Mass

FRIDAYS DURING LENT

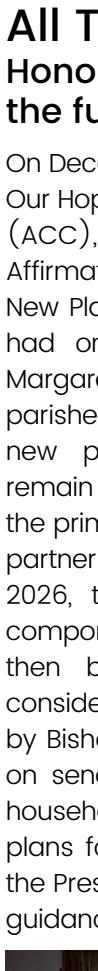
Stations of the Cross 6PM @ ALL PARISHES
BENEDICTION WITH STATIONS AT ASSUMPTION:
FEBRUARY 20 & MARCH 13

**SAVE THE
DATE!**

**March 13th
4-7 PM**

ASSUMPTION CHURCH

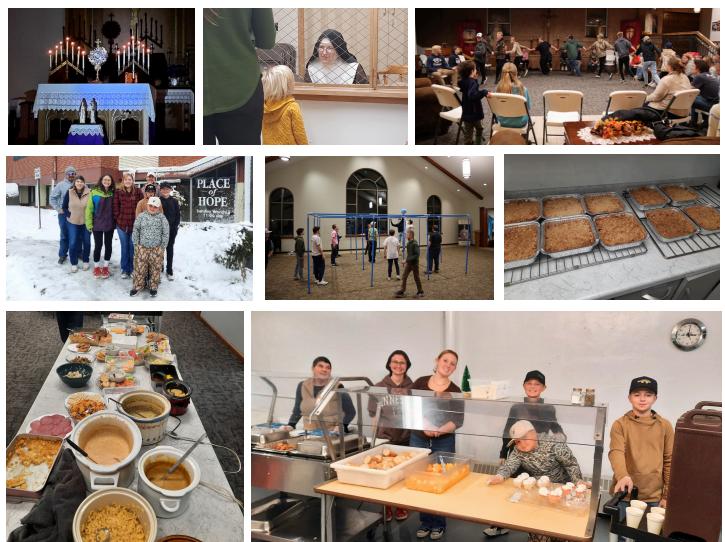
**FISH
FRY**



All Things New: Honoring the past, inspiring the future



On December 15, 2025, the Christ Our Hope Area Catholic Community (ACC), met with the St. Cloud Diocese Committee of Affirmation of Plans (CAP) to review our ACC, All Things New Plan and answer any questions the CAP committee had on the proposal. The plan included closing St. Margaret's in Lake Henry, St. Agnes in Roscoe. These parishes would then merge into St. Louis, and form one new parish corporation. Assumption Church would remain its own corporation and name. St. Louis would be the primary church and Assumption Church would be the partner church. The ACC received an email on January 8, 2026, that the CAP had voted to affirm the above components of the Christ Our Hope Plan. This Plan will then be presented to the Presbyteral Council for consideration. The final decision will ultimately be decided by Bishop Neary. The Pastoral Planning Office is planning on sending a letter (probably in the spring) to all the households in the ACC after the CAP has affirmed all the plans for the Diocese. Please continue to keep the CAP, the Presbyteral Council, and the Bishop in your prayers for guidance from the Holy Spirit in making these decisions.



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(GROUP)



YouTube



Website



Formed



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Father Don Voicemail: 320-453-2788 (#2); Father Don in an Emergency (#4)

Faith Formation Office: 320-453-2788 (#3) or 453-5765 ewwcatholic@gmail.com

Youth Ministry: ewwyouthministry@gmail.com

