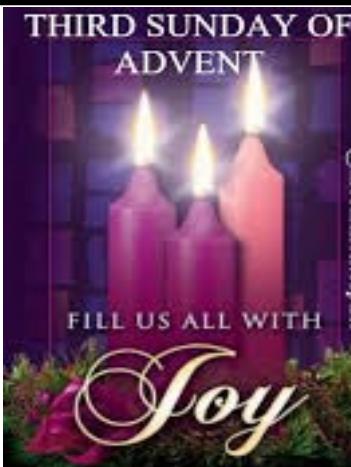


Sat, Dec 13, 4:00PM (Sacred Heart) † John Tschida
 Sat, Dec 13, 5:00PM (St. Henry) † Virgil, Allene, Dan & Cathy Mueller
 Sat, Dec 13, 7:00PM (Holy Cross) † Lucille Schik
 Sun, Dec 14, 8:00AM (St. Henry) † Michael Richter & † Bob & Betty Richter
 Sun, Dec 14, 8:30AM (Sacred Heart) † Dorothy Kratzke
 Sun, Dec 14, 10:00AM (St. Henry) † Gregory Januszewski
 Sun, Dec 14, 10:30AM (St. Lawrence) † Tracy Frost
 Sun, Dec 14, 11:45AM (St. Henry - Spanish Mass) For the People
 Tue, Dec 16, 8:45AM (St. Henry) † Mike Rohde
 Tue, Dec 16, 7:00PM (Sacred Heart) Court St. Rita 409 Catholic Daughters of America
 Wed, Dec 17, 8:30AM (St. Lawrence) † Paul Klinnert
 Wed, Dec 17, 5:15PM (Holy Cross) Christian Mothers
 Thu, Dec 18, 8:30AM (Sacred Heart) Leo & Elaine Winkels Family
 Thu, Dec 18, 8:45AM (St. Henry) † David Quistorff
 Fri, Dec 19, 8:30AM (St. Lawrence) † Fern Boedigheimer
 Fri, Dec 19, 10:00AM (Perham Living) † Thomas O' Donnell
 Sat, Dec 20, 4:00PM (Sacred Heart) † John Gerber
 Sat, Dec 20, 5:00PM (St. Henry) † Christine Wasche
 Sat, Dec 20, 7:00PM (Holy Cross) † Rose Guck
 Sun, Dec 21, 8:00AM (St. Henry) † Orris & Eleanor Olson
 Sun, Dec 21, 8:30AM (Sacred Heart) † Gracie Langlie
 Sun, Dec 21, 10:00AM (St. Henry) For the People
 Sun, Dec 21, 10:30AM (St. Lawrence) † Eva Lamb
 Sun, Dec 21, 11:45AM (St. Henry - Spanish Mass) Special Intention—Elena Sandoval



"O my God, fill my soul with holy JOY, courage and strength to serve You."
 ~ St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

December 14, 2025 Third Sunday of Advent Guadete Sunday

Financial Blessing for December 6th

Adult.....	1,355.00	Plate.....	30.25
Immaculate Conception..	316.00	Youth.....	10.00
Votives.....	23.00	Flowers.....	50.00
		Total.....	1,784.25

Thank you for remembering Holy Cross Church with your Stewardship throughout the year.

Financial Blessing for December 6th & 7th

Adult.....	1,318.00	Plate.....	485.00
Youth.....	18.00	Elec. Transfers.....	175.00
Christmas Flowers.....	605.00		
Immaculate Conception....	42.00		
		Total.....	2,643.00

Thank you for remembering Sacred Heart Church with your Stewardship throughout the year.

Financial Blessing for December 6th & 7th

Adult.....	5,671.00	Plate.....	1,411.25
Children's Basket.....	55.00	Elec. Transfers....	4,221.00
Christmas Flowers.....	210.00	Votives.....	125.00
Imm. Conception.....	1,862.00	Christmas.....	50.00
Bulletin Sponsors.....	250.00	Coffee.....	24.00
		Total.....	13,879.25

Thank you for remembering St. Henry Church with your Stewardship throughout the year.

Financial Blessing for December 7th

Adult.....	1,774.00	Youth.....	39.00
Elec. Transfers.....	1,256.49	Plate.....	1,335.00
Immaculate Conception ..	95.00	Rent.....	75.00
Rel. Retirement.....	50.00	Christmas.....	50.00
Christmas Flowers.....	83.00		
		Total.....	4,757.49

Thank you for remembering St. Lawrence Church with your Stewardship throughout the year.

Northern Cross ACC Advent Penance Service is at 6:30PM on Thursday, December 18th at St. Henry's Church, Perham.



BULLETIN DEADLINE FOR THE DECEMBER 28 & JANUARY 4 BULLETINS IS THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18.

ST. LAWRENCE UPCOMING EVENTS



BLACKSTONE GRILL RAFFLE!
\$5 per chance or 3 chances for \$10
 You could win this Blackstone grill along with all its contents. The raffle is sponsored by St. Lawrence Christian Women with all proceeds going toward the 2026 St. Lawrence Festival. Chances will be on sale after Mass, in the parish office, or contact Marlene Boedigheimer at 218-457-1588. Drawing will be in February.

Thank you to all the Groups that donated wonderful items to the Bake Sale! Super collection of baked goods! Thank you to everyone who purchased those items! We also had a great variety of delicious food items brought for the Pot-luck. Thank you to those who contributed, and stayed to enjoy the meal. Very nice social event! St Nick added to the festivities to the enjoyment of the children!

The parish of **St. Lawrence** invites everyone who is interested in helping decorate the church this Christmas with a poinsettia flower to use the "Christmas Flower" envelope insert in this week's bulletin. Envelopes have space for "In Memory of" or "In Honor of" dedications. If you don't have an envelope you can put your request and donation in a white envelope with the name of the persons you are remembering and your name in the collection basket.

The communities of Perham and New York Mills are blessed with caring volunteers that help at our Food Shelves each week and generous communities that provide gifts of food and money throughout the year. Please keep your local Food Shelves in your thoughts during this holiday season.



Congratulations to Roger Schmitz who is celebrating his 80th birthday on December 16th. Happy birthday Roger!

Cemetery News

Rick Guck is the sexton of St Lawrence Cemetery. Please, contact Rick (218-849-5488) or the parish office (218-346-7729) with any questions regarding cemetery plots.

Pastor: Fr. Omar Guanchez, E-mail: fatheromar@ncacc.net
Parochial Vicar: Fr. Nathaniel Daubner, E-mail: fathernathaniel@ncacc.net
Deacons: Deacon Richard Quistorff; deaconrichard@ncacc.net
Business Manager: Deacon Randy Altstadt; deaconrandy@ncacc.net
Business Manager: Ann Koll; ann@ncacc.net



St. Lawrence Catholic Church of Rush Lake
46404 County Highway 14
Perham, MN 56573

Phone: (218) 346-7729 Fax: (218) 346-5946
Office Hours: Tuesday & Wednesday 9:00AM-Noon
Email: sandi@ncacc.net

Parish Website: sacredheartstlawrencecatholicchurches.com

ST. LAWRENCE



Faith Formation

Wed., December 17: All Grades; 6:30-7:30PM

Wed., December 24: No Class; Christmas Break

Wed., December 31: No Class; Christmas Break

Wed., January 7: All Grades; 6:30-7:30PM

Stephanie VonRuden-Faith Formation Director
218-298-1050 or steph@ncacc.net



Birthday Boxes for the Food Shelf

In honor of Jesus' birthday St. Lawrence Faith Formation students are collecting items to create Birthday Boxes for our local food shelves.

Collection dates: November 30-December 14

December 7: A second collection will be taken at the 10:30AM Mass to help purchase additional supplies. See the bulletin board for more information.



Thanks to the generosity of our Northern Cross ACC parishes we were able to make the following donations to the Bridge Pantry in Perham and the New York Mills Food Shelf:

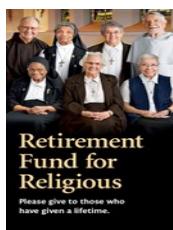
Children's November Collection of \$745.21

Thanksgiving Collection of \$1, 884.65

WINTER WEATHER POLICY



When school is cancelled due to weather, there will be no Masses, no Adoration, and offices will be closed at all the NCACC parishes. If school is two hours late, Adoration will begin at noon and all morning Masses will be cancelled, but evening Masses may take place, if weather permits. For any other weather related announcements refer to My parish app or the NCACC Facebook page.



The special collection for the **Retirement Fund for Religious** is this weekend, December 13th and 14th. Your generosity today is not just a donation—it's a way of thanking religious men and women for their lifelong service to the Church. Please give to the Retirement Fund for Religious.

Em: 218-346-4240 *Press 7
Phone: 218-758-2888 (landline)
Phone: 720-688-1015
Phone: 218-457-0925
Phone: 218-346-4240



SACRED HEART UPCOMING EVENTS

Sacred Heart Christian Mothers'

Parish Breakfast

Sunday, December 14th
(after the 8:30AM Mass)

All are invited to join us for breakfast and meet the newest members of our parish.



The parish of **Sacred Heart** invites everyone who is interested in helping decorate the church this Christmas with a poinsettia flower to use the "Christmas Flower" envelope in your envelope box. Envelopes have space for "In Memory of" or "In Honor of" dedications. If you don't have an envelope you can put your request and donation in a white envelope with the name of the persons you are remembering and your name in the collection basket.

"Seeds to Grow" Sacred Heart "Seeds to Grow" is for those who are sick, injured or are in need of financial assistance due to their medical circumstances. If you know of anyone who needs our help, please submit a request to Sacred Heart Church, Dent, or call Mary at 218-758-2032. Request forms are available on the Sacred Heart bulletin board.

Cemetery News

Tim Stoll (218-841-4251) and John Kratzke (218-758-2275) (Sacred Heart) and Mark Riestenberg (218-731-2867) (St. Joseph) are the sextons of Sacred Heart and St. Joseph Cemeteries. Please, contact them or the parish office (218-758-2700) with any questions regarding cemetery plots.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM: Contact the Parish Offices

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY: Diocesan Policy requires that the Pastor be contacted at least 6 months before the anticipated date of marriage to allow time for premarital inventory, instructions and planning.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: ½ Hour before Weekend Masses at Sacred Heart, St. Lawrence and Holy Cross; Third Saturday from 6:00PM– 7:00PM at Holy Cross. Tuesday & Thursday, 8:15AM-8:45AM; Saturday, 4:00PM—4:45PM (Before 5:00PM Mass) at St. Henry

Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick: Contact the Parish Offices

Trustees: Brenda Aschnerwitz & Jan Januszewski (Sacred Heart); Jack Werner & Andy Klinnert (St. Lawrence); Mark Halbakken & Lisa Hemmelgarn (St. Henry); Dawn Swanz & Jason Schik (Holy Cross)

Northern Cross Area Catholic Community Pastoral Council Members: Chelsey Hendrickx, Dawn Swanz, Dan Schik (Holy Cross); Brenda Aschnerwitz, Mark Riestenberg, Kenny Moenkendick (Sacred Heart) Gina Cavanagh, Ken Guck, Jason Smith (St. Henry); Sandi Carrlson, Jack Werner, Caleb Carrlson (St. Lawrence)



Sacred Heart Catholic Church of Dent
36963 State Highway 108
Dent, MN 56528

Phone: (218) 758-2700

Office Hours: Monday and Thursday 9:00AM-1:00PM

Email: sandi@ncacc.net

Parish Website: sacredheartstlawrencecatholicchurches.com



**FAITH
Formation**

SACRED HEART

Wed., December 17: 1-11; 7:00PM
Wed., December 24: No Class; Christmas Break
Wed., December 31: No Class; Christmas Break
Wed., January 7: 1-11; 7:00PM

Diane Sazama-Faith Formation Director
218-849-7520 or email woolyacres@arvig.net

Online Evening Prayer with Young Adults

Young adults ages 18+ are invited to pray online together with other young adults and School Sisters of Notre Dame from across the U.S. and Canada on **Tuesday, December 16 at 7 p.m. CT.** (*Please note this is a week earlier than usual due to Christmas!*) Learn more and register for the Zoom link at ssnd.org/events/12-16-25.

Baby Jesus Shower

Sacred Heart Christian Mothers are collecting baby items to be donated to the needy. Items can be placed under the tree in the gathering space.



Requirements for having your first child baptized are: registration at a parish and attendance of a pre-baptism class. This class is normally offered on the 3rd Saturday of each month. The next class will be offered on **Saturday, January 17th** at 9:00AM in St. Henry's conference room. If you want your child baptized but have not yet attended the required class, please call the parish office at 218-346-4240. Pre-registration is required.



SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM: Contact the Parish Offices

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY: Diocesan Policy requires that the Pastor be contacted at least 6 months

before the anticipated date of marriage to allow time for premarital inventory, instructions and planning.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: ½ Hour before Weekend Masses at Sacred Heart, St. Lawrence and Holy Cross; Third Saturday from 6:00PM– 7:00PM at Holy Cross. Tuesday & Thursday, 8:15AM-8:45AM; Saturday, 4:00PM—4:45PM (Before 5:00PM Mass) at St. Henry

Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick: Contact the Parish Offices

Trustees: Brenda Aschnerwitz & Jan Januszewski (Sacred Heart); Jack Werner & Andy Klinnert (St. Lawrence); Mark Halbakken & Lisa Hemmelgarn (St. Henry); Dawn Swanz & Jason Schik (Holy Cross)

Northern Cross Area Catholic Community Pastoral Council Members: Chelsey Hendrickx, Dawn Swanz, Dan Schik (Holy Cross); Brenda Aschnerwitz, Mark Riestenberg, Kenny Moenkendick (Sacred Heart) Gina Cavanagh, Ken Guck, Jason Smith (St. Henry); Sandi Carrlson, Jack Werner, Caleb Carrlson (St. Lawrence)



Congratulations to our Calendar Raffle winner this week. 12-12-25-Jake Huebsch-\$100



Calendars are available after Masses at St. Henry's and in the school and church offices for \$50 each. Each purchase gives you the opportunity to win \$100 every Friday and \$50 every other Wednesday, and you can win multiple times. 225 calendars are available. They will be available until January 2nd or until they are sold out. They make great gifts. Thank you for supporting this fundraiser.

If you are interested in enrolling your preschooler at our preschool for the fall of 2026-27, please reach out to Miss Missy at mmickelson.sthenryschool@arvig.net. We have a 3-year-old program and a 4-5 year-old program. Our preschool fills up fast, so reach out as soon as you can.

You are invited to our annual Christmas program on Wednesday, December 17th at St. Henry's Church. Performances are at 1:30 and 6:00. This is a wonderful way to get into the spirit of Christmas.

Jason Smith, Principal
218-346-6190 or sthenryschool@arvig.net

The Parish of St. Henry
extends congratulations to
Liam James
son of Steve & Jolene Tuma
who received the Sacrament of Baptism
on December 7th

thank you! Thank you for your loving support to families in our community. To date 109 families have been assisted in getting furniture, household items and bedding through Calvary's Community Outreach Ministry.

thank you! The Holiday Bake/Craft Sale this year was once again a big success. Total revenue of \$3,277.01 was raised for the elevator fund. A huge thank you to all those who donated, worked and purchased baked goodies and craft items.

The **2026 Marriage Prep Course** will be held at St. Henry on **January 25, 2026 from 8:00AM-4:00PM**. The fee is \$175.00 per couple. For more information or to register, please contact St. Henry's Parish Office.



St. Henry 

Wed., December 17: No Class
Wed., December 24: No Class
Wed., December 31: No Class

Michelle Sazama, DRE
218-849-9660 or michelle@ncacc.net



Are you interested in helping out the needy this holiday season? The Holy Family Council of Catholic United Financial will be creating cookie and fruit baskets for the shut-ins on Monday, December 15th at 6 PM in the school gym. We need your help. We are in need of fruit, cookies, donations and people to help build the baskets. Fruit and cookies can be brought to St. Henry's Church office or school office on December 15th. If you'd like to help build the baskets, meet at the gym on Monday, December 15th at 6 PM. Donations can be dropped off in the collection marked "Shut-In Baskets" for the next couple of weekends. Thank you for your help.

Your ways are not my ways says the Lord. Do you know what the Lord's ways are? CENTRAL MINNESOTA KOINONIA is a weekend Catholic retreat program sponsored by the St Cloud Diocese and is designed for adults to help you on your faith journey. The next retreat is scheduled for January 23-25, 2026, at the TEC Center north of Little Falls, Minnesota. Cost of the weekend is \$70. Go to www.centralmnkoinonia.org for more information and to register for retreats.



*The Northern Cross ACC Parishes
wish to extend deepest sympathy to
family and friends of
Renee Doll
who passed away recently.
May Renee know eternal peace
and joy in heaven and may God
grant comfort to her family and friends.*

Text App to **55321**
to download our parish app!
Search for "Northern Cross Area
Catholic Community"



Cemetery News Mike Johnson (St. Stan) (218) 849-0501 and Ron Berns (St. Henry) (218) 298-0545 are the sextons of St. Stan and St. Henry Cemeteries. Please, contact them with any questions regarding cemetery plots.

St. Henry's Catholic Church of Perham
234 2nd Ave SW
Perham, MN 56573
Phone: (218) 346-4240
Email: chelsey@ncacc.net

HOLY CROSS NEWS

Adoration is held on the third Saturday of the month at 6:00PM.

 Poinsettias can once again be ordered for Christmas in honor or in memory of someone; the cost will be \$10 and can be put in the collection or given to Faye.

Saturday, December 13th the CCD students will perform their Christmas program at 6:30PM before Mass. After Mass Christian Mothers will hold their Christmas Cookie Sale and snacks will be served for everyone.

Are you looking for something new to pass away the day? Go to St. John's (Corliss) Tuesday at 1:00 and play whist. Everyone welcome.

Cards will be played every Thursday at 1:00 pm.



Faith Formation Schedule



Sat., Dec 13: Christmas Program (1/2 hour before Mass)

Wed., Dec 17: Class 4:15-5:15PM/ Advent Confessions
Grades 3+ ; Evening Class 6:40-7:40PM

Wed., Dec 24: No CCD; Christmas Break

Wed., Dec 31: No CCD; Christmas Break

Wed., Jan 7: Class 4:15-5:15PM

Cemetery News Sexton for Holy Cross cemetery is Edgar Hendrickx who can be contacted at 298-2434 or 385-3850.



2025 BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

Voices of Hope - Bishop's Annual Appeal: Blessings to you in this third week of Advent that calls us to remember the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus. As you celebrate this season, please consider supporting diocesan ministries with a year-end gift. To donate, visit www.stcdio.org/annualappeal or mail to: Bishop's Annual Appeal, P.O. Box 1538, St. Cloud, MN 56302.

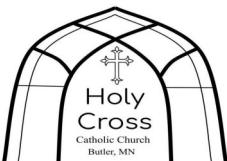
OFFICE HOURS: (HOLY CROSS): Call Faye Hendrickx:

(218) 385-3850

(SACRED HEART): Monday & Thursday : From 9:00 AM-1:00PM, (218) 758-2700

(ST.LAWRENCE): Tuesday & Wednesday: From 9:00 AM-12 Noon, (218) 346-7729

(ST. HENRY): Monday-Friday: From 8:30 AM—1:00PM, (218) 346-4240



**Holy Cross Catholic Church of Butler
57189 Co. Hwy 62 New York Mills, MN
Phone (218) 385-2201 or (218) 385-3850**

Email: faye@ncacc.net

Parish Website: <https://www.parishfaith.com/holy-cross---butler>



Please pray for those in need of healing in our parishes: Joyce (Huebsch) Bauer, Kathi Schmitz, Tait Bormann, Keith Friesam, Susan Loerzel

All military personnel, especially: Derick Burr, Greg Hirshey, Sandra Silbernagel, Nicholas Melz, Miguel Martinez, Noah Zeleny, Tyler Van Watermulen, Andrew Schlosser

Always remember in prayer our leaders in faith, especially: Pope Leo XIV, Bishop Patrick Neary, Bishop Emeritus Donald Kettler, Dcn Randy Altstadt, Dcn Richard Quistorff, Fr. Omar Guanchez, and Fr. Nathaniel Daubner.



A LIFE-CHANGING EVENT

REBOOT event with Chris Stefanik will be held at the Wadena Memorial Auditorium on Wednesday, February 11th, 2026. Chris is an incredibly dynamic and energetic speaker with a beautiful message of joy! We invite you to join us for this life-changing event! Tickets are on sale now and can be found by scanning the QR code or by visiting [HTTPS://BUYTICKETS.AT/REALLIFECATHOLIC/1765324](https://buylTickets.at/reallifecatholic/1765324).



Holy Father's Prayer Intention for December For Christians in Areas of Conflict

Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.

New School Capital Campaign Update

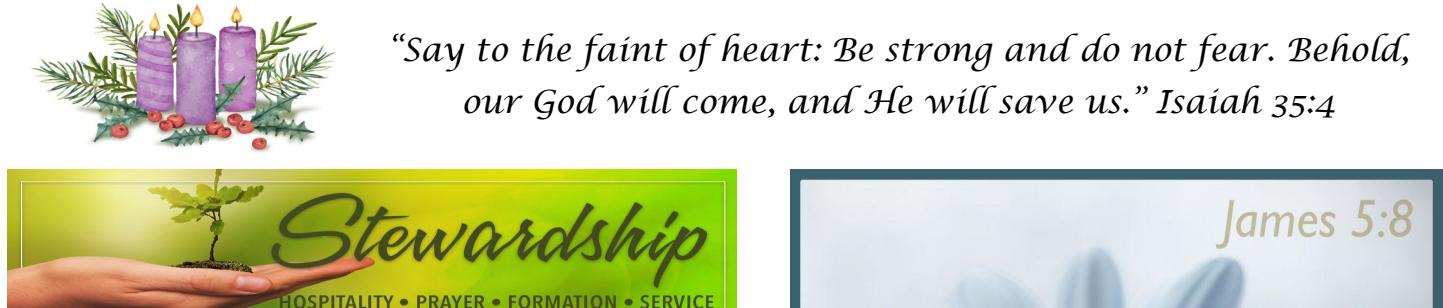
Complete Project	\$8,100,000.00
Pledged	\$8,339,177.00
Pledges to be Received	\$374,119.00
Received	\$7,965,058.00
Monies Received 11-17	\$54,200.00
Households Contributing	350

Readings for the Week

Monday	Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a	Mt 21:23-27
Tuesday	Zep 3:1-2, 9-13	Mt 21:28-32
Wednesday	Gn 49:2, 8-10	Mt 1:1-17
Thursday	Jer 23:5-8	Mt 1:18-25
Friday	Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a	Lk 1:5-25
Saturday	Is 7:10-14	Lk 1:26-38
Sunday	Is 7:10-14	Rom 1:1-7
	Mt 1:18-24	

Please let the advertisers know you saw their ad in the bulletin.

 Schoeneberger <small>FUNERAL & CREMATION SERVICE</small> 100 Jake Street, Perham, MN (218) 346-5175 www.SchoenebergerFH.com	ALL CREATURES VETERINARY HOSPITAL 905 Jenny Ave, Perham, MN 56573 218-346-PETS (7387) Dr. Raeanna Tisdell-Covington, DVM Dr. Ciarrin Sailer, DVM Dr. Darl Enga, DVM Dr. Lani Vincent, DVM allcreaturesperham.com		 KIT MASTERS <small>FAN CLUTCH EXPERTS</small>
 Swan Machine <small>EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS WITH HIGHER QUALITY PRODUCTS AND SERVICE</small>	 Step UP <small>THRIFT BOUTIQUE</small> 117 East Main Street Vergas, MN 56587 218.849.2509	 Perham Dairy Queen 802 - 3rd Ave SE 218-346-4070 Marc & Mike Winjum <small>U.S. Pat. Off. Am.D.Q. Corp. Copyright, 1989 Am. D.G.</small>	 SCHMITZ <small>MOTOR COMPANY, INC.</small> Perham, MN 218-346-3900 OWNERS: GREG, TONY, JONNIE, COLE & RYAN "ROO" SCHMITZ
 Rutherford Excavating <small>INC.</small> EXCAVATING SEPTIC SYSTEMS SNOW REMOVAL DEMOLITION CLEARING & GRADING LICENSED - BONDED - INSURED MATERIAL HAULING 218-346-4688 Cell: 218-298-1477	 DEAN'S <small>Appliance SERVICE</small> 218-346-6200 Over 42 years of Service	 CURTIS SEIFERT <small>CONSTRUCTION, LLC</small> LIC# BC234124 3D RENDERING AVAILABLE! CALL US ABOUT YOUR UPCOMING PROJECT 218-298-0676	 RainSoft <small>Solving local water problems since 1984.</small> Lake Country RainSoft 231 Main St West, Ottertail, MN 56571 218-367-7873 * 1-800-450-1212
 kln <small>Family Brands</small>  TUFFY'S <small>Treat Company</small>  TUFFY'S <small>PET FOODS, INC.</small> From our family to yours.	 Catholic United <small>Financial</small> Becky King Rep since 2005 (218) 841-4600 BKKing@catholicunited.org	 Knights of Columbus Perham Area Council 1773 Join the Knights at kofc.org/joinus	 St. Henry's Preschool to 6th Grade Area School 218-346-6190
CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS COURT ST. RITA PERHAM, MN  Serving the community for 105 years TO JOIN, CONTACT REGENT LEANNE STOLL AT 218-758-3050	FLORENCE HAMMERS <small>RENTAL PROPERTIES</small> Perham, MN 218-346-6770	 FIVE STAR STORAGE East Industrial Park, Perham Secure Location, Rodent Deterrent Call for your inside or secure outside storage needs. 218-346-7925	 OVERLAND <small>INSURANCE AGENCY</small> 255 3rd Ave SE Perham, MN 56573 218-346-6250 www.overlandinsurance.com
If your business is interested in advertising in our weekly bulletin, please contact your parish office.		<p><i>“Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and He will save us.” Isaiah 35:4</i></p>	ROHDE INSURANCE SERVICES Writing all lines of insurance.  WMIM <small>WESTERN MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY OF MINNESOTA</small> 218-739-3295 Mickey Rohde, Dianne Rohde-Szarke & staff



Patience is another one of those things many of us struggle with. We want things to go according to our plan and our schedule; we like things to be convenient. Any change brings anxiety and fear. Through daily prayer God reveals to us what He wants us to do with the gifts He has given us. We are able to better align ourselves with God's will and His plan, which is far better than anything we can come up with on our own.



December 12, 2025

Advent Greetings!

I hope your Advent preparation is going well and that your Christmas time may be one of special blessings. As we approach the end of the year, I would like to share with you that the number of Christmas Masses will be lower than previous years. In the past, we used the help of retired priests which allowed us to have a few extra Christmas Masses. However, this year is different. Fr Arlie was supposed to help us with two or three Masses, but he was recently asked by the Bishop to assist the five parish cluster that Fr Joe Herzing serves in Todd County. May The Lord bless Fr Joe at this time of trial! Our prayers are with him! May the Lord also bless Fr Arlie who is always willing to help despite his retirement.

After losing Fr Arlie's help I contacted 11 priests and they are all booked and helping in different parishes of the Diocese. In view of all this, six Masses will be offered in our four parish ACC, four on Christmas Eve and two on Christmas Day. The words of Bishop Patrick come to mind when he said that we have no priest sitting on the bench; the shortage of priest is real and we do what we humanly can do. This is the reason you will see the reduction in the number of Christmas Masses. Please, keep praying for more vocations to the priesthood and for all priests to grow in holiness and stay healthy.

It is a wonderful journey, and I really enjoy being here to serve all of you in my limited capacity. I'm happy to be in these faith-filled communities where I've met so many wonderful people. Let's keep supporting one another in faith, hope and charity!

On a personal note, I am happy to have my siblings with me. They came to America last year and they will probably have to leave the country in 2026. My siblings, even though they are here legally and working full-time, are at risk of losing the opportunity of being here. That's something we never thought would happen, but life is full of challenges, and we just need to trust that the Lord will indeed hear the cry of the poor and open a new path where there seems to be no path. To me, every day with them is a blessing and whatever happens in 2026 we know that our faith will sustain us. On the other hand, I hope that the Lord will grant me the

opportunity to see my parents next year. They're in Venezuela, and the last time I saw them was in 2018. A lot of things have happened since then, the pandemic, my Venezuelan passport expired, the situation in Venezuela has worsen etc. I realize now that it is time to visit them because it has been a long time. I hope in the Lord that I can see my folks next year!

Back to the situation in our Diocese, the All Things New process is underway and changes will be made in 2026. We've been asked to design a conservative plan and an aggressive plan for our Northern Cross ACC. The conservative plan contemplates having two priests, which is what we have at the present time. Each priest will say three Masses on the weekends as Canon Law prescribes. The aggressive plan is the tough one because it contemplates the option of having only one priest. He will say three Masses for the four parishes and of course we know that three Masses is not enough.

The Diocese is trying to plan according to the declining number of priests and be prepared to face the future by doing so. Again, we will see changes in some parishes from the Diocese next July and such changes may affect our routine and demand some adjustment. In all of this, the most important goal is to have access to the Eucharist within reasonable driving distances. The Eucharist is the center and the summit of our faith, and the Lord is still with us, even as the boat is being tossed by strong winds. He is with us! This is His Church! We will keep sailing forward with Him until we reach the other side of the Kingdom!

To conclude, I give thanks to God for all of you committed Catholic brothers and sisters, for the growing number of students in our school, for the faithful adorers in our Adoration Chapel, for the youth seeking Christ, for those families that have Christ at the center of their lives, for those suffering illness with grace, and for the good I see in so many people. The light will never be conquered by darkness and that's what I celebrate this Christmas. That Light came into the world. Our Light is Jesus!

Merry Christmas season to all of you!

Fr. Omat Goanchez