



St. Mary Parish

900 Central Ave, Coon Valley, WI 54623

Fr. Joe Richards, Pastor | Dcn. Tony Shay

December 14, 2025 | Third Sunday of Advent | Reading 483A

CONNECT WITH US

PASTOR

Rectory: 400 Congress Ave.
Viroqua, WI 54665

Cell Phone: 608-606-9787

Email: jrichards@diolclergy.org

Office Hours in the Sacristy

Tuesday 1:00pm until Mass

Thursdays after Mass until noon or by appointment

DEACON

Email: ashay@diolclergy.org

Parish Phone

608-452-3841

Mailing Address

904 Central Ave
Coon Valley, WI 54623

Email

stmaryscv@mwt.net

Website

www.stmaryscv.org

Social Media

www.facebook.com/StMarysCoonValley

Bulletins

Bulletin Deadline: Monday, 6 days prior

Parish Office Hours

Varies - most Wednesdays, Thursday morning and most Fridays

MASS SCHEDULE

Weekend Masses

Saturday | 4:00pm

Sunday | 8:00am*

**Livestreamed on our Facebook page*

Weekday Masses

Tuesday | 5:15pm

Thursday | 8:00am

Confession

Saturday | 3:30pm - 3:45pm

Devotions

Adoration Tuesday | 4:30pm



Administrative Assistant

Amy Stafslie 608-452-3841
stmaryscv@mwt.net

Coordinator of Religious Education

Bridget Goodwin
bladams50@gmail.com

Parish Finance Council

Mary Gajewski, John Mislivecek,
Nancy Peters (Secretary), and John
Roesler (Buildings and Grounds)

Parish Pastoral Council

Ryan Goodwin, Marlene Humfeld, Sue
Humfeld, Robert Kerska, Lori Pedretti
and Steve Schulte

PCCW (Parish Council of Catholic Women)

Clarice Kammel (President), Nancy
Peters (Treasurer), Linda Berg (Secretary)

Musicians

Mary Beth Smith 608-632-9548
Linda Schulte 608-397-3643
Chris Carskadon 608-790-4495

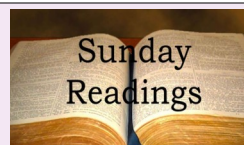
Fr. Joe also serving:

**Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin
Mary Parish, Viroqua**

Mass Times:

Weekend: Saturday 6:30pm
Sunday 10:30am

Weekday: Wed - 5:15 pm
Fri - 8:00am



December 14, 2025
Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10/7
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

Intentions / Schedule

SATURDAY, December 13

Third Sunday of Advent

- 4:00pm Mass - † Dennis LeJeune
 Altar Servers: Volunteers Ushers: Volunteers
 Lector: Jeana LeJeune

SUNDAY, December 14

Third Sunday of Advent

- 8:00am Mass - For the Persecuted Christians of Nigeria and China
 Altar Servers: Volunteers Ushers: Volunteers
 Lector: Ryan Goodwin

Money Counters: Loree Nickelotti, Rodney and Kathy Berg

TUESDAY, December 16

Advent Weekday

- 4:30pm Adoration
 - 5:15pm Mass - For the Priest

THURSDAY, December 18

Advent Weekday

- 8:00am Mass - † Eugene and Elizabeth Freit

SATURDAY, December 20

Fourth Sunday of Advent

- 4:00pm Mass - † Edward and Anna Kerska
 Altar Servers: Volunteers Ushers: Volunteers
 Lector: Robert Kersak

SUNDAY, December 21

Fourth Sunday of Advent

- 8:00am Mass - † Helen Stafslie
 Altar Servers: Volunteers Ushers: Volunteers
 Lector: Volunteer

Money Counters: Mike Kammel and Mark Boland

Upcoming Events/Calendar

- **Dec 18** ~ Coffee and Fellowship after the 8 AM Mass
- **Dec 21** ~ Rel Ed (FoF) Activity after 8 AM Mass
 ~ Parish Social hosted by St. Theresa
- **Dec 24** ~ Christmas Eve - 4:00 PM Mass
- **Dec 25** ~ Christmas Midnight Mass - 12:00 AM
 ~ Christmas Day in Viroqua at 10:30 AM
- **Dec 31** ~ Vigil Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. Holy Day in Viroqua at 5: 15 PM
- **Jan 1** ~ Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. Holy Day of Obligation here 8:00 AM
 ~ in Viroqua 12: 10 PM
- **Jan 4** ~ Rel. Ed (FoF) after 10:30 AM Mass in Viroqua
- **Jan 12** ~ PCCW Meeting at 5:30 PM
- **Jan 18** ~ Rel Ed (FoF) Activity after 8 AM Mass
- **Jan 25** ~ Encounter Class (middle school) 9-10:15 in Viroqua
- **Feb 1** ~ Rel. Ed (FoF) after 10:30 AM Mass in Viroqua
- **Feb 8** ~ Encounter Class (middle school) 9-10:15 in Viroqua



- Monday: 7:00-7:30 AM in Viroqua
- Tuesday: 4:30-5:00 PM in Coon Valley (continuing after Advent)
- Wednesday: 5:45-6:30 PM in Viroqua (continuing after Advent)
- Thursday: 7:30-8:00 AM in Coon Valley
- Friday: 8:30-9:30 AM in Viroqua
- Saturday: 9:00-10:00 AM, changing locations – in Viroqua on December 6 & 20, in Coon Valley on December 13

Dec. 1-23

Eucharistic

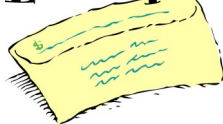
Adoration



2026 St. Mary Calendars and Contribution Envelopes

Please pick yours up today!
 If you have not been assigned envelopes and would like some, please message the parish office.

Offering Envelopes



Mass Intentions

Mass intentions for 2026 are now being accepted. Reserve your special date early to ensure availability. Below are open dates for the next few months.

Open Sat. and Sun. dates: Dec is full. Jan 3 or 4, 10, 11, 17 or 18, & 31. Feb 1, 8, and 28. Mar 7 or 8, 14, 21, 28 & 29.

Open Weekdays: Dec is full. Jan 6, 13, 20, 27 & 29. Feb 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, & 26. Mar 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26 & 31.

Request a specific date by filling out an intention envelope or by emailing the office. Suggested stipend amount is \$20 per Mass. If you have questions feel free to email the office at stmaryscv@mwt.net or voice message 608-452-3841.

Annual Appeal 2025-2026		
As of 12/1/2025	Total Pledged	Total Payments
Pledged/Paid	\$7,665.00	\$5,206.69
Target Amount	<u>\$14,565.00</u>	<u>\$14,565.00</u>
Under Target	(\$6,900.00)	(\$9,358.31)
Percent Pledged: 52.63%, Percent Received: 35.75%		
Number Contributing: 13		
To donate online, visit: https://diolc.org/stewardship/ and in the drop down box choose: 2025(445) St. Mary Parish, Coon Valley		

Giving Last Week		Info not available at time of publication	12/7/2024
Adult Env (35)		Needed Weekly	\$2,000.00
Offertory		Received This Week	
Memorial		Total needed	\$96,000.00
Total		YTD Received	
Xmas Flowers		Difference	

From the Pastor

A continuing Happy Advent to you, Friends,

Bear with me while I mention again that I find the timing of Advent quite elegant. We spent just over half a year in the appropriately named “Ordinary Time” – a season of slow and steady grace mirroring agricultural seasons (in the Northern hemisphere, anyhow). Now we have this short little season of watching and waiting – preparing for Christ’s warmth and light to radiate into the winter’s chill and darkness, accompanying Mary and Joseph on the walk to Bethlehem, and “nesting” in our own hearts to make a crib-throne for the coming little King. With just three and a half weeks, Advent offers a manageable timeline to enter deeply and intentionally into new life with Christ. We’re right about at the halfway mark of the season – please accept my gentle encouragement to persevere in your intentionality, to renew your openness to the Lord, and to keep asking that question: **“how are you preparing my heart, Lord?”**

Last week I mentioned one good opportunity to enter into this renewal and deep season – our area’s quarterly **healing service** over in Cashton. We’ve been running this for a few years here now with a number of local lay folks and clergy joining forces to bring things together. We typically start off with a holy hour (adoration) at 4:30, Mass at 5:30, and specific healing prayers at 6:30(-ish, that is, when Mass is over). Those latter prayers vary each time, with the team praying beforehand about where the Holy Spirit is leading us to focus, but they consistently conclude with opportunities to pray individually with prayer teams. Confessions will be going on through the evening as well, meaning it could be a good opportunity if you’re looking to make an Advent confession as well. Anyhow, you’re warmly invited to join us for this service **this Monday (the fifteenth) at Sacred Heart in Cashton**. Come to stay for as long or as little as you like!

Finally, you’ve perhaps been holding your breath to hear our **Christmas schedule**. We’ll follow the same schedule we started a few years ago that has served us well – on **Christmas Eve 4:00 in Coon Valley and 6:30 in Viroqua; on Christmas Day 12:00 AM in Coon Valley and 10:30 AM in Viroqua**. A few notes on how this has historically gone for your planning purposes – the 4:00 and 10:30 tend to fill up most and often call for some extra seating. The midnight serves the type of folks (myself included) who like the extra adventure of, well, Midnight Mass. Coon Valley is perfectly oriented to draw out the intimacy and “Silent Night” of the occasion – I don’t want to celebrate midnight Mass every day, but I really like it once a year. The 6:30 is typically well populated, but might offer a little more breathing room than the two other more accessible times. I hope that helps you map out what things will look like in a week and a half!

God bless you, and Happy Advent, Fr. Joe

Parish Announcements

Join us for Family Adoration and Fellowship!

All are welcome – especially little ones. Soft music will be played and activities will be provided. Come any time, for any length of time.



- **If you missed our December 13th adoration event, you have a second chance on:**
- **Saturday December 20th from 9-10am** at ABVM in Viroqua
 - Fellowship will follow in the Hall downstairs – *bring a snack to share*.
 - We will also be providing materials for the kids to make ornaments during Fellowship so we can decorate the trees of Marian Hall.

Christmas Flower Donations



We are now accepting donations for Christmas Flowers. A special envelope is included with your envelope bundles, there are also extras located at the church entrances.

2026 Contribution Envelopes

Envelopes are now available in the back of the church in alphabetical order. Please pick yours up to save on the deliver expense. If you do not find your packet or you do not currently have envelopes, please email the parish office at: stmaryscv@mwt.net or leave a voicemail at 608-452-3841.

2025 Pancake Breakfast Report

Copies of the year-to-year comparison report are available in the back of the church and posted on the bulletin board.

Retirement Fund for Religious

Heartfelt gratitude for your generosity!

“Thank you very much for your donations, always,” says Sister Olivia Bellegante, 93, a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in St. Louis, Missouri. Women and men religious have spent their lives serving others in prayer, ministry, education and care for those in need—usually for little or no pay. Today, their religious communities do not have enough retirement savings. As they age, they require essential care and medications. Please support them by giving to the Retirement Fund for Religious. Your donation makes a difference for senior men and women religious. Please give generously. Learn more at retiredreligious.org.

Quarterly Healing Service at Sacred Heart Cashton

Monday, December 15, All are welcome.

- 4:30 PM Adoration with praise and worship, rosary, Divine Mercy and confessions
 - 5:30 PM Mass
 - 6:00 Corporate prayer with healing
 - 7:00 Individual healing ministry
- Come for part or all of the night



Diocesan/Community Announcements

ALL DAY CONFESSIONS at the Cathedral - Dec 22

There will be all day confessions at the Cathedral on Monday, December 22nd from 9 am - 6 pm. There will be four to five priests available to hear confessions at any given time. For the young and the young at heart, during Advent look for copies of the Kids Bulletin in the back of the church.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter is coming to the Diocese of La Crosse | Feb. 13-15, 2026 | Sparrow's Nest, Sparta

Looking for a way to rekindle the love and romance in your marriage? Your marriage is your most important human relationship. This powerful experience of discovery helps you renew your commitment, deepen your intimacy and reignite the passion that brought you together. Space is limited apply for the weekend by visiting: <https://wwme.org/> to save your spot!

Pope Leo XIV's Dilexi Te ("I Have Loved You") - Resources Available

Dilexi Te is Pope Leo XIV's first Apostolic Exhortation. Building on a theme dear to Pope Francis and bringing to completion a document he was working on when he died, Pope Leo focuses on the preferential love for the poor so prominent in the Gospels and in Catholic Social Teaching. To read Dilexi Te and for links to a variety of resources on it from the Holy See and from the USCCB, visit the diocesan <https://diolc.org/social-concerns/>

Support through the Holiday Season

The *Franciscan Spirituality Center* in La Crosse offers a variety of events for the Holiday Season and spiritual enrichment. Visit their website for listing and to register at: <https://fsc.retreatportal.com/events/> or call 608-791-5295

Advent: Jesus is Our Hope (1 Tim. 1:1)

The Advent hymn *Come, O Long Expected Jesus* is a prayer of hope, asking that He come because we need a Savior. Jesus came to set us free from our attachment to bad habits, which creates barriers and can even separate us from our friendship with Him. Due to His unconditional love for us, Jesus desires to help us break away from sin so that we can be more closely united to Him.

During Advent, set aside time for quiet prayer, to watch and wait for the coming of the Christ Child into our heart at Christmas. Let us allow Jesus to spiritually renew us with greater hope, peace and joy, even amidst difficulties.

The first verse:

*Come, O long expected Jesus,
Born to set Your people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Free us from captivity.*



3RD SUNDAY OF

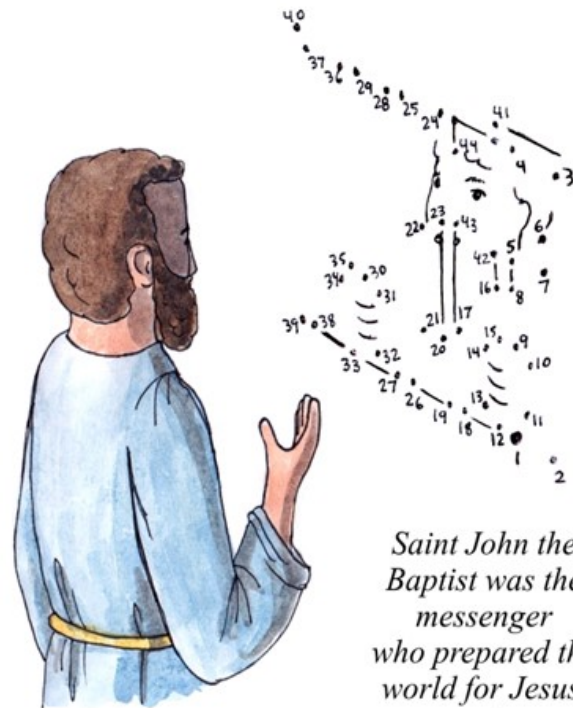
Advent
Songs of Shepherds and Joy



Activity Corner

Advent is Half Over!

Today is the third Sunday of Advent. That means that half the wait is over! If you have an advent wreath, this is the week to light the pink candle. Pink is a symbol the joy we have because we're half-way to Christmas.



Saint John the Baptist was the messenger who prepared the world for Jesus' coming.

*Where was he in today's Gospel reading?
Connect the dots to find out!
Then you can finish colouring in the picture.*

New Parishioners: Welcome to our parish! Please introduce yourself to Fr. Joe and contact the parish office for registration and information. www.stmarycv.org/visit-us

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturday from 3:15pm to 3:45pm

Sacrament of Baptism: Submit a registration by mail, or e-mail to both stmaryscv@mwt.net AND jrichards@diolclergy.org You will be contacted by the parish office to finalize your requested date. The registration form at: www.stmarycv.org/sacraments.

Sacrament of Anointing / Visitation of the Sick: Please contact the parish office or Fr. Joe when someone you know is in need of the Sacrament or a pastoral visit. Requests may also be made from our website under the Sacraments tab. www.stmarycv.org/sacraments

Mass Intentions: Please use the Mass Intention envelopes available in the church.

Book of Prayer Requests: Located in the back of church. Feel free to add your own prayer requests. The requests will be included in the parish prayers.



How Real is Jesus to You?

Do you have a personal relationship with Jesus?

We Catholics tend to dismiss that as a Protestant question. If we answer it at all, we have learned to say that of course we have a personal relationship with Jesus, because He comes to us through the Sacraments, and most profoundly in Communion.

But the question goes deeper. It asks: do we have a sense of connection, of familiarity, with Jesus, like the feeling of connection we have with a spouse, a family member or a close friend? Sadly, it is possible to experience our sacramental encounters with Jesus in a way that is mechanical, impersonal, detached from the heart.

Of course we can see, touch, and speak with family members and friends in an immediate way, while God is invisible to us, or hidden under the appearances of bread and wine. And yet God has a powerful key to our hearts.

A mind-boggling invitation

In the Gospel of John, Jesus tells us that He is the Vine and we must be joined to Him as branches. Listen to the intimate language He uses: "Remain in Me, as I remain in you.... Remain in My love" (15:4,9). Then consider the invitation in the Book of Revelation: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone

hears My voice and opens the door, I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with Me."

It really is stunning – Jesus, the Only-Begotten Son of God, is knocking on the door of our lives, inviting us to the most profound friendship. He will not force His way in, but if we open, He is sure to respond.

Others have gone before us

Men and women throughout history have opened that door and remained in Jesus' love. They have embraced Him as the center of their lives and experienced the joy and fulfillment our hearts were made for. St. Francis of Assisi, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, St. Padre Pio, St. Faustina – the list goes on and on. Did they sometimes experience spiritual dryness and suffering? Of course, but Jesus never stopped being the center of their lives.

It is false modesty to say that their path is not our path, that we are just "ordinary" people. There is only one real path in life, that of a living, breathing friendship with Jesus, Who told us, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life" (Jn 14:6). After much wandering, St. Augustine finally discovered that truth and cried out with joy, "O Lord, you have made us for

Yourself, and our hearts are restless till they rest in You."

Keys to deepen that relationship

Let's start by simply asking, "Jesus, please help me to know You better. I don't want to just know *about* You, I want to *know You*." Begin and end your day by giving yourself to Him, and talk to Him often, telling Him your joys, your troubles, your hopes. Read slowly from the Gospels, meditating on Jesus' words and deeds, asking Him to help you see how they apply to you. Then rest in silence and listen. Do this for a few minutes each day. Visit Jesus in Eucharistic adoration, awakening your devotion with prayer, Scripture and silent contemplation. Find inspiration in reading about the saints.

Ask Jesus to help you see and touch Him in works of mercy toward the poor, the homeless, the lonely. Ask His forgiveness in Confession. Make your heart ready each time you receive Him in Communion. Ask Mary to help you. In all this, you will not be perfect, you will stumble. Keep going. Yes, you are busy but set aside *some* time each day. Because He is EVERYTHING, and in your heart of hearts you know that remaining in His Love is exactly what your life should be about.

By Christopher Ruff, Office for Ministries & Social Concerns