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# The Compass IN THE Bulletin

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## Flat Fr. Paul builds connections

BY AMANDA LAUER | FOR THE COMPASS

**APPLETON** — It was a busy summer of travel for Fr. Paul Demuth, a senior priest who serves as sacramental minister at St. Bernard Parish. He's been all around the state of Wisconsin — and beyond.

Well, not personally. The "flat version" of him has been traveling the United States — all because of the parish staff.

"Our staff team was trying to brainstorm ways to keep families connected to the parish in the summer," Deacon Mike Eash, pastoral leader, explained. "We latched onto 'Flat Father Paul' for people to take him on vacation and adventures."

Flat Father Paul is a takeoff of "Flat Stanley," the leading character in the 1964 children's book by Jeff Brown. The book evolved into Dale Hubert's "Flat Stanley Project," an education project started in 1995. Students around the world were encouraged to make paper Flat Stanley cutouts and take them on adventures or send them with other people going on adventures. The goal was to improve children's reading and writing skills and to inspire in them a love for learning about



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**Fr. Paul Demuth, who serves as sacramental minister at St. Bernard Parish, Appleton, holds "Flat Father Paul," designed by parishioner Anne Douglas and carried on travels this summer.**

different people and places.

Lisa Christiansen, coordinator for evangelization and discipleship at St. Bernard Parish, was at that mid-July meeting when the concept of creating Flat Father Paul developed.

"When my kids were younger," she said, "we had adventures with Flat Stanley and sent him off to family members and they took him on adventures for us."

"Things get quiet during

the summer at church and we know that people are traveling," she added "How do they stay connected to the parish? Flat Stanley came to mind. It just so happened that Fr. Paul also likes to travel, so we thought, 'Wouldn't it be fun if we could have Fr. Paul travel with our parishioners?'"

**Our full story** appears in the Sept. 23 issue.

### FRANKLY, FRANCIS



**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

We are continuing our reflection on discernment. ...

One of the most instructive examples is offered to us by St. Ignatius of Loyola, with a decisive episode in his life. Ignatius was at home convalescing after injuring a leg in battle.

To dispel the boredom, he asked for something to read. He loved tales of chivalry, but unfortunately, there were only the lives of saints at home. Somewhat reluctantly, he adapted, but in the course of reading, he began to discover another world, a world that won him over and seemed to compete with that of knights. He was fascinated by the figures of St. Francis and St. Dominic, and felt the desire to imitate them. But the world of chivalry also continued to exert its fascination on him. Thus, he felt within himself this alternation of thoughts — those of chivalry and those of the saints — which seem to be on par with one another.

**+ Pope Francis, Sept. 7, 2022**



## Suamico parish choir: It's a family thing

BY JEAN PEERENBOOM | FOR THE COMPASS

**SUAMICO** — Monday night choir practice at St. Benedict Parish feels like family night when The Spirit of Isaiah Choir gathers.

"Singing together as a musical group for 40 years, we have become like a family and a support group for each other," said founder and

leader, Jim Bertler. "Being together for 40 years and spreading God's words through music is the greatest gift we can give to God and our fellow parishioners."

The 40th anniversary is marked this year by a CD of the choir's music, with all original songs written by Bertler. It is the choir's third CD. "Saving God's Children: Catholic Values"

is a celebration of life with Jesus, Bertler said, as were the two previous CDs, "Life of Child Within" and "Walking in the Rain and Snow."

"Music can create and reflect love, sorrow and happiness in one's personal life," he said. "We try to create and promote this in our songs."

**Our full story** appears in the Sept. 9 issue.

# 5 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

## St. Jude of the impossible

BY PATRICIA KASTEN | THE COMPASS

**1** Oct. 28 is the feast day of SS. Simon and Jude, apostles. Tradition says they were beheaded together in Syria around A.D. 65.

**2** St. Jude is known as the patron saint of impossible causes. He is also the patron of other groups and places, including the Chicago Police Department.

**3** St. Jude is believed to have been a cousin of Jesus and a brother of St. James the Younger.

**4** He is also called Jude Thaddeus because in Matthew and Mark's Gospels (Mt 10:3) (Mk. 3:18), he is called Thaddeus. Luke (6: 16) calls him Jude.

**5** St. Jude Parish in Oshkosh was formed on July 14, 2007, from a merger of St. John, St. Vincent de Paul and Sacred Heart parishes.

## In gratitude for our priests

Dear friends and followers of Jesus:

This coming Sunday, Sept. 25, is Priesthood Sunday, a special day set aside to honor the priesthood in the United States. This celebration is an opportunity for



### BISHOP'S CORNER

Bishop David Ricken

us as Catholics to affirm the essential role of the priesthood in the life of the Church. It is a chance to give thanks for our priests for their service and leadership. Whether as a pastor, parochial vicar or priest celebrant, our priests have dedicated themselves in service to the people of God, and we are grateful for their commitment.

Growing up in the Catholic Church, I can think of priests in my life who inspired me, challenged me and cared for me. Fr. Norbert Temaat and Fr. Joe Bahr were parish priests who worked at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart Parish in Dodge City, Kan., where I grew up.

Dad and Mom took us to the 8:30 Mass every Sunday and we always sat in the front pew so that Mark and I, and later Carol, would

behave. When I saw Fr. Temaat come down to give Holy Communion, I knew that I was going to be a priest when I grew up. As I grew older, I volunteered every Saturday morning with a few friends to help Fr. Bahr do charitable works in the community through the Junior Legion of Mary.

Both parish priests were a real inspiration of how the priesthood can be lived. I am so grateful for that. If not for the influence of these men, I may not have heard God's call for me to join the priesthood, much less been willing to answer the call.

As we enter the "Worship Jesus" years in our diocese, and the national Eucharistic Revival, I find myself reflecting on the priesthood and its indispensable role in the church. During these years, we will grow in our love of the Mass, the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. As we do, we will recognize the essential role of the priests serving in the Person of Christ, as celebrant of the Mass, and the one who offers the sacrifice of Christ as priest and victim. This is a fascinating and terrifying mystery all at the same time. Serving this role is a great responsibility for our priests, something they ought to approach with humility and grace.

Read the entire column in the Sept. 23 issue.

## Parish SNAPSHOT

SUBMITTED PHOTO | SACRED HEART CATHOLIC SCHOOL, SHAWANO

Sacred Heart Catholic School students and staff in Shawano had their first All School Mass of the school year on Aug. 31. Fr. Scott Valentyn and Deacon James Lonick lead the celebration Mass. Pictured is preschool student Lillian Spranger dipping her finger in the baptistry font as she enters church with her teacher, Melonie Reopelle, and first grade teacher, Jami Gegare.



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