

St. Bridget Catholic Church

Parish Newsletter
Important Updates

211 E Division Street PO Box 86 River Falls WI 54022 715.425.1870 Website: www.saintbridgets.org

Dear Parishioners and Staff Members of St. Bridget and St. Mary's Parishes:

We recently received a letter from Bishop Peter Christensen informing us that St. Bridget Church, River Falls, and St. Mary's Church, Hammond, will be clustered effective June 29, 2010.

The decision to cluster was anticipated and has been discussed within our diocese. Both parishes were a part of *The New Spring Time* study that was conducted a few years ago. Both parishes will remain separate legal corporations as are all parishes in the Diocese of Superior. Basically, *clustering* means that St. Bridget and St. Mary's will share a common pastor. I will be that pastor. I was administrator of St. Mary's thirty years ago and look forward to working with the Hammond parish again.

The first decision to be made was to determine the Mass times at each parish. Based on input from the parish councils regarding Mass time preferences, we will try the following new Mass times:

St. Bridget, River Falls: Saturday at 5:00 p.m. and Sunday at 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
St. Mary's, Hammond: Saturday at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday at 8:00 a.m.

These times insure that everyone will have reasonable access to Mass. The LIFETEEN Mass will be at St. Bridget on Sundays at 11:00 a.m. beginning in the fall. I will spend Saturday nights in Hammond. The Parish Staffs and Parish Council members felt that this would make the most sense because it would prevent my having to "race" back and forth between River Falls and Hammond. Both parishes have told me that, "Whatever works for you, will be fine with us. We don't want you to burn out." I appreciate that support and will pace myself so as to conserve my energy.

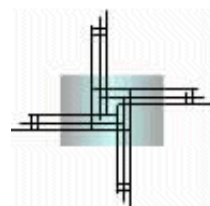
I will have two additional nursing homes where I will need to minister. Therefore, I will have one Mass at each facility each month. On Thursdays, I will spend the day, or most of the day, at St. Mary's in Hammond for Mass at the church and at one of the nursing homes. We also plan to have Sunday morning office hours at St. Bridget Church occasionally.

Many people have asked how they can help. To facilitate these changes, we will need additional liturgical ministers. There is a general sign-up for additional ushers, Eucharistic Ministers, cantors, greeters, and Sunday sacristans in the Parish Hall. We also need Scrip volunteers. Thank you!

I realize that change is not easy for some people and that many of you will have questions and concerns. It is important for me to hear personally what you have to say and to respond the best that I can. I hope that the information that follows on the grieving process will be of help. Clustering can also be an exciting time of wonderful growth and opportunity for our parishes. Please pray that the Holy Spirit will guide this time of change so that it can truly be the Spirit's work. We will continue to keep every one posted. Thanks for your understanding and patience.

Sincerely,

Rev. Gerald Harris,
pastor@stbparish.com 715-425-1870 ext 103



Grieving Process in Change As Applied To the Cluster

We all grieve. Loved ones die, we retire or lose a job, etc. The five stages of grieving from Elizabeth Kubler-Ross are:

- 1) **Shock and denial;**
- 2) **Anger and emotion;**
- 3) **Bargaining;**
- 4) **Depression;**
- 5) **Acceptance.**

We don't go through all these stages nicely and neatly, in lock-step fashion. Rather, we often go back and forth through the stages but eventually move towards acceptance. Let's apply this to our clustering of St. Bridget's and St. Mary's:

	Stage	Typical Responses
1	Shock and Denial	When the announcement was made to cluster Hammond and River Falls, some people were shocked. When I initially made the announcement of clustering in River Falls, there was dead silence. A typical response there was, "I can't believe this is happening." For the Hammond people, it might have been, "We are being clustered again?"
2	Anger and Emotion	The reality of change sets in and we feel emotion. "Why do we have to change the Mass times? It's not fair. It's going to affect the way that I do things on the weekend with family." These are all common immediate reactions.
3	Bargaining	We try to bargain or negotiate with the loss. "Maybe we can find another priest to help out?" The reality is that there are no extra priests.
4	Depression/Sorrow	The reality of the loss or the change starts to set in. Responses include things like, "Man, this is really happening! Fr. Harris talked about it for a while, but now it really is happening."
5	Acceptance	The reality of the loss is accepted and we move on and make new plans. The creative juices start to flow. The staffs of both parishes have told me that they are excited about the possibility of working together and sharing ideas. We start to make the best of the loss and move forward. We affirm that life is good and that faith in God is still there.

I hope this explanation is of benefit. If we are not aware of the loss, we can get stuck in the cycle of grief and never move out of it. If we are not aware of the process of grieving, we may not understand our reactions as normal and as part of an ongoing journey. Understanding what is happening helps us to move from grief to acceptance.

Father Harris

Join us for a Grief Workshop with Dick Obershaw, December 11, 2010 from 2-4 p.m. in the parish hall.

School News

It has been a GREAT year at St. Bridget Parish School! We have been blessed with many curricular and technological upgrades, which when combined with an amazing staff, dedicated parents, and smaller class sizes, made for an unbelievable learning community and great academic success! St. B's students also participated in some fantastic service projects and grew in their faith development.

As enrollment continued to increase, we were challenged to find more space and so began our remodel project for the summer of 2010: converting an unnecessary stairwell into extra office space, moving the teacher work area to the current office space, and reclaiming a classroom that had been recently used as the teacher work room. The end result will be a much more inviting and productive office environment and an additional classroom. Watch for an open house in the fall!

Financial Update

Parish 2010 -11 Budget Update: The parish finance and pastoral councils have approved the budget for this next year (2010-11), which will begin on July 1. A summary of the parish financial status will be published for the entire parish following the end of the fiscal year – June 30th. Please watch for this important parish information, and as always, if you have any questions regarding parish finances, please feel free to ask any finance council member or call Ric Johnson at the parish office 425-1870.

Youth Ministry

Summer Youth Group: Begins Wednesday, June 23rd! 6:30-8pm in the Youth Room, all youth entering 7th, 8th, & 9th grade are invited for games, food, and fellowship. Pick up a flyer from the wooden kiosk at the church entrance for all the dates and contact information.

Please pray for our High School Mission Trippers!

On July 4-9, a group of our High School youth and adult leaders are headed south to Kansas City, Kansas. During the week, they will be working with kids, painting and assisting with various work projects. God bless them on their journey!

Thanks to your continued support and prayers, our reputation as a school of academic excellence, high student standards, and a strong faith community is spreading; enrollment is increasing; we are financially stable; and the parish subsidy has decreased significantly!

Its time for the **Annual School Grand Garage Sale.**

We need a lot of items to make this a successful event. When you clean out your basement, garage or closets this Spring, think of us!!

Garage Sale Dates: Thursday June 24th 8:00 a.m.- 8:00 p.m., Friday June 25th 8:00 a.m.- 6:00 p.m., and Saturday June 26th 8:00 a.m.- 12 noon.

Drop off times at the school gym will be the weekend of June 19th and 20th after church masses, June 21st from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. Call Lauren Baillargeon, 426-9334, with any drop off questions or to volunteer.

Announcements

POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR HEALTHCARE WORKSHOP

Mark your calendar for the next workshop,

**Wednesday,
June 23, 2010
6:30- 8:30 pm**

in the Fellowship Hall. Contact Mary Camber 425-1879, Ext. 120 or visitation@stbparish.com with questions or to sign up.

Stay in the know when you visit our new websites at www.saintbridgets.org. Find up to date information on all areas of the church and school.

Calling Young Voices!

All youth in grades 3-8 are invited to join our Youth

Choir. If you would like to learn more about praise through music, come and join us in the Fall. We will sing once a month at Mass with practices being held once a week. We also sing at Christmas Eve Mass and with the Adult Choir on Holy Thursday. Contact music@stbparish.com.

Would You Like to Become a Catholic?

Each year we have the RCIA process (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) for those joining the Catholic Church. There are presentations with faith sharing of various speakers each week discussing aspects of our faith. The meetings begin in September on Thursdays at 7p.m. Contact pastor@stbparish.com or 425-1870 if interested.

ST. BRIDGET CHURCH

211 EAST DIVISION STREET
PO BOX 86
RIVER FALLS, WI 54022
Address Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 62
River Falls, WI

New Mass Schedules

***St. Mary's of the
Immaculate Conception
Hammond, Wisconsin***

***Saturday
7:00 p.m.***

***Sunday
8:00 a.m.***

715-796-2244
www.ourparishes.org

***St. Bridget
River Falls, Wisconsin***

***Saturday
5:00 p.m.***

***Sunday
9:30 a.m.
11:00 a.m.***

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www.saintbridgets.org

These Mass times will go into effect beginning on July 3 and 4, 2010.