

# Cross Rock Catholic Community Newsletter

Parishes of

Holy Cross, North Prairie Holy Trinity, Rogalton

Immaculate Conception, Rice

Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Opole St. Stanislaus Kostka, Bowlus

## MEET THE NEW PASTORS

Father Gregory Sauer:

Thank you to all of you for the warm welcome that I have received. It has been a great joy to be here and to get to know the wonderful people of this area.

I shared this information with many of you already but for those of you who don't know me, I want to give you a little background into who I am. I grew up on a hobby farm near Long Prairie. I am the second of ten children, three boys and seven girls, and we were homeschooled through twelfth grade. After high school, I attended North Dakota State University for two years where I studied mechanical engineering. While I was there, I discerned that I was called to go to seminary. I entered seminary in 2012 and went St. John Vianney College Seminary at the University of St. Thomas. After graduating from there, I remained at St. Thomas and attended the St. Paul Seminary. I was ordained a priest June 15, 2019, and was the parochial vicar at Holy Spirit, St. Anthony's, St. John Cantius, and later, Christ Church Newman Center in St. Cloud. I enjoyed my time there and had many positive experiences. Some of the things that I enjoy include reading, unicycling, playing card and board games, being outdoors, and learning about how things work. I am excited to be a part of this community and to serve the Lord. Please feel free to reach out to me to sit down and have a chat or invite me to your home. I enjoy spending time with parishioners at social gatherings and visits to their homes. Also, if you or a loved one is sick, in the hospital or dying, please feel free to give the office a call and I am happy to go visit those who are in need of spiritual care.

Since this is my first time being a pastor, I do not have a lot of experience, but I look forward to learning how to pasture the flock God has entrusted to me! Please keep me in your prayers, as you will be in my prayers!

Fr. Sauer



Father Peter Kirchner:

Many thanks for the warm welcome I've received these past few weeks. It is greatly appreciated. My late uncle, Father Harold Kost who was the long-time pastor of Belle Prairie north of Little Falls had a photographic memory for names; unfortunately, I struggle with names. So, I ask for your patience if I ask your name numerous times. Because of HIPPA Laws, health care facilities are not allowed to give out patient information. If parishioners from Opole or Rice would like me to visit, please call the Parish Office with the name of the hospital or rehab center. Please be specific with facility name and room number, plus the length of stay.

I have been ordained 28 years and have served many parishes in our diocese as a priest: Alexandria, Verndale, Blue Grass, Staples, Motley, Glenwood, Villard, Breckenridge, Kent, Poor Clares, Belgrade, Brooten, Elrosa, Lake Reno and Kensington. Hopefully these experiences will help me with my new assignment. Before I entered the seminary, I was a public-school Music Teacher for string and orchestra in Montana and South Carolina. Most Priests, like to fish, play cards, hunt, golf, or bowl. I do none of these hobbies and Bishop Hanus still ordained me! My hobbies are the following: traveling, playing the cello, classical music, reading and spending time with family and friends. Please invite me to your Wedding Reception, Anniversaries, 1st Communion Parties and Graduation Parties. I do enjoy being with parishioners at social gatherings.

Again, thanks for your warm welcome to me. I do realize that it has been difficult for Opole to have had three different priests over the last three years. God willing, I will be able to spend many years at Rice and Opole for stability in our cluster. God Bless, Fr. Kirchner



*Lord Jesus, may everything I do begin with You, continue with Your help, and be done under Your guidance. May my sharing in the Mass free me from my sins, and make me worthy of Your healing. May I grow in Your Love and Your service, and become a pleasing offering to You; and with You to Your Father. May the mystery I celebrate help me to reach eternal life with you. Amen*

**Hello Families from the Cross Rock Area Catholic Community.....**

We have officially combined as our ACC. Parishes from Bowlus, North Prairie, Opole, Rice, and Royalton are together as one ACC. We have been working towards this goal for a couple years now and have made many steps forward in getting settled together. We have combined the Parish Offices to make one Central Office which is located in Rice.

The Office is located in the basement of the Church and is accessible by elevator or steps. Hopefully by the time you receive this the Buzzer System will be installed on the front doors for ease of access to the office. If you need to access the office you will be able to push a button and we will let you in. If you need to contact the Office you can do so by Phone: 320-393-2725 or Email: cross-rockacc@gmail.com. Father Kirchner and Father Sauer can also be reached by contacting the office. Father Sauer does have an email gsauer421@gmail.com. If you need to mail something in you can mail it to: Cross Rock Central Office PO Box 189 Rice, MN 56367. We are working on making this transition as easy on everyone as possible. We know that change is sometimes hard but we know that if we work together we can make great things happen. Please feel free to reach out with any questions, comments or concerns.



In this Newsletter you will find Religious Education Information for each parish as well as the Registration form which, can be used for all parishes. You will also find a Family Information/Census Form. We are in need of updating our Census Programs so your help with this is much appreciated. Please fill out the forms and return them to the Parish Office via...Mail, Sunday Collection, Email or Drop Off. We truly do appreciate you patience and grace as we keep things rolling.



**Bulletin:** One big accomplishment is that we have one combined bulletin for the 5 parishes. It is exciting to have all information in one place. If you would like to get something in the bulletin,

we need to have it in the office on Tuesdays by 3:00pm. The bulletin gets sent in to be printed Wednesday morning and this deadline gives Father Sauer and Father Kirchner time to proof it. The Bulletin is posted online usually by Thursday.

**Website:** We are currently working on getting one website up and running but this is taking some time. I promise you that we are working on it and it is our goal to get it up and running soon. Thank you for your patience on this. We know that most of the world runs on technology and it's convience.



**Meet the Office Staff:**

**Bookkeeper/Office Manager:** Patti Krystosek.....

Patti is a member of the Opole Parish and has been doing book work for many years. She was the Bookkeeper/Office Manager for Immaculate Conception Church in Rice for 14 years before that she worked the books for Opole. Patti has experience in Bookkeeping and Parish Secretarial Work. She is great at what she does and pays close attention to detail. If you have any questions about finances or contributions, Patti is your go-to. Outside of work Patti enjoys taking walks around her farm, traveling, shopping and hanging out with her puppy and her family.

**Secretary:** Jean Skroch.....

Jean is a member of the Rice Parish and has been working with the Religious Education Program there for about many years as a Volunteer, Teacher and is the current Religious Education Director. She was hired on as the Secretary for Royalton, Bowlus and North Prairie and now is the Secretary for all 5 Parishes. Jean prepares the Bulletin and takes care of the Mass Intentions along with the day to day Secretarial duties. Outside of work Jean and her husband Brian and their child Seth do Foster Care, enjoy trips to the North Shore. She also enjoys watching her son play football.

**Contacts:**

Central Office: 320-393-2725  
Address: PO Box 189  
Rice, MN 56367  
Email: crossrockacc@gmail.com  
Father Sauer: gsauer421@gmail.com/584-5484  
Father Kircher: crossrockacc@gmail.com/393-2725

**Reconciliation Schedule:**

Bowlus: Friday 7:30am  
North Prairie: Tuesday 8:00am, Saturday 7:15pm  
Opole: Tuesday after Daily Mass  
Rice: Saturday 4:00pm  
Royalton: Wednesday 7:30am, Thursday 7:30am

**Mass Schedules:**

**Sunday:**  
Royalton 8:00am, Rice 8:30am, Bowlus (July-Dec) 10:00am, Opole 10:30am  
Monday: No Masses  
Tuesday: North Prairie 8:30am, Opole 12:00pm  
Wednesday: Royalton 8:00am, Rice 9:00am  
Thursday: Royalton 8:00am, Rice 9:00am  
Friday: Bowlus 8:00am, Rice 9:00am  
Saturday: Rice 5:00pm, North Prairie (July-Dec) 8:00pm

**Holy Trinity, Royalton Religious Education: Royalton Faith Formation**

One important aspect of our Faith is evangelizing others, and one of the most important ways that we evangelize is by passing on our faith to the younger generations. The school year is quickly approaching and with it comes religious education. In Royalton this year we are looking at trying something a little different. I would have liked to have had more time to get more feedback and ideas from a broader number of people, but with the school year fast approaching, decisions had to be made.

The school release program has served our community for many years; however, it has become increasingly difficult to make it work. With the COVID-19 pandemic last year, the school release program was interrupted. This brings us to a crossroads this year: do we continue the school release program, or do we try something new?

After speaking with numerous people about the benefits and disadvantages of different models of religious education, we are looking to try something new for this year. The proposal is for grades 1-5 to attend religious-ed classes every other week from 3:00pm to 5:00pm. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classes would meet one week and the 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade classes would meet the following week. This allows for more spacing of the children and requires fewer teachers.

The middle school and high school students will have class twice per month at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday evening. The weeks that they do not have class, the youth group will meet. The youth group is open to students from all parishes in the ACC.

You may be wondering why we decided on this schedule. There were many factors to take into account. There is not enough room in the church basement to allow all grades to have classes at the same time, thus we choose to split it between Wednesday afternoon and evening. The decision to move to elementary students to Wednesday afternoon was because the school release program on Wednesday mornings was disruptive to the school schedule and was causing behavior problems. Allowing the program to run 3-5pm makes it easier for parents because supervisors can simply bring the children directly from school and the 5:00pm pick-up time is easier for parents than an earlier time. There is a possibility that we may try an occasional meal and family program between the afternoon classes and evening classes.

I understand that this may not work for some people. You are welcome to participate in any of the religious education programs that are offered at the other parishes. Parishioners from other parishes are also welcome to attend the programs offered at Holy Trinity if it works better for them.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to email or call me at 584-5484. We are planning to try this system this year and at the end of the year, we will evaluate how it went and decide whether to keep it and improve it or to try something new.

Thank you for your patience as we work to provide religious education for our youth.

*Fr. Sauer*

**Holy Cross, North Prairie**

**Religious Education:** If you are new to the Parish, or have a 1st Grader and would like your child/ren to attend classes please contact Ann Borash @ 320-333-9145. Classes are on Wednesday Nights at the Church. Classes will start in September.



If you are interested in helping with any of the Religious Education Programs please contact the office.

**Opole Religious Education:**

We are looking for Faith Formation Teachers and Classroom Helpers. Please contact Missy if you are able to help out. 320-309-3280



**Religious Education Parent Night:** There will be a Religious Education Parent information night on September 15th at 6:30pm at church. One parent must accompany their child/ren. Religious Education Classes will start on September 22nd and continue every Wednesday.

**Back to School Lunch:** Join us for a Back to School Lunch on September 12th after 10:30 am Mass. Please join us as we kick off the New School Year.



**Cross Rock Catholic Community**

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**Rice Religious Education:** Classes will begin in Rice on October 6th and will meet 2x per month on Wednesday Nights from 6:30-8pm. Confirmation Classes will be 1x per month on a Wednesday. Please keep an eye out for more information and a final schedule. If you have any question please contact

Jean at 393-2725. We are glad that we can meet in person this year but we also understand that some may not feel comfortable yet so, we are offering a program that can be done at home. Please contact Jean if this option works better for you.

**We are looking** for a few teachers this year. Please consider helping out. We are also on the search for a child care helper.

*“The secret of happiness is to live moment by moment and to thank God for all that He, in His goodness, sends to us day after day.” St. Gianna Molla*

**Bowlus Religious Education:** Thank you to Cindy Fussy for her years of dedication to the Religious Education Program. Cindy has retired from her position as DRE. We haven't had anyone step up to take on the program so families have the option of registering with any of the 4 other parishes. If you have questions or would like to take on the program please reach out to the Parish Office or Father Sauer.



**New Religious Education Director for Holy Trinity, Royalton...**

My name is Nicole Koll. I am taking over the leadership role for the Holy Trinity Elementary and MS/HS Religious Education programs this year. Let me tell you a little about myself...

I have been teaching religion class in various grades for the past 11 years (1st grade and 8-11 grades), as well as leading the adult Bible study program for the past 7 years in Rice.

I have been married to my high school sweetheart, Jakin, for 19 years. We have three children, Kaden (16), Connor (13) and Layla (1). I work full-time as a Media and Simulation Technologist for Centracare and have been with CentraCare for 8 years.

I grew up Catholic and have become very passionate as I learn more about the Catholic lifestyle, I took for granted growing up. I love telling others, especially our young souls, about our faith and helping guide them through the misunderstandings and explaining why the Church believes what it does and teaches what it does.

I look forward to getting to know all of you and doing what I can to support you in your role as your children's' primary teacher of the Catholic faith! As adults we never stop learning about our faith either, so don't be afraid to ask questions of myself or the teachers.

"And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 Blessings, Nicole