

A photograph of the Church of St. Anthony in Watkins, MN. The church is a large, multi-story brick building with a prominent central steeple topped with a cross. The facade features arched windows, a large rose window, and a main entrance with a portico. American flags are visible on the left side of the church. The sky is clear and blue.

*Church of St. Anthony
Watkins, MN*

*Parish Memory Book
2012 -*



Church of St. Anthony

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A Brief History

1889

The church community was established, and a small wooden church was built on 2 acres of land, which was purchased for \$50.



1906

The Benedictine Sisters of St. Joseph built a school for the faith formation of St. Anthony's parish.

1912

The church community outgrew the small wooden church. A magnificent brick church was built. The winning contractor's bid was around \$48,000. The cornerstone for the church was laid on August 12. Parishioners helped build the church. They hauled building materials with horses and wagons. The church was fully constructed after a year and a half.



1928

A new brick St. Anthony's School was constructed.

1958

St. Anthony's became a church in the Diocese of New Ulm.



1976

The Benedictine Sisters left St. Anthony's School after 70 years.

1995

St. Anthony's School was closed.

2004

The handicap accessible entry was added onto the church.



2008

The old rectory was removed, and a new rectory was constructed.

2012



Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Ordination for Fr. Richard Gross and Fr. John Brunner



St. Anthony's Church in Watkins, hosted a 50th Jubilee Mass celebrating the 50th anniversary of ordination of two beloved priests: Fr. Richard "Dick" Gross and Fr. John "Jack" Brunner. Bishop John LeVoiir celebrated the mass, and the honor guard from the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Order of Foresters added to the pomp and circumstance. It was a beautiful, moving Mass shared with a few hundred friends, family and parishioners Sunday morning, April 22, 2012.



Vacation Bible School

August 2012
"Sky" theme





Picnic in the Park

Parish Festival on August 26,
2012.



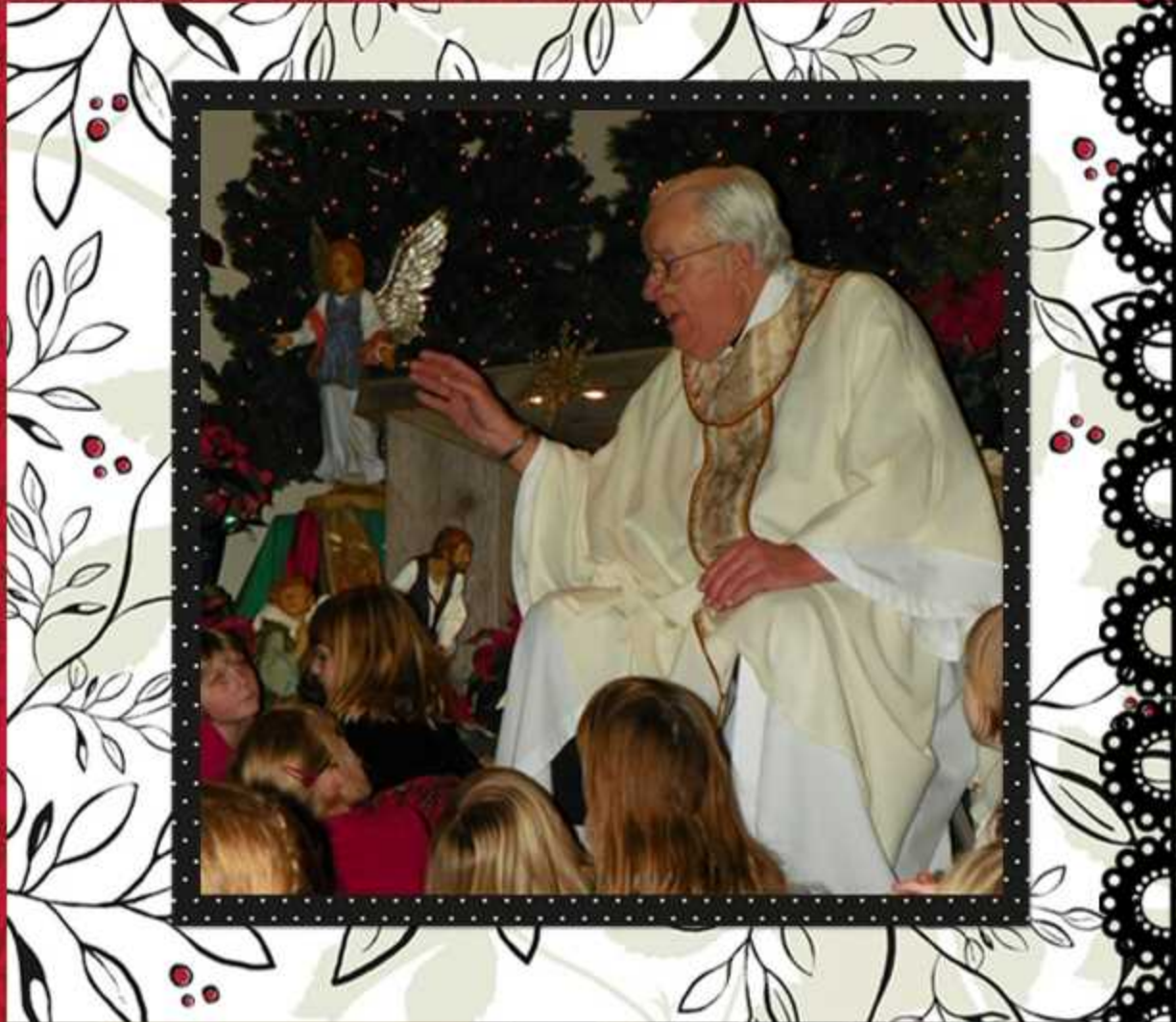


Picnic in the Park

Parish Festival on August 26,
2012.



Christmas Eve Mass



Father Jack telling the story of the birth of Jesus at the Christmas Eve mass.



2013



Religious Education Classes



Photos from Religious Education classes. Classes meet on Wednesday nights, from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Appreciation Party



The Catholic Order of
Foresters Bouja Workers'
Appreciation Party was
held on February 9, 2013.



Foresters

Bowling Tournament



Catholic Order of
Foresters Youth
Bowling Tournament
on March 15.

Easter and First Eucharist



April 2013

Service



Catholic Order of Foresters
cleaned the ball fields in Marty
as part of "Feeding and
Serving God's Children" Day
on May 4, 2013.

Picnic in the Park



It was a beautiful day for our
"Picnic in the Park" Parish
Festival in August 2013 held
at McCarthy Park in Watkins.



Sloppy Joe Dinner & Bingo



The Social Concerns
Committee hosted a Sloppy
Joe Dinner and Bingo in
November 2013.



Christmas Eve Mass

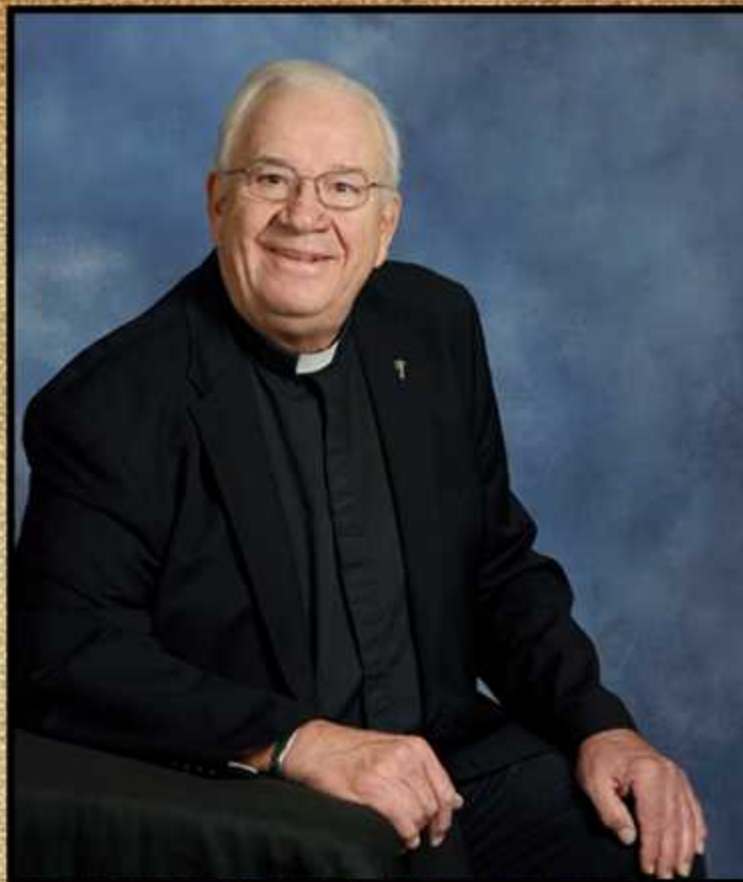


The children gathered around Father Jack Brunner as he tells the story of Christmas, followed by the whole congregation singing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus.



2014





Father John H. Brunner

Pastor from June 17, 2002 to January 12, 2014

During this term of office, the primary goal in the parish as told to the new pastor was a new social center to replace the grade school cafeteria. It was determined by parish council leaders in those early years that all donations from wills and estates would be reserved for the new building. This was faithfully accomplished. As a result, there are sizeable savings in the parish as the year 2014 began.

The following was achieved during these years:

1. Windows in the grade school were replaced, saving fuel costs. 2. The school boiler was re-tubed to make it last a few more years. 3. The new addition was added to the church. And paid for in full. 4. Old rectory was eliminated. A new modest house was built. 5. The church valleys were sealed to prevent leakage. 6. A new economical heating plant was installed in the church. 7. A Building Committee was established to eliminate the school building and build a new parish social center.

During this time period, the weekend mass schedule was changed to allow one mass on Saturday evening and one on Sunday morning. The Religious Education program reached out to all students with qualified class room teachers and aides. In addition, on-line programming was made available to our parish families. The RCIA program (instructional program for candidates being received into the church) was provided yearly to those who sought entrance into the church. The weekend liturgical music provided a choice between traditional and contemporary music.

Fr. Jack was 65 years old when he came in 2002 and although clergy can retire at 70, he retired when he was 76 - a month before his 77th birthday. At this time, his health was a major problem and realizing he was getting slower, he followed his medical advice and retired. This was the most painful step. His love for the parish was second to none. To leave was a major step and realizing there was no way he could say "good bye" without lots of emotion. Remembering his happy anniversary party two years earlier, he left the parish after the Tuesday Mass at the Hilltop Nursing Home. His love for St. Anthony's will never wane.

On January 12, 2014, Fr. Jack Brunner retired, and St. Anthony's was partnered with the Church of the Assumption in Eden Valley with a priest from the Diocese of St. Cloud.



Welcome, Father Jerome

Father Jerome Naduvathaniyil, OSB, is a monk of the Asirvanam Benedictine Monastery, in the Archdiocese of Bangalore, India. He was ordained to the priesthood on November 23, 2005, by His Beatitude Cardinal Varkey Vithyathil.

Fr. Jerome was born on February 20, 1976, at Pervoor, Kerala. His immediate family includes his mother, brother, and sister. His dad passed away 3 years ago. He finished the primary school at Dr. Palppu Memorial School, Kanichar and high school graduation at St. Joseph's Peravoor. He left his hometown at age 15 to enter the Asirvanam Benedictine Monastery. He spent 3 years learning English and other studies. Father Jerome earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Mysore University. Next, he spent 3 years earning a Bachelor of Philosophy degree from Asirvanam Benedictine Monastery. His thesis was "Concepts of God and Man in the Sacred Scripture of Hindus." After 4 years, he earned a Bachelor of Theology degree from Saint Thomas Benedictine Abbey in Kottayam. His thesis was "Liturgy in the Eastern Rite and in Latin Rite." He continued his studies at Mysore University and earned a diploma in Journalism and Human Resources Management. He speaks five Indian languages and has the working knowledge of Latin, Hebrew and Greek.

Prior to his arrival in the United States, he served his Monastery in various capacities including: the Financial Administrator and Development Officer of Asirvanam Benedictine Society, Assistant Principal at Saint Benedict's High School, Assistant Parish Priest at St. Benedict parish, as Secretary to the Benedictine Inter-religious Dialogue (BID) for India and Sri Lanka. During the diaconate ministry, he served Holy Cross parish and Saint Dominic Cathedral in the diocese of Kanjirappally, Kerala.

In the United States, he was honored to be a Parochial Administrator of Prairie du Chien churches and schools in 2009. Next, he served as Pastor for Loyal Church and School for 2 years. As a Benedictine, his primary pastoral concern is bringing people closer to God through the meaningful celebration of liturgy. He studied toward his Master of Arts degree in Pastoral Ministry through St. John's Abbey and University. He would appreciate your prayers so that he may be a good father and shepherd.





Catholic Order of Foresters Annual Membership Mass and Brunch was held on March 8, 2014.



Youth Bowling Tourney

Catholic Order of Foresters Youth Bowling Tournament was held on March 14 at Granite South Bowl in St. Cloud.



The Building
Committee held
a School Tour &
Breakfast on
March 29.





Fish Fry



There was a great turnout for the annual CCW Fish Fry on April 11.

Youth



Pictured above is the Confirmation Class of 2014. At right, are some of our youngest parishioners as they receive a blessing before Sunday School.

Grow



First Communion was held on April 26. Fr. Jack Brunner, Fr. Richard Gross, and Fr. Jerome presided over the occasion.





The Catholic Order of Foresters held a Bouja Worker Appreciation party on May 2 at the Lion's Park.

Bouja
Worker
Party



Confirmation was held on
May 3. Fr. Jack Brunner, Fr.
Richard Gross, and Fr.
Jerome presided over the
occasion.





May Crowning of Mary

In May, we honored our Blessed Mother as we held two crowning masses for Mary. One was done by the faith formation students on Wednesday night with the First Communion children doing the honors. The second was held on the weekend mass with Dolores Faber crowning Mary, followed by cookies, juice and fellowship.





Memorial Day Mass

The annual Memorial Day Mass was held in the St. Anthony Cemetery on May 26. Fr. Jerome, Fr. Gross, and Fr. Brunner presided over the mass.



125th Anniversary Mass

The Church of St. Anthony celebrated 125 years with a Mass and reception on June 1, 2014. Bishop John LeVoir presided along with several area priests. At the reception, several historical items were on display including priest vestments, scrapbooks, photographs of religious from our parish, and traditional sheet music.







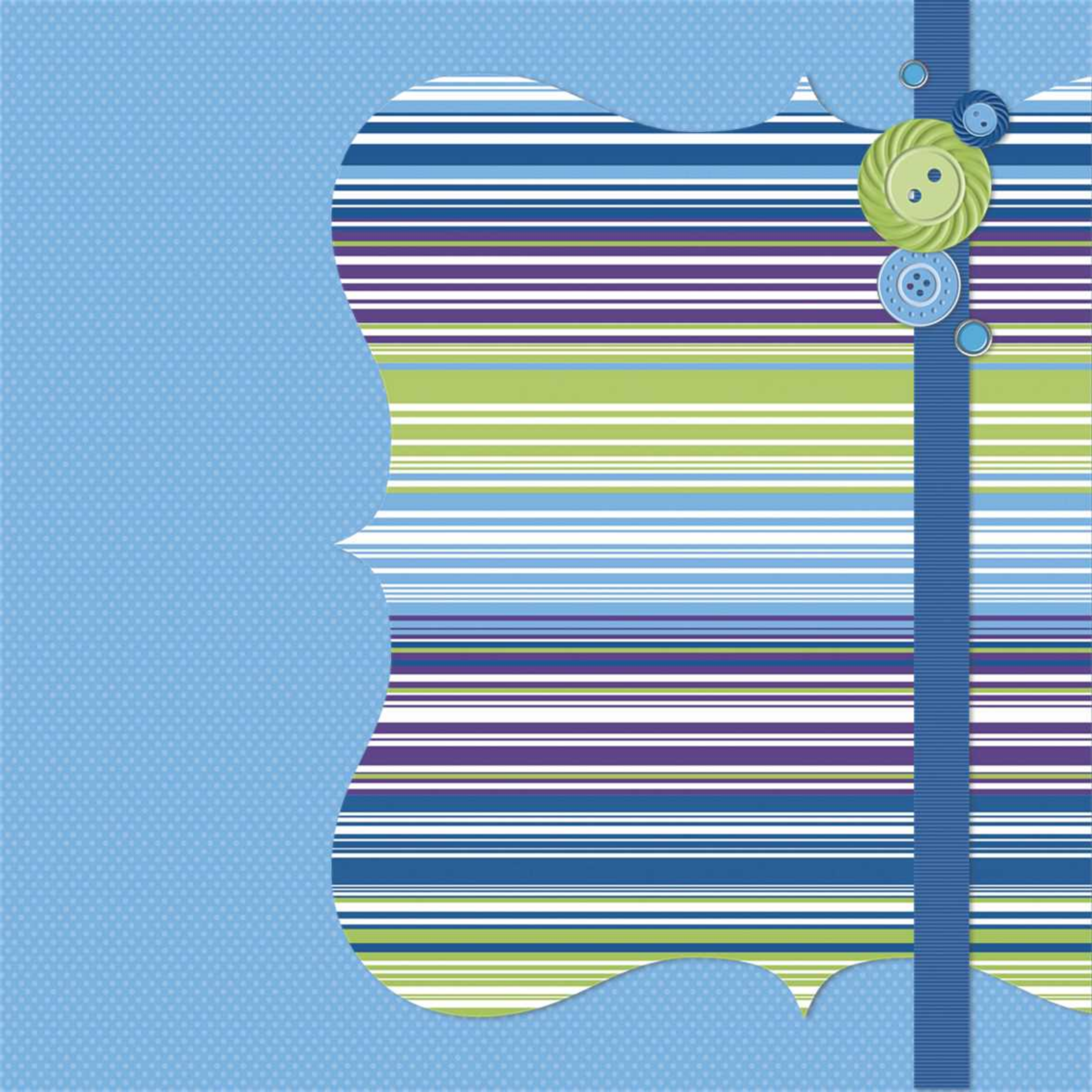


"Picnic in the Park"

"Picnic in the Park" Parish Festival was held on June 20 at McCarthy Park in Watkins. The festival was moved to June this year instead of August as it had been in years past. The weather cooperated, and it was a beautiful day.







"Celebration of Life" Mass



Balloon Rosary



The faith formation students from St. Anthony's and Assumption came together to recite the rosary with illuminated balloons. After the rosary was completed, the helium balloons were carefully taken outside while the Litany of Loretto was recited. The balloons were released and rose to heaven. A few songs followed the balloon release.

Balloon Rosary





St. Anthony School Memorial Mass

A Memorial Mass for the St. Anthony School was held on October 26. Father Richard Gross gave a wonderful homily filled with many great memories of the school from his days as a student and priest. The Building Committee carried out the cornerstone. A reception followed.



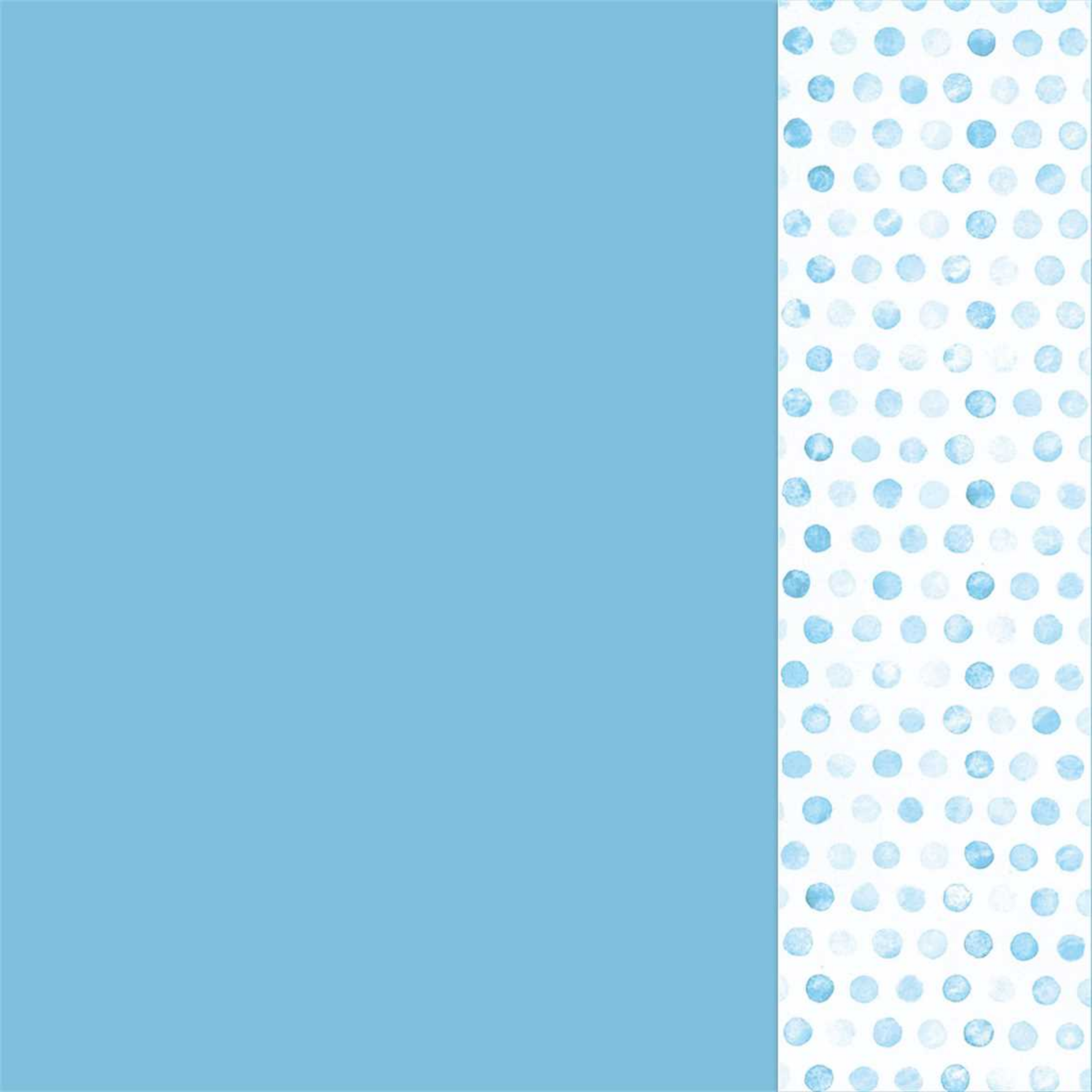


Meet the Living Saints Celebration



The youth of St. Anthony celebrated All Saints Day by portraying the saints at the November 2 Mass.





Farewell, St. Anthony School



Demolition and removal of the St. Anthony School building began on November 3. The excavator made quick demo of the school. It was a bittersweet day around town filled with many emotions as the walls came down. The skyline has changed, but there is excitement for the new Parish Center.

Farewell, St. Anthony School



Farewell, St. Anthony School





Christmas Pageant



For the first time in many years, St. Anthony's held a Christmas Pageant. It was a wonderful event held after Mass on December 20. In all, there were 100 participants in the whole production. At the end of the pageant, the kids were surprised by Santa, who came to pay homage to the one true king.



2015





The 2015 Confirmation class presented the Stations of the Cross in silhouette on March 11. Following the Stations, Bishop John LeVoor presided over a Reconciliation Service.



Palm Sunday



A blessing of the palm branches, followed by a procession around the church began the Palm Sunday Mass on March 29.