



ROOTED & SENT

News, stories, and updates from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Lay Initiative

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understand your gifts, your
frustrations & your team

God Wastes Nothing

Dear Co-Workers in Christ:

Spring has always been my favorite season. Perhaps its because of my birthday, but I've always loved the return of the birds singing and the beautiful flowers in bloom. The days stretch a little longer, the air softens, and almost without noticing, the world begins to wake again. What once looked still and lifeless slowly stirs with new color and energy.

Lately, I've been noticing this most in the growing collection of houseplants that have found their way into my home (thanks largely to my sister). I am by no means an expert - I tend to favor plants that can survive a bit of neglect - but I've come to appreciate their rhythms. For months, they sit dormant. No new leaves, no visible change. And yet, beneath the surface, the plants are conserving their energy, effectively resting. Then spring arrives, and suddenly - almost all at once - new growth pushes through, vibrant and undeniable.

The spiritual life often unfolds in much the same way. There are seasons that feel quiet, even stagnant - times when growth seems slow or invisible. But God is never absent in those moments. More often than not, He is doing His deepest work there, beneath the surface, in ways we cannot yet see.

In his first letter to the Corinthians 15:36, St. Paul writes, "*What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.*" It's a striking image, and an honest one. Seeds must be buried, broken open, and transformed before they can bear fruit. What looks like an ending is, in fact, the very beginning of new life. There is no resurrection without first a kind of dying - no growth without surrender, no fruit without first letting go.

Continued on page 2

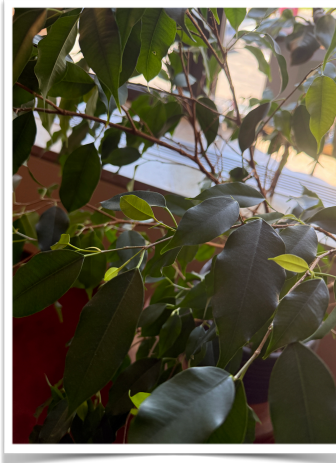
God wastes nothing. The joys, the disappointments, the seasons of clarity and the moments of confusion - He gathers it all up and puts it to work. Even what feels lost or fruitless is not beyond His reach. This is the quiet, often hidden pattern of the Christian life: that God brings abundance not by avoiding loss, but by working through it, redeeming even what feels like absence or decay, and turning it into something unexpectedly fruitful.

As spring continues to unfold around us, it offers more than beauty; it offers an invitation. Where in your life have you experienced this quiet dying? Where might God be asking for trust in a season that feels hidden or unproductive? And just as importantly: what new life might already be stirring?

Growth is happening, even if you can't yet see it.

Know of my prayers for you!

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Meg



Peep the new growth on one of my office plants!



Share your photos with us!

We are in search of pictures featuring YOU, Lay Pastoral Staff, actively engaged in your area of ministry/work. Our Communications Office has an abundance of photos from around the archdiocese but very few that highlight the great work of our lay pastoral staff. Help us change that!

If you have high resolution photos that we can use for promotional and recruitment materials, please upload them [HERE](#). Contact Meg with any questions.

SAVE THE DATE

September 10, 2026

Formed for the Call
(See page 7 for details)

October 8, 2026

Formed for the Call
(See page 7 for details)

October 22, 2026

Desert Day | Hales Corners
Priests of the Sacred Heart
Provincial Offices

November 12, 2026

Formed for the Call
(See page 7 for details)

December 3, 2026

Formed for the Call
(See page 7 for details)

December 10, 2026

Advent Day of Reflection
Keynote | Sr. Miriam James
Heidland, SOLT

February 25-27, 2027

Icon Writing Retreat
Thurs & Fri Evenings
All day Saturday
Lead by Fr. Reed
Mungovan, S.D.S

February 18, 2027

Lenten Day of Reflection
Keynote Speaker TBD

April 2027

Desert Day | Date TBD
St. Norbert Abbey

June 10, 2027

Lay Initiative Summer Event
with Archbishop Grob

Desert Day Recap

They Lay Initiative recently hosted a Desert Day at St. Norbert Abbey in De Pere, WI. Crafted after the mission and ministry of St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of the Lay Initiative, participants were encouraged find stillness and silence and spend some quality time with our Lord. Here are some reflections on the day!

My time at the Lay Initiative Desert Day was a personal day of transformation. It was such a blessing to be able to step away from work and to take the day to personally reflect with the Lord.

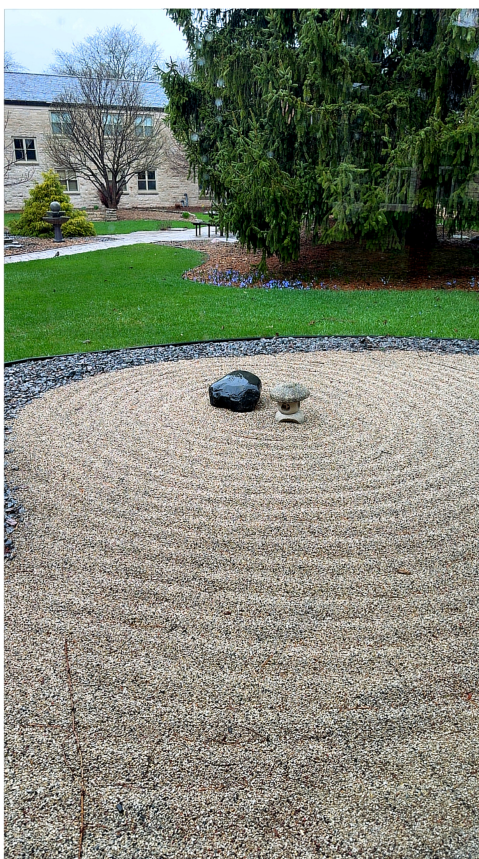
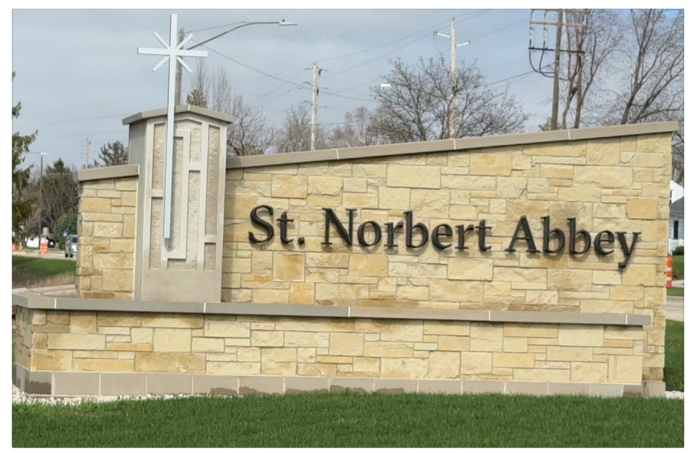
Meg and Brenda provided such beautiful testimonies of encountering Christ that helped focus our reflections that day and really open our hearts to hearing what the Lord is trying to say to us. The St. Norbert Abbey was an incredible space to host our day, with such lovely places to reflect. Through the quiet, calming spaces, you could feel the Holy Spirit within the halls. By surrounding ourselves with the exquisite art, relics and history within the Abbey, you felt as though you could transform deeper

into spiritual reflection, being inspired by the artifacts encompassing you. The day provided a good mix of activities as well as free time to allow you to have total freedom in what called to you. I spent my day in Visio Divina of their stunning stain glass within their main chapel, reflecting in the quiet Zen garden, taking the opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation and exploring their display of historical relics. Each participant was gifted a personal journal to reflect in and I filled a fourth of the journal by the end of the day.

The day overall had a great balance of group time as well as personal time; I could feel how carefully thought out the agenda for the day was to give you a perfect blend of activities. The ending activity together was the perfect way to conclude the day, in which we were able to write a word that resonated with us on a candle, sing a song together and come together as one. I remember thinking how sad I was that the day was over, and how I wished it could have continued for days!

Brianna Hagen

Archdiocese of Milwaukee



I'm so grateful for the opportunity to step away and participate in the Desert Day through the Archdiocese's Lay Initiative Office. Entering a space that was completely new to me, filled with beauty, quiet, and a sense of calm, felt like a true gift.

One of the things that surprised me most was how meaningful it was to share silence with people I know. We're so used to connecting through conversation, but there was something powerful about simply being present together. The day was thoughtfully paced, with just enough content to guide reflection, followed by time to step away and sit with it personally. That balance made it easy to enter in more deeply.

I left feeling renewed and refreshed, carrying with me not only a sense of peace but also tangible reminders of how the Holy Spirit moved in that time. It was a meaningful invitation to remain open and to continue noticing, listening, and allowing the Spirit to keep working within me beyond the day itself.

If you've ever felt the need to step away, to breathe, to listen a little more closely, I would really encourage you to consider these opportunities. It was time well spent, and I'm very thankful I said yes.

Kim Slizewski
St. Peter, Slinger



Relic of the Cloak of St. Joseph
Located in the crypt at St. Norbert Abbey

Recently I attended the silent Desert Day Retreat sponsored by the Lay Initiative at St. Norbert Abbey. Amid the usual bustle of ministry, that day was a welcome pause: to breathe, sit in silence, and quietly encounter Jesus. I believe it is crucial that we give ourselves permission to step away from busyness now and then, so we can regain perspective, be renewed in prayer, and listen for God's gentle voice.

Deanna Muñoz
St. Anthony on the Lake, Pewaukee

New Archdiocesan Logo



ARCHDIOCESE of
MILWAUKEE

Archbishop Grob recently shared his desire to return to the archdiocesan crest as our primary visual mark. He shared the following:

As we enter a new season with a new Mission, Vision, and Values we will return to the archdiocesan crest which was designed during the tenure of Archbishop Sebastian Messmer in the early 1900s.

The traditional logo carries with it the faith, sacrifices, and witness of those who came before us. It is a visual expression of continuity—of a Church that has weathered change across generations while remaining anchored in Christ. By embracing it again, the archdiocese honors its history and reclaims a shared identity that transcends any one moment or leader.

The design combines meaningful symbols of Archbishop John Martin Henni, the first Bishop of Milwaukee; imagery representing Milwaukee's geographical location; and an eagle, the emblem of the Cathedral's patron, St. John the Evangelist. The shield's red and white colors are drawn from the flag of Switzerland, honoring Archbishop Henni's native country. The four arms of the design converge to symbolize the meeting of waters, the Milwaukee and Menomonee Rivers and Lake Michigan, the heart of the city.

Archbishop Grob's Vision

We envision a time when all know Christ, promote human dignity, and transform society.

Maybe you've noticed the tagline at the bottom of our emails:
Know Christ. Promote Human Dignity. Transform Society.

This is more than a nice sentiment—it expresses who we are as Catholics and what we are called to live. The Office of Pastoral Leadership (in which lives the Lay Initiative) have been spending a lot of time reflecting on this vision. I'd like to share some of my thoughts on Archbishop Grob's three-fold call to mission:

Know Christ: Rooted in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19), our work as lay pastoral staff begins with a personal relationship with Christ. Only then can we truly "go and make disciples." We cannot give what we do not have, so we must remain attentive to our own spiritual lives.

Promote Human Dignity: A foundational teaching of the Church is that every person is made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27) - every single one. We are called to see Christ in everyone we encounter: coworkers, family, friends, strangers, and even those with whom we disagree.

Transform Society: The Parable of the Yeast (Luke 13:20–21) reveals the Kingdom's quiet but powerful influence in the world. We are called to bring Gospel values into every sphere of life—family, business, politics, and culture. In doing so, we participate in the transformation of society.

Archbishop Grob shared this reflection with Pastoral Center Staff when he first shared his vision:

Pope Leo XIV reminds us in his message to the Roman Curia: *"Amid daily toil, it is a grace to find trustworthy friends, where masks fall away, no one is used or sidelined, genuine support is offered, and each person's worth and competence are respected, preventing resentment and dissatisfaction. Such relationships call for a personal conversion, so that Christ's love, which makes us brothers and sisters, may shine through."*

Mission and communion are possible if we place Christ at the center.

We invite you to join us in embracing and reflecting on this vision.

Workshops and Other Opportunities

All Lay Pastoral Staff Members

LAY INITIATIVE SUMMER EVENT

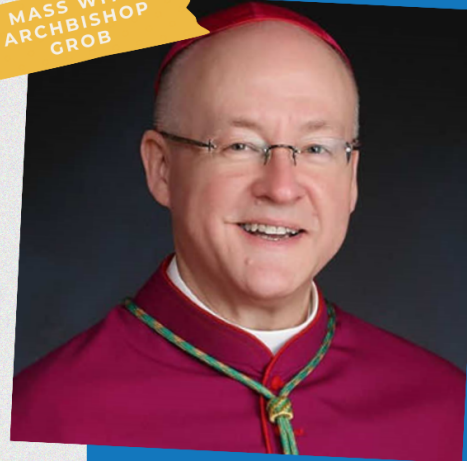
MONDAY, JUNE 1 | 1:00PM - 3:00PM

Join us for Mass at the Mary, Mother of the Church Pastoral Center for mass with Archbishop Grob followed by fellowship and updates from the Lay Initiative

[Register here](#)

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SINGING IN THE CHOIR FOR MASS, PLEASE EMAIL MEG!

MASS WITH
ARCHBISHOP
GROB



ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE
Lay Initiative

Parish Catechetical Staff



**BACK TO
THE WELL**
Rediscovering
Our Call to Serve

**REGRESANDO
A LA FUENTE**
Redescubriendo
Nuestro Llamado al Servicio

ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE
**CATECHETICAL
Conference**
August 20-22, 2026

Mary Mother of the Church Pastoral Center
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

[Register here](#)

Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology is offering this event for Parochial and Diocesan leaders, including Lay Pastoral Staff

More information can be found **HERE**.

That They May Be One: Bridging Cultural Gaps in Your Parish

Join us **FRIDAY,**
JUNE 19, 2026
8:15AM-4:15PM

A Forum for Catholic Leaders with Changing Demographics and International Clergy

- Hear from experts and leaders from the regional Church
- Gather with fellow stakeholders for discussion
- \$45.00 registration includes meals, Mass, and all sessions
- Learn more & register by June 1: shsst.edu/events-news
- Questions? Pearce Pomerleau, ppomerleau@shsst.edu



7335 S. Lover's Lane Rd., Franklin, WI 53132 | Apostolate of the Priests of the Sacred Heart | shsst.edu

SAVE THE DATE



mark your calendar!

THE OFFICE OF STEWARDSHIP & THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION ARE JOINING FORCES FOR AN UPCOMING WORKSHOP.
OFFICIAL INVITATION AND REGISTRATION DETAILS TO FOLLOW SOON.
PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS AS WE PREPARE TO GROW TOGETHER!



Formed for the Call

Workshop Series for Lay Leaders – Fall 2026

Thursday, September 10, 2026 | 9:00am-Noon
Marquette University (AMU 163)

The Council Speaks: Documents of Vatican II
Rev. Joseph Heit, [Incoming] Director for the Office of Worship for the Milwaukee Archdiocese

Thursday, October 8, 2026 | 9:00am-Noon
Marquette University (AMU 163)

The Joyful Rebel: The Life of St. Francis of Assisi
Sr. Joanne Schatzlein, OSF, Director, Congregation for the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi

Thursday, November 12, 2026 | 9:00am-Noon
Marquette University (AMU 163)

Leading with Purpose: Parish Leadership in a Changing World
Dr. Susan Switalski, Location Manager, Mt. Olivet Cemetery

Thursday, December 3, 2026 | 9:00am-Noon
Marquette University (AMU 248/250)

Sent Forth: Living the Mission of Evangelization
Rev. Juan Camacho, [Incoming] Vicar General for the Milwaukee Archdiocese

Stay tuned for registration links!

Working Genius identifies the six fundamental activities that are required for any type of work and provides a simple framework for how work gets done. Too many people feel frustrated, underutilized or misunderstood at work. Far too many teams experience failure, feel stuck or are confused because they don't know how to tap into the people around them. Working Genius is changing the way people are thinking about their work and teams, and is leading to more dignified, fulfilled and successful work.



Working with a Certified Facilitator can transform work for people by helping them:

- ✦ Understand why they have been successful or unsuccessful in past endeavors
- ✦ Clarify which types of work give joy and energy and which types are draining and difficult
- ✦ Avoid making unfair and inaccurate judgements about one another's motivation
- ✦ Alleviate guilt about struggles people have with certain types of work
- ✦ Improve dialogue and directives in team meetings
- ✦ Make quick and concrete adjustments to roles and responsibilities to better tap into one another's strengths, and avoid one another's weaknesses
- ✦ Get more done in less time

The Lay Initiative is able to bring the Working Genius to parishes at the request of the pastor.

Contact Meg Aspinwall (aspinwallm@archmil.org) for more information.

Prayer Intentions

We all carry joys, worries, and hopes that don't always get spoken out loud. If there is something you would like lifted up in prayer, we would be honored to pray with and for you.

Let us know your prayer intentions [HERE](#).



ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE
Lay Initiative

Meg Aspinwall

Associate Director of the Lay Initiative
Office of Pastoral Leadership
414-758-2223 | aspinwallm@archmil.org