

Hello and welcome to September!

As crisp autumn breezes sweep through and the morning air turns cool, our hearts turn naturally toward the simple comforts of shared tables, church pews, and the warm presence of neighbors gathered in friendship and faith.

This month is especially dear to our hearts as we celebrate community milestones—including honoring the unwavering dedication of our volunteers—and look forward to our **Annual Retreat** on **September 22, 2026**, at St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church.

September also highlights the **World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly** (observed in the U.S. during the first weekend after Labor Day). Guided by this year's reassuring theme—*"I will never forget you"* (cf. Isaiah 49:5)—we are reminded that God's love answers isolation, assuring every older adult that they are known, cherished, and loved without end.

Whether you are a family member, devoted caregiver, Care Team Member, pastoral associate, or part of our parish family, your daily presence brings this comfort. Thank you for embracing the true gift of aging and helping our elders remain connected, valued, and surrounded by love. Wishing you a peaceful, joy-filled, and blessed month ahead.

In this issue, you'll find—

- Important upcoming events including—
 - Care Team Ministry Annual Retreat flyer & registration (pp.2-3)
 - Mental Health Ministry Retreat flyer and registration (p.4)
 - Other community-wide events (p.5)
- *September Reflections*: World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly (USCCB) (p.6)
- 21 Conversation Starters (pp.7-8)
- A book recommendation to end your summer (p.9)

Annual Retreat

September 22 • St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church

Just a friendly reminder to register on **page 3**!



Holy Cross Care Team

Celebrating a wonderful 12-year milestone of compassion, dedication, and service since being established in 2014!



Our Lady Queen of Peace Care Team

Joyfully marking a wonderful 4-year anniversary of bringing comfort and care to our community since 2022!



Seasons change, yet our roots remain

September 22, 2026

8:30 - 9:00 Coffee's on!

9:00 Welcome & Catholic Charities Updates

9:05 Shawn Carney

Executive Director, Catholic Charities

9:10 Most Reverend Donald J. Hying

Bishop of Madison

9:30 Alisha Henning

Trauma-Informed Companionship

10:30 Break

10:45 Alisha Henning

The Healing Power of Music

12:00 Fr Lawrence Oparaji

12:05 Lovely Lunch

1:00-1:45 Peg Weber Change

1:45 - 2:05 Delicious Dessert

2:05-2:50pm Peg Weber Be Like a Tree

2:50-3pm Closing Blessing

Venue: St Thomas Aquinas Church 602 Everglade Drive, Madison, WI 53717

Annual Retreat Registration

September 22, 2026

Venue: St Thomas Aquinas Church
602 Everglade Drive, Madison

There are three simple ways to register, and all three options take you to the same place:

A. Scan the QR code with your smartphone camera, then tap the link that appears on your screen.

or



B. Type the short web address (URL) into your internet browser and press Enter on your keyboard.

<https://tinyurl.com/ya3xpedy>

or

C. Click the "Register Now" link, and the registration page will open automatically.

REGISTER NOW

Once you're there, you'll only need to answer six quick questions to complete your registration.

After you register, we'll send you a reminder a few days before the event, so you won't have to worry about finding the details in your old emails.

MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY RETREAT

Are you...

- living with mental health challenges
- helping a friend or family member
- volunteering in your church or community
- working as a mental health professional
- wanting to better understand mental health
- curious about Mental Health Ministry

This retreat is for you!



Keynote Speaker: Scott Weeman,
Founder of Catholic in Recovery
Remarks: Bishop Donald Hying,
Bishop of Diocese of Madison

SATURDAY

19

SEPT, 2026

CAMP GRAY

E10213 SHADY LANE RD
REEDSBURG, WI 53959

9am to 6pm

Bilingual Mass at 5pm

Breakfast and lunch included.

Register Today!
Free to attend



Questions? Call 608-821-3050 or email apd@madisondiocese.org



COMMUNITY EVENTS



Memory Screening by the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Dane County (Belleville)

Memory Screening – Sugar River Senior Center

- Date & Time: **Wednesday, September 2, 2026** | 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Location: **Sugar River Senior Center**, 21 S Vine St, Belleville, WI 53508
- Details: **Free**, confidential 20-minute memory screenings by ADRC specialists help establish a baseline, check for early signs of memory changes, and provide information on brain health and local resources.
- Registration: Space is limited, and registration is required. You can schedule an appointment by calling the Sugar River Senior Center at **(608) 424-6007**.

View additional dates and information [here](#).

Additional Memory Screening Opportunity by the ADRC of Dane County (Middleton)

Memory Screening – Middleton Senior Center

- Date & Time: **Friday, September 11, 2026** | 1:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.
- Location: **Middleton Senior Center**, 7448 Hubbard Ave, Middleton, WI 53562
- Details: **Free**, confidential 15-minute memory screenings provided by an ADRC specialist. Space is limited, and registration is required.
- Registration: Call the Middleton Senior Center at **(608) 831-2373** to schedule an appointment.

View additional information [here](#).

2026 Walk to End Alzheimer's (Diocese of Madison Area)

From Marathon to Dane, counties across Wisconsin host their own walks each fall.

Local highlights include:

- [Rock County](#): **Saturday, September 19, 2026**
- [Dane County](#): **Sunday, October 4, 2026**

(View all 27 statewide dates, locations, and registration details through the [Alzheimer's Association Wisconsin Chapter](#).)



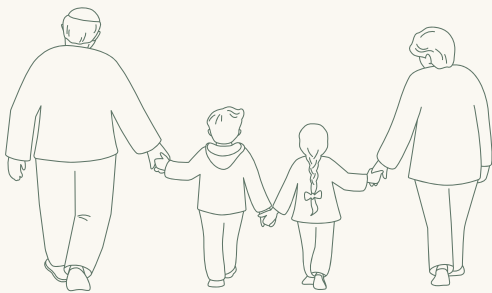
WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND THE ELDERLY

The theme chosen by Pope Leo XIV for the 2026 celebration is “I will never forget you” (Isaiah 49:5).

The U.S. bishops have approved moving the celebration of World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly in the U.S. to the first weekend after Labor Day—September 12 and 13, 2026—to coincide with National Grandparents (and the Elderly) Day in the United States, as many local communities, schools, and parishes have been doing for some time which is typically observed in ____ by

In their 1999 pastoral message *Blessings of Age*, the U.S. bishops invited older adults, their families, and faith communities to find new ways to welcome older persons and encourage their participation in society and the Church. Recognizing the social, economic, and spiritual importance of this fast-growing group, the bishops called for a fresh perspective that celebrates aging as a *gift*.

“In *Blessings of Age*, special words are offered for (1) older people themselves, (2) caregivers, (3) the parish faith community—pastors, staff, volunteers, and all parishioners, and (4) younger adults. The publication also includes reflection and discussion questions, current statistics, and helpful suggestions. It was released in commemoration of the United Nations' "International Year of Older Persons."



A Statement by the U.S. Catholic Bishops

“There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens” (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

“Arriving at an older age is to be considered a privilege: not simply because not everyone has the good fortune to reach this stage in life, but also, and above all, because this period provides real possibilities for better evaluating the past, for knowing and living more deeply the Paschal Mystery, for becoming an example in the Church for the whole People of God” – Pope Saint John Paul II.

CONVERSATION STARTERS



Transitions & Harvest Memories

1. What was your favorite sign that autumn was around the corner—was it the cooler morning breeze, the changing leaves, or something else?
2. Did your family have any end-of-summer traditions, like a final picnic, a campfire, or a harvest drive?
3. How did you usually prepare your home or garden as September brought cooler weather?
4. What warm food or drink did you look forward to making as summer heat faded?
5. When you were growing up, what was your favorite thing about going back to school or starting a new routine in September?
6. Did you ever go apple picking or visit a local farm in the early fall? What was that experience like?
7. Is there a specific memory or feeling that always comes back to you when the late September air turns crisp?
8. What was your favorite fall fashion item or cozy sweater to pull out of the closet when the temperatures dropped?
9. Did you ever help with canning, preserving, or storing the late-summer harvest for the colder months?
10. Do you remember attending local county fairs or harvest festivals in September, and what did you enjoy most there?
11. What was your favorite outdoor activity to do on a clear, sunny September afternoon?
12. Did your family have a favorite comforting soup or baked good that signaled the true start of autumn?
13. How did the changing seasons remind you to thank God for the year's harvest and blessings?
14. As the busyness of summer ended, did your family or parish have any traditions for giving thanks or saying special prayers for the new season ahead?



CONVERSATION STARTERS

World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

15. What is one of your favorite memories of visiting your own grandparents when you were growing up?
16. What special treats, dishes, or meals did your grandmother or grandfather always make for you?
17. Did your grandparents ever pass down a special skill, story, or piece of advice that stuck with you over the years?
18. What was your grandparents' home like, and what made it feel warm and welcoming?
19. If you are a grandparent yourself, what was the most surprising or wonderful thing about welcoming your first grandchild?
20. What is a favorite activity, game, or pastime you loved sharing across generations?
21. If you could sit down for a quick chat with your grandparents today, what is one memory you'd love to reminisce about with them?
22. What was a nickname or special name you had for your grandparents, or that your grandchildren call you?
23. What is a favorite photo or picture you have with your grandparents or grandchildren, and what was happening that day?
24. What kind of music, songs, or radio programs did your grandparents love to play around the house?
25. What was a fun tradition or small routine you looked forward to every single time you visited your grandparents?
26. How did your grandparents celebrate special occasions like birthdays, milestones, or family gatherings?
27. Did your grandparents teach you a favorite prayer, bedtime routine, or hymn that you still hold dear today?
28. How did seeing your grandparents practice their faith or attend services influence the way you lived your own life?

BOOK NOOK



Grandma's Story & Grandpa's Story

Korie Herold

At a Glance

A keepsake book arranged chronologically, with sections such as childhood, school days, work and travel, family, and personal values.

A Meaningful Activity

Offers ample writing space and photo spots, making it easy for a youth, young adult, or grandchild to serve as the "scribe" during an interview with their elder.

This role invites attentive listening, meaningful storytelling, and a deeper bond across generations.

Why it fits with the Care Team Ministry

This guided keepsake journal reflects the heart of Care Team Ministry by encouraging intergenerational connection, honoring older adults, and helping families preserve treasured memories.

It offers a gentle, practical way for volunteers, family members, or grandchildren to share quality time with an elder, inviting them to tell their life story, share their wisdom, and pass along their faith journey across generations.

Where to Locate

Available at major retailers such as [Target](#), [Amazon](#), and [Walmart](#), as well as select local independent bookstores.

- **Note:** Only Grandma's version is linked here; Grandpa's version is also available on these sites and in person.

