

FEBRUARY 2026

ISSUE 1

# THE DUTCHMEN DIFFERENCE

## ST. JOHN NEPOMUCENE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Welcome to  
**ST. JOHN NEPOMUCENE  
SCHOOL**

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# WE ARE ST. JOHN SCHOOL

When we say, “We are St. John School,” we are not talking about a building or a name; we are talking about a mission, a faith, and a community united in Christ.

At St. John Nepomucene School, Jesus Christ is our center. Our mission to educate our faith community in an atmosphere of acceptance, service, and unity guides everything we do. It shapes our classrooms, our relationships, our expectations, and our culture.

The Dutchman Difference is lived through FAITH. We follow Christ’s example in how we treat one another, Accept challenges and responsibilities as opportunities for growth, Inspire wisdom through learning rooted in values, Thank God by sharing our gifts, and Help others through service and compassion.

What makes St. John’s special is not just what we teach — it’s who we form. We are forming disciples, leaders, servants, and faithful young people who know they are loved by God and called to love others.

Together We Love, Serve and Share Our Faith.

This is who we are.

This is St. John School.

This is The Dutchman Difference.

Kyle Kapinos, Principal



Father Ron Belitz  
Pastor



Deacon Dave Van Eperen  
Executive Director



Kyle Kapinos  
School Principal

# ST. JOHN SCHOOL MISSION

As a school community, we work to develop Christ as the center of our lives. We strive through our actions and in our education to demonstrate what it means to show F.A.I.T.H. Every Day.

- F** Follow Christ's Example
- A** Accept Challenges and Responsibilities
- I** Inspire Wisdom
- T** Thank God by Sharing our Gifts
- H** Help Others

Religion is taught in each grade at St. John School. Our faith-integrated education is also weaved into other areas of learning, including math, science, art and field trips.

Every Friday at 8 a.m. there is an all-school mass. Students read the Bible readings and petitions, bring up the gifts, serve mass, and lead the congregation in song.

In accordance with our mission of F.A.I.T.H. Every Day and keeping Jesus Christ as our center, we strive to:

- Help students understand the ways in which Christ lived by studying His life and living as He did.
- Look at challenges as a gift from God, and using prayer to rise to those challenges.
- Create an atmosphere that encourages questioning and lifelong learning of the life and ways of Christ
- Use daily prayer to express our gratitude to the Lord, and to help students see the value of prayer in their own lives.
- Promote service to others not as a requirement, but as a way of life.

*F.A.I.T.H. EVERY DAY*



# GETTING TO KNOW PRINCIPAL KAPINOS



I am truly grateful and excited to be part of the St. John Nepomucene School community. It is a blessing to become part of a faith-filled school family that is rooted in Christ, committed to excellence, and grounded in service.

My wife, Jill, and I have been married for 15 years, and we are blessed with four wonderful children: Emma (14), Clay (11), and twin boys Beau and Jace (9). Our family lives on a hobby farm in Maribel, Wisconsin, where life is full of energy, responsibility, and plenty of laughter.

I have been blessed with a wide range of experiences in Catholic education and public education. I previously served as fourth grade teacher at St. Clare Catholic School and eventually became their principal. I was blessed to have been principal at St. Francis of Assisi Elementary School in Manitowoc, and most recently spent five years as the High School Assistant Principal/Activities Director at Denmark High School. Each role has shaped my passion for student growth, leadership development, and building strong school communities.

At the heart of everything I do is a deep belief that schools should form the whole child: academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually. I am passionate about creating a school culture where students feel known, valued, challenged, and supported, and where faith is not just taught, but lived.

I am honored to be part of St. John Nepomucene School, and I look forward to walking alongside students, families, and staff as we grow together in faith, love, and purpose.

I am grateful to be here, and I can't wait for what our future holds.

**GO DUTCHMAN!!**



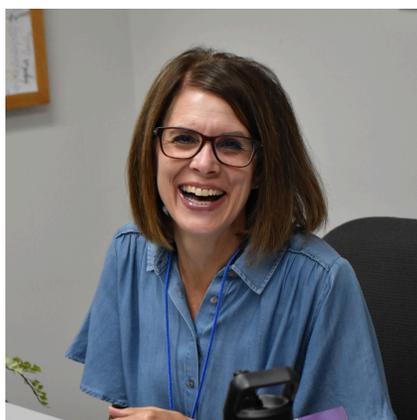
# NEW DUTCHMAN STAFF MEMBERS

“From the moment I arrived, I was surrounded by so much positivity and kindness – it was honestly overwhelming in the best way. Everyone has been so helpful and welcoming, and I already feel like I’m part of something special here,” says Valerie Vosters. We are so excited to have her support and positivity in the school office this year. “I spent 34 years working in the insurance industry, but I’ve found real joy in working alongside school staff, students and teachers.”

“I love being a part of St. John School because from the very beginning, I have felt so welcomed into both the school and parish community,” comments Stacey Hooyman, a first grade teacher. “I discovered my passion for teaching later in life, and it has truly been the best decision I’ve made.” The staff loves her upbeat attitude and the incredible energy she brings every single day. She has so much to offer and gives her whole heart to this school. “It is truly a blessing to come each day to a place where I feel connected, supported and part of something greater.” Our students are incredibly fortunate to learn from someone who cares so deeply and gives so much of herself each day.

Amber Hietpas is our newest preschool paraprofessional, helping in Mrs. Andrejeski and Mrs. Hietpas’ classrooms. As a parent of two current students and one former student at St John's, she understands our community deeply and invests in it wholeheartedly. Not only does she support our classrooms, but she has also stepped up to take on the role of lead chef in our cafeteria three days a week. “I love St. John’s School because it feels like a second family,” Amber says, and her willingness to serve wherever she’s needed truly reflects her heart for our school.

You can read more about all our staff members on our website on the School Staff page.



Valerie Vosters  
Office Assistant



Stacey Hooyman  
First Grade Teacher



Amber Hietpas  
Preschool Paraprofessional

# RED CARPET EVENT



St. John School's first all-school Mass is celebrated by rolling out the red carpet for our students, a tradition starting back in the 2013-2014 school year! Teachers lead each class from school to church, and families line the red carpet to clap, cheer and take pictures. Those who stay for Mass can feel the excitement and hope for the school year and the priority we place on having Jesus in our students' hearts.

# COLOR RUN

The crisp September air turned into a kaleidoscope of color during St. John School's 5th Annual Color Run. Organized by the Home & School Association, the fundraiser saw students darting through an obstacle course while being playfully doused in vibrant powder by staff and families. Between the high-energy music, pizza and shaved ice treats, the afternoon was a perfect celebration of school spirit that ended in a spectacular "color blast" finale.



# SPORTS CENTER



5th Grade Boys Basketball team takes 1<sup>st</sup> place in Kimberly tournament



7<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls Volleyball Team



5<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls Basketball Team



7<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls Basketball



7<sup>th</sup> Grades Boys Basketball Team

Alumni Update: Lauren Vosters and Hattie Grishaber, both 2025 SJS alumni, have played a key role in the Little Chute Varsity Girls Basketball team's success this season, each hitting a game-winning shot to secure the victory among other fantastic moments. Go Dutchmen!

# IS THAT A SNOWPLOW?

Check out this amazing upgrade to an Outagamie County plow!

Back in November, one of our St. John School parents reached out to ask if the students would be interested in painting a snowplow, and our art teacher, Mrs. Chelsea Klister, was up to the challenge!

Students were inspired to showcase what makes our school special: our faith, our church community and the rich history of Little Chute. In less than two weeks, almost every student had a chance to work on the design.

The plow was lined in lights and featured in the Little Chute, Appleton, Kaukauna and Freedom Christmas parades. It was then proudly displayed outside the Outagamie County building.



# CHRISTMAS PERFORMANCES

St. John School's annual St. John's Christmas Concert was held in church this year and featured students in kindergarten through eighth grade. This year's theme, "Sing for the King," was directed by Mrs. Baranczyk, our general music and orchestra teacher, along with Mrs. Hanson, our band teacher.

Orchestra students performed several selections, including "Let It Go," while the band showcased pieces such as "We Three Kings." Eighth-grade students impressed the audience with a handbell performance, and students from all grade levels joined together in song, performing favorites like "Born This Night in Bethlehem" and "Angels From the Realms of Glory." The evening concluded with a unified and uplifting finale, "Sing for the King."



The concert was a memorable evening filled with beautiful Christmas music and Gospel readings that celebrated the true meaning of the season.



# CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

“United in Faith and Community” was this year’s theme for Catholic Schools Week, and we began our week at Mass with the St. Johns community. Students gathered Monday to sing spirit and praise songs and continued the week with reading stories with big and little buddies, burning off energy on inflatables or bowling, performing in a talent show, watching the 8th graders play an excellent volleyball game against the teachers, and ending with our 35th annual Pep Rally For God! We also made tie blankets and had a fundraiser for Harbor House.



# 35TH ANNUAL PEP RALLY FOR GOD



# DID YOU KNOW?

## St. John Nepomucene Catholic School Awarded Simplified Writing Champion Award, Hosts Johns Hopkins University

In April of 2025, April Smith, CEO and Professional Development Lead of Simplified Writing awarded St. John Nepomucene Catholic School with the Simplified Writing Champion Award, and a representative from Johns Hopkins visited the school to present the award and observe classroom instruction using the Simplified Writing Program.

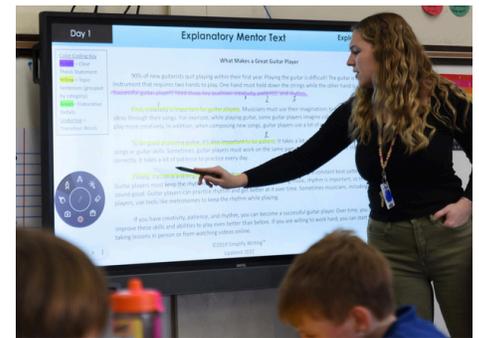


St. John School first implemented the Simplify Writing® Program to improve students' writing skills in the 2024 – 2025 school year. Nicole Geurts said, "I have seen a huge improvement in the foundational skills of the kindergarten students since the implementation of Simplified Writing. Grammar and sentence structure have grown. Overall knowledge is amazing to see and hear." Skylar Wolf (Vollendorf), fourth grade teacher agreed saying, "Their ability to analyze, understand and construct different forms of writing has been incredible!"

Nicole Geurts, Interventionist and Curriculum Specialist, is now using the program's intervention resources, and said, "These resources have helped students identify tricky letters that look the same; such as b and d, with fun visuals to help them remember the differences. The intervention handwriting program has also improved students' letter formation, and using the program's writing mechanics has helped students stay within expectations for their writing."

Jolene VanDeLoo, Kindergarten teacher, is impressed with each of her student's progress. "It has taught my students how to map out their sentences, use a complete sentence, identify specific parts of speech like nouns or adjectives, and have independent writing skills." One student recently wrote: "Archer is feeding my dog yesterday when we are at karate because my mom wasn't at our house."

**"I was amazed at their ability to construct these papers using higher level thinking," Wolf said. "And most of all they are excited about it!"**



[stjn.org/school](http://stjn.org/school)



**St. John Nepomucene Catholic School**

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