

CHAMPION

"GO, FEAR NOTHING, I WILL HELP YOU."

FALL 2025

Issue #77



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RECTOR'S WINDOW

Dear Pilgrims,

The year 2025 has been a tremendous year for us here at the Shrine of Our Lady of Champion. As we approach December 8th, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, we will commemorate the 15th anniversary of Bishop Ricken's proclamation approving the apparition of the Queen of Heaven to Adele Brice. On December 8th, 2010, Bishop Ricken stated, "I declare with moral certainty and in accord with the norms of the Church that the events, apparitions and locutions given to Adele Brice in October of 1859 do exhibit the substance of supernatural character, and I do hereby approve these apparitions as worthy of belief (although not obligatory) by the Christian faithful."

As devotion to Our Lady under her title of "Our Lady of Champion" continues to grow, the ways in which the Catholic faithful choose to honor her become more widespread. Playgrounds at schools, classrooms, and parish centers are being named after Our Lady of Champion. Churches have installed stained glass windows portraying Our Lady's apparition to Adele. EWTN has filmed documentaries on the history of her apparition in Wisconsin and a program recounting the story of how the apparition was approved, titled "Return to Champion" was produced. It includes interviews and conversations with the three Bishops who helped conduct the study, which led to the approval of the apparition. Devotion to Our Lady has spread to the digital realm as well. The "Amen" app provides prayers for the faithful to participate in the National Novena to Our Lady of Champion, October 1-9. While on the "Hallow" app, a person can enjoy a "walking tour" of the grounds of the Shrine at Champion. From receiving countless letters of thanksgiving from people who are invoking Our Lady of Champion in their time of need, to art projects shared with us from students, I hear and see so many fruits of her presence. Most clearly, we see Our Lady honored every day here at her Shrine by the hundreds of thousands of pilgrims who travel from near and far to pray with her and give Glory to God through the Sacraments.

As we look towards the future, we pray that devotion continues to grow for Our Lady in the United States and around the world, especially under her title of "Our Lady of Champion."

Fr. Anthony M. Stephens, CPM

Fr. Anthony Stephens, CPM



STAY TUNED FOR UPDATES
COMING REGARDING
CHANGES IN MASS TIMES



PLAYGROUND DEDICATION

St. Ignatius School in Kaukauna Dedicated playground to Our Lady of Champion. Before the playground was built, more than 100 Miraculous Medals were placed beneath it, entrusting the children to Our Lady's protection and guidance.

Fr. Anthony Stephens, CPM, blessed the playground and led the dedication, officially placing it under the patronage of Our Lady of Champion. This is fitting with the message of Our Lady to gather the children of this wild country.



SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

FR. ANTHONY STEPHENS, CPM

Time flies – remember death – *yet we hope in the Lord Jesus!*

As we approach the end of the calendar year, those of us in the Northern Hemisphere see the change in seasons from summer to fall. As time marches on, we witness a shift in nature around us. The flowers in gardens are beginning to wane, and the grass on the lawn no longer grows with the same vigor as it did a few months ago. The leaves on the trees have changed color and are falling to the ground. The crops in the fields are ripe and ready for harvest.

There is a sense of fulfillment, as all things have run the course for which they were created this season. *Tempus fugit—memento mori*: “time flies—remember death,” as the old saying goes.

Reflecting on death, it is one of the things that unites all humanity. No one gets out of this life alive. Death calls on the rich and poor, religious and irreligious, young and old. A person without faith sees death as a tragedy and, therefore, desires to maximize worldly experiences before death calls. Many people live and act as if there will be no consequences to their behavior.

But the faithful Christian has a different perspective on life and death, because of Jesus’ victory over death on the cross. The Christian does not see death as an ending of all meaning and existence, but as a birth into eternal life. Thus, the Christian takes up the sweet yoke of the Gospel and strives to observe the Ten Commandments and the Eight Beatitudes.



They see in Our Lord’s admonition to the sinful woman “to go and sin no more” as more than a mere suggestion. It is an invitation to go on the greatest adventure ever!

What is more, the Lord Jesus is with us every step of the way. He aids us in slaying the dragons of selfishness, and He travels with us in the deserts of loneliness and pain. The Christian strives to live in such a way that they may have some incomplete work when they die, but they have lived each day prepared to meet the Lord Jesus.

Death is not the end, but it is the gateway to eternal life. Choosing to love God and neighbor in the time that has been given to us will determine whether our eternal life will be one of eternal bliss in Heaven or eternal suffering in Hell. We do not have absolute certitude that when we die, we will go to Heaven. However, we do have hope that if we live well and die as a friend of God, then we will be welcomed into that Heavenly reward. “*Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few.*”

One of the ways that we can live with one eye to Heaven and one eye looking at our lives on earth is by embracing the virtue of hope. Throughout 2025, Catholics have been celebrating the Jubilee Year of Hope. One of the blessings of the Jubilee Year of Hope is that it has taught us to view life

through a lens of hope, including our view of death. Pope Francis reminded us of this when he reflected on the reality of death in preparing the Church for the Jubilee year of Hope: *“For hope is “that theological virtue by which we desire... eternal life as our happiness”. The Second Vatican Council says of hope that, “when people are deprived of this divine support, and lack hope in eternal life, their dignity is deeply impaired, as may so often be seen today. The problems of life and death, of guilt and suffering, remain unsolved, so that people are frequently thrown into despair”. We, however, by virtue of the hope in which we were saved, can view the passage of time with the certainty that the history of humanity and our own individual history are not doomed to a dead end or a dark abyss, but directed to an encounter with the Lord of glory. As a result, we live our lives in expectation of his return and in the hope of living forever in him. In this spirit, we make our own the heartfelt prayer of the first Christians with which sacred Scripture ends: “Come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev 22:20).”*

Our hope for Heaven does not end when a person's life on earth comes to an end. This is demonstrated by the Church's teaching on Purgatory and that we pray for the dead to be welcomed into Heaven after their pilgrimage here on earth. November 2nd, the Church celebrates the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls). The Catholic teaching on Purgatory gives us great hope since we are not to canonize

nor condemn a person when they die. We commend them unto the mercy of God, because we do not know the state of their soul at their death. While we have breath in our lungs, we can and should pray for the needs of all the members of the Church: The Church here on earth (the Church Militant) and those who await entry to Heaven (the Church Suffering).

A regular part of our life of prayer should be to ask St. Joseph for a “happy death”. He is the patron saint of a happy death. Did any man ever die a happier death than St. Joseph? He died in the presence of Our Lady and Our Lord. They showed him love and care in his last days on earth. We should all pray for a death as happy as that one: to be welcomed into eternal life by Our Lady and Our Lord.

“““

But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be an affliction, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace.
(Wisdom 3: 1-3)







A SEASON OF GRACE

BY: KATHY CIHA, PILGRIMAGE COORDINATOR

What a remarkable summer at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion! Pilgrims from across the nation have filled our grounds, bringing their prayers to Our Lady and Adele on each visit. This Jubilee Year has brought a 13% increase in pilgrim groups, including parishes and schools from Texas, Kansas, and Colorado. We hosted the Jubilee year mass, where hundreds of people processed with the mission cross. Over 2,000 faithful came to venerate the first-class relics of Padre Pio, while the Flame of Love Conference gathered a record 650 attendees. The Vietnamese Divine Mercy Association brought more than 400 pilgrims for a weekend of faith, worship, and fellowship with Bishop David L. Ricken and Bishop Michael Pham, the nation's first Vietnamese American bishop.

The Feast of the Assumption is one of the oldest events that shows us devotion to Our Lady here at Champion. On August 16, 1920, the Green Bay Press-Gazette printed this anecdote about the Shrine's Assumption Mass: "Gee, all of Green Bay must have gone," said a resident, referring to the scarcity of cars in town. "A large number of residents made the pilgrimage to Robinsonville (now Champion). The streets of Green Bay presented an empty appearance as a result." Over a hundred years later, that has not changed, as we saw nearly 1,800 pilgrims join in prayer and procession, a breathtaking testament to the enduring love for Our Lady.

From October 1–9, thousands united in the National Novena to Our Lady of Champion, lifting intentions from every corner of the country to heaven through Our Lady's intercession. We celebrated the Feast of the Holy Rosary on October 7th. On October 8th, we remembered the miraculous deliverance of the Belgian settlers during the Great Peshtigo Fire with an evening glowing with candlelight, prayer, and devotion. It all culminated on October 9th, the 166th anniversary of Our Lady's appearance to Adele Brice, with a Solemn Mass celebrated by Bishop David L. Ricken.

Every pilgrimage, every prayer, and every step taken here is a way to encounter Our Lady of Champion, where heaven once touched earth.

If you want to make a pilgrimage, please go to championshrine.org/visit or contact Kathy Ciha:

920-866-2571 x113
kciha@championshrine.org



SAVE THE DATE

RORATE CAELI MASS & BREAKFAST
DECEMBER 13TH | 6:30 AM

An ancient Advent liturgy honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary! Mass is celebrated in candlelight as the sun rises and illuminates the chapel.
Hot breakfast will follow Mass. RVSP required

MEET OUR NEW CHAPLAIN

FR. ZACHERY FELDKER, CPM

I JOHN

Favorite Book in the Bible?

DRAWING/PAINTING

Favorite Hobbies?

THE APPARITION ORATORY

Favorite Spot at the Shrine?

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Confirmation Saint?

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Favorite way to pray?

ADORO TE DEVOTE

Favorite Hymn?



**READ FATHERS
VOCAION STORY**



KEEP HIM IN YOUR PRAYERS AS HE BEGINS HIS TIME AT THE SHRINE

CHAMPION TO ROME

Communications Director John Paul Brissette and his wife, Halle, were engaged at the Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in January 2025 and were married on September 19, 2025, in Green Bay. After their wedding, they traveled to Rome for the Sposi Novelli marriage blessing by Pope Leo XIV. During their audience with the Holy Father, they presented him with an *Apparition Icon of Our Lady of Champion and the Seer Adele Brice*. Pope Leo XIV admired the icon and contemplate the message of Our Lady inscribed on it.



“”

"Sharing Our Lady of Champion with the Holy Father was an unforgettable honor and a true gift to bring Mary's message from the fields of Wisconsin to the heart of Rome."

JOIN US IN PRAYING

FOR OUR HOLY FATHER POPE LEO THE XIV

Online Gift Shop CHRISTMAS PICKS



Add this stunning Our Lady of Champion Ornament to everyone's Christmas tree. A great way to honor and remember where heaven touched earth.



This Acrylic replica of the stained-glass window makes a unique Christmas ornament and a radiant reminder of Our Lady of Champion and her message of hope.



Support The National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion mission this Christmas Season. Four shrine exclusive designs for a total of 12 Christmas cards.

SHOP ONLINE

Visit ChampionShrine.org/store



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

BY: KIM MAY, VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Hip, hip, hooray for our incredible volunteers who helped make the Feast of the Assumption such a joyful celebration at the Shrine! This year, more than **120 volunteers** gave their time and energy to welcome and serve the pilgrims who came to honor Our Lady.

Among them were **10 Missionaries of the Word**, who generously devoted their entire day to assisting in every way imaginable, all with a smile. Their cheerful presence was truly contagious, filling the grounds with a spirit of joy and service. Events like these remind us how vital our volunteers are to the life of the Shrine.



To each of you who served, thank you! Your generosity reflects Our Lady's message.
IF YOU WANT TO VOLUNTEER CONTACT KMAY@CHAMPIONSHRINE.ORG

FEAST DAY RELIC VENERATION



The National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion is home to many beautiful relics of Saints and Blesseds.

On their feast day, the Shrine brings out the Saints' relic for personal veneration the hour before its 11 am Mass. See our upcoming relic veneration dates:

St. Cecilia (11/22)

St. Andrew the Apostle (11/30)

St. Barbara (12/4)

St. Anastasia (12/25)

St. John the Evangelist (12/27)

St. Patrick (3/17)

St. Mark the Evangelist (4/25)

St. Philip the Apostle (5/3)

St. James the Lesser Apostle (5/3)

St. Matthias the Apostle (5/14)

St. Barnabas the Apostle (6/11)

St. Anthony of Padua (6/13)

St. Peter the Apostle (6/29)

St. Paul the Apostle (6/29)

St. Thomas the Apostle (7/3)

St. Maria Goretti (7/6)

St. James the Greater Apostle (7/25)

St. Pope Pius X (8/21)

St. Bartholomew the Apostle (8/24)

St. Teresa of Calcutta (9/5)

FUND DEVELOPMENT

BY: KELSEY DORNER, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR



A Year of Blessings, A Season of Thanksgiving

As we prepare to close out this year, our hearts at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion are filled with gratitude. Day after day, pilgrims journey to this refuge seeking peace, healing, and a deeper relationship with Christ through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother. Each prayer whispered, each candle lit, and each Mass offered is a reminder of God's enduring love for His people.

The mission entrusted to us through Our Lady's message continues only through the prayers and generosity of faithful friends like you. Because of your support, the Shrine remains a place of encounter with Christ and a refuge of hope for the more than 200,000 pilgrims who visited this year.

During this season of reflection, we give thanks for the many ways in which so many support the Shrine, through ongoing prayers, volunteering their time, and making financial gifts. These prayers and support are not simply contributions; they are acts of faith that extend Our Lady's embrace to all who journey here. Together, we keep alive her invitation: to pray for sinners, to trust in God's mercy, and to walk faithfully with her Son.

As we enter this season of giving, we invite you to join us in closing the year with a gift of thanksgiving. Whether offered through prayer, service, or a financial contribution, your generosity is a beautiful act of faith that helps the Shrine remain a place of prayer, healing, and hope for all who seek Our Lady's intercession.

On behalf of all of us at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion, thank you for your continued prayers and generosity. May Our Lady of Champion intercede for you, and may Jesus, born anew in our hearts this Christmas, bring you peace, joy, and abundant grace in the year ahead!



To support the Shrine and its mission, please visit **championshrine.org/give** or contact Kelsey Dorner:

920-866-2571 x125
kdorner@championshrine.org



ADELE'S WISH LIST

Adele Brice was a visionary who had an unwavering faith in Jesus to help her carry out the mission entrusted to her by the Queen of Heaven here at Champion.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the countless stories of miraculous last-minute wishes for help and assistance granted to Adele. Be it food for the orphaned children, money to keep the school open for classes or to ensure the Chapel could be kept open and running, Adele would express her wish in the form of a prayer and put her faith in Jesus and His Mother to enlist foot soldiers in faith here on earth to provide.

In the spirit of that faith and trust, we humbly put forward "Adele's Wish List" for those items most needed by the Shrine at this time. To sponsor an item through a donation, simply send your check to our mailing address or go to our website and click "Make a Gift". If you would like to donate anonymously, **please call (920) 866-2571 ext. 125.**

Thank you and may God bless you!

ITEMS NEEDED:

- **Liturgical Items for Mass (\$100)**
- **Adele Brice Prayer Cards (\$100)**
- **Water Bottle Fill Station (\$1,450)**
- **Wood Display Case for Mother of Mercy Hall (\$1,730)**
- **Battery Operated Lift Table (\$2,500)**
- **Pilgrimage Passport Printing Cost (\$5,900)**
- **Chapel Heating Repairs (\$14,000)**
- **New Signs for the Shrine Grounds (\$64,000)**

All donations made to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion are tax deductible, as permitted by law. Donations will be used, at the discretion of the organization, to further the purpose indicated by the donor.



DONATION FORM

Please fill out the following form and mail along with your check to:

The Shrine of Our Lady of Champion

4047 Chapel Drive
Champion, WI 54229

Name

Street Address

City

State

Zip

Phone Number

Email

Donation Amount \$

☐ General Donation

☐ Adele's Wish List

☐ Please contact me about including The Shrine in my will or estate plan, listing the Shrine as a life insurance beneficiary or the sale of stock

How do you want to be acknowledged?



HOURS AND INFORMATION

4047 Chapel Drive, Champion, WI 54229

920-866-2571 | www.championshrine.org

APPARITION CHAPEL, APPARITION ORATORY, AND THE SHRINE GROUNDS

Daily from 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

MASS

Daily & Sunday at 11:00 a.m.

Tuesday & Saturday at 8:30 a.m.

Wednesday at 5:45 p.m.

Sunday (May-October) at 8:30 a.m.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Daily at 10:00 a.m., after 11:00 a.m. Mass, and 2:00 p.m.

Saturday at 9:15 a.m.

DEVOTIONAL PRAYER

Rosary Daily at 10:30 a.m.

Chaplet of Divine Mercy Daily at 3:00 p.m.

Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament .. Daily from Noon – 3:15 p.m.

Sacred Heart Devotions First Friday after 11:00 a.m. Mass

Fatima Devotions..... First Saturday after 8:30 a.m. Mass

Healing Service with Anointing of the Sick Last Saturday after 11:00 a.m. Mass

Outdoor Rosary Walk Sundays (May-Oct) after 11:00 a.m. Mass

Family Holy Hour with Guided Lectio Divina. Sundays (Nov-Apr) after 11:00 a.m. Mass

ADELE BRICE DAY – ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Ninth of Each Month, Immediately after 11:00 a.m. Mass

GIFT SHOP AND SCHOOLHOUSE CAFÉ

920-866-2571 ext 101

Monday – Saturday from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Sunday from 12:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

HISTORY CENTER

May-October from 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

November-April from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.



SCAN QR CODE
TO GET OUR
NEWSLETTER BY MAIL

*Special thanks to northbound photography
for our beautiful Assumption Photos*