

THE AQUINAS REPORT

Aquinas Catholic Schools Magazine For Families, Friends & Alumni



2025 SITCOM SOIRÉE SUPPORTS

THE ARTS

FOUNDATION'S GOLD GALA EVENTS
ECLIPSE \$1 MILLION IN SUPPORT OF ACS
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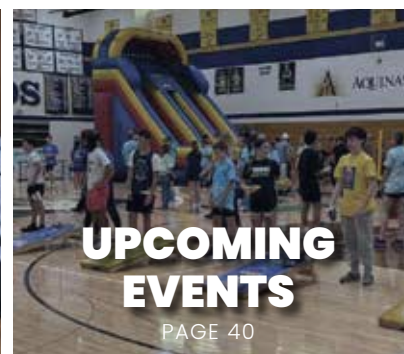
BLUGOLD SPORTS

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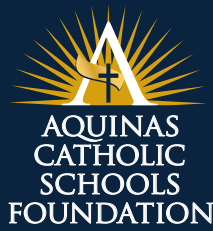
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The Aquinas Catholic Schools Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. The Foundation's mission is to raise funds and supervise the investment of those funds, which are used for scholarships, special projects and specific needs. These funds ensure that high quality Catholic education is affordable and accessible to all who wish to attend Aquinas Catholic Schools.

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THE AQUINAS REPORT

FALL 2025

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Thank You to Aquinas Report Volunteer
Kathy Keppel

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Aquinas Report Publication

The Aquinas Report is published twice a year. Every effort is made to ensure accuracy of the information published.

A LETTER FROM OUR DEAN

Dear Alumni, Benefactors and Friends of Aquinas,

Recessional hymns at Mass are important because they leave us with an inspiring and uplifting message as we leave the church, to carry us through the day. One popular recessional hymn at Mass entitled “Go Make A Difference” was written by Steve Angrissano and Tom Tomazek. The hymn reminds us of the Gospel values challenging us to change the world. The truth of the Gospel enlivens our hearts so we can make a difference within society. Christian values have shaped society for hundreds of years making a difference in the fields of education, medicine, justice, mathematics, science, philosophy, etc. As we look through history, we see how strongly the Church has made a difference in so many ways. Aquinas Schools continue to carry on these valued traditions.

We can see how our students are making a difference. Students of Aquinas become involved in concerns in our community and the missions. From our little ones saving their quarters for Project Milk, from our older students going to Casa Hogar in Peru to help minister to the children. This spiritual development allows our students to grow as a whole person. This is key for maturity. They learn the Gospel values and live them out in a world in need of truth. Graduates leave and remain involved in the ways of the world. Aquinas has made a difference and still makes a difference.

As I write this to you, I received this note in regards to a Veterans Celebration, “I am a US Veteran, active for 6 years. The celebration with the children this morning is a tribute to your educational mission. In a moment in history which fails to honor sacrifice and truth, I am grateful and proud of the Aquinas Educational System. Your success as an educator was on full display this morning.”

Aquinas Schools, we make a difference!

God Bless,
Msgr. Steven Kachel ‘82
Dean of the La Crosse Deanery



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Our Core Values

Faith

Serving Jesus and His Church

Integrity

Cultivating moral character

Excellence

Pursuing daily improvement
through life-long learning

Leadership

Inspiring achievement and
stewardship

Dignity

Respecting God, others, and self

Our Mission Statement

Aquinas Catholic Schools is a
Christ-centered family devoted to
nurturing students of all faiths through
educational excellence in its
vibrant Catholic tradition.



Aquinas students at Casa Hogar in Peru

A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Dear Alumni and Friends of Aquinas,

During this time of year, I am reminded of how much we have to be grateful for and the many blessings we are celebrating in 2025 and looking forward to in 2026. The dedication, spirit, and support of our students, staff, families, and the entire Aquinas community strengthen our schools and inspire confidence in the future of Catholic education.

This year, our **Mental Health Initiative** has made a meaningful impact on students by providing access to counseling services, social-emotional learning programs, and wellness workshops. Students are learning coping skills, stress management strategies, and how to build healthy relationships – helping them thrive both academically and personally. Our **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** supports faculty and staff, offering confidential counseling, work-life resources, and mental wellness guidance. **Safety upgrades** in all four school buildings have created a more secure, welcoming environment. To deepen our Catholic identity, we added two **full-time campus ministers** to walk with students, faculty, and staff in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

Our partnership with **Viterbo University** continues to offer Aquinas students college-credit courses, academic pathways for early graduation, and guaranteed acceptance into Viterbo's most competitive programs.

As this school year unfolds, our students continue to thrive academically, artistically, musically, and athletically, all while growing in faith and character. Each school community gathers weekly for Mass and participates in meaningful service opportunities locally and beyond.

Your continued prayers and generosity make this mission possible. **Thank you for supporting a Christ-centered education that remains affordable and accessible to all families.** As always, I invite you to stop by the school next time you're in town – I would love to give you a tour and hear how Catholic schools have made a difference in your life.

With gratitude and prayers,



Ted Knutson

Ted Knutson ('80)
President
Aquinas Catholic Schools

Mrs. Lazzari, 2nd Grade Teacher at St. Patrick Elementary, recipient of September 2025 Tools for Schools.

Tools for Schools kicked off the 2025-26 school year by celebrating Mrs. Lori Lazzari! She was awarded \$1,000 to use for her classroom. Mrs. Lazzari plans to create a LEGO wall for her classroom, which will encourage teamwork, creativity, problem solving, and fine motor skill development. Congratulations!





Aquinas unveils the new Hall of Honor Interactive Display

*Experience
it here!*

HALL OF HONOR



Aquinas High School is proud to introduce a dynamic new addition to its campus — the Aquinas Hall of Honor, an interactive touch-screen display that celebrates the people, history, and legacy that have shaped Aquinas Catholic Schools.

Located in the high school Cass Street lobby area, the Hall of Honor invites students, alumni, and visitors to explore decades of tradition through a modern, engaging experience. The display features donor recognition from capital campaigns, profiles of Athletic Hall of Fame inductees, and highlights of Founders Day Award recipients who have made lasting contributions to the Aquinas community.

In addition to honoring individuals and families, the Hall of Honor serves as a digital archive of school history, offering a fully searchable collection of all 98 Aquinas yearbooks — a treasure trove of memories spanning nearly a century.

With this new display, Aquinas connects past and present, ensuring that the stories, spirit, and generosity that define the Blugold tradition continue to inspire generations to come.



If you are unable to make a visit to Aquinas to enjoy the new display, alumni and friends can follow the QR Code to experience it for themselves from their mobile device or desktop computer.

SCHOOL REPORTS

Aquinas Catholic Schools, through its vibrant Catholic tradition, aspires to be the premier educational choice, empowering students to fulfill their God-given potential for the betterment of all.



CATHEDRAL ELEMENTARY

Cathedral Elementary School is proud to be part of the Aquinas family. Our students range from three-year-old preschool through second grade — the youngest Blugolds — yet they fully experience our system's core values of faith, integrity, excellence, leadership, and dignity. These values guide everything we do and are reinforced daily. Along with our values, we also teach kindness in thoughts, words, and actions, following the example of Jesus. This commitment is lived out as students participate in weekly Mass as readers and choir members and help with dressing the altar.

Our faculty and staff work to create an environment that embraces our Catholic faith and pursues educational excellence. Whether in the classroom, lunch room, on the playground, or on a field trip, students practice cooperation and respect because these virtues are woven into the school day. Students are engaged

in high-quality curriculum and teachers enrich learning with manipulatives, music, movement, and varied instructional strategies so every child can engage through interaction, practice, collaboration, and play. Students are embracing a new reading curriculum rooted in the science of reading with exciting new stories and informational texts.

We also value community within the Aquinas schools. Highlights of the fall include Aquinas Fest, the homecoming parade, and attending the play at Aquinas Middle/High School. We have also had high school students read with our young scholars. Blessed Sacrament students came to teach our students about the Saints for all Saints' Day as well as to celebrate Halloween. Seeing the connections between students strengthens the sense of community and family in our system.

We continue to partner with families through newsletters, parent-teacher conferences, and open communication. Our amazing PTO sponsored a dine out at the La Crosse Distillery where families mingled, kids created craft projects, and all enjoyed delicious food and drinks.

We sincerely thank our families, supporting parishes, alumni, and friends. Your passion and support make our work possible. Please pray for us as we continue to pray for you.

Thank you,

Teresa Eliason, Principal
Cathedral Elementary School





BLESSED SACRAMENT ELEMENTARY

At Blessed Sacrament Elementary School, our Catholic faith is at the heart of everything we do. Each day, students and staff work to live out our five core values of faith, integrity, excellence, leadership, and dignity. These values guide our academics, relationships, and service to others. Prayer, worship, and faith-based learning help our students grow spiritually as they strengthen their relationship with God and one another. Our community strives to create a welcoming environment where every child can flourish in mind, body, and spirit.

Our classrooms have been filled with exciting academic projects and hands-on learning. Students have taken on meaningful projects, such as writing and illustrating their own memoir books and crafting personal narratives that reflect their unique experiences. Sixth graders impressed everyone with their Mesopotamia Shark Tank project, where they presented innovative ideas inspired by ancient civilizations. Science lessons across the grades have included multiple experiments that brought key concepts to life. The fourth graders had a memorable educational experience during their trip to the state capital in Madison, and our students showcased their research and creativity through All Saints Day reports and presentations, highlighting the lives of holy men and women who inspire us all.

Collaboration has been another important part of our school year. Blessed Sacrament students have enjoyed connecting with peers from our other Aquinas Catholic Schools. Highlights include team-building games with Aquinas High School seniors on Unity Day, the sixth graders hosting a Halloween party for Cathedral students, and sharing games and saint stories on All Saints Day. Our students also had the chance to meet with Aquinas high schoolers for a sportsmanship talk, followed by lunch and recess together – a wonderful opportunity to learn from older role models and strengthen our community bonds.

Looking ahead, Blessed Sacrament is excited to continue growing in faith, learning, and service. We look forward to partnering with community organizations for Advent and Lenten giving projects, where students can put their faith into action through service and generosity. With so many engaging educational and collaborative opportunities on the horizon, our school community is eager to keep learning, serving, and shining together throughout the rest of the school year.

In Christ's Peace,

Megan Bauer, Principal
Blessed Sacrament School





ST. PATRICK ELEMENTARY

St. Patrick Elementary School proudly opened our doors to the new addition, the Father Rossiter Early Elementary Center, in August of this year! This new section of the building is important to our parish and school community as we continuously grow in enrollment. It provides six additional classrooms containing three-year-old preschool, four-year-old kindergarten, and five-year-old kindergarten students. Additionally, new office space was created, allowing more room in the older portion of our building.

In order to open the school on time, it took a lot of hard work and dedication from many wonderful parishioners, families, faculty, and staff. It is truly a testament to the devotion we have from our parish and school community members that, in such a small amount of time, we could come together and get our beloved school ready for the students on time! Furthermore, on August 26th, we were blessed to have Bishop Battersby bless our school. The students were so

excited to show him the new school, and his presence was much appreciated by everyone.

Thus, the school year continues on as we went right into our fall field trips of apple orchards and nursing homes. We filled buses and joined our Aquinas family for the big homecoming parade. The students enjoy cheering for the “big kids” as they march by, sprinkling them with candy along the way. This is a great opportunity for them to see their relatives, neighbors, and hometown heroes.

Speaking of heroes, our students held a Veterans’ Day program in our gymnasium and posted the colors, prayed, sang patriotic songs, and listened to U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Erik Archer talk about his life in the military, along with sharing his Army artifacts. It was a wonderful way for our students to share their gifts with the veterans, learn some history, and show respect for those who

have fought for our freedom. It was a wonderful way to celebrate our community!

Lastly, we have much to be thankful for here at St. Patrick Elementary School! As we gear up for the Advent and Christmas seasons, we remain grateful that we have a loving place to learn, play, socialize, and support one another. After all, a building is just a building until it is filled with the laughter and excitement of children! We would like to thank our families, supporting parishes, alumni, and friends! We would not be able to accomplish all that we do if it were not for people like you who have a passion for our Catholic school system. Please pray for us as we continue to pray for you.

Peace in Christ,

Tara Key
Principal, St. Patrick Elementary School





AQUINAS MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOLS

Aquinas High & Middle Schools have had a tremendous start to the 2025–2026 school year. As I begin my second year as principal, I am inspired daily by our students, staff, and families. It has been a joy to see our mission in action, students growing in faith, striving for excellence, and supporting one another in all they do.

This fall, we introduced several initiatives to strengthen learning and collaboration. Grades 7–12 teachers now share common professional development time each morning to focus on academics and student needs, and our new Blugold Time in the middle school provides targeted intervention and enrichment to help every student succeed.

Safety remains a top priority. Through the generous support of last year's Gold Gala fundraiser, we have added new security cameras, implemented a visitor ID check-in system, and continue to hold monthly Standard Response Protocol drills.

Our faith and community life continue to thrive. Campus Ministry has led five grade-level retreats this fall, giving students opportunities to grow closer to our Catholic faith while serving the community. Our clubs, Impact and Interact, have organized service opportunities such as Special Day for Special People and care kits for those in need, reminding us that faith in action is at the heart of Aquinas.

School spirit has been strong this fall. Homecoming Week was a huge success. Congratulations to our seniors for winning the Spirit Stick and to our middle schoolers for fun homeroom chair races. Both middle and high school fall sports teams have enjoyed tremendous success, and our marching band performed beautifully in local parades. Our musical students also put on a fantastic production of *James and the Giant Peach*. We are blessed to have talented students who not only showcase their skills but also grow into remarkable young people.

Our Annual Middle and High School Christmas Concerts help everyone get in the Holiday Spirit. I invite you to come cheer on our winter sports teams and dance team. We are always exploring ways to evolve and better meet the needs of today's students.

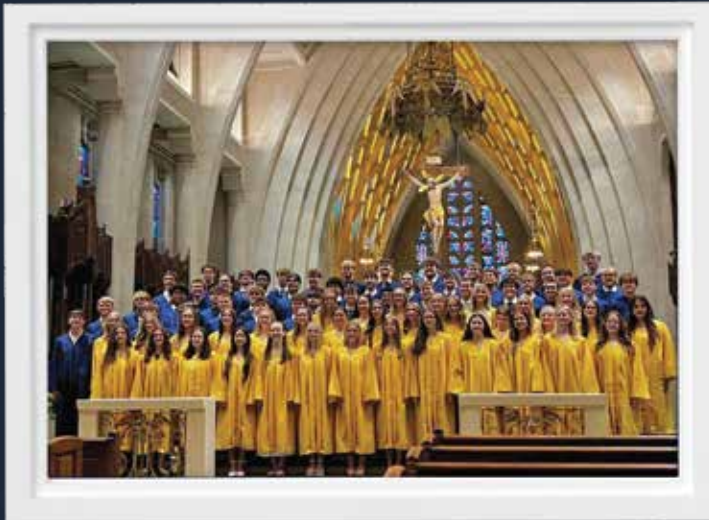
I invite all current and past families interested in learning more about our progress and plans to reach out. I would love to share our vision with you. It truly takes a family, along with many partnerships, to help our schools grow and continue providing an exceptional experience for every student.

As we approach Christmas, I thank all our families for your continued support. May God bless you and your family with peace and joy this holiday season.

Go Blugolds!

Adam Poellinger ('08)
Principal, Aquinas High & Middle School





Congratulations

AQUINAS HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2025

We celebrate not only your achievements but the faith, integrity, and compassion you've shown throughout your journey. As graduates of Aquinas High School, you carry with you more than knowledge — you carry the light of Christ into the world.

May the values you've learned here — faith, service, excellence, and community — guide you in every step ahead. Trust in God's plan, stay rooted in prayer, and never forget that you are forever part of the Aquinas family.

We are so proud of you. Go forth and shine, Blugolds!



AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



CLASS OF 2025 SENIOR AWARDS

Valedictorians
Daniel Poterucha
Bernadette Mulhern
Rachel Gagermeier
Addison Foor

Salutatorian
Jacob Thornton

Wisconsin Academic Excellence
 Scholarship
Daniel Poterucha

Brian & Paula Soller
 Leadership Scholarship
Kathryn Savoldelli

Irvin & Dorothy (nee Hahn)
 Bottcher Memorial Scholarship
Zoe Emineth

Terry & Sue Erickson Scholarship
Cullen Pittman

Altra Federal Credit Union:
 Community Service Scholarship
Brody Sherrill

St. Charles School PTO
 Scholarship
Zachary Malin

Future Saint Scholarship
Coltyn Pohlmann
Evelyn Smith
Leo Kirchner

DAR Good Citizen Award
Sophia Paulson

George P. & Evelyn Miller
 Scholarship
Ezra Barna

Borton Construction
 Scholarship
Leo Kirchner

Clayton & Vivian Veum
 Scholarship
Brody Sherrill

Peter DeCicco Scholarship
Tessa Miskowski

William P. & Lorna C. Vafeas
 Art Scholarship
Sophia Paulson

Jay F. Leinfelder Memorial
 Scholarship
Jonathan Kearney
Treyton Bahr

Vernon Electric Cooperative
 Scholarship
Zoe Emineth

Oktoberfest Gemütlichkeit
 Foundation Scholarship
Camryn Theis

La Crosse Rotary East
 Scholarship
Ayden Townsend

La Crosse Lions Club
 Scholarship
Felicity Bell
Ava Belland

La Crosse Kiwanis Club
 Scholarship
Annica Klug

Teddy (Gregon) Von Arx
 Memorial Scholarship
Bernadette Mulhern

Luminary Scholarship
Max Maliszewski

Aquinas Class of 1976
 Alumni Scholarship
Ava Ryan

Charles J. Mathy Jr.
 Scholarship
David Onyeabor

Donald & Louise Schams
 Memorial Scholarship
Cullen Sackman
Claire Miller
Emma Dobbins
Nora Dickinson

Edward & Ella J. Poehling
 Scholarship
Rachel Gagermeier

M & M Memorial Scholarship
Charlotte Berendes

Rotary Club of La Crosse
 Extra Effort Award
Jackson Knothe

Rotary Club of La Crosse
 Service Above Self Award
Brody Sherrill

La Crosse Eagles Club
 Scholarship
Addison Foor

National Honor Society
 Blood Drive Scholarship
Tennysen Makepeace

Bishop's Medal
Bernadette Mulhern

Agape Service Scholarship
Jacob Thornton

Junior Achievement Titan Scholarship
Coltyn Pohlmann
Noah Kamrowski
Kathryn Grabski
Tennysen Makepeace

Business Quiz Bowl Scholarship
Kathryn Grabski
Tennysen Makepeace
Felicity Bell
Ava Ryan

Saint Teresa of Calcutta
 Servant-Leadership Scholarship
Jonathan Kearney

Saint Martin and Rose
 Spirit of Service Scholarship
Matthew Rabindra

French Island Lions Club Scholarship
Isaac Finch

Emmett J. Doerr
 Memorial Scout Scholarship
Jonathan Kearney

Aquinas Booster Club
 Robert Kachel Scholarship
Kathryn Savoldelli
Jacob Thornton

A.J. Petras Memorial Scholarship
Zachary Malin

Coach Nockels Memorial Scholarship
Elsa Fortner

Will Reckase Memorial Scholarship
Patrick Gundersen

Blessed James Miller
 Campus Ministry Award
Jonathan Kearney

Scholar-Athlete Award
Addison Foor
Jacob Thornton

Father Rossiter Award
Declan Gregg
Tennysen Makepeace
Kate Fortney
Anderson Fortney

Jane Baker Award
Tessa Miskowski
Sophia Paulson

Mike Pitz Award
Jonathan Kearney
Mitchell Fortney

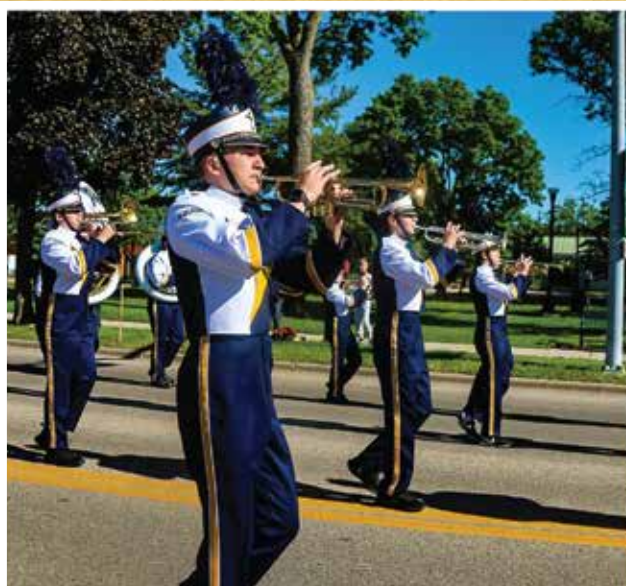
Olympathon Award
Trey Bahr
Kathryn Savodelli

Lee Gilbert Service Award
Mike White



CELEBRATING THE ARTS

Aquinas students continue to showcase the blessing of their amazing creativity and musical talents. The Fine Arts staff at Aquinas continue to provide a first class experience that allows students to immerse themselves in the arts and follow their passions through a diverse selection of courses, travel opportunities, clubs, and performance opportunities.





AQUINAS FOUNDATION

SITCOM SOIRÉE – A TASTE OF GOLD EVENT

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15



CELEBRATING THE ARTS

The Aquinas Catholic Schools Foundation hosted a casual Gold Gala event in support of Arts Education and Fine Arts programming on Saturday, November 15th. Thanks to the 150 attendees, 20+ student volunteers, and a creative committee, \$35,000 will be distributed across our 5 schools to benefit our students' fine arts experience. During the event, we **surpassed the \$1 million milestone** for funds raised by way of Gold Gala events. Thank you to all who have supported these events over the years and served as the catalyst to critical initiatives coming to life for our students.



GIG
2025

AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
GOLD GALA

THE AQUINAS REPORT

SPORTS REPORT

SPRING 2025 SEASON SUMMARIES

BASEBALL

Head Coach: Mike Dee

Season Record: 23-4

Conference Place Finish: 1st place

Playoff Finish: Regional Champs,
Sectional Champs,
Final Four for State

Season Highlights

Fourth consecutive MVC Conference Championship, third consecutive trip to State.

All-Conference Selections

1st Team = Jacob Thornton, Catcher
Isaac Schelfhout, Infield
Cullen Sackman, Outfield
Jonny Deets, Infield
2nd Team = Waylon Hargrove, Pitcher
HM = Jackson Knothe,
Brayden Young
Sportsmanship = Thomas Bagniefski
Coach of the Year = Mike Dee

All-State Selections

3rd Team = Jacob Thornton
HM = Jonny Deets
All State Academic = Jacob Thornton
District Player of the Year = Jacob Thornton
All District First Team =
Jacob Thornton, Jonny Deets
Second Team =
Isaac Schelfhout, Cullen Sackman
HM = Waylon Hargrove

Other post season awards

WBCA Baseball All-Star Classic
participant = Jacob Thornton

BOYS TENNIS

Head Coach: Kevin J. Roop

Season Record: 23-4 6-0 MVC

Conference Place Finish: 1st

Playoff Finish: 4th in the Madison
Memorial Section

Season Highlights

The Blugold boys team took the MVC regular season and conference tournament titles for the 4th consecutive season. A stellar run for the seniors on the team! Competing in WIAA Division 1 for the first time in school history, the team battled over two days to place 4th in the section, ending the team's string of 3 straight trips to the team state tournament. Anderson Fortney rounded out his stellar career competing at the WIAA individual state tournament for the 4th time. At 1 doubles Jaedan Silcox and Tegan Schott made for an imposing tandem, with a record of 26-5 and a trip to individual state. Anderson Fortney finished his career with 107 match wins, an Aquinas boys record. Mitchell Fortney (93) and Pat Gundersen (79) also completed their high school careers with impressive match win totals.

All-Conference Selections

Anderson Fortney (1st), Mitchell Fortney (1st), Tegan Schott (1st), Jaedan Silcox (1st), Pat Gundersen (2nd), Ezra Barna (HM), Leo Kirschner (HM), Owen Ludlow (HM) and Korwin Bessinger (S).

Other post season awards

Anderson Fortney was awarded MVC singles Player of the Year for the 4th consecutive season after winning the MVC 1 singles title for the 4th consecutive season.



SOFTBALL

Head Coach: Jenny Gallagher

Season Record: 10-13

Conference Place Finish: 3rd

Playoff Finish: Lost first round playoff game to GET, 6-7

Season Highlights

Had a slower start to the year but started to turn things around mid-season. The team swept both Logan and Central to claim the outright city championship, with Junior Abby Ziolkowski throwing a complete game no-hitter against Central on 4/16.

All-Conference Selections

1st Team = Kathryn Savoldelli

2nd Team = Ava Fernholz, Ella Deets

HM = Tessa Miskowski, Abby Ziolkowski

Sportsmanship = Caroline Paulson

Other post season awards

WFSCA All-District HM = Kathryn Savoldelli. Kathryn also participated in the Senior All-Star Game in Wisconsin Dells.

GIRLS SOCCER

Head Coach: Doug Harpenau

Season Record: 15-4-2

Conference Place Finish: 2nd

Playoff Finish: Sectional

Season Highlights

Two years ago we lost to Central 0-8 and this year we beat them 1-0. We beat River Valley 1-0 to be regional champions and were very close to taking sectionals. Team has a lot of heart and they should be proud of their accomplishments.

All-Conference Selections

2nd Team = Nora Dickenson, Alexa Myre

Sportsmanship = Hannah Miller

HM = Hayden Zehren, Eleanor Paulson

TRACK AND FIELD

Head Coach: Chris Carley

Conference Place Finish:

Boys 7th, Girls 5th

Playoff Finish:

Boys Regionals, 4th

Girls Regionals 5th

Boys Sectionals, 2nd

Girls Sectionals, 14th

Season Highlights

Boys' team placed 2nd at sectionals as a team and 4th at State. Declan Gregg, State Champion in the 3200.

All-Conference Selections

David Onyeabor 2nd Triple Jump, Boys 4x200 1st, Declan Gregg 2nd 3200 m, 2nd 1600 m Girls, 2nd 4x100 m, Eliot McKnight 3rd Shot put, Eliot McKnight 1st Discuss.

All-State Selections

Declan Gregg 3200 State Champion

BOYS GOLF

Head Coach: Dave Baldwin

Conference Place Finish: MVC 3rd Place

Playoff Finish: GET Regional D2 Champion

Hayward D2 Sectional 3rd Place

Season Highlights

West Salem Fox Hollow Invite Champions
1st Place Trempealeau Mtn Dual vs Luther
2nd Place D2 Sparta Invitational
2nd Place Northern Bay Invitational
3rd Place 20 Team Dodgepoint Invitational
Set new Aquinas Boys Golf score record shooting a 309 at Forest Hills Golf

All-Conference Selections

2nd Team MVC All Conference:

Jack Vogel, James Siegert, Michael Jones

MVC Sportsmanship Award:

Matthew Rabindra



in Tribute & MEMORIALS

GIFTS GIVEN JULY 1, 2024 – JUNE 30, 2025

TRIBUTES

**Aquinas Catholic Schools
Retiring Teachers**
Mary Jo Werner

Aquinas Boys Basketball
Matt & Mel Johnson

Bernard & Nora Banasik
Sarah & Michael Wendland

Margaret Mary Bissen Alland
Mary Steinmets Simonis

Frank & Mildred Bakalars Family
Marvin & Christine Bakalars

Barb Bailey
Robert Sheehy

Betsy Binsfeld
Dave & Fran Ortmeier

Cathedral Elementary
Franz Schuttenhelm

Class of 1961
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Margaret Grenisen &
John Cochran
Virginia Horstman

**Jim & Lisa Heberlein
Wedding Anniversary**
John & Kathy Reinhart

Marianne Holinka
Joseph Holinka

Mark Koehne
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SUPPORT THE CAUSES YOU CARE ABOUT

While it's impossible to know or control what happens in the future, you can have security about achieving your ultimate goals by making a plan.

Planning is one way to create a secure future for you and your loved ones. With a good plan, you can rest easy knowing that your family will be well cared for and your property will pass to your intended beneficiaries.



HOW TO MAKE A BEQUEST

A bequest is one of the easiest gifts you can make to significantly impact our work. Your estate planning attorney can include a provision in your will that leaves a lasting gift to our organization. Your bequest could be a gift of specific assets (such as a vehicle, artwork or coin collection), a dollar amount (\$1,000, \$10,000 or \$50,000), or a percentage of your estate (3%, 10% or even 25%). A bequest could also be made from the residue of your estate or what is left after all gifts have been made to your heirs.

BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION GIFTS

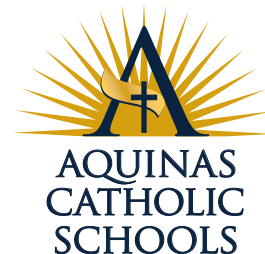
It's easy to designate beneficiaries for assets that are not transferred through a will. For example, you can designate us as a beneficiary of your retirement assets, life insurance policy, bank accounts and investment funds by completing a simple form. Please contact your account or asset administrator to designate us as a beneficiary of these assets. Let us know if we can make sure the proper designations are in place so that your plans are carried out according to your wishes.

BEQUEST BENEFITS

A charitable bequest or beneficiary designation gift is an easy way for you to help us in our work. Here are some of the many benefits:

- **Your gift costs you nothing today**
- **Your gift is free of federal and estate tax**
- **You can change your mind later**
- **You can still benefit your heirs with specific gifts**
- **You can leave a legacy**

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IN LOVING MEMORY

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1947

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1948

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1951

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1952

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Dolores (Yost) Slungaard
Carol (Poellinger) Weiland

1953

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Patricia (Kubiak) McDowell

1954

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Jeanette (Allen) Olson

1955

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1956

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1957

Roger Kendhammer

1958

Julie (Holley) Poehling
Patricia (Locy) Romskog

1959

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1960

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Harriet (Jungen) Nelson

1961

Orville Molling
Larry Quillin
Robert Stange

1962

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Mary Kay (Hartman) Skemp

1963

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1964

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James Paulus

1965

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Gary Pampuch
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1966

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Richard Pitz

1968

Jane (Kendhammer) Klawitter
Carl Ruegg

1972

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Edward Watson
Steven Wolf

1977

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*"Blessed are the
poor in spirit,
for theirs is
the kingdom
of heaven."*

MATTHEW 5:3

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A Sweet Choice

If your IRA is life's dessert, the thought of being forced to pay taxes on a distribution you would rather not take may leave a sour taste in your mouth.

It does not have to.



May We Help You?

To learn more, please contact us.

We would welcome the opportunity to answer further questions and work with you and your advisors.

IRA ROLLOVER



There is a sweeter choice. Rather than take the required minimum distribution, call your IRA administrator and ask them to gift all or part of the RMD to our organization.

Make sure the distribution comes directly to our mission and not to you. You can use your IRA for charitable purposes, if you are age 70½ or older. When you do, you:

IRA

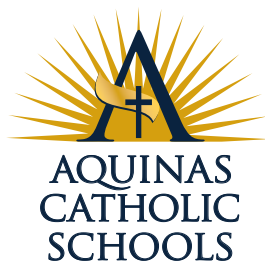


Do not pay income tax on the distribution



Satisfy your RMD up to \$108,000

You contributed to and saved your IRA all your life. Do not let taxes spoil it. Use your IRA's RMD to support the cause you love. Replace the disappointment of taxes with the delight of helping others.



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22JC02

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Donald & Cheryl Walsh
Marvin & Michelle Wanders
David M. Washa
Mark A. Watunya
Kurt & Linda Weaver
August Weber
Thomas J. Weber
Keith Wegscheid
Charles Weibel
Kathryn Weiland
Patrick & Tamara Weinberger
Weinberger Eatery, LLC
Virginia Weiner
Charles Weis
Robert Weisbecker
Lawrence & Jill Weisbrod
Bruce R. Weiske
Chris & Beth Weiss
Jean Marie Weissenberger
Mary Welch Lee
David J. Wenger
Steven Wenger
Daryl & Maureen Wermedal

Nicole West
James & Rose Wettstein
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Wettstein
Case & Kathleen Wewerka
Eric Whitecotton
Al & Karen Wieser Jr.
Wieser Precast
LeighAnn Wilkes
Duane & Diane Willenbring
Tom & Eileen Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Wilson
Robert & Sue Wilson
David & Brianna Winiecki
Brenda Wintheiser
David Wise
Thomas M. Woestman
Mary Wozney
Michelle Wozney
Barbara Wright
George & Joan Wright
Julie & Mike Wuensch
Marc J. Wuensch
Timothy R. Wyant
Koa Yang
Roger & Arlene Young
Todd & Anne Young
Steven Zanter
Mary Zarnott
Zehren Dental
Mindy Zenke
Scott & Sarah Ziolkowski
Michael Zoellner



EVENT RECAP:

AQUINAS GOLF SCRAMBLE

The 36th annual Aquinas Golf Scramble was held on July 9th at Cedar Creek Golf Club. Teams of alumni, parents, friends of Aquinas, and businesses raised more than \$16,000 for need-based tuition assistance, benefiting families at all five Aquinas Catholic Schools. Thank you to everyone for helping make the day a success!

FLIGHT WINNERS:

1st Flight - 59

Nick Dobbins,
Mike Peyer,
Jordan Rudolph

2nd Flight - 61

Paul Franke,
David Justus,
Phil Downing

3rd Flight - 67

Brian Dickinson,
John Garry,
Alex Berg

SAVE THE DATE FOR NEXT SUMMER:

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8, 2026



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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Lunch Sponsors



Beverage Cart Sponsor



Dinner Sponsor



Hole-In-One Sponsor



19th Hole Social Sponsor



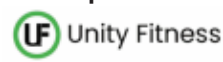
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HOLE SPONSORS



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EVENT RECAP:

48TH ANNUAL Aquinas Fest 2025

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated in the sweepstakes, tuition raffle, and to all who attended or sponsored Aquinas Fest. Thanks to your incredible generosity, the 48th Annual Aquinas Fest was our most successful on record, raising over \$65,000 to support Aquinas Catholic Schools.

GRAND PRIZE WINNER:

Clason-Buick GMC Sweepstakes
Steve Crogan (Class of 1972)

TUITION RAFFLE WINNER:

Mike & Jessica Boland

SAVE THE DATE FOR AQUINAS FEST 2026:

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2026



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Homecoming Football Game and Sweepstakes
Presented by:



PRESENTING PARTNERS



EVENT SPONSORS



FRIENDS OF THE FEST



ALUMNI & FRIENDS RECENT GATHERINGS

Thank you to those who attended our recent Alumni Gatherings in Madison and Minneapolis. The groups enjoyed sharing memories, celebrating successes and connecting with other members of the Aquinas Family. Watch for more upcoming Aquinas socials in your region at: www.aquinascatholicschools.org/alumni

>>> MINNEAPOLIS / 10.15.25 / Brick & Bourbon



UPDATE YOUR CONTACT
INFORMATION



BE SURE WE HAVE YOUR
UPDATED EMAIL AND PHONE
TO NOT MISS OUT!



ALUMNI ANECDOTES

RUDY ROTT

Class of 2015

Rudy Rott (2015) is currently the Director of Youth Baseball at GRB STiKS Academy in Waukesha, WI. On October 18th, Rudy was inducted into the Ohio Athletics Hall of Fame.

Rudy Rott, a member of the Ohio baseball team from 2016-19, played in every game over his four-year career and remains one of the most talented players in program history. After being named to the 2016 Louisville Slugger Freshman All-American Team, Rott helped the team to a MAC Championship title. He was two-time All-MAC Defensive Team honoree and two-time All-MAC First Team honoree. Rott earned back-to-back MAC Player of the Year honors in 2018 and 2019. During his senior season, Rott earned a slew of awards and honors including being named to 2019 National Baseball Coaches Association All-American and All-Region teams. He was also awarded the MAC Presidents Medal of Excellence.

Rott was a three-time Academic All-MAC honoree, two-time MAC Commissioner Award honoree and two-time MAC Honor Roll member. Prior to graduating, he was awarded the Ohio Signature Award, Achievement Scholarship, Ohio Distinction Scholarship and Ohio Trustee Award. Rott graduated Cum Laude from Ohio University with a bachelor's degree in Sports Management with a minor in Finance.



SHANE WILLENBRING

Class of 2024

This fall, Blugold friends, family, and coaches made the drive to Brookings, SD to support Shane Willenbring (2024) who is starting at center for South Dakota State University. Shane was recognized by the Missouri Valley Conference as the Newcomer of the Year on the offensive line.



JACK COLEMAN

Class of 2020

In the previous Aquinas Report, we highlighted Blugold Alumni competing in college sports. Jack Coleman was inadvertently omitted. He was playing hockey at the University of Jamestown, ND.



ZACH DEGROOT

Class of 2020

La Crosse Police Officer Zach DeGroot (2020) began his field training recently.



JACOB THORNTON

Class of 2025

Jacob Thornton (2025) found a role as a student manager and bullpen catcher for the South Carolina Gamecocks baseball team. Jacob is in his freshman year at South Carolina.



LEXI DONARSKI

Class of 2020

PAJA FICOVA

Class of 2022

Paja Ficova (2022) recently connected with Lexi Donarski (2020) after a basketball game in Budapest, Hungary.



BRONSON KOENIG

Class of 2013

Bronson Koenig (2013) returned to the Coulee Region in September to lead his Mind, Body, & Spirit Basketball Camp and share his story with the youth and teens in attendance. The camp was sponsored by the Ho-Chunk Nation's Good Life program and held at the District 1 Center Community Center.



IT'S A SMALL WORLD!

Theresa Knutson (class of 2014) and Pat Daley (class of 1985) were on the same canal cruise in Amsterdam, when they discovered they were both from Wisconsin, and both Aquinas graduates!



Getting married?
Family addition?
Career move?
Accomplishments?
If you have an alumni
update to share,
please email
[brad.reinhart@
aquinasschools.org](mailto:brad.reinhart@aquinasschools.org)

AQUINAS BOOSTER CLUB

The Aquinas Booster Club meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7pm in the High School Commons. All are invited to attend.

If you would like more information about becoming a Blugold Gameday Sponsor, please contact **Jessica Schams** at jessie_rn04@yahoo.com.

BOARD MEMBERS

Erin Klar ('01)
President

Jessica Schams
Vice President

Lance Hughey
Treasurer

Kristy Holinka
Secretary

ANNUAL EVENTS

The Booster Club's Auction is April 18th and the Chicken Q is April 29th.

Follow "LaCrosse Aquinas Booster Club" on Facebook and "La-Crosse-Aquinas-Booster-Club" on Instagram for schedules, updates and events!



**SAVE
the
DATE**

UPCOMING 2026 AQUINAS ANNUAL EVENTS

Saturday,
April 18, 2026



Sunday,
April 19, 2026



Wednesday,
April 29, 2026



Wednesday,
July 6, 2026



FOOTBALL GAME

Friday,
August 21, 2026

INDUCTION CEREMONY

Saturday,
August 22, 2026

Friday,
September 11, 2026



STAY UP TO DATE with Aquinas activities by downloading the Activity Scheduler App or checking the calendar online.

EVENTS CALENDAR



CLASS GATHERINGS

Class of 1947

Meets the second Monday of each month at 8:00am at The La Crosse Family Restaurant, 2120 Rose Street, La Crosse

Class of 1954

Meets the first Monday of each month at 9:00am at Tom Sawyer's, 136 Clinton Street, La Crosse
Contact: Donna (Zellmer) Puent at 608-788-4137

Class of 1955

Meets the second Tuesday of January, April, July & October at 9:00am at Perkins Restaurant, 9428 Highway 16, Onalaska
Contact: Grace Binner Smith at 608-667-6085 or gracemi80@gmail.com

Class of 1957

Meets the second Monday of February, April, June, August, October, and December at 9:00am at Tom Sawyer's, 136 Clinton Street, La Crosse
Contact: Phil Hess at 608-788-9417, James Schams at 608-784-3316 or Mary Ferguson Wakeen at 563-529-9071

Class of 1960

Meets the fourth Tuesday of each month
Contact: Micki (Bicha) Banasik at 608-788-2817 for location and time.

Class of 1962

Men's Group meets fourth Thursday of each month (except holidays)
Contact: Robert Rusch at bobrusch@clasonbuickgmc.com or rjrcar1969@gmail.com for location and time.

Class of 1963

Meets every fourth Tuesday at Barre Diner for breakfast at 8:30am. Meets annually on the second Saturday in September at 5:00pm at Bluffside Tavern.

Class of 1964

Meets the second Wednesday of each month
Contact: Sue King at smasking_suzanne@aol.com or JoAnn La Fleur at 608-399-3129

Class of 1975

Meets the first day of each month at 12:00pm at Schmidty's Restaurant, La Crosse **Contact:** John Dvorak at 608-526-6090

Class of 1977

Meets the second Friday of the month at various locations
Contact: Paul Bruha at 608-317-4254 or visit the class website at www.Aquinas77.com



CLASS REUNIONS

Class of 1986 • 40 Year Class Reunion

Saturday, August 8, 2026

Dinner & Drinks in La Crosse (details to come)

To keep up to date: visit the class Facebook page "Aquinas Class of '86 Reunion" for updates from Linda (Balts) Harmon & Sean O'Flaherty

Class of 1976 • 50 Year Class Reunion

Thursday-Saturday, August 27-29, 2026

Thursday, August 27, 2026

5:30PM MoonTunes at Riverside Park

Friday, August 28, 2026

4:00PM Aquinas Tour

5:00PM Cocktails - Freighthouse Restaurant

6:00PM Class Picture

6:30PM Dinner followed by reconnecting

Saturday, August 29, 2026

Possible Golf Outing / other specifics are in the works

To keep up to date: visit the class Facebook page "La Crosse Aquinas 1976" or contact DeeDee (Miller) Burns at dburns10130@gmail.com or Sue (Ruetten) Kratt at skratt1957@gmail.com

PLANNING A REUNION OR GATHERING? WE CAN HELP!

Contact **Brad Reinhart** at (608) 784-0707 or brad.reinhart@aquinasschools.org.

Services include: class contact info, school tours, Masses, venue recommendations, mailing labels, and more!

Aquinas Foundation Statement of Financial Position as of June 30, 2025

ASSETS	JUNE 30, 2025	JUNE 30, 2024
CURRENT ASSETS		
Checking / Savings		
Citizens Money Market	\$105,408.77	\$70,896.41
Citizens State Bank CD	\$85,123.69	\$80,997.26
Citizens State Bank CD	\$105,407.74	\$101,283.97
River Bank Checking	\$248,556.63	\$244,763.98
River Bank Money Market	\$10,942.01	\$10,830.16
TOTAL CHECKING / SAVINGS	\$555,438.84	\$508,771.78
OTHER CURRENT ASSETS		
Inter-Fund Transfer - General	\$3,233.78	\$94,528.36
Inter-Fund Transfer - Human Capital	\$100,266.22	\$8,971.64
Inter-Fund Transfer - Schams	(\$103,500.00)	(\$103,500.00)
Total Other Current Assets	\$0	\$0
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$555,438.84	\$508,771.78
OTHER ASSETS		
Donald Schams Scholarship	\$1,450,087.49	\$1,339,401.79
Endowed Scholarship	\$1,064,294.96	\$1,028,205.22
Endowment Trust	\$1,616,903.87	\$1,464,603.57
General Trust	\$2,084,213.84	\$2,139,801.49
Human Capital	\$5,102,585.33	\$3,124,100.21
Kiffe Guardian Angel	\$571,644.02	\$531,659.84
Kiffe Trust	\$1,956,056.76	\$1,771,810.80
Next Step Forward Restricted	\$4,023,524.98	\$3,748,508.79
TOTAL OTHER ASSETS	\$17,869,311.25	\$15,148,091.71
TOTAL ASSETS	\$18,424,750.09	\$15,656,863.49
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Equity		
Donald Schams Scholarship Fund	\$1,235,901.79	\$1,167,021.59
Endowed Scholarship Fund	\$1,028,205.22	\$980,481.54
Endowment Trust Fund	\$1,464,603.57	\$1,346,532.66
General Fund	\$2,749,012.76	\$2,599,058.65
Human Capital Fund	\$3,127,160.72	\$1,352,197.91
Kiffe Guardian Angel Fund	\$531,659.84	\$507,683.85
Kiffe Trust Fund	\$1,771,810.80	\$1,628,973.97
Next Step Restricted	\$3,748,508.79	\$3,485,055.20
Net Income	\$2,767,886.60	\$2,589,858.12
TOTAL EQUITY	\$18,424,750.09	\$15,656,863.49
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$18,424,750.09	\$15,656,863.49



Mardi Gras 2025 Rex & Queen XXXIII
Jason and Kelley Bahr

Coulee Region **MARDI GRAS**

Join us to celebrate the reveal of

Rex and Queen XXXIV!

Royal Reveal

Wednesday, January 7, 2026
5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Join us in the Hiawatha Room at the Freighthouse Restaurant to cavort in anticipation of the revealing of Rex and Queen XXXIV for the upcoming Mardi Gras season. ALL are welcome!

Community Tour

Friday, January 30, 2026
8:00 am – 2:00 pm

Cavort with Rex and Queen XXXIV on their tour of the realm, including visits to local Catholic school locations: Cathedral, Crucifixion, St. Patrick's, Blessed Sacrament, St. Rose Convent, and Aquinas Middle & High Schools!

Mardi Gras Ball

Saturday, January 31, 2026
4:30 pm at the
Radisson Ballroom

Newly crowned Rex and Queen XXXIV host a night of frivolity, dinner, dancing, auctions, cavorting, and supporting Aquinas Catholic Schools.

Mass

Join the newly crowned Rex & Queen XXXIV for morning Mass at their home parish! Date and location TBD.

Learn more by visiting:

www.LaCrosseMardiGras.com



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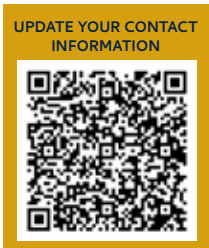
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Please mail your request to:

Aquinas Report

315 11th Street South, Suite 2200
La Crosse, WI 54601

(608) 784-0707
or email info@aquinasschools.org



*Receiving multiple mailings?
Have alumni who are living
on their own now? Help us
clean up our records by updating
your contact information.*

**Aquinas High School • Aquinas Middle School • Cathedral Elementary
St. Patrick Elementary • Blessed Sacrament Elementary**

Our Mission Statement

Aquinas Catholic Schools is a Christ-centered family devoted to nurturing students of all faiths through educational excellence in its vibrant Catholic tradition.



Connect with Aquinas

Visit us on Facebook, Instagram and Linked In @AquinasCatholicSchools



AquinasCatholicSchools.org

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.