AUGUST 19, 2026

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ACADEMY OF SAINT CARLO ACUTIS

WELCOME BACK NEWSLETTER



From the Principal's desk:

Welcoming our students back from summer

Welcome back to another incredible year at ASCA! I am thrilled to see our hallways filled with your energy, smiles, and enthusiasm for learning once again. This year promises to be packed with exciting new opportunities, inspiring challenges, and unforgettable moments of growth. As we embark on this journey, we lift up our prayers to St. Carlo Acutis, asking him to guide our hearts, inspire our use of technology for good, and help us walk closer to Jesus every day. Our dedicated staff has been working tirelessly to prepare classrooms that will spark curiosity, celebrate unique talents, and deepen the faith of our students. Let's bring our absolute best attitude every single day and make this school year our greatest adventure yet!
St. Carlo Acutis, pray for us!
~ Principal Myers

Mark Your Calendars.

Smile! Picture day is coming up at ASCA!

Peru Campus - September 23rd
LaSalle Campus - September 24th
Oglesby Campus - September 25th
All Preschool - September 30th

- **What a start to school!**

We hope all Miracles and their families had a restful, fun summer and are ready to get back to the groove of school. Our teachers were excited to get to see all of our students' smiling faces and readiness to learn!

Our first day was on August 12th and had many fun back to school activities for the students. Our first full week of school started on August 17th.

Reminder that hot lunches started August 13th and the menu schedule is posted monthly on our website.



We still have room in our 2nd annual golf outing

Our 2nd annual ASCA golf outing is arriving before we know it. There are still a few more spots left for teams to sign up. If you or someone you know loves to golf, grab some of your friends and sign up before it's too late.

The golf outing is happening on the 22nd of August at Spring Creek Golf Course.

If you didn't want to golf but still wanted to participate there are still spots to volunteer!



Sign up on our website or with the QR code



Please Welcome

Father JohnPaul Stedwill

You can read more about Fr. JohnPaul's story and interests on the last page.



- **Fr. JohnPaul visits the classrooms**

As the school year got underway this past week, Fr. JohnPaul began making visits to the classrooms. He enjoyed getting to meet the students and sharing in the joy and anticipation of a new academic year beginning.

Besides offering the Mass and times of confession for the students, Fr. JohnPaul will also be visiting the classrooms regularly to pray, teach, and play with the students at various age levels and activities. Please feel free to say hello when you see him walking around as he is eager to get to know you and your family!

First Day of School!



Welcoming Our New Staff

Michael Struna - Social Studies Peru Campus

Joseph Rita - Advancement and Operations Coordinator

Michele LeMar - Science Peru Campus

Elvira Guerrero - Secretary LaSalle Campus

Tamara Pinter - Facilities

Marissa Bernhardt - Second Grade Aide LaSalle

Alessandra Tranquilli - Preschool Aide Oglesby



A letter from Mr. Joseph Rita

Dear Families,
My name is Joseph Rita. I am the Advancement and Operations Coordinator at the Academy of Saint Carlo Acutis. My goal is to work closely as a liaison between the school and families to make sure communication needs are met. I want to ensure the success of our students and ASCA. With that being said I want to welcome all students and families back into the school for another school year.

I look forward to meeting each and every one of your families and have enjoyed meeting some of your students already. I'm excited to see the success of each student not just academically but also spiritually as we look towards Christ and shift our hearts like Saint Carlo Acutis did.

Saint Carlo Acutis, Pray for us!
God Bless
~Mr. Joseph Rita

Meet the Teacher Nights

LaSalle Campus - 6PM August 18th
Oglesby Campus - 6PM August 19th
Peru Campus - 6PM August 20th

First Science Experiments

Mrs. LeMar's junior high science class kicked off the year with a bang! Students tested chemical reactions during a bubbling and chemical combining experiment and cannot wait for the next lab.



Fr. JohnPaul Stedwill Introduction letter

Hello! My name is Fr. JohnPaul Stedwill! I'm new to this area and to the Academy of St. Carlo Acutis, so I want to take a moment to introduce myself. I was just ordained to the priesthood in the Diocese of Peoria this past spring, and I was very excited to receive my first assignment to serve at St. John Baptist de La Salle Parish in La Salle and at the Academy of St. Carlo Acutis. My hometown is Peoria, and while growing up there, I had the blessing to receive a Catholic education from St. Thomas the Apostle Elementary School and Peoria Notre Dame High School.

Following high school, I attended Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas, where I completed my Bachelor of Arts in Biology and Philosophy. Throughout high school and college, I had the goal of one day completing medical school and serving those who were physically suffering as a medical doctor. Thanks to the influence and formation of my Catholic education, many holy friendships and mentors, and – foremost – time spent before our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, I gradually came to see that the Lord was not calling me to be a physician of the body. God was calling me to be a Catholic priest, a physician of the soul to bring healing and life through the Church's Sacraments. I completed the first two years of my seminary formation at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Then I began my four years of theological studies at Mundelein Seminary in the northern suburbs of Chicago. I have always had a deep love for studying the truths of our Faith; moreover, I now rejoice in the opportunity I have to share the goodness and treasures of this Faith at the parish and especially at the Academy of St. Carlo Acutis. I will have an active role in all three campuses of the Academy both in and out of the classroom. From greeting students in the morning drop-off line to after school extracurricular, I look forward to being a part of the Academy of St. Carlo Acutis and getting to know all the students and families that make up this great community.

As I truly look forward to being a part of this Academy family, I also want to share a bit more about my own interests and background. Besides the gift of my life and my Faith, my parents also gave me the gift of six siblings, which made for an ever eventful and joy filled home. My youngest brother and sister are still in school, and my other siblings are married with families of their own. Some of the coolest "priest-in-the-family" moments I've experience thus far have been baptizing three of my eight nieces and nephews—hopefully many more to come! In my free time, I enjoy spending time outside: running, hiking, camping, and more recently with some of the priests in our diocese, road cycling. On rainy days, I spend my free time reading, sewing liturgical vestments, or scheming for my next adventure in the great outdoors.

Finally, I want to thank you for the warm welcome I've already received from all the parishes of the area and the Academy of St. Carlo Acutis. I am truly grateful to be here, and I am confident that the Holy Spirit has sent me here to love and serve in this school by bringing the Sacraments, the teachings, and the joy of Christ and His Church to the buildings, lunchrooms, practice fields, and families of this community.

In Christ,
Fr. JohnPaul Stedwill