

WELCOME BISHOP TYLKA!

Auxiliary Bishop Celebrates Mass for Pontiac Vicariate



Voice of St. Mary's Parish Monthly Newsletter

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The Pontiac Vicariate (St. Joseph's, Flanagan; St. Mary's, Lexington; St. Patrick's, Dwight; Sts. Peter and Paul, Chatsworth; St. Joseph's Chenoa; St. Mary's, Pontiac) welcomed new Auxiliary Bishop Louis Tylka to Livingston County during a Mass held here at St. Mary's on August 2.



It was just the second Vicariate the newly ordained bishop had visited since he began his role as an assistant to Bishop Jenky in late July.

With the arrival of the new bishop, "things" at St. Mary's were somewhat "normal" again for



Mass. The bishop processed in from the back of the church, led by the Knights of Columbus 4th Degree members. The choir (15 strong) sang from the loft under the guidance of our new Choir Director, Brandon Huffman, the first time since March they had the chance to sing. Incense was used. And Holy Communion returned to its original spot in the Mass (See page 3).

Con-celebrating with Bishop Tylka included Father Haake, Father Adam, and Father David. Vicar Father David officially welcomed the new bishop at the beginning of Mass. In his opening remarks, Bishop Tylka said that he was still learning about the little things a Bishop must do, but he was really excited about getting out to meet the people of the diocese.

During his homily, the Bishop shared the idea that we often feel inadequate for whatever we are called to do. He mentioned that when the Papal Nuncio called to inform him of this new role in his life, his immediate response was that he was not worthy. He encouraged us to turn to Jesus in those times. "If we go to the Lord," he said, "He will transform us to get it done. Nobody is inadequate in the eyes of the Lord."

In this manner, he reasoned, what seems inadequate is really abundant. "We gain abundance with God," he noted. "Our purpose is to share the love of God. We need to allow Jesus to work in our lives. When we do that, there's always abundance."

Following the Mass, a "Meet and Greet" for Bishop Tylka was held in the Parish Hall, with social distancing practices in place. Those parishioners who got to celebrate Mass with him or visit a short time with him found Bishop "Lou" to be very personable, friendly and dynamic.



What's Been Going on at St. Mary's During the Summer/Pandemic?



The Women's Guild finally got to hold their "Garage Sale" in the Parish Hall in late July. They raised over \$1700 to be used for club projects/church needs. Much of what was not sold was donated to other charitable organizations.



The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd room, "The Atrium", on the 2nd floor of the Convent has completed its summer renovation.

A group of volunteers painted the walls, the ceilings, and the cabinets in the room to brightly freshen up the area. In addition, all the hallways and hallway ceilings were painted, as well as one bathroom and two office areas. Also, new vinyl baseboard coverings were installed, along with painting the stairwells and staining/varnishing the handrails of the staircase.

Volunteers who contributed either time or materials (or both) to the project included Kevin Murphy, Father Adam, Father David, Paula Corrigan, Daniel Corrigan, Denny Krippel, Carole Peterson, and Mick Peterson. CGS Director Kelly Krenz, assisted by her family members, Tammy Johns, and Samantha Johns, transferred and installed the Catechesis materials needed to run the program.

News Around St. Mary's Parish

In an effort to return to a bit of regularity in our parish, the following changes will take place as stated:

- **Holy Communion at all Masses will revert to its original time during the celebration of Mass, as opposed to waiting until Mass is over, as we have done since June. Please maintain good social distancing practices, especially after Mass. Follow the lead of the ushers.**



- **Beginning Monday, August 17, we will offer daily Mass on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday at 7:00AM. Our church will be open for prayer until 8PM on those days.**



- **Beginning Thursday, August 20, we will hold a Mass for St. Mary School's students, faculty, and staff at 8:15AM. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this Mass**

will be closed to the public and is for St. Mary's School only.

- **CONFESSIONS: Every Saturday from 2-3:30pm in church in the adoration chapel with a screen, until we are allowed to use the confessionals. Please use the Howard Street door.**



Confession times have been added for the week. Before Mass on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 6:30-6:50AM. Also Wednesday from Noon-1PM.

- **Beginning Sunday, August 23, we will add our 7AM Mass to our weekly schedule. That means we will have ALL THREE of our regularly scheduled weekend Masses available for our parishioners: Saturday at 4 and Sunday at 7 & 9:30.**

Elsewhere...

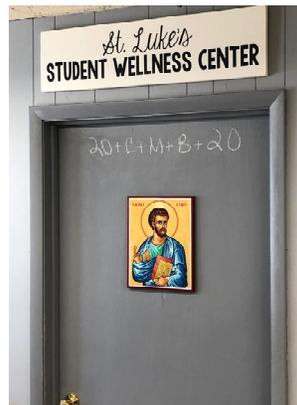


- **DRIVE-THRU COMMUNION WILL CONTINUE** for those who cannot, or choose not to attend public Mass. Father will be available each Sunday from 10:30 to 11:00am ONLY to distribute Holy Communion in the school parking lot until the Bishop resumes the obligation to attend public Mass.

- **HOPE PREGNANCY CENTER BABY BOTTLE PROJECT:** This weekend (August 15-16), we are asking that baby bottles be returned to Masses as you enter the church. A basket will be made available for your deposit. A huge thank you to everyone who helped donate their spare change, bills, or a check to assist babies and mothers across the entire the Livingston County area. You've helped us inspire HOPE to those who really need it!



- **Something new at St. Mary's School.**



In order to have a specific room in the building to handle any COVID issues or any other sickness for students, the former office of Bookkeeper Jon Kinate (whose office is now in the Parish Center) has been converted into the St. Luke's Student Wellness Center. Why St. Luke? Besides being a writer, Luke was also a physician.



Gardening Angels Not Slowed by Summer/Pandemic

Thanks to some real TLC, the St. Mary's grounds have never looked prettier!



Have you been thinking about joining the church?

Do you have friends you would like to introduce to the Catholic faith?

Want to learn more about the depth and beauty of a 2000 year old faith tradition?

Do you desire to connect to God but do not know how?

The next session of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) will begin this September.

To join or ask questions, please call the Parish Center at 815-844-7683

RCIA will meet Wednesday evenings from 6:30 - 8pm in the Parish Hall on the following dates:

September 16, 30
October 7, 21
November 4, 18
December 2
January 6, 20
February 3, 17
March 3, 17, 31
April 7, 21

www.stmaryspontiac.org

Given the current Phase 4 guidelines, St. Mary's is unable to offer Come and See in the same capacity as last year. As you are aware, gatherings must be 50 or fewer people, with social distancing enforced, food serving restrictions are very rigid, and childcare is also a hurdle. As a result, St. Mary's will be offering a "traditional" RCIA class for those interested in learning more about the Catholic faith and becoming Catholic. This will allow us to keep the gathering size under 50. No food will be served, and childcare will not be provided. The nightly topics will follow very closely with Come and See's schedule from last year. For those interested, we plan on livestreaming each RCIA session for viewing from home or elsewhere. Classes will begin on September 16.



Welcome to the 2020-2021 School Year!

I want to personally welcome our new and returning students to St. Mary's. We are so excited to have each of you in school. This year we are excited to introduce Mrs. Mary Helen McCorvie as our Kindergarten teacher. Please welcome her when you see her.

Even though our lives have slowed down or changed due to this pandemic, St. Mary's School has stayed the course. The Little Disciples Preschool will open its doors for the first time, with 10 eager little people ready to learn about Jesus. They will also learn reading, math, and have other exciting lessons. Mrs. Carol Hepner is ready to get to know them!

Our classroom teachers have taken classes this summer to learn more about Eureka Math, STEAM, and Remote learning. In recent weeks, they have prepared their classes for students to return. They are excited to form relationships with their students.

Amidst the changes due to this pandemic, one thing has not changed, our Faith is as strong as it ever was, maybe more so. When we trust God, we can do anything. For our teachers and staff, thank you for your service and dedication to our students. We are a family at St. Mary's.

Again, welcome to school!

With all of God's Blessings,

Mrs. Karen Jones
Principal, St. Mary School



SCHOLARSHIPS AT ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

\$232,846
awarded in the
last three years

We strive to ensure that Catholic education is affordable for all families.



28% of our students have received scholarships for the 2020-2021 school year.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

EMPOWER IL, INVEST IN KIDS ACT

Available to ALL income-eligible families, based upon availability of funds on a first come, first served basis, pays up to 100%.

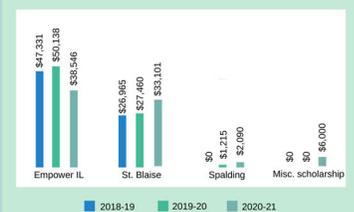
JOHN LANCASTER SPALDING, DIOCESE OF PEORIA

Available to income-eligible CATHOLIC families, partial scholarship based upon need and fund availability.

ST. BLAISE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Available to income-eligible CATHOLIC families, partial scholarship based upon need.

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED



Every student, regardless of faith, receives a tuition subsidy from St. Mary's Parish.

- Operating expenditure per pupil St. Mary's: \$6,600 (2019-20)
- Operating expenditure per pupil Dist. 429: \$12,784*
- Operating expenditure per pupil Dist. 90: \$13,273*
- Operating expenditure per pupil State of IL: \$13,764*

*Data Source: Illinois Report Card (2018-2019).

WAYS TO HELP

- Donations made to Empower Illinois are eligible for a 75% tax credit on State of IL tax return. Matching gifts may be available.
- Donations to the St. Blaise Scholarship Fund may be deductible as a charitable contribution on Federal tax return.
- Donations to the Annual Diocesan Appeal support the John Lancaster Spalding Scholarship funds.



WELCOME!

Schedule for St. Mary's & Area Parishes

Weekday Prayer Time (8am until 8pm) & Mass Schedules:

Mondays	St. Mary Pontiac with 7am Mass St. Joseph Chenoa with 8am Mass
Tuesdays	St. Mary Pontiac with 7am Mass St. Mary Lexington with 8am Mass St. Patrick Dwight with 6pm Mass
Wednesdays	St. Mary Pontiac with 7am Mass
Thursdays	St. Paul Odell with 8am Mass Sts. Peter and Paul Chatsworth with 8am Mass
Fridays	St. Mary Pontiac with 7am Mass
Saturdays	St. Mary Lexington

Weekend Mass Schedules:

St. Mary Pontiac	4pm Saturday and 9:30am Sunday
St. Patrick Dwight	4:30pm Saturday
St. Paul Odell	8am Sunday
St. Joseph Flanagan	8am Sunday
St. Joseph Chenoa	5:30pm Saturday and 11am Sunday
St. Mary Lexington	4pm Saturday and 9am Sunday
Sts. Peter and Paul Chatsworth	10am Sunday

Limited capacity inside church to maintain social distancing.
Online Mass available on YouTube, "St. Mary's - Pontiac" channel.
Eucharist available after Sunday Mass from 10:30-11:00am in parking lot.

Baptisms, weddings, and funerals are still being scheduled.

- The faithful continue to be dispensed from attending Sunday Mass.
- Those who are elderly or vulnerable are encouraged to remain at home.
- Please wear your mask or face covering and maintain social distancing when at church. (Family members in the same household do not need to maintain distance from each other.)
- Please enter and exit church at the doors at Howard Street and follow guidelines posted inside church.
- Do you have a fever or flu-like symptoms? Have you recently traveled out of the country? Have you been exposed to someone with COVID-19? Those who show signs of risk should not enter the church and should stay at home.

For more information on other events and activities, please visit www.stmaryspontiac.org or Facebook at St. Mary's Parish-Pontiac. You can also call our Parish Center at (815) 844-7683.



August 17, 2020

From The Back Page

by Mick Peterson

I think we would all admit that 2020 has been a year we'd either like to start over or just head to 2021 ASAP. Hoax or real, masks or no masks, social distancing or do what you want, "It won't happen to me," or "I didn't think it would happen to me" - these are all legitimate feelings and perceptions...and we don't know when it's going to end.

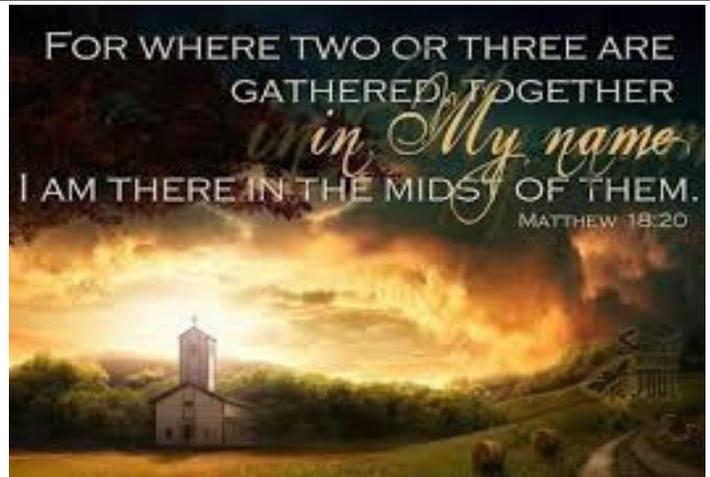
Man and woman are social creatures. That's probably been the toughest part for me and my family. We have been so used to going places and mingling with friends and families. We miss crowds...like ball games, parades, road trips, family gatherings, parties...we enjoy being PART of the atmosphere, not just some visitor looking through the TV screen.

I miss high-fiving a friend at a football game after a great play. I miss booing the opposition. I miss the roar of anticipation before a great play. I miss the high school band marching in front of our house. I miss laughing and singing with a bunch of people. I miss sharing those moments. I miss being a part of those moments. Do you?

However, there has been a place where we have been able to share those moments – here at St. Mary's. Ever since we began Masses back on Father's Day, slowly but surely, our group of worshippers has slowly increased. People have steadily felt the urge to be a part of something bigger than ourselves. *Whenever we gather to pray and worship with others..., Jesus is there with us---and not only with us, but in us. And because He lives in us, we are all connected to one another in ...the Communion of Saints* (The WORD Among Us).

That idea is so reassuring. We are connected to the past (those who have gone before us); we are connected to the present (those around us); and we are connected to the future (those who will follow us). Just think how much noise those crowds could make!

We are not alone. Our lives were never meant to be a solo act. Our recent "little project" in the Convent, for example, couldn't have been done alone. Our group-Paula, Denny, Carole and me--relied on each other and supported each other as we squeezed in another hour or so to make the place much more appealing



to the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program. Alone, we probably would have looked at the job begrudgingly; together we knew we could make it happen. The same can be said for the efforts of our parish Gardening Angels. With their efforts at watering and weeding when necessary, our campus has never looked this beautiful. Jesus is with us.

I've seen the same effect on people at Mass or the Drive-through Communion line. Sure, it hasn't been easy, and people have every right to be apprehensive still. But the warmth that has been shown by the greeters, the ushers, and the outside crew makes very clear that Jesus has been right there with us all along. These folks have done everything possible to create a positive, holy atmosphere. It hasn't been perfect, but we should know their hearts are in the right place. Jesus is with us.

Let's ask the Holy Spirit to continue to build our "crowd." Starting next week (August 22 & 23), we will be back to our "normal" weekend Mass schedule – Saturday at 4, Sunday at 7 and 9:30. We are also offering daily Mass Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday (Thursday for St. Mary's School only). Confession opportunities are available. Soon, we will bring back our Adoration Chapel schedule.

If you're like me, this is a reason to cheer, to be a more invested part of the best team out there – God's Squad. Pray that we will do whatever it takes to become part of the Heavenly team, as well. Together, we can take what 2020 wants to dish out and KICK ITS BACKSIDE. Just pray!