



## VOICE OF ST. MARY'S

*Parish Newsletter*

### Pastor

Rev. Adam Cesarek

### Permanent Deacons

Deacon Jim Wallace

Deacon Ray White

### Vicar

Rev. David Sabel

### Parish Secretary

Patti Zehr

### Rectory/Parish Office

815-844-7683

### Email -

[zehr.patti@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:zehr.patti@stmaryspontiac.org)

### Contributors -

Father Adam

Principal Karen Jones

Patti Zehr

Kim Cheek

Megan Lauritsen

Danielle Gill



# “GO OUT AND SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS”

Those were Jesus' words to the Apostles as he sent them out across the land to bring people to Christ. Our parishioners will have the opportunity to “Go Out and Spread the Good News” at our 2nd Annual Corpus Christi Procession to be held on Sunday, June 11, immediately after the 9:30 Mass. As Father Adam and the altar servers, process out of church with the Blessed Sacrament, everyone is invited to follow as we process around the downtown Pontiac courthouse square, approximately a half mile walk, stopping at 4 places to pray and meditate. While walking, we will sing hymns of praise led by Music Director Merryn Krenz. If you are unable to walk this distance, the trolley will be available to follow along.

After the procession returns to the church for benediction and a final blessing, everyone is invited to come over to the parish hall where we will have a Farewell Reception for Fr. Adam, as this will be his final weekend with us. For those not attending the Corpus Christi Procession, the Farewell Reception will be held from 12 noon to 2pm. Refreshments will be served by our Women's Guild.



Father Adam has said that this will be the best gift we can give him as he leaves, to attend the Corpus Christi Procession and be witnesses of our faith to our community.

# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK



Celebrations are incredible things!  
We celebrate all kinds of things. We celebrate birthdays, graduations, weddings, anniversaries, ordinations, liturgical seasons, retirements, holy days, holidays, feast days and just about anything we can. Why do we celebrate things? We celebrate things to help us through times of transition. Transition is a reminder that we live in time and space. It is a reminder that this world is a pilgrimage toward our true homeland with God in heaven. Celebrations help us cope with the transition from one age to another, from Preschool to Kindergarten, from Junior High to High School, from college to the job force, from 2022 to 2023, or from one liturgical season to another.

Celebrations help us to transition our heads and our hearts with Jesus from one time to another time or one location to another location. Celebrations in this world don't last forever because this is not our true home. Our true home is in heaven where the greatest celebration takes place in the presence of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit with every faithful soul in the ultimate celebration of celebrations for all eternity!

Every celebration we have in this world is a foretaste of heaven, and let me tell you, I am getting an incredible foretaste of heaven these days. I am celebrating preschool graduations, kindergarten graduations, junior high graduations, high school graduations, college graduations, funerals, retirement parties, ordinations, baptisms, funerals, Memorial Day, Pentecost, anniversaries, birthdays, First Communions, house blessings, weddings, Corpus Christi Processions, confessions, Masses and a whole lot more. All this stuff reminds me to celebrate every single moment to the best of my ability.

St. Mary's has been home to me since the summer of 2015 and has always felt like a home for me since I was a seminarian here in 2010. I have taken part in so many celebrations with so many families at St. Mary's that I couldn't even begin to count. Every single one of those moments, encounters, holy moments, celebrations, whatever you want to call them, has helped me to learn how to love as I am called to love as a priest of Jesus Christ. Each person here has in some way taught me how to be a

spiritual father during the first eight years of my priesthood. For that, I will never be able to thank you. On account of that, I owe all of you the biggest thank you I can offer, and I also want to let you know how much I love you and will miss you all. This transition that I will be making on June 14th is one of the largest transitions of my life, and I have never felt the beauty of celebrations more.

As I get ready to leave Pontiac, I would ask you all to continue to celebrate each moment because each celebration is a foretaste of the great celebration we will have in heaven. This side of heaven is getting us ready for that moment. Keep Jesus in every celebration you have so we can practice what we are getting ready for in heaven. Please keep me in your prayers as I will keep you in my prayers as I begin my time at Blessed Sacrament in Morton. Please also keep Fr. Joe Baker in your prayers as he goes through the transition from his current parish to St. Mary's in Pontiac. You and Fr. Joe are going to keep celebrating lots of amazing things together. Until we all meet again, whether it is on this side of the greatest of all celebrations or not, I will see you and be praying for you in the Eucharist. Mass is the best preparation for heaven that we have this side of heaven.

I also invite you to celebrate that great gift of the Holy Eucharist on my last weekend at St. Mary's by joining us on Sunday, June 11th after the 9:30am Mass for our now annual Corpus Christi Procession, where we walk with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament through the heart of Pontiac. It is a physical reminder of the walk we make in this world with Jesus until we all get to the great celebration of heaven. The parish is also incredibly kind to offer a reception for me to say goodbye to everyone after the procession until 2:00pm. I would love to see you and your families one last time before I leave for a new adventure and new celebrations in Morton. It would be a great blessing for me to be able to say goodbye to you and thank you for helping me to learn how to love as a priest is called to love. Thank you again for that gift. I love you all and will miss you all. Let's celebrate together one last time because, my goodness, celebrations are incredible things!

God bless you!  
*Father Adam*



High School graduates from our parish participate in our annual Graduate's Mass on Sunday, May 21.



St. Mary's 8th Grade Class in the prayer garden on graduation night, May 24.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR 2023 PARISH GRADUATES!**





## HELP NEEDED AT THIS YEAR'S 4-H FAIR KITCHEN

First off, thank you for all the years that you have helped out in the St. Mary's kitchen at the 4-H Fair. What a great representation of St. Mary's Church members who pull together to build God's kingdom in the community!

It is that time of year to begin signing up to work at this year's fair to be held July 19-22. Again, we will be in the air-conditioned kitchen and need volunteers to bake, grill, serve, take money, etc. This is a great opportunity to meet new people and have fun helping out St. Mary's. To volunteer, please go to our website at [stmaryspontiac.org](http://stmaryspontiac.org) to connect to the Signup Genius.

Mark & Anne Corrigan have graciously offered to be our coordinators again this year and we are most grateful for their continued leadership. They will be cleaning and setting up the week before the fair. Contact them if you can help with this. We may also need someone to run and pick up more food for us. John & Katie Wille will again collect desserts and bring them out to the fairgrounds.

If you have any questions, or need help with the online Signup Genius, please call Mark & Anne at 815-848-3066 or 815-848-6767.

**BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP** will be held this fall for parishioners and others in the vicariate who have experienced the loss of a family member or a friend. The group will meet in September and October and end with the All Souls' Mass on November 2. Those interested should contact Margo Law, Katie Wille, or the parish office for more information.

**LAY MINISTERS NEEDED** for St. Mary's Parish in the bereavement ministry, nursing home ministry, and homebound ministry. Bereavement ministers work with those who have lost loved ones by sending cards, visiting them, and supporting them in other ways. Nursing home ministers are needed to take Holy Communion to and visit with the residents of local nursing homes one day a month. Homebound ministers take Holy Communion to and visit with those who are homebound temporarily or for an extended time. If interested in these ministries, please call Sue Smith, 815-307-4647, Katie Wille, 309-531-1233, or the parish office.



### WOMEN'S GUILD RUMMAGE SALE

**FUNDRAISER:** The Women's Guild will be holding a Rummage Sale Fundraiser in the parish hall on June 22-24. Donated items in good condition are needed for the sale such as books, jewelry, linens, toys, household items, decorations and miscellaneous items. **NO CLOTHES!** Drop off times the week of the sale will be Monday from 1-4pm, Tuesday & Wednesday from 10am-6pm, Thursday from 10am-1pm. The Rummage Sale will be open to the public on Thursday from 4-7pm, Friday from 9am-3pm and Saturday, bargain day, from 9-11am.



### USING THE GIFTS GOD GAVE US

What an example of using your time and talent for the Glory of God! Thank you to Linda Renner for making this beautiful scarf for the credence table. She spent MANY hours, making these beautiful crosses. We greatly appreciate her time, talent, love and prayers that went into this project.

Join us this summer for

# The CHOSEN

Every Wednesday May 31 - Aug. 16  
6:30 pm in the Parish Hall\*  
Two episodes shown each week  
\*June 21 & 28 in the MPR

We will have:

- Raffles
- Complimentary popcorn
- Activities for kids
- Chairs available

You are welcome to bring your own chairs, blankets, drinks, and snacks.

# From the Principal's Desk...



Greetings,

With the end of the school year quickly approaching, I want to thank all of our faculty/staff for a great year of teaching our students. A huge thank you to our parent teacher group (TAPS) for everything they helped with this year for our students. Finally, thank you for your prayers as we complete this school year and make final plans for next year.

Father Adam's homily recently was reminding us that our goal is to Get to Heaven. He asked each of us, do we spend time with people that will help us achieve this goal or do we spend time with people that are pulling us away from God? I think this is a great reminder as we begin the transition into summer. Life slows down and we have more time to do things we want to do, but are those things bringing us closer to God or not?

I pray that each one of us, including myself, find ways to become closer to God this summer, either by attending an extra Mass, reading a devotional/scriptures, or by spending time with others that will help us on our journey to Heaven. Heaven is our end goal, our final home is with Jesus.

Mrs. Jones



Mrs. Karen Jones

*I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13*

## HELP SAVE OUR SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM!

The "Invest in Kids" Illinois tax credit scholarship program provides income-eligible families with critical scholarships to private schools like St. Mary's. Over the last five years, this program has provided dozens of scholarships to SMS students. Unfortunately, this program is due to expire at the end of this calendar year. We need your help! Please scan this QR code to send an email to your state legislator asking them to 'remove the sunset' so this program does not expire.



## ST. MARY'S PARISH

MARCH 2023



*"They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed; every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which he has given you."*  
~ Deuteronomy 16:16-17

### WE THANK YOU

We continue to be truly humbled by the generosity of our parishioners. We invite you to support our church and school to the best of your ability, sharing the gifts that God has given you. Every contribution is greatly appreciated. Prayerfully consider the impact you can have.

## A QUARTERLY UPDATE ON OUR FINANCIAL JOURNEY

	Previous Fiscal Year July 1 - March 31, 2022	Current Fiscal Year July 1 - March 31, 2023
<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>\$1,208,513.75</b>	<b>\$1,340,850.21</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,082,414.95</b>	<b>\$1,180,337.60</b>
<b>GAIN/(LOSS)</b>	<b>\$126,098.80</b>	<b>\$160,512.61</b>

- Report covers both Parish and School Operations

We continue to rely on your prayers and generosity to provide what we need to run our operations, and we work hard to be good stewards with the gifts we have been given. The Increased Offertory Appeal held just over a year ago was most beneficial and we encourage you to continue those commitments made. We kindly ask everyone to use your weekly envelopes or use Online Giving through our website: [www.stmaryspontiac.org](http://www.stmaryspontiac.org)



# TOTUS TUUS 2023



Totus Tuus is a fun, spiritual program that allows kids to reach a deeper level of religious education through catechesis, prayer and celebration of the Sacraments. If you want to learn more about your faith and strengthen your relationship with God while having a great time with friends and classmates, join us and our 4 college-aged missionaries this summer!

## ENTERING GR 1 TO 6

M - F 9am to 2:45pm

\$40 per child

Lunch provided daily by  
the Women's Guild

## ENTERING GR 7 TO 12

S - Th 6:30 to 8:00pm

\$20 per teen

\$80 Family Maximum



**JUNE 25-30TH**



**SUMMER PROGRAM**

**AT ST MARY'S  
PARISH HALL**

**RETURN REGISTRATION FORMS TO  
SCHOOL OR PARISH OFFICE**



## CONTACT:

Coordinator: Taryn Tissiere

Email: [tissiere.taryn@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:tissiere.taryn@stmaryspontiac.org)

We are looking for families to host our missionaries for dinner ONE evening from 5-6pm throughout the week. If you are interested, please contact Taryn.



\*Learn about the Catholic faith \* Draw closer to Mary \* Attend daily Mass \* Play games \* Pray together \* Water Balloon fight \* Skits \* Celebrate the Sacraments \* Study the rosary \* HAVE FUN!

# ST. MARY'S SCHOOL PRESENTS



## 2023 SMS SCRAMBLE

**Sunday**  
**July 30** 2023

Wolf Creek  
Golf Course

A flight - ages 16+  
B flight - ages 15 & under  
Maximum 2 kids per team

**\$30/  
player**

**2:00  
Shotgun  
Start**

**9 Hole Scramble**

**Family Friendly Event**

**Games & Fun Activities**

**50/50 Drawing**

**\$10 Mulligans**

**Food available for purchase.**

Register today at [school.stmaryspontiac.org](http://school.stmaryspontiac.org)



## PRAY FOR OUR PARISH FAMILIES THIS YEAR

*We ask everyone to pray for specific church and school families each week-day. Please remember these families in your prayers each day for them to grow in their faith this year. Thank you.*



Mon June 5	Dave Mishur Family Jason & Clarissa Montello Family	Mon July 3	Thomas & Kathryn Oestmann Family John & Barbara Pagel Family
Tues June 6	Michael Moore Family Keith Moritz Family	Tues July 4	David & Allison Pelnarsh Family Richard & Mary Olson Family
Wed June 7	Angela Mote Family Sandra Moore Family	Wed July 5	Gerry Panno Family Jose & Otilia Perez Family
Thurs June 8	Phyllis Moritz Family Maryann Motes Family	Thurs July 6	Dakota & Sarah Opperman Family Bob & Shari Paris Family
Fri June 9	Shirley Moran Family Josephine Morrison Family	Fri July 7	Marie Rice Family Matthew & Daisy Rigsby Family
Mon June 12	James Motteler Family Leonor Moreno Family	Mon July 10	John Pfaff Family Robert & Sharri Pfaff Family
Tues June 13	Jake & Bridget Morrissette Family Denise Mrozek Family	Tues July 11	Joe & Melissa Pina family Alzina Porter Family
Wed June 14	Kay Morgan Family Lety Morrissette Family	Wed July 12	Clay Pfeiffer Family Jose Pina Family
Thurs June 15	Jeff & Patti Muir Family Jeannae Morta Family	Thurs July 13	James & Denise Potter Family William & Paula Pflieger Family
Fri June 16	Betty Murphy Family Kevin Murphy Family	Fri July 14	Dennis & Connie Ping Family George Pouliot Family
Mon June 19	Laura Mussari Family William Nolan Family	Mon July 17	John & Angie Pickett Family Dale Popp Family
Tues June 20	Laurie Murphy Family Justin & Cynthia Nedza Family	Tues July 18	Jeremiah & Shayna Pulliam Family Kathy Pike Family
Wed June 21	Thomas & Patricia Noonan Family Mike & Shannon Murphy Family	Wed July 19	David & Sheila Popp Family Richard Quas Family
Thurs June 22	Mark & Susan Nelson Family Jana Norman Family	Thurs July 20	Esmerelda Pina Family Ryan & Stephanie Quas Family
Fri June 23	Patrick Murphy Family Joel & Whitney Newkirk Family	Fri July 21	Mike & Julie Ralph Family Bianca Redfern Family
Mon June 26	Theresa North Family Francis Nolan Family	Mon July 24	Rose Quellhorst Family Robert Reilly Family
Tues June 27	Birdie Ocean Family Dan Ocean Family	Tues July 25	Jason & Betsy Quinn Family Bill & Sue Ramseyer Family
Wed June 28	Dave & Pat Ochs Family Donna O'Shaughnessy Family	Wed July 26	Steve & Linda Renner Family Sheila Rainbolt Family
Thurs June 29	Jim & Karen Peissig Family Susan Oestmann Family	Thurs July 27	John Randa Family John Rhode Family
Fri June 30	Elaine Otto Family Bernard & Patricia Pelnarsh Family	Fri July 28	Rod Rasmussen Family Dan & Linda Rhodes Family
		Mon July 31	John & Anita Rebholz Family Andrew Rice Family

### EMMAUS DAYS: SESSIONS I & II

Sessions I and II are overnight retreats. Participants deepen their faith and focus on discerning God's will through prayer and the sacraments. By listening to and spending time with priests and seminarians, participants get a glimpse into their lives. Along with prayer and other devotions, activities like various sports and card games are played.

**Session I June 9-11 Working & College Men**

**Session II June 23-26 High School Juniors & Seniors**

**Both sessions held at St. John's Catholic Newman Center, Champaign**

### EMMAUS DAYS: SESSIONS III & IV

Sessions III and IV are overnight retreats. Led by seminarians, participants hear God's call to become authentic Christian men. The experience includes prayer, talks from seminarians and activities like basketball, ultimate frisbee, card games, and swimming.

**Session III July 16-19 High School Freshmen & Sophomores**

**Session IV July 19-21 Seventh & Eighth Graders**

**Both sessions held at Peoria Notre Dame High School**

**To register for any session, go to: [comeandfollowme.org/emmausdays](http://comeandfollowme.org/emmausdays)**



### WELCOME FR. JOE

On Wednesday, June 14, we will welcome our new pastor, Fr. Joseph Baker (Fr. Joe) to St. Mary's. Fr. Joe was ordained in 2015 alongside Fr. Adam.

They were classmates in seminary. Fr. Joe comes to us from St. Ambrose in Milan and St. Patrick in Andalusia, near the Quad Cities. He also served as a chaplain at Central Catholic High School from 2017-20. Please introduce yourself to Fr. Joe when you see him.

# From The Back Page

by Kim Cheek

This time of year is when all of the graduations occur. Of course each spring is preschool graduation where they wear their tiny little caps and gowns, sing songs, and move on to elementary school. They are taught by passionate people who know the value of early education. This is where they learn to use their words, play nicely, begin working in groups, and so on. My kids attended Noah's Ark where of course they also had lessons about God and Bible stories. These skills will prepare them for the rest of their educational lives and adult lives for that matter.

After preschool graduation, then you have kindergarten. Some schools have graduation ceremonies and some don't. This is an awesome time of year because the kids grow and change so much. They are beginning to read and turning into more social, dynamic individuals. This is not a time for the faint of heart. Their little brains are like sponges - they soak up everything good and bad sometimes.

Then comes elementary school and junior high. Man do these years fly by. The kids continue to grow and learn academically, socially, emotionally, and if they are lucky enough to go to SMS, they grow spiritually. They are pushed and challenged to learn new skills and concepts, while learning to process that knowledge and connect it to what is taught at home and how to apply it to real world issues. Faith is a big part of this also.

Of course high school graduation and maybe college for some is next and it is such a fast paced 4 years. With technology like it is today, the majority of students are never not engaged socially. They are never off. I think each generation thinks they had it pretty tough, but I have to say kids today are exposed to so much more than I remember being exposed to. Times have changed, and people often change with it. However, this is where the learning should continue especially in regards to our relationship with Jesus. .

Learning about our faith and religion should keep going. It should not just stop because you are no longer in elementary school or high school. Adults continue to grow and evolve as time goes by. For some people it takes them longer to realize what they need or what is lacking in their life. Father Adam always says when you put Jesus first things tend to fall in place or at least are more manageable. When we put our own needs, wants, and desires ahead of Jesus and others, there is a ripple effect. It throws our society out of whack. His "JOY" acronym is something he used to appeal to the kids, but it also appeals to us older kids. When you take the time to think about it, putting Jesus first is never a bad thing, ever. Serving others and then yourself. Imagine if everyone practiced this simple 3 letter concept, how much better our world would be for our kids. I hope you all are able to practice JOY this summer and never lose that desire to keep learning.

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*Church of St. Mary*  
Box 374  
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS 61764  
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