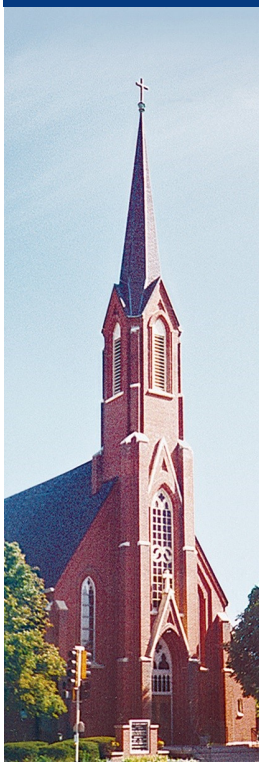


MARCH 2023
VOL XXII NO. 4



VOICE OF ST. MARY'S

Parish Newsletter

Pastor

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Permanent Deacons

Deacon Jim Wallace

Deacon Ray White

Vicar

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HOLY WEEK 2023

PALM SUNDAY-APRIL 2

Masses Saturday at 4pm, Sunday at 7am & 9:30am

WEDNESDAY-April 5

Stations of the Cross with scenes from *The Passion of the Christ*
at 6:30pm, Confessions during and after Stations of the Cross

HOLY THURSDAY-April 6

Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7pm followed by Visitation of Churches
Adoration closes at 10pm

GOOD FRIDAY-April 7

Passion Service at 12 noon

HOLY SATURDAY-April 8

Easter Vigil Mass at 8pm (NO 4pm Mass this day)

EASTER SUNDAY-April 9

Masses at 7am, 9:30am & 11am

CONFESSIONS:

Monday: 6:30-6:50am, 12-1pm, 5:30-7pm

Tuesday: 6:30-6:50am

Wednesday: 6:30-6:50am, 12-1pm

Friday: 1-2pm, 6-7:30pm

Saturday: NO CONFESSIONS

HAVE A BLESSED HOLY WEEK & EASTER!

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK



We are entering into the most holy days of our church year and there is a great deal to look forward to as we prepare for Holy Week and the Easter season!

Here are the upcoming events that are worth knowing about: Our RCIA catechumens (those to be baptized) and candidates (those to enter full communion with the Catholic

Church) are getting ready for the Easter Vigil over the next few weeks. Please pray for them as they get ready for a big day! Our last fish fry will be March 31 and the following night will be our St. Mary's School Drawdown. Come and join us for a very fun night!

There will be several opportunities for confession beyond the standard times during Holy Week. Monday, April 3rd from 5-7pm; Wednesday, April 5th from 12-1pm and then 6:30-8:30pm; Friday, April 7th from 1-2pm (after the noon Good Friday service) and 6-7:30pm.

Please pray for the priests of our diocese on April 4th when we all come together in Peoria for the annual Chrism Mass to receive the oils to be used for the upcoming year and to recommit ourselves to our ordination promises.

Wednesday, April 5th we will again do the Stations of the Cross with the scenes from *The Passion of the Christ* in the church starting at 6:30pm.

We will have Holy Thursday Mass at 7pm and will do our local church visits as if we were walking with Jesus through His night of passion. We will again travel after Mass to Chenoa and Odell to visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. It is a powerful and ancient devotion. Plan to join us after Mass if you are able.

Our Good Friday Service will be at 12:00pm this year. It is the only day of the year where we do not have a Mass so that we can enter into the solemnity of Jesus suffering and death.

Easter Vigil will bring several new souls into our Catholic faith at St. Mary's and that Mass will begin around the bonfire outside at 8pm. Easter Day Masses will be at 7am, 9:30am and 11am.

The Easter season is loaded with a great deal of excitement from Baptisms to Weddings to First Communions to Divine Mercy Sunday to graduations to ordinations, and several Sundays of celebration of Easter before we close out the season with Pentecost Sunday. We will then not be too far from our 2nd Annual Corpus Christi Procession on the square. I can't wait to do that again at our parish!

My prayers are with you all this Holy Week and throughout the Easter season and I look forward to walking with you in these holiest days of our church year!

God bless you!

Father Adam



Small groups continue to be in full swing as we read through *The Imitation of Christ* together. Please feel free to jump in at any time.

This current session of groups is sixteen weeks long and will last through the first week of June. The times are Tuesday at 10:00 am in the Rosary Room, Tuesday and Wednesday at 6:00 pm in the Blue Chapel of the old convent. The Men's Group also continues to meet every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month in the upstairs of the Parish Center from 7:30-9:00 pm. All men are welcome to come and join! If you have any questions about any of the small group opportunities, please feel free to reach out to Kel Krenz at krenz.kel@stmaryspontiac.org.



**MATCHING GIFT
OPPORTUNITY
ANNOUNCED:
CAN YOU HELP A
CHILD RECEIVE A
CATHOLIC EDUCATION?**

Through the Invest in Kids Act, students living at or below the federal poverty level can receive a scholarship to attend St. Mary's School. Scholarships cover up to 100% of private school tuition and fees. These scholarships are 100% funded by donations. Donors will receive a 75% tax credit for their donation. We have 27 students who have qualified and are on the waiting list, hoping to receive a scholarship for the 2023-2024 school year. We recently learned that a generous donor has created a 1:1 matching gift program. For every dollar donated, this donor will match the gift up to \$10,000! We need to raise \$10,000 by April 15 to unlock the full gift. Additionally, Caterpillar employees and retirees can have their gift matched by the Caterpillar Foundation. A \$1,000 gift matched twice becomes \$3,000 to SMS! Please consider making a gift to help these families provide a Catholic education for their children. All donations must be made directly to Empower Illinois, our Scholarship Granting Organization. If you can help, call the school office at (815) 844-6585 or email Danielle Gill.

UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Sun Apr 30 | First Holy Communion at 11:30am |
| Sun May 21 | Senior Graduates Mass at 9:30am |
| Sun June 11 | Corpus Christi Procession |
| June 23 & 24 | Women's Guild Rummage Sale |
| June 25-30 | Totus Tuus (more details in our next issue) |

From the Principal's Desk...



Mrs. Karen Jones

Our volleyball season has officially ended and what a season our girls and coaches had! Our 7th Grade Girls won the 1A State Tournament which was held in Clinton and our 8th Grade girls received 3rd Place in the 1A State Tournament at Kankakee. God gave these girls and coaches many talents. The girls were supported by their families, students, and faculty and staff at each and every game. It was a true team effort!

We have started our final quarter for this school year, it doesn't seem possible another year is in its final grading period. Once we return from Spring Break, we have 1st Reconciliation and 1st Communion with our Second Graders. This is such a monumental time in these children's lives. This is the first time these children will receive the Body and Blood of Christ. Please keep these students in your prayers as they prepare for these Sacraments.

Be sure to attend our Drawdown which is this Saturday, April 1st. If you haven't purchased a ticket, they are available at the door.

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



OUR 7TH GRADE STATE CHAMPS!



OUR 8TH GRADE THIRD PLACE TEAM!

JOIN US FOR
**LEARNING CAN TAKE US
EVERYWHERE!**



THE 30TH ANNUAL ST. MARY'S SCHOOL DRAWDOWN

SATURDAY, APRIL 1

**\$100 TICKET ADMITS 2 / PONTIAC ELKS LODGE
FEATURING BLAKE STADEL AS EMCEE**

Only 300 tickets will be sold. Visit our website
school.stmaryspontiac.org to see if tickets are still available.
Any remaining tickets can be purchased online or at the door.
Need not be present to win.

UPCOMING SCHOOL EVENTS

Thurs Apr 27 Fine Arts Night
Sun Apr 30 First Holy Communion at 11:30am
Wed May 24 8th Grade Graduation





2023-2024

K - 8 REGISTRATION OPEN

Why choose us?

- Full, state private school recognition
- Certified teachers
- Scholarships available
- K - 8 building, one class of each
- Music, Art, PE, and Computers
- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd religion program

We are...

- providing a safe and welcoming environment for all.
- partnering with parents in the faith formation of their children.
- setting high standards for student achievement.
- preparing students to be productive citizens and future leaders.
- instilling the value of service to others in our students.

For more Information:

school.stmaryspontiac.org

815-844-6585



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 Apr 3	Amber Bartolo Family Angela Hoegger Family	Mon May 1	Mark & Kristy Masching Linda Minar Family
Tues Apr 4	Amy Bednar Family Paul Huter Family	Tues May 2	Bill & Michelle Masching Family Helen Million Family
Wed Apr 5	Marilyn Benedino Family Miranda Jackson Family	Wed May 3	Jerrold & Jeannine Mathia Family Santos & Letisia Molina Family
Thurs Apr 6	Chance Carlson Family Bernard Jenkins Family	Thurs May 4	Ricky & Brenda Matuszewski Family Nicole Mills Family
Fri Apr 7	John Cyril & Karen Castillo Family Patrick & Seely Kelly Family	Fri May 5	Charles & Cathy Maubach Family Rob Miller Family
Mon Apr 10	Katie Duffy Family Sam Kelly Family	Mon May 8	Carla Mays Family Karen Moen Family
Tues Apr 11	Hannah Collins Family Alexander & Corinne Klus Family	Tues May 9	Claire Mays Family Mike & Tammie Mills Family
Wed Apr 12	Peg Denton Family Madison Knowles Family	Wed May 10	Vicki McBeath Family Megan Miller Family
Thurs Apr 13	Kevin Duffy Family Ally Krenz Family	Thurs May 11	John McCarty Family Bernadette Meiner Family
Fri Apr 14	Wilce & Cara Enriquez Family Deanna Lauer Family	Fri May 12	Casey & Christine McCaskey Family Susan Michel Family
Mon Apr 17	Cory & Samantha Farris Family Elizabeth Legner Family	Mon May 15	Pam McCormick Family Jane Mies Family
Tues Apr 18	Jeff Flott Family James Mann Family	Tues May 16	Mary Helen McCorvie Family Judy Mikel Family
Wed Apr 19	Richard & Joyce Fox Family Teresa Masching Family	Wed May 17	Kathy McCoy Family Nick & Nancy Milhauser Family
Thurs Apr 20	Sharon Green Family Jerry Marcin Family	Thurs May 18	Adam & Christin McDermott Family Jim & Carol Miller Family
Fri Apr 21	Kevin & Vanessa Guidry-Jones Family Marie Margherio Family	Fri May 19	Ryan McGuckin Family Karen Miller Family
Mon Apr 24	Mike & Trisha Haag Family Jim & Nanette Marx Family	Mon May 22	Regina McGuire Family Julie Michel Family
Tues Apr 25	Nathan Hayner Family Tim & Diane Masching Family	Tues May 23	Kathy McMillan Family Aaron & Kieran Metcalf Family
Wed Apr 26	Alvin Heinrich Jr. Family Jim & Lisa Martin Family	Wed May 24	Teri McWethy Family Tom & Colleen Melvin Family
Thurs Apr 27	Tim & Cheyenne Henson Family Gene & Tammie Masching Family	Thurs May 25	Maddie Mehrkens Family Michael Melvin Family
Fri Apr 28	Vincent & Abby Hobart Family Todd Masching Family	Fri May 26	Mark & Kim Mehrkens Family Jeff & Kenzie Meister Family



From The Back Page

by Kim Cheek

Over the past few years, I have noticed the major impact social media has made on my kids, my students, and even my own life, positively and negatively. There are people who are famous for literally playing a video game and recording themselves. Others are famous for opening packages, trying out makeup, etc... which got me thinking about things or people that influence us in our lives. I asked several people what their definition of an influencer was. The general consensus was someone who has an affect on people and what they add to their lives.

I agree with this definition, so I started to think about the influencers in my life. Personally, I have quite a few people who have influenced me to pursue my relationship with God. Some are family, all are friends, and some are my priests, who still love me even when I fail and don't get out of my own way. Some of my influencers are Lenore, Sharie, Alison, Mary, Betty, Jill, Rita, Mary Helen, Julie, Anne, Carol, Christy, Michele, Marie, Amelia, Ashley, Heidi, Amber, Denise, Kelly, Amanda, Jamie, Mick, Heidi, Karen, Jon, Danielle, Megan, Carol, Ellen, Taryn, Sandy, Adam, Katy, Danielle, Mark, Adam, Kel, Patti, Dave, Deb & George.

These influencers had an impact through their daily love of God. They show through their actions every day what devotion and grace look like. They pick themselves up after something bad or unjust happens. They guided and still guide me by being living examples of people pushing themselves to be better than they were the day before. All of these influencers have one thing in common. They all believe in the greatest influencer of all, Jesus Christ. He influences them. They are pushing themselves every day, but no doubt for these 40 days of Lent, to try to be more like God. I decided while contemplating about Lent and what my sacrifices should be, to refocus on what influences me, not just during Lent but every day of my life. Be on the lookout for your influencers. They are all around us.



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