

**Voice of St. Mary's**  
*Parish Monthly  
Newsletter*

Pastor

Rev. Adam Cesarek

Permanent Deacon

Deacon Jim Wallace

Vicar

Rev. David Sabel

Parish Secretary

Patti Zehr

Rectory/Parish Office

815-844-7683

Email -

zehr.patti@stmaryspontiac.org

Editor -

Mick Peterson

Contributors -

Father Adam

Principal Karen Jones

Megan Lauritsen

Danielle Gill

Karen Peissig

Shari Paris

Other Parish Voices

# 7th Grade VB Saints 2nd in State



St. Mary's 7th Grade Volleyball team finished 2nd in the Class 1A State Tournament. Story, more photos page 6.

## Security, Sound/Video Systems OK'd

The St. Mary's Finance Council has approved two proposals by the Building Committee which will improve the quality of our parish in much needed areas. A new security system will be installed early this summer that will include the church, the rectory, the school, the parish hall, the convent, and the parish center. Also, an updated audio and video system for the church proper will also be upgraded to provide better quality to our liturgies.

Eighteen outside security cameras will be installed across the entire campus of St. Mary's, covering activity from several spots on the exterior of the buildings. Also, an additional eighteen cameras will be placed on the interior of the school, gym, parish hall, and multi-purpose room that will record any activity in those areas. Finally, eight access points will be created for use by key card (fob) at the Adoration chapel door, the Sacristy entrance, the MPR entrance, the west side of the school main entrance, the west side gym entrance, the Parish Hall main entrance, the Parish Center entrance on the west side, and the first grade door entrance.

Two types of bids were received for the project – one with the company providing the labor for pulling the wires to various spots for hookups and one in which St. Mary's would provide the labor for that task, an idea suggested by Jim Hennehan, the IT coordinator at Bloomington Central Catholic High School, who faced a similar dilemma when his school installed security several years back. He encouraged St. Mary's to provide that work force which would save the parish thousands of dollars. That's the approach the Building Committee and Finance Council took. St. Mary's will save close to \$20,000 pulling the wires ourselves under supervision from the company.

The sound system that was installed for the church a few years ago was an excellent one...for an auditorium. The digital mixer box in the choir loft did not fit our needs, the sound for the YouTube transmission has been extremely inconsistent; and the microphones in the choir loft have proven to be inadequate. Furthermore, when the pandemic broke out, Father Adam and Deacon Nicolas rigged up the current YouTube transmission in the front of church, which included Father Adam's personal computer and camera. Consequently, a new sound system designed for churches, as well as a new computer and camera placed in a different location in the church for YouTube masses, will be installed.

The Finance Council okayed the projects, provided that the costs do not exceed \$60,000. The cost for the Security system (with St. Mary's volunteers pulling the wires) has been placed at just over \$49,000 while the cost of the sound/video system in the church will cost \$3400. The size of these projects requires approval by the diocese, but Father Adam does not anticipate any problems in that area.

These projects are indeed possible due to the fundraising done during the 4H Fair by St. Mary's volunteers. A total of \$40,000 has been donated from the last three years at the fairgrounds, including over \$12,000 this past summer. Efforts like these with the benefits gained make volunteering at the fair an extremely worthwhile endeavor. Moreover, money from the Blue envelopes each month have also helped tremendously in achieving these goals.

With the diocese's approval, the new sound/video system will be updated by the end of March, while the Security system will be installed during a 2-3 week window in the early summer.

# Making Disciples for the Mission: Living Joy When I Don't Feel Joyful

For 10 weeks at Mass, we are putting together what Jesus is sharing with us in the Gospel together with a helpful book in working through how to live joy in this world called *Living Joy* by Chris Stefanick.



Each week we are going through a different aspect of how to live joy in times and in a world that you may be finding it hard to do so.

In Week 1, we began discussing how our prayer is meant to lead us to a “metanoia” which is the Greek word for “repent.” The word “meta” means change and the word “noia” means mind or thinking. So literally, repent/metanoia means to change our minds or thinking. In prayer we often seek to have God change our circumstances,

and we tend to think if everything just went as we would like, everything would be great. The goal of prayer is quite different. The goal of prayer is not to change my circumstances, but rather that God would change me and my thinking, for only in His will do we find true joy and peace.

Each week at Mass, we are going through different rules that can help us learn how to find the joy God is seeking to stir up in us. We use the theme from the Gospel and put that together

with one of the nine rules that Stefanick gives in his book *Living Joy*.

The nine rules we are walking through together are:

1. Give Thanks
2. Practice Silence
3. Rest
4. Serve
5. Love Yourself
6. Engage Your Body in the Battle for Joy
7. Frame Your Mind with Faith
8. Make Friends
9. Have Fun



These rules have been very helpful for me in keeping my eyes on Jesus and less overwhelmed by the problems of the world in the last months. My prayer is the homilies, the Gospel, the book, and, most importantly, our sacramental life will help us all to live joy when it is difficult to be joyful.

Know you are all in my prayers this holy season and may Lent be a season of true metanoia for every one of us.

God bless you!  
Father Adam



## PRAY FOR OUR SCHOOL & CHURCH FAMILIES THIS YEAR

*For 2022, we ask everyone to pray for specific church and school families each weekday. A list will be published each month in both the bulletin & in our newsletter. Please remember these families in your prayers each day for them to grow in their faith this year. Thank you.*

Fri. Mar. 18	Joan Bolen's Family Mallory Msching's Family	Mon. Apr. 4	Marilyn Broerman's Family Knox Grundler's Family
Mon. Mar. 21	Mary Lou Branz's Family Tristan Bednar's Family	Tues. Apr. 5	Valerie Brown's Family Weston Haan's Family
Tues. Mar. 22	Joan Blocker's Family Olivia & Eli Miller's Family	Wed. Apr. 6	Barbara Brunskill's Family Zander Miller's Family
Wed. Mar. 23	Martin & Ann Bourgeois Family Marcos Borregos Family	Thurs. Apr. 7	Deb Bromereck's Family Owen & Lydia Kelly's Family
Thurs. Mar. 24	Robert & Lynette Branz's Family Rhys & Chase Carley' Family	Fri. Apr. 8	Mark & Michelle Brummel's Family Rosie, Ryann, & Kennedy Krenz's Family
Fri. Mar. 25	Gary & Mary Brown's Family Leah Clement's Family	Mon. Apr. 11	John Brunskill's Family Beckett Legner's Family
Mon. Mar. 28	Scott Braszale's Family Ethan Deal's Family	Tues. Apr. 12	Betty Buck's Family Ryne Mackinson's Family
Tues. Mar. 29	Kim Brown's Family Kendall Demack's Family	Wed. Apr. 13	Harold & Bernice Brown's Family Lanie McGuckin's Family
Wed. Mar. 30	Bill & Linda Brummel's Family Chandler Dietz's Family	Thurs. Apr. 14	William & Diana Burbridge's Family Avery Van Waes' Family
Thurs. Mar. 31	Ed Broerman's Family Torey Dodson's Family	Fri. Apr. 15	Mary Buster's Family Sophia Forbes' Family
Fri. Apr. 1	Gary & Kristina Brunner's Family Brenna Burgess-Lang's family		



# News & Notes Around St. Mary's Parish



\*\*\* Due to the increasing fish costs, the Knights of Columbus have changed their menus to a Lenten Soup Supper this year. Seafood chowder potato soup & cheesy broccoli soup highlight the choices. Plus, fish sandwiches, grilled cheese sandwiches, dessert & drink- all for just \$10

for adults/\$5 for kids/\$35 family max. Remaining Lenten Soup dates are March 18, April 1, and April 8 from 5-7. No meal on March 25 in honor of the Feats of the Annunciation. And while you're there, stop by the Christ Child Society booth where they're selling boutique items.

\*\*\* STATIONS OF THE CROSS will be held each Friday of Lent, except Good Friday, at 5:30 p.m. in the church.

\*\*\* Hooray for us! St. Mary's received \$70.07 last quarter from Amazon Smile. Get involved by looking for St Marys Catholic Church & School (no punctuation) on Amazon next time you shop.



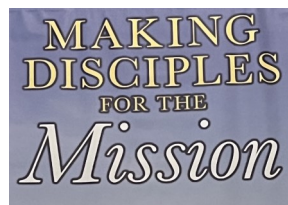
\*\*\*Earlier this month, new LED lights were installed on poles around the property to improve the exterior lighting on our parish campus. These light were part of a grant offered by Comm Ed that our Building Committee acted upon.



\*\*\* Looking ahead to the summer yet? Totus Tuus returns to St. Mary's June 12-17, our annual Summer camp for both teens and our young children. More details to be forthcoming.

\*\*\*A huge "Thank you" to the great many parishioners who have completed and submitted their Commitment Cards for the *Making Disciples for the Mission* program here at St. Mary's. It's been so rewarding to witness the generosity and caring our parish has displayed as we continue to grow on our faith journey together.

By now, those haven't yet responded should have received a second letter with all the pertinent information included inside it. Those cards can be returned by: mailing it to the church using the preaddressed envelope, or putting it in the collection basket at Mass on the weekend, or just visit our parish website at [www.church.stmaryspontiac.org](http://www.church.stmaryspontiac.org) and complete an electronic Commitment Card.



As a friendly reminder, Online Giving is an easy, safe and secure way to support St. Mary's Catholic Church. To set-up a recurring weekly, or monthly gift or to make a one-time donation directly from your bank account or credit card, please visit our website and follow the instructions.



\*\*\*Our "new" bishop, Bishop Lou Tylka, has now assumed reins of our Peoria Diocese. Bishop Daniel Jenky retired on his 75th birthday earlier this month; we should all pray for a happy, blessed retirement for Bishop Jenky and wisdom and understanding for Bishop Tylka.

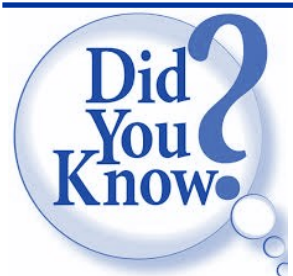
\*\*\*THE CATHOLIC POST: Did you know that you can place a message atop a page of our diocesan newspaper, *The Catholic Post*? Your special message will be seen in



10,000 Catholic households from Rock Island to Danville! Memorialize a deceased loved one; give thanks for blessings such as a new grandchild or a marriage anniversary; or give a shout-out to a pastor or teacher. A page sponsorship of \$100 is one suggested level of giving in *The Catholic Post's* subscription drive now

underway on the theme of "Spread the Word!" Contribute instantly via credit or debit card online at [thecatholicpost.com](http://thecatholicpost.com); call (309) 671-1550 during business hours; or send a check to The Catholic Post, PO Box 1722, Peoria, IL 61656. The regular subscription rate remains at \$30.

\*\*\*Planning ahead? Easter flowers may once again be purchased in memory or in honor of a loved one as part of our church decorating for Easter. All memorials will be listed in the Easter Sunday bulletin. Place your donation and the intention with your name inside an envelope and deposit in the collection basket or mail it to the Parish Office. Available purchases include; Lily (\$10); Small Mum (\$15); Large Mum (\$20); Azalea (\$30).



...why Catholics give up "things" for Lent?

This question has been asked by both children AND adults of all Christian religions, but especially us Catholics, seemingly every year when Lent rolls around. Even though many today feel doing something "positive" for Lent, the

practice of "giving something up" is still the basis of our Lenten behavior. Here's a wonderful explanation of our beliefs from [catholic.com](http://catholic.com):

*By denying ourselves something we enjoy, we discipline our wills so we're not slaves to our pleasures. Just as over-indulging the pleasure of eating leads to physical flabbiness, over-indulging pleasure in general leads to spiritual flabbiness.*



*When the demands of morality require us to refuse something pleasurable (such as sex outside marriage) or endure hardship (such as being scorned for the faith), spiritual flabbiness may well make us fail.*

*Is the denying of pleasure an end in itself? No, it's only a means to an end. By training ourselves to resist temptations when they are not sinful, we train ourselves to reject temptations when they are sinful.*

*We also express our sorrow over having failed to resist sinful temptations in the past. There are few better ways to keep our priorities straight than by denying ourselves things of lesser priority to show us that they are not necessary & focus our attention on what is necessary.*

# From the Principal's Desk...



Greetings,



On Ash Wednesday, all students and staff received ashes on their foreheads .. Have you ever wondered why we do this for Ash Wednesday? By receiving the ashes, we entered into the time of Lent, preparing for Easter. We are embracing Jesus' journey: the cross of suffering and the promise of Resurrection. The ashes help us connect the spiritual aspect of Christ's cross and Resurrection with our everyday lives.

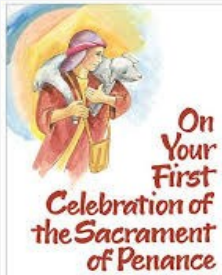
During Lent, our school has also focused on Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving as a way to be more engaged in the Lenten experience. (Just look at the story/photo below of our first graders!) Students and Staff wrote on index cards what they were doing for Lent regarding Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving. The index card was placed into an envelope which was then sealed and placed in a basket when they came up to receive ashes. When Lent is over, the envelopes will be given back to each person, and he/she can then reflect on what was stated at the beginning of Lent. Whatever you choose to do for Lent this year, I pray you grow closer to God during this Lenten Season.



Our Volleyball teams have really performed well, especially in the last month. To begin with, our 6th grade girls won the St. Mary's 6th Grade Volleyball Extravaganza. This year, twenty schools from all over participated, and so many alumni, parents, coaches, community member volunteers stepped up to make this tournament a rousing success. We are SO grateful!



After winning the regional in Saunemin, our 8th grade team hosted the Sectional with a chance to qualify for State (Not known at press time). They hope to join our 7th grade team, who won the regional, then the sectional, and qualified for State in Class 1A. At the State tournament in Clinton, the girls performed extremely well, finishing SECOND overall, the BEST finish in our school's history!!!!. Congratulations to our Coaches—Jill Francis, Betty Murphy, and Ashton Edwards—as well as all the girls and their families, and especially representing Pontiac St. Mary's in the proper way.



Also, we ask that you please pray for our 2nd Graders as they will receive their First Reconciliation on Thursday, March 31. The students are always nervous as this date approaches. I know they would welcome your prayers.

And the Drawdown is approaching, I hope you can join us April 2 at the Pontiac Elks Club for a night of fun and fellowship. We've sure missed it the last couple of years! Get your ticket today!

Principal Karen Jones

## 1st Graders Create Crown of Thorns Project for Lent

Mrs. Anne Corrigan's first grade class students have been learning about Jesus' sacrifice during the 40 days of Lent. The children made crowns of thorns using toothpicks. Each time they are caught doing a good deed, they get to remove a thorn. The class has set a goal to have all thorns removed by Easter. Let's pray there are NO thorns left!





# Gonzaga 2022 Message-“Build His Kingdom!”

After a couple of years off due to Covid, Gonzaga 11 returned on March 12-13 and was a very successful, gratifying jump back into the “Gonzaga Experience.” St. Mary’s was so excited to host seventeen high school attendees at this year’s retreat, those teens coming from all over the vicariate. It was a blessing to get teens from Pontiac, Dwight, Fairbury, and Chatsworth all together for a weekend of faith and fellowship, full of music, scripture, and joy.



It was a gift to hear from team members as they stepped up to give a talk and share their hearts with all in attendance. The theme for this year was *Build Your Kingdom Here*, from the song by Rend Collective. This song inspired the team to choose the Bible verse from Matthew 16:18- “And so I say to you, you are Peter and upon this rock I will build my church” as its foundation block for the weekend. The verse was the pivotal conversation starter, in discussing the talks that had been given but also answering the question “In what way is God calling me to build His Kingdom?” That has

definitely left me thinking even after the weekend ended, what am I doing to help build God’s Kingdom here and more so, what is He calling me to do to build His Kingdom?

A key part of the weekend experience for all of us is Adoration and Confession on Saturday night. This beautiful part of the weekend we all get to witness, inspired by the youth singing out in hymn after hymn and adoring our Lord in prayer. Each year, Gonzaga seems to inspire our candidates to release emotions they had never experienced before. It’s simply a wonderful, spiritual experience. Besides each on giving talks during our retreat, both Father Adam and Father David were on hand to hear confessions long into the night, joined by Father Ryan Mattingly. We are so blessed here to have such involved priests.



After a night of sleeping on mattresses, mats, and couches, experiencing the sacrifice of the Mass with many of you at 9:30 on Sunday morning was simply wonderful as well, a great pause in our day to get to take part in the Mass before diving back in to listening to talks and participating in different activities before our retreat ended Sunday afternoon.

A huge thanks goes out to all the team members who made this weekend possible: Adult Leader Monte Andrews, Teen Leader Andy Krenz, Merryn



Krenz, Jordan and Jake Heller, Kim Frauli, Amelia Logan, Madyson Hepner, Liam Pickett, Debbie Alsdorf, Peyton Cheek, Daniella Frauli, Sam Johns, Carrington Gray, Brynn Pickett, and Tyson Cramer. Their combined efforts most certainly made our retreat so memorable, along with another group of volunteers who helped make this weekend possible. We were so grateful to have Peg Meier keeping us well fed all weekend, and we also say “thank you” to Allison Hankins for helping her out in the kitchen. We are also so thankful to Mike Follmer who stayed up all night to monitor and make sure everyone was safe! It has been such a gift to be able to experience this retreat right here at St. Mary’s!

I definitely left St. Mary’s on Sunday afternoon feeling inspired by all the high schoolers who came to grow in their faith. Let’s hope that they will continue to find ways to “Build His Kingdom.” Please continue to pray for our Youth Group and the teens in it and know of our prayers for all of you!

Megan Lauritsen



# RCIA Candidates Attend Rite of Election

On Saturday, March 5, a group of 25 people consisting of our RCIA candidates, their sponsors and families, and our RCIA team made their way to St. Mary's Cathedral in Peoria for the Rite of Election. Father Adam led the group on a tour of the Cathedral before the liturgy began which included the St. Thomas More Chapel, home to many relics of well-known saints, and the tomb of Venerable Fulton Sheen. During the Rite of Election, the candidates were presented to Bishop Tylka, who recognized their desire to enter fully into the sacramental life of the Catholic Church on Easter Vigil. We have 8 candidates and 1 catechumen going through RCIA this year. Please keep them in your prayers as we approach Easter Vigil. They are Samantha Farris, Cory Farris, Tory Farney, Amanda Cleary, Alicia Cunningham, Jesus Madrigal, Sam Kelly, Scott Stover, and Cheyenne Coon.



## “Breathe, Believe, Battle!” Guide Saints to Runner-Up Title

Spearheaded by their motto of “Breathe, Believe, Battle!”, the St. Mary's 7<sup>th</sup> grade Saints Volleyball team finished their season as Class 1A Runners-up in the State Tournament, providing the best season ever recorded to date in St. Mary's school history. After qualifying for state with a solid 2-game Sectional win over Lockport Taft at home, 25-19, 25-15, the Saints faced perennial volleyball power Hartsburg-Emden in the quarterfinal match. In a very tight battle, the Saints prevailed – 26-24, 25-22. Bevin Brummel led the way with 10 service points, including 3 aces, while Trinity Cheek added 6 points, including 5 aces. In the semi-finals, the Saints met Kewanee Visitation. This tough contest went three games, but the Saints took over in the third game to advance to the finals – 25-14, 22-25, 25-10. Alexis Legner had 14 service points (3 aces), Mallory Masching chipped in with 12 points (2 aces), and Bevin Brummel and Mallory Masching each added 10 points. In the championship match, Augusta Southeastern proved to be a little tougher than the Saints, capturing the title 16-25, 16-25. The Saints coaches praised the girls for their excellent play and tremendous sportsmanship. A huge crowd of fans made the trip to Clinton to support the team. (Photos Courtesy of Exuberant fans)



St. Mary's Saints  
7th Grade  
Class 1A Volleyball  
State Runner-Up



# *St. Mary's Drawdown Returns April 2*

JOIN US FOR OUR 29TH ANNUAL  
ST. MARY'S SCHOOL DRAWDOWN

## LIGHTS, CAMERA,

# *Auction!*

*Featuring  
Blake Stadel  
as emcee*

**SATURDAY, APRIL 2**  
**\$85 TICKET ADMITS 2 / PONTIAC ELKS LODGE**

**GRAND  
PRIZE  
\$2,000**

Your \$85 ticket admits two adults to the event and includes dinner, draft beer, a chance to win fantastic prizes, and the opportunity to participate in live & silent auctions.

5:00 pm Doors open  
5:30 - 7:30 pm Buffet dinner served  
5:30 pm DrawDown of tickets begins  
followed by Live Auction

RESERVE YOUR TICKET AT [SCHOOL.STMARYSPONTIAC.ORG](http://SCHOOL.STMARYSPONTIAC.ORG)  
ONLY 300 TICKETS WILL BE SOLD! NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN. THIS EVENT IS FOR ADULTS 21+ ONLY.

Back in the 90s, Pat & Lisa Martin brought the idea of a "Drawdown Dinner" to St. Mary's from St. Bede. St. Mary's was the FIRST organization to adopt this fundraiser in the Pontiac area, starting at the Legion Billet well over 25 years ago. After enduring the Covid era, it's time for all of us to come together again, enjoy some wonderful fellowship, laughs, and a delicious meal, bid on some wonderful prizes, and help raise some dollars for St. Mary's. We all go home WINNERS!!!!

# From The Back Page

by Mick Peterson

Don't be a rock. Be a sponge.

We are nearing the halfway point of our Lenten season, and people often respond by doubting themselves, asking what's the purpose of all this? Why...EVERY year...we have to **SACRIFICE**...we are asked to ...heaven forbid...NOT eat meat on Fridays! How come we have to pray MORE, fast MORE, give MORE alms? Which master are we choosing...the Devil or God?

Find yourself doing that? ...or better yet...nothing during this time of year has changed at all...still doing the same old thing day after day...Lent or no Lent? Ain't got no time for Lent! Too much LIVIN' to do. Who needs spiritual development?

The same people who spend monthly memberships to gyms or personal trainers also need spiritual development. The same young people who get individual speed development training or golf lessons also need spiritual development. The same folks who feel the need to take more out of life than they give also need spiritual development. Those people who feel the need to "Get, Get, Get," rather than "Give, Give, Give, Give" – yeah, they need spiritual development too. We ALL do!

We have friends who don't think twice about getting a 6:00 AM workout in five days a week. We have others who will travel hundreds of miles to play in a golf tournament or take their child to club volleyball or softball. Then there are the people who don't think twice about dropping a couple hundred dollars for new running shoes.

None of these desires are bad...unless they dominate our lives. Physical development...sure. Social development...of course. Financial growth...you betcha. But THE most important growth is the one many of us neglect or push aside...**spiritual growth**. Because when it's all said and done, that spiritual development determines Heaven or Hell.

Lent should be a time when we "Revive our Passion" for our faith. We need to dig down deep for strength, endurance, generosity, perseverance...some of the same things we do in other plans of improvement. We all know in order to GET

something worthwhile, we have to GIVE something. And "Giving" is what Jesus asks us to do...today and every day.

A rock and a sponge are each dropped in water. Water rolls off the rock because the rock won't absorb it; water soaks into the sponge. Total absorption. When it comes to any of our liturgical seasons, it stands to reason that being the "sponge" is the way to go. Let the word of God, the way of life, the sacrifices needed, the mindset – let all those things be absorbed into our very being. That's how to get the most out of Lent.

The simple acts of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving – no matter how big or small – allow us to actually invest in God. They actually allow us to find the Right Life we will need to attain that heavenly reward. We can still do those other things...but we cannot afford to forget the most important one of all – our spiritual lives.

Don't be a rock! Be a sponge! Absorb God! Absorb all that is good! You will be in the best shape of your lives.



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