

OCTOBER 2022  
VOL XXII NO. 1

# CHURCH DIRECTORY PICTURES—SCHEDULE YOURS TODAY



It has been nine years since our last Church Directory featuring pictures of our parish families and a listing of updated addresses and phone numbers. A new directory will help all of us be better connected to one another and be able to put names to faces we see at Mass each week.

The first week of photography is happening right now, but we will have two more weeks of photo shoots on November 1-5 and November 30-December 3. If you have not yet scheduled your family's photo appointment, please go to our website: [church.stmaryspontiac.org](http://church.stmaryspontiac.org) and scroll to the bottom of the page for the link to schedule. A church code and password is given to access the scheduler. If you do not have a computer or have any troubles, you can always call the parish office at 815-844-7683 and we will help you get scheduled.

All pictures will be taken in the parish hall and there is NO COST to have your picture taken. Everyone who sits for a photo shoot will receive a FREE 8x10 photo and a FREE directory when they are available early next year.

Please help us reconnect our parish family and schedule your appointment today!



## 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

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## ANNUAL PARISH THANKSGIVING DINNER RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

Turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, gravy, sweet potatoes, vegetable, cranberry sauce, roll, dessert and drink...what more could you want from a delicious meal prepared by the women of our parish.

Join us on Sunday, November 13 for our Annual Parish Thanksgiving Dinner which promises to be delicious, as always, and a great opportunity to gather with our fellow parishioners and enjoy this meal in good company, in addition to raising some funds for the Women's Guild to continue their good work for the betterment of our church and clergy.

The meal will be served in the parish hall from 11am to 2pm. Those dining with us are asked to enter from Main Street at the new gym entrance. Those who prefer a carryout can enter the hall from Chicago Street and go into the Rosary Room to get your meal to go. Cost is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children in grades 1-8 and \$30 family maximum for those in the same household. Raffle tickets for the 50/50 raffle will be available at both entrances. You need not be present to win.

Many hands make light work for the women (and men) of our parish. Volunteers are needed to prepare, serve and clean up, and food donations are requested to help keep expenses down and the meal cost reasonable. Go to our website at: [church.stmaryspontiac.org](http://church.stmaryspontiac.org) and scroll to the bottom of the page for the link to volunteer or donate food.

We look forward to seeing all our parish families at our Thanksgiving Dinner on November 13. We have been so blessed here at St. Mary's! Now let's gather to give THANKS!



# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK



Making Disciples for the Mission  
Good News for October

Hello everyone!

In case you were concerned that the newsletter was gone forever, I have some good news! Our newsletter will still be sent out throughout the year. It will be sent with a little less frequency, but with all kinds of upcoming events and other exciting information that you will want to know.

Speaking of exciting things – this month is one that I will never soon forget. For three years, my mom, dad and I have been trying to get a trip planned to Italy. It is a dream we have all had for a long time and after two attempts, foiled by Covid, it is looking like the third time is a charm. We will be able to offer Mass each day in some of the most beautiful churches in Italy starting in Rome. We will be able to celebrate St. Francis' Feast Day (Oct. 4) in Assisi! We will also celebrate Mass on the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary (Oct. 7) in Loreto, Italy at the home of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. The home miraculously and mysteriously showed up there centuries ago. (Side note: that day is parishioner Sophie Fecht's 100th birthday! Please keep her in your prayers and send her some birthday notes of encouragement!) We will also head up north into the Italian Alps where we will be able to celebrate the Feast of St. John XXIII (canonized in 2014) in his hometown! I can only imagine how exciting that will be as his hometown was once called Sotto il Monte but is now called Sotto il Monte di Giovanni XXIII! If they changed the name of his town to have his name in it, I'm sure there will be some serious Italian fun celebrating his heavenly birthday!

Besides all the excitement happening overseas, there will also be plenty of excitement going on around St. Mary's. Our new Director of Leadership and Discipleship, Kel Krenz, is off and running with "The Good News: The St. Mary's Way" which is happening on Thursday nights and is helping us be ready to take the good news to more people throughout our community. RCIA is off the ground and running with a great crew of people. The Bereavement Support Group is helping many souls cope with the loss of loved ones and our school students are having a great start to the 2022/23 school year!

I am also very excited to let you know, if you did not yet know, that we are starting a new parish directory. Our current directory is nearly a decade old now – probably time to update! I just went online myself to get signed up for my picture and it is super easy. Just go to our parish website and follow the directions to be a part of our next parish directory and get an 8x10 of your own.

Finally, let me just say how excited I am for October – my favorite month of the year! Not just for the great fall weather and sunny days with a little extra chill in the air, but also for the many saints to celebrate this month. Starting the month with St. Therese of Lisieux (Oct. 1) and the Guardian Angels (Oct. 2). We also get to celebrate St. Francis of Assisi (Oct. 4), St. Faustina (5), Our Lady of the Rosary (7), St. John XXIII (11), Blessed Carlo Acutis (14), St. Teresa of Avila (15), St. Margaret Mary Alacoque (16), St. Luke (18), Sts. Isaac Jogues and John Brebeuf (19), St. John Paul II (22), and Sts. Simon and Jude (28) right before we celebrate All Hallow's Eve (31), All Saints Day (Nov. 1) and All Souls Day (2). There is much to be grateful for and to celebrate!

Know you are all in my prayers and may God send His many blessings upon you this month. 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. Please remember these families in your prayers each day for them to grow in their faith this year. Thank you.*



Mon Oct 24	Joseph Guerrero Family Olivia Lindley's Family
Tues Oct 25	Tom & Beth Halloran Family Olivia & Eli Miller's Family
Wed Oct 26	Bob & Julie Harback Family Aden & Bevin Brummel's Family
Thurs Oct 27	Randy & Linda Hart Family Brenna Burgess-Lang's Family
Fri Oct 28	Bill & Marsha Halpin Family Harper Francis' Family
Mon Oct 31	John & Sally Harcharik Family Maddie & DJ Herkert Family
Tues Nov 1	Troy & Shannon Hart Family Bailey & Chloe Cox's Family
Wed Nov 2	Amanda Hamilton Family Evelyn, Izzy & Myers Hinz's Family
Thurs Nov 3	Sandra Harmon Family Tiffany Legner's Family
Fri Nov 4	Patti Jo Hart Family Ella Ashcraft's Family
Mon Nov 7	Jeff & Michelle Hamilton Family Lucas & Amelia Maier's Family
Tues Nov 8	Scott & Cathy Harmon Family Payton Rogers' Family
Wed Nov 9	Deanna Hassinger Family Gavin Schaidle's Family
Thurs Nov 10	Allison Hankins Family Talon & Hudson Simmons' Family

Fri Nov 11	Kate Harrold Family Nevaeh Vogt & Angelene Wertz's Family
Mon Nov 14	Chuck & Dianne Hanley Family McKenna Woodcock's Family
Tues Nov 15	Michael Heenan Family Boston Alsdorf's Family
Wed Nov 16	Karen Hepner Family Cecilia & Avery Alsdorf's Family
Thurs Nov 17	Marty & Sherri Hatzler Family Harper Bachman's Family
Fri Nov 18	Patrick Heenan Family Alexis Brown's Family
Mon Nov 21	Pat Hepperly Family Parker Casner's Family
Tues Nov 22	Dick & Carol Hatzler Family Reagan Mackinson's Family
Wed Nov 23	Bruce & JoEllen Heitz Family Isaac & Cameron Mackinson's Family
Thurs Nov 24	Gerald & Kristine Hayner Family Callum, Palmer & Eva Masching's Family
Fri Nov 25	Jordan Heller Family Jaxson Rambo's Family
Mon Nov 28	Katrina Hertz Family Sammi & Riley Salinas' Family
Tues Nov 29	Marilyn Headley Family Nora & Wilson Sweitzer's Family
Wed Nov 30	Christine Hendren Family Jasmine Kennedy's Family

# Spreading the Good News Around St. Mary's Parish

We are so grateful to Mick Peterson and the team of people who have kept us informed with a monthly parish newsletter. As stated in the August issue, Mick has retired as Editor. However, the parish leadership felt it necessary to continue some form of a parish newsletter which reaches everyone, whether they attend Mass or not. Therefore, we welcome you to the ongoing newsletter which you will now receive bi-monthly, and maybe with fewer pages, but still filled with important information about our church and school and how you can be involved and pray for our mission: TO GET PEOPLE TO HEAVEN! Enjoy this October issue and be looking for the next issue in December which will be filled with all things Advent and Christmas.

## WHY DO WE EXIST? TO GET TO HEAVEN

### **ALL SAINTS' DAY TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1 (Holy Day of Obligation)**

#### **Mass Times:**

**Monday, October 31 at 5:30pm**

**at Pontiac & Flanagan**

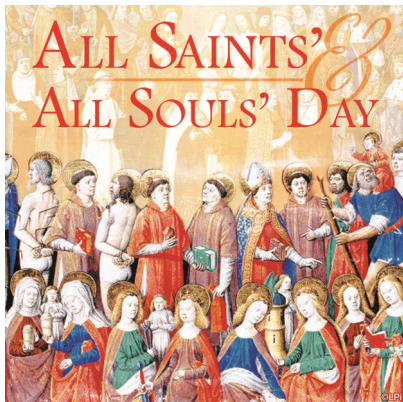
**Tuesday, November 1 at 6:00am**

**& 8:15am (School Mass-public welcome)**

**Chenoa 8:00am**

**Lexington 5:30pm**

**Chatsworth 7:00pm**



### **ALL SOULS' DAY WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2**

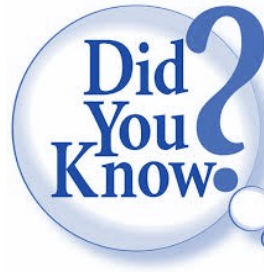
#### **Mass Times:**

**7:00am regular morning Mass**

**12:00 noon at St. Mary's Cemetery**

**6:00pm All Souls Day Memorial Mass  
in church with names of deceased read  
and candles lit in their memory**

Ray White will be ordained a Permanent Deacon for our parish on Saturday, December 3 at the Cathedral in Peoria. To celebrate, there will be a reception on Sunday, December 4 in the parish hall after the 9:30 Mass. The Knights of Columbus will also be hosting a breakfast that morning so plan to join us for a great meal and to congratulate Deacon Ray White.



### **HOW DID ALL SOULS' DAY GET STARTED?**

To understand the origins of All Souls' Day, we should probably start with All Saints' Day. During the Middle Ages, most Christian communities held a yearly feast to honor the Church's saints—martyrs who had died and gone to heaven. In time, this day

came to be known as All Saints' Day, and the Catholic Church made it a holy day of obligation.

Sometime in the 10th century, the Catholic priest St. Odilo of Cluny instituted All Souls' Day—a day to pray for the souls of deceased family members—ordinary men and women who had lived good lives and were waiting in purgatory until they were worthy to enter heaven.

When it comes to All Souls' Day, people of faith around the world hold extraordinary beliefs and traditions about spirits on this day: According to Hungarian tradition, all work and housework is forbidden on All Souls' Day. It is seen as disrespectful to the dead, and it is believed that any work done will be sabotaged by them. According to a superstition from the Philippines: When it rains on All Souls' Day, the raindrops are tears of the dead. According to the teachings of the Catholic Church, Catholics can shorten the time a soul spends in purgatory by visiting a church and praying the Our Father and the Creed on All Souls' Day. In the Mexican culture, All Souls' Day is known as *Día de los Muertos* or the Day of the Dead. It is believed that the dead are still members of the community, kept alive in memory and spirit, and during the Day of the Dead, they temporarily return to Earth.



### **FOR OUR HIGH SCHOOLERS**

By Megan Lauritsen, Youth Group Director

The youth group has had an exciting start to the beginning of the school year, returning to our Sunday 6:30-8:30pm time. Any and all high school students are invited to join us for an evening of fun and fellowship in the second floor youth group room of the parish center (former rectory).

Along with the youth group meetings, the Gonzaga 12 team has begun meetings to prepare for this year's Gonzaga retreat. It truly is an exciting time to get to prepare for the weekend. This year, the retreat will be held January 7-8th at St. Mary's. If you know of a high school student, forms to attend can be found in the back of the church, or on the youth group website, <https://stmarysyouthgroup.weebly.com/gonzaga.html>. Please continue to keep the teens in your prayers, and know of our prayers for you all!



# From the Principal's Desk...



The first quarter of school is almost complete. Each year, I think the time goes faster! Students and teachers have all settled into a daily life at school. We begin our day by meeting as a faculty and staff to pray for any intentions we may have, then we, as a whole school (Preschool-8th Grade) pray together. This year we are saying the Apostle's Creed. There is something to be said as we recite this prayer together. It brings me JOY to hear many little voices say this prayer each morning.

Our Parent Teacher Organization (TAPS) is under new leadership, and they are very excited to be an active group again. Our Family Reading Night is coming soon, I look forward to families coming to this fun event.

We continue to learn about our Faith, in fact we are learning that it is NOT about Me, we are learning the importance of being Joyful and showing tangible Faith. Teachers and students are sharing Holy Moments each week, these moments emphasize to each of us how God continues to work in our lives.

At our recent Teachers' Institute, teachers were asked to sit in silence for ten minutes to reflect upon how God is working in their lives. They were given an index card for this exercise and they were directed to write down where they have been seeing God work in their lives. How many of us actually sit in silence? It is hard to be still and not think of the many tasks that are on our to-do list. I challenge each of you to sit for 10 minutes in utter silence and think of how God is working in your life. Are you open to what God is asking you to do? Do you hear God? If you are not comfortable for ten minutes, start slow, maybe sit for three minutes, then increase your time. As you sit in silence, open your mind and heart to hear God's words. He loves each of us so much and he wants to be a part of our lives.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,  
that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." —John 3:16



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## 2023-2024 REGISTRATION

### Kindergarten

- Registration for current PreK4 students and current SMS families begins 12/5/22.
- Registration for new families begins 1/4/23.

### 4-year old PreK

- Registration for current PreK students, re-enrolling in PreK, and current SMS families begins 12/5/22.
- Registration for new families begins 1/4/23.

### 3-year old PreK

- Registration for current SMS families begins 3/1/23.
- Registration for new families begins 5/1/23.

### For more Information:

[school.stmaryspontiac.org](http://school.stmaryspontiac.org)

815-844-6585



# NEW ALTAR AT ST. MARY'S CEMETERY



Informal discussions had been held in years past regarding the installation of a permanent altar at our cemetery, but had not moved beyond that stage. Following the 2021 Memorial Day Mass at the cemetery, given the great response to this Mass, discussions resumed. It was determined that this project was not only feasible, but could prove to be a great benefit to the parish. Father Adam and some members of the cemetery board held several meetings with Mark Ifft of Pontiac Granite, with several designs being discussed. The altar, and a matching ambo (lectern) was ordered last winter in the hopes it would be delivered and installed by Memorial Day, 2022. Due to supply chain issues, and difficulties locating a piece of granite meeting the quality standards and size of our specifications, this was not to be. Ron Schulz and Jack Timmerman did a great job of pouring the concrete pad to accommodate the new altar and ambo. The altar ultimately arrived, and was installed on October 6, 2022 on a beautiful fall morning.

An All Souls Day Mass will be held at 12 noon on Wednesday, November 2 at the cemetery to honor all the dead buried there. Bring your lawn chairs. The traditional evening All Souls Memorial Mass being held in church will have names read and candles lit in memory of those who passed away this last year. It is hoped this new addition to our cemetery can be used several times during the year during nice weather.

## ADVENT SMALL GROUP STUDY

We exist to get to heaven! One of the ways we can work toward heaven is small group discipleship, walking with Jesus and praying the gospels. We invite you to join us this Advent season!

**What:** Small Group Study: *Praying the Gospels: Jesus Launches His Ministry* by Fr. Mitch Pacwa, SJ

**When:** There are 4 time offerings. A committed time must be chosen as participants will be assigned to a specific small group for this 6 week study.

**Tuesdays at 10:00am** starting November 15th and ending December 20th

**Wednesdays at 1:00pm** starting November 16th and ending December 21st

**Tuesday evenings at 6:30pm** starting November 15th and ending December 20th

**Thursday evenings at 6:30pm** starting November 10th and ending December 22nd

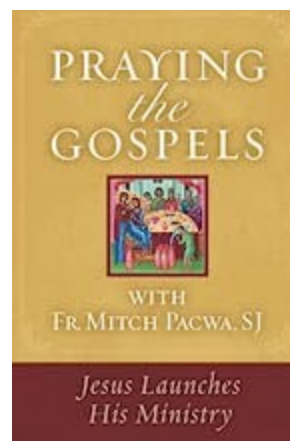
**Why:** To build community, to grow in our love for Jesus, and to help us all get to heaven.

**Where:** Participants will be notified once sign ups are completed and meeting locations are determined.

**3 ways to sign up:**

1. Sign up sheets are located at all church entrances
2. Call the church office at 815-844-7683
3. Email Kel at [krenz.kel@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:krenz.kel@stmaryspontiac.org)

- A donation of \$10.00 will be accepted to offset the cost of materials. Donations will be collected at time of first meeting.





# From The Back Page

by Kim Cheek

Webster's Dictionary defines the word team as "a group of people who work together." I truly believe that everyone should be on a team of some sort in their lifetime. I think a team can be any group, whether it be musically, athletically, academically, occupationally, anything with a shared goal. The lessons learned and the value of being on a team are immeasurable.

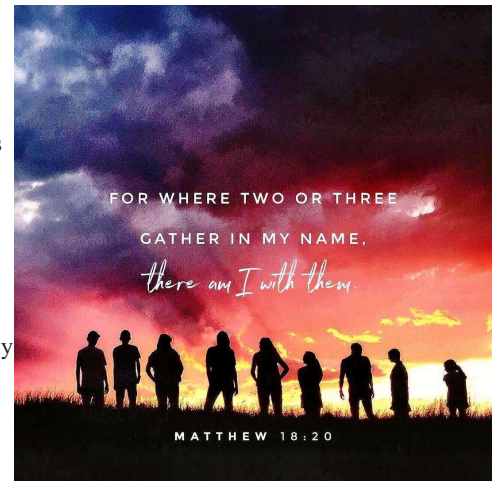
I have been involved in some sort of team or group since I was a child and now continue to be involved in various teams as an adult through my job and church. The first value of being on a team is there is power in numbers. One person can be persuasive; two or more people can be divine. A reflection I read about a recent Gospel mentioned how it was no accident that Jesus sent his Apostles in twos. The idea was people would see how the Apostles interacted with each other and spoke about Christ that they would be intrigued and want to learn more. There was power in the number.

Strength is increased when working together for a common goal. One team member may be a poor speaker or communicator. Another may have suffered great loss or tragedy and is unsure. Yet another may be boisterous and well meaning but misunderstood. If and when one member of your team falls, it is the other members who will lift them up. Working on a common goal allows these individuals to lean on each other and continue to grow in strength. The insight gained from other members strengths and weaknesses is also great.

Two or more people believing in something and sharing it with others also shows trust. Look at any sports team when they are celebrating a huge win or when they have played their final game together. The trust it takes to give 100% and share the joy and agony. The idea of working as disciples on a mission to bring more followers to Christ requires us to trust God, trust our priests, trust the people in charge of leading us. The Apostles gained people's trust in the same way. The Apostles had each other for support and companionship. "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." (Matthew 18:20)

A fourth quality gained by being on a team is the reward. Of course our reward is Heaven, and the team we are on is as followers of Christ. The gift of sharing a common goal or desire, the gift of sacrificing one's self to lend a helping hand to a neighbor or friend, the work put into growing a relationship with another person, these are rewarding. I listened to Father Adam's homily recently about our mission, and he spoke about all of the good things that have been accomplished the past few years despite the pandemic and trials we are currently facing. So many great rewards being heaped upon us all. We can truly count ourselves as blessed.

I would encourage everyone to be a good teammate. Learn to celebrate the power, trust, strength and reward that comes from working with others in our goal towards Heaven.



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