



WEEKLY UPDATE | Jan. 3, 2020

Holiday Office Hours

The parish office will be closed on December 31 & January 1.
We wish you and yours a safe, healthy, and happy New Year!

St. Joseph Food Program Collection Jan. 2/3

This time, we're collecting international food items (Chinese, Italian, Mexican, German - think of your favorites!). No glass containers or perishable or expired items please. Collection carts will be in the back of church and in the Marian Way.

Mass Times & Intentions

Monday, January 4, 5:30pm	Parishioners of St. Mary
Tuesday, January 5, 5:30pm	Michael Hurley
Wednesday, January 6, 12:05pm	Elaine Lamers
Thursday, January 7, 12:05pm	Marilyn Christensen
Saturday, January 9, 4:30pm	Erica Lynn Baumgart
Sunday, January 10, 7:45am	Parishioners of St. Mary
9:45am	Harry Smits
6:30pm	Ruth Carew

In Loving Memory

Please pray for the family of Jason Roberts (son of James & Beverly Roberts). May fond memories comfort you at this time. If you have lost a loved one and would like them to be remembered in the bulletin, call the parish office at 739-5119.

Prayer Needs

Contact Mary Jo Zilisch (920-734-1182 or 920-843-1249) or Laurie Richter (lauriejrichter@gmail.com) if you have a prayer need. Please remember the requests in our prayer baskets.

Events Calendar

Monday, Jan. 4

6:30pm Matthew 25 Meeting (Virtual)

7:00pm Boy Scouts/St. Anne Room

Tuesday, Jan. 5

2:00pm Rosary Group/Chapel

Wednesday, Jan. 6

9:00am Connect Group with Mary Ann Otto/L7

12:35pm Holy Hour

4:00pm Beacon Open House (until 6:00pm)/Community Room

6:00pm First Reconciliation Zoom Meeting #1

6:45pm First Reconciliation Zoom Meeting #2

Thursday, Jan. 7

7:00pm Cor Jesu/Church

Friday, Jan. 8

Parish office closed

Saturday, Jan. 9

9:00am Confessions/Chapel

Sunday, Jan. 10

11:00am RCIA/Community Room

6:00pm Beacon Ministries Deep Divers (virtual Session - Zoom)

7:00pm Beacon Ministries Sailors (virtual Session - Zoom)

We Gratefully Give

So much is different this Christmas season, yet the focus and dedication of our parish ministries remain constant. Your generous online donations are needed now to help sustain parish ministries that reflect the promise of God's love. The upheaval and distress caused by COVID-19 give these ministries added importance, and your kindness will help us continue our outreach to our parish families and neighborhood. From your computer, smart phone or tablet, you'll be able to set up a recurring donation or make a one-time gift.

St. Mary Parish Support			
December 2020	Budget	Received	Variance
received 12/21- 12/25/2020		41,537	
December- month to date:	158,000	123,186	-34,814
7/1/20-12/31/2020			
Fiscal Year To Date :	484,000	435,771	-48,229

There are two easy ways to give with Faith Direct: 1. Head to stmaryparish.org and click on the blue DONATE button in the upper-right corner of the homepage. 2. Text to Give - Open a new text message and enter (920-294-1189) in the 'TO' Field. In the 'TEXT MESSAGE' field, enter a dollar amount, then hit SEND. You will be prompted for the next steps. Need help? Call Faith Direct at 1-866-507-8757 or contact Pam Acker in the parish office at (920) 739-5119 or packer@stmaryparish.org.

End of Year Contributions

The IRS requires donations to be received **ON or BEFORE Dec. 31, 2020 to qualify for your 2020 deductions**. Please note: the parish office will be closed on December 31 & January 1 so plan accordingly. Checks intended for 2021 **MUST** be dated 1-1-2021 or after.

COVID Tax Tip: New for 2020 - Most taxpayers can deduct up to \$300 in charitable contributions without itemizing deductions!

Following tax law changes, cash donations of up to \$300 made this year by December 31, 2020 are now deductible without having to itemize when people file their taxes in 2021.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act includes several temporary tax law changes to help charities. This includes the special \$300 deduction designed especially for people who choose to take the standard deduction, rather than itemize their deductions.

This change allows individual taxpayers to claim a deduction of up to \$300 for cash donations made to charity during 2020. This deduction lowers both adjusted gross income and taxable income – translating into tax savings for those making donations to qualifying tax-exempt organizations. See your tax accountant for more details.

St. Mary Parish Office

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In Joy & Sorrow with Father Bill

At the moment of his appointment to lead the enslaved Israelite people out of Egypt, standing mesmerized before the bush that was on fire but not being burned up, Moses had the presence of mind to ask the Lord, "What is your name? It would be good to know your name if I am to carry out your mission!" The Lord responded cryptically, "I am who I am," meaning something like "I am always with you."

It is interesting to note that the Lord God declared "I am", not "I was" or "I will be." It is best for us to live our lives present to the present moment. It is difficult to always be looking back to the past, sometimes weighed down by guilt and shame. The Lord does not live in the past. Let it go!

Similarly, it is difficult to live our lives in the future, always anxious and even worried or fearful. God does not live in the future, so to speak.

I suspect that in God, and this is even hard for us to imagine, there is only the present and somehow the past and the future are melted into the present. God is only present! I am not a philosopher so I am unable to explain the meaning of concepts like time but I know that it is best for us if we live in the present.

As we begin a New Year, let's try to let go of the past. No use stewing or complaining about it. Let's hear Jesus' reassuring words, "Do not be afraid!" as we look to a New Year. Living one day at a time is the best strategy.

I would like to suggest to you a daily habit of prayer that may help you to do just that! It comes down to us through history as an insight of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, the Founder of the Society of Jesus. It is called the "Daily Examen." It is a way to reverence the gift of life lived in the present moment.

At the end of your day, open your heart to the Holy Spirit and the Spirit will lead you. Begin with a prayer of gratitude. Pause and reflect and bring forth into your mind and heart a moment during the day in which you felt great gratitude to the Lord. It can be as simple as feeling invigorated by the brisk winter chill.

Then review the day in the light of the Lord's closeness to you. When did you experience his touch upon your day? How did that make you feel? Did you miss something or someone today because you were too caught up in your own agenda? Do you need to apologize to anyone? Or ask the Lord's forgiveness? How did you pray your day? What did the Lord say to you? Do look quickly at your tomorrow and place all that you have scheduled into the hands of the Lord.

It was Socrates who said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." I suspect that Mary, the Mother of God and the Mother of the Church, understood what Socrates was implying. Mary was a ponderer - always turning over in her heart and mind her daily experiences - feeling the closeness of her God to her.

Praying with Father Austin Fleming
(concordpastor.blogspot.com) in the New Year:

Lord, I offer you my heart for the year ahead and pray you'll soften what's grown coarse, warm what's chilled and frostbit, smooth my roughened edges and mend my broken parts - and not so much for my sake - but more for those who count on me to be there with and for them...In the New Year, Lord, give me a heart for others and help me resolve to love my neighbors as myself...Amen.

Happy New Year to you and to those you love!
Father Bill +