



## **WEEKLY UPDATE | Jan. 10, 2020**

### **The Baptism of the Lord**

### **Community Room & Marian Way Update**

We have exciting news! New furniture for the Community Room and Marian Way is starting to arrive this week! Thank you to all who donated to the one by One Capital Campaign. Your generous contributions made these updates possible. Stay tuned for more updates and photos. We can't wait until we can gather together again and put our spaces back to work for Coffee & Donuts and other social events!

### **Help Needed**

Please join us on Monday, January 11 at 9:00am to take down our Christmas trees and decorations. We appreciate any help you can provide.

### **January Envelopes**

If you haven't yet received your January envelopes, please know that the post office is experiencing delays. Your envelopes should arrive soon. In the meantime, you can simply drop your check in the collection basket or mail it to the office. There are extra envelopes in the parish office if you would like to pick some up.

### **Office Hours**

The parish office will be closed from 12:30-4:30pm on Monday, January 11 for a staff gathering. 5:30pm Mass will take place as usual.

## Mass Times & Intentions

Monday, January 11, 5:30pm	Harold Hanson
Tuesday, January 12, 5:30pm	Audrey & Harold Deprez
Wednesday, January 13, 12:05pm	Gary Malchow Family
Thursday, January 14, 12:05pm	Alice LeFevre
Saturday, January 16, 4:30pm	Leonard & Susan Magee
Sunday, January 17, 7:45am	For Peace & Collaboration in Our Nation
9:45am	Mark VandeHey
6:30pm	Bill Gosz

## Events Calendar

### *Monday, Jan. 11*

Parish Office Closed 12:30-4:30pm

7:00pm Boy Scouts/St. Anne Room

### *Tuesday, Jan. 12*

2:00pm Rosary Group/Chapel

7:00pm Facilities Committee Meeting/Community Room (Virtual Option)

6:15pm Confessions/Chapel

6:30pm First Reconciliation/Church

7:00pm Finance Committee Meeting/Community Room (Virtual Option)

### *Wednesday, Jan. 13*

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

6:45pm Beacon Ministries Paddlers & Swimmers (virtual session - Zoom)

### *Thursday, Jan. 14*

No events

### *Friday, Jan. 15*

Parish office closed

### *Saturday, Jan. 16*

9:00am Confessions/Chapel

10:00am THEO/LL1&3

### *Sunday, Jan. 17*

11:00am RCIA/Community Room

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

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

# Beacon Ministries Updates

## PREPARATION & CELEBRATION: THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Please pray for our Grade 2 families as they gather (option for both in-person or hybrid) this Sunday from 11:00am-12:30pm for a Retreat Event. Fr. Bill will review the different components of the Sacrament and the children will have the opportunity to view the chapel, which will be used as the Reconciliation Room. The families will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Tuesday, January 12th. God's love and blessings to all!

## PREPARATION: FIRST EUCHARIST

Preparation for First Eucharist will begin mid-January. If you would like your child to participate and have not registered, please call or email Mary Ann Otto at 739-5119 or [motto@stmaryparish.org](mailto:motto@stmaryparish.org). We would love to have you join us!

**Families who have registered, please mark your calendars for January 27 from 4:00-6:00pm. Materials will be available for pick up at St. Mary.**

## GRADES 1-5 (Paddlers & Swimmers)

Beacon Families picked up their activity folders for January and early February on Wednesday, January 6. They will be investigating what the Bible and our Church has to say about Mary, Jesus' Mom, Angels and some of Jesus' Love Lessons. They will also be looking at prayers of our Church like the Hail Mary, the Rosary and the Guardian Angel Prayer.

## GRADES 6-11 (Deep Divers & Sailors)

Middle and High School Virtual Beacon sessions start back up this Sunday night (January 10). The Middle School session begins at 6:00pm & the high school session begins at 7:00pm.

## ADULTS (Voyagers)

Wednesday Morning Connect Group: Discuss the Sunday Readings and the Homily in Faith and Friendship, facilitated by Mary Ann Otto.

Wednesday mornings | 9-10am | Socially distanced and masked in Room L7

Contact Mary Ann Otto at [motto@stmaryparish](mailto:motto@stmaryparish) to register.

## In Loving Memory

Please pray for the family of David Gerald Van Eperen and Della Borre. 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 Luanne Witthuhn ([dlaawi@gmail.com](mailto:dlaawi@gmail.com)) or Ann Walkowski (920-428-0969) if you have a prayer need. Please remember the requests in our prayer baskets.

# 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 12/28- 12/31/2020		15,583	
December- month to date:	158,000	138,769	-19,231
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7/1/20-12/31/2020			
Fiscal Year To Date :	484,000	451,354	-32,646

There are two easy ways to give with Faith Direct: 1. Head to [stmaryparish.org](http://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](mailto:packer@stmaryparish.org).

## Mass Attendance

In an effort to help you determine your safest options, we are providing Mass attendance numbers from the previous week. For reference, our church capacity at 25% is 120. Week of December 28-January 3:

Monday, 5:30 pm (6)	Saturday, 4:30 pm (57)
Tuesday, 5:30 pm (2)	Sunday, 7:45 am (47)
Wednesday, 12:05 pm (28)	9:45 am (83)
Thursday, 12:05 pm (29)	6:30pm (21)
Friday, 8:30 am (31)	

## St. Mary Parish Office

312 S. State Street  
Appleton, WI 54911  
[stmaryparish.org](http://stmaryparish.org)

Contact Us  
920-739-5119  
[stmary@stmaryparish.org](mailto:stmary@stmaryparish.org)

Fr. Bill Swichtenberg, Pastor  
[wdswitz@stmaryparish.org](mailto:wdswitz@stmaryparish.org)  
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# *In Joy & Sorrow with Father Bill*

I have shared many times that one of my mentors in the Catholic Church is the former Archbishop of Chicago, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, who died of pancreatic cancer in November of 1996. He was an influential leader among our US Catholic Bishops, a former President of the Conference of Catholic Bishops, a proponent of the Common Ground Initiative, which was his dream of bringing Catholics of varying viewpoints together for honest and respectful conversations. This Initiative still lives on twenty-four years after his death.

Cardinal Bernardin was also the originator of the notion that all of the life issues are interconnected, beginning with the precious life of the infant in the womb and weaving through all of the pro-life issues to the moment of natural death. This consistent ethic of life model still to this day remains a topic that is worthy of discussion among Catholics of varying viewpoints. The current Archbishop of Chicago, Cardinal Blase Cupich, has taken Bernardin's notion of the consistent ethic of life and has advocated for a consistent ethic of solidarity as well.

Solidarity is the notion that the lives of all human beings are interconnected. We are all in the same boat, if you will. We are a part of a global family. Pope Francis, too, has dedicated his second encyclical to human solidarity, titling his beautiful work, "On Human Fraternity."

One of the treasured books on my shelves is Cardinal Bernardin's [The Gift of Peace](#). I have mentioned this book many times, which was published shortly after his death. The

Cardinal, in fact, wrote "A Personal Letter to the Reader", in his own handwriting, that was completed just a few days before his death, and is included in the front of his book. The book is the Cardinal's Last Will and Testament, if you will. As he struggled with his cancer diagnosis and an unsubstantiated charge of clergy sexual abuse against him, which was later recanted, the Cardinal found his love for the Lord and others deepened.

In fact, once the young man who accused him of sexual abuse admitted that he had made the whole thing up (which, by the way, is very rare in the horrifically long list of credible charges brought against clergy), Cardinal Joseph Bernardin wanted very much to fly out to Philadelphia, the "City of Brotherly (and Sisterly) Love," to visit with Steven. He wanted to make sure that Steven knew that he had forgiven him. It was right around the Feast of the Holy Family, during the Christmas Season of 1994. The Cardinal celebrated Mass with Steven and here is what he said in his brief homily:

"In every family there are times when there is hurt, anger, and alienation. But we cannot run away from our family. We have only one family so we must make every effort to be reconciled. The church is our spiritual family. Once we become a member, we may be hurt or become alienated, but it is still our family. Since there is no other, we must work at reconciliation."

I remember being very touched by the Cardinal's gesture of reconciliation and his

understanding of church as family.

In the New Year, I would like to explore with you what it means to say that “My parish is my spiritual family.” How can we deepen the sense of our parish as a family? Because we are a large family, how do we draw near and connect to a smaller group of parish members? How might we walk together and grow closer to the Lord and each other? Are we able to cry when one member of our family cries and laugh when one member laughs? How do we sustain our commitment to our parish family when uncomfortable situations arise? How do we lovingly bring our concerns or hurts or struggles to members of our parish family? How do we work through the things that are upsetting us? What is the place of the pastor in this parish family? How do we get to a place where commitment to my parish family is stronger than my difficulties or differences with the pastor? How do we create safe spaces to have conversations that help us to see the bigger picture? How do we look to Jesus and His Gospel to guide these delicate conversations?

We are well aware that we live in a nation that is deeply divided. We are a part of a Church that is deeply divided. How do we plot a course to begin to discuss these divisions and construct a bridge together? What unites us in the Lord is far greater than what may divide us!

Stay tuned for an opportunity for us to share living room conversations in parish connect groups during Lent.

Father Bill +