



WEEKLY UPDATE | Jan. 17, 2021

Second Sunday of Ordinary Time

Hey St. Mary Parish Family...What's the Good News?

We're introducing a new bulletin feature to share with you what's good, exciting, uplifting, and positive: "Hey St. Mary Parish Family...What's the Good News?" With the doldrums of winter and the pain of separation due to the pandemic upon us, we want to connect to joy, positivity and each other.

The Good News this week:

Last Sunday, we enjoyed the beautiful voices of Isabelle & Evelin Bestul cantoring at our 9:45am Mass. What a joy! We're blessed to have such talent in our young people to enhance our worship experience.

Want more good news? [Visit us on Facebook!](#) If you have an uplifting story about someone in or something about our St. Mary Parish Family, share it with us at info@stmaryparish.org. Your story might be featured in the bulletin!

Lenten Stations of the Cross

Mark your calendar! We will be hosting in-person Stations of the Cross this year, alternating Thursday evenings with St. Joe's. Stations will begin at 5:30pm (no soup suppers this year).

Stations of the Cross, Thursdays, 5:30pm

Feb. 25 - St. Mary

Mar. 4 - St. Joseph

Mar. 11 - St. Mary

Mar. 18 - St. Joseph

Mar. 25 - St. Mary

Beacon Ministries Updates

PREPARATION & CELEBRATION: THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Grade 2 families gathered (in-person or hybrid) last Sunday for a retreat event. Fr. Bill reviewed the different components of the Sacrament and the children had the opportunity to view the chapel, where reconciliation would be held. Families then celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation Tuesday, January 12. Please pray for our beautiful children and their families. 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. 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 met virtually on January 13 to investigate Mary, Jesus' Mom. Working with Luke's passage *Hail Favored One! The Lord is with you.*, the children talked about Mary as Jesus' mother, as the greatest disciple, and as a courageous woman. They also explored the words of the *Hail Mary Prayer* and considered the *Rosary*.

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.org to register.

Mass Times & Intentions

Monday, January 18, 5:30pm	Parishioners of St. Mary
Tuesday, January 19, 5:30pm	Janice Mercier
Wednesday, January 20, 12:05pm	Alice McGinnis
Thursday, January 21, 12:05pm	David Gerald Van Eperen
Saturday, January 23, 4:30pm	William & Sue VanEeckhout
Sunday, January 24, 7:45am	A Special Intention
9:45am	Mike Hurley
6:30pm	David Robert Balliet

Events Calendar

Monday, Jan. 18

7:00pm Boy Scouts/St. Anne Room

Tuesday, Jan. 19

1:00pm St. Mary & St. Joseph Prayer Shawl Group/@ St. Joseph, L12 & L14

2:00pm Rosary Group/Chapel

6:00pm Human Concerns Committee/L1&3

6:15pm Confessions/Chapel

Wednesday, Jan. 20

8:00am Quilting Group/St. Anne Rm.

9:00am ROCKs Meeting/Community Rm.

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

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

Thursday, Jan. 21

No events

Friday, Jan. 22

Parish office closed

Saturday, Jan. 23

9:00am Confessions/Chapel

Sunday, Jan. 24

11:00am RCIA/Community Room

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

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

In Loving Memory

Please pray for the families of Helen Heckel, Charles Schueler, and Peter Lamensky. 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.

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 January 4-10:

Monday, 5:30 pm (10) Saturday, 4:30 pm (69)

Tuesday, 5:30 pm (20) Sunday, 7:45 am (55)

Wednesday, 12:05 pm (41) 9:45 am (72)

Thursday, 12:05 pm (30) 6:30 pm (24)

A Grateful & Blessed Family

“Let us pray to become God’s enthusiastic partners. Let us recommit ourselves to the Lord and to each other...” It is difficult to believe it has been a few months since Fr. Bill spoke these words asking us to partner with God in transforming our world with the Gospel. Many of us took time to pray and reflect upon our financial stewardship to St. Mary Parish.

We returned cards indicating we wanted in on this beautiful partnership in 2021. We then held high the basket offering our promised tithes to God. What a blessed and grateful family we are! As we remember our commitment and begin to bring/send our tithes to the parish this year, may we become excited about how we are partnering for a transformed world in Jesus’ name.

Ripples of God’s Love - Through Our Hearts - To All Hearts!

St. Mary Parish Support			
January 2021	Budget	Received	Variance
received 1/4- 1/8/2021		4,238	
January- month to date:	65,000	4,238	-60,763
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7/1/20-1/31/2021			
Fiscal Year To Date :	549,000	455,592	-93,409

FAITH DIRECT

This new year is filled with hope and promise – opportunities abound to grow our vital ministries, explore new ways to share the good news of Christ’s love, and reflect His care and mercy to those in need throughout the community. To continue to make a difference in 2021, St. Mary Parish is reaching out to our parishioners. Begin the new year with eGiving to help sustain and build ministries throughout 2021 that reflect the promise of God’s love. The need is great in our community, and your generous online gifts will help people all around us. We prayerfully request that you consider signing up for eGiving. From your computer, smart phone or tablet, you'll be able to set up a recurring donation or make a one-time gift.

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.

St. Mary Parish Office

312 S. State Street
Appleton, WI 54911
stmaryparish.org

Office Hours
Monday – Thursday, 8:30am-4:30pm
Closed Fridays

Contact Us
920-739-5119
stmary@stmaryparish.org

Fr. Bill Swichtenberg, Pastor
wdswitz@stmaryparish.org
cell 920 422-4316

In Joy & Sorrow with Father Bill

As we enter Ordinary Time, I would like to share with you a reflection by Ann Weems titled "It Is Not Over", which concludes her book of reflections, *Kneeling in Bethlehem*.

It is not over,
 this birthing.
There are always newer skies
 into which
 God can throw stars.
When we begin to think
 that we can predict the Advent of God,
 that we can box the Christ
 in a stable in Bethlehem,
 that's just the time
 that God will be born
 in a place we can't imagine and won't
believe.
Those who wait for God
 watch with their hearts and not their eyes,
 listening
 always listening
 for angel words.

I spent one last time praying before the Nativity Scene in Church after last Sunday evening's Mass before the good people of our parish family came in Monday morning to put all the "Christmas stuff" away for another year. That tender scene of the newborn Jesus, lying in a food trough, gazed upon by Mary and Joseph, is charged with so much hope. This Jesus would grow up to be God in our midst, moving from village to village, not shouting or crying out in the streets and, so gentle, that he would not even break a bruised reed. Even on His Cross, Jesus mustered the grace deep within Him to be about forgiveness and not vengeance. He did not call down an army of angels to lift

him off of the Cross and to place a sword in His Hand, so to destroy the oppressing Roman occupiers of the Promised Land. No, Jesus was a peacemaker.

On these upsetting and unnerving days across our nation, what can we do but ask our tender and gentle Jesus to embrace our nation in His Loving Arms. With His Hands upon our lives, we can feel His peace and calm, His strength and courage. With His Hands upon our hearts, we pray to become more like Jesus. Those who bear the name of "Christian" are truly Christ-bearers. We bring Jesus to others just as Mary brought Jesus in her womb to her cousin Elizabeth. We have to pray for the grace to be Christians in name and in deed. As the song prays, "And they will know we are Christians by our love."

God is with us! Let us place all our hope in our God. Let us be still and silent often to listen for "angel words." Let us recall the words of President Abraham Lincoln in his first Inaugural Address on March 4, 1861: "We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory will swell when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Father Bill +