



Our Mission is to know, love and serve God by living the Eucharist.

Promulgated on Pentecost Sunday, 2013

420 Irving Street | Alexandria, MN 56308 | (320) 763-5781



The Church of
St. Mary

MARCH 29, 2020
THE 5TH SUNDAY OF LENT

*I am the
Resurrection
and the Life*



Pope's Prayer to Mary for a protection during the coronavirus pandemic

O Mary, you always shine on our path as a sign of salvation and of hope.

We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,

who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm.

You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need,

and we are sure you will provide so that, as in Cana of Galilee,

we may return to joy and to feasting after this time of trial.

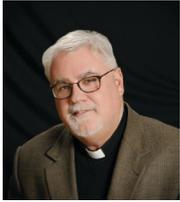
Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father
and to do as we are told by Jesus, who has taken upon himself our sufferings
and carried our sorrows to lead us, through the cross,
to the joy of the resurrection. Amen.

Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God.

Do not disdain the entreaties of we who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger,

O glorious and blessed Virgin.

FROM OUR PASTOR



Dear Parishioners,

Covid-19 is changing how we are around the world. I am angry at the virus and want to destroy it. But it is a silent, sneaky IT, a tough thing to get a handle on to fight. I miss our gathering together and long for the day when we can gather as we have done in the past. Is this the work of the devil as some have claimed? I don't go there as disease and viruses and plagues have been part of humanity since we started gathering in cities. But I do know that God is more powerful than the devil or evil or any destructiveness. I believe that God is present to humanity in the front-line medical workers, in those who provide essential services, in those who check in on elderly neighbors or the single mom with kids cooped up in the house. God is present when we move from hoarding to sharing so all might have a chance. As a pastor whose role is to gather people together to celebrate Eucharist, I am aware that keeping separate is a way to slow down the virus. Being available for Mass in your home via stmaryalexandria.org is one way of reaching out to you with a message of hope.

In this time, we have been given a chance to develop our "HOME CHURCH." It is important to establish a routine of prayer: Morning Prayer together (see our website), meal prayers together (write your own—have each child write one), teach your kids (and maybe yourself) how to prepare a meal. (Meals are really not about the food but about the care and love that goes into it and the conversation that flows around the table. Watch the movie "Babette's Feast" about the redemptive and healing quality of a meal).

I know that I am thinking of the economy. I am to retire in 15 months. Will there even be any retirement funds left? We'll see. I also think of so many of you right now without a paycheck coming in, who live paycheck to paycheck. As this goes on, we have to find ways of helping each other. This is a very real challenge for all of us. We are all in this together. It affects all of us to be sure. As an employer, I am worried about the 30+ employees of the church and making payroll for them. The teachers continue to teach from home. Our pastoral staff, even though what we do doesn't change—how we do it has. We are learning as we go. With no gathering, we have no offertory. It is from the offertory that those who work for the church are paid. I know how stressful finances are for all of us, but be as generous as you can. Sign up for online giving (stmaryalexandria.org) or you can put your offering in the dropbox at the office. We check it many times a day for communications.

We are working hard to staying connected with you and your family through our email blasts and on our website: www.stmaryalexandria.org. Please go to it. We have any number of resources there. Subscribe and log onto "Formed" to view good religious themed movies as well as learn about our Catholic faith. Directions are given on our website. Having a class with each other can be another part of your routine. Continue to pray, to grow in your faith and be Christ to those around you.

BLESSINGS TO YOU THIS WEEK.
FR. STEVE

— BANS OF MARRIAGE —

I Benjamin Whalen & Christina Matthews

| SUNDAY OFFERINGS | ACTUAL | BUDGET* | VARIANCE |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Envelope | \$ 11,080 | \$ 26,413 | \$ (15,333) |
| Electronic | 17,666 | 6,731 | 10,935 |
| Other | 162 | 2,490 | (2,328) |
| Weekend - March 22 | \$ 28,908 | \$ 35,634 | \$ (6,726) |
| Year-to-Date Offerings | \$ 1,273,371 | \$ 1,354,092 | \$ (80,721) |

** Total year budget is spread equally over 52 weeks. Detailed financial reports may be viewed at the Parish Office.*



COMMUNITY NEWS

YOU CAN HELP US DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. During this challenging time, we depend on online donations to continue our ministry. Use eGiving from your computer, smartphone or tablet to set up a recurring donation or make a one-time gift. Sign up is easy. Click "Giving" in the top right corner of our website, stmaryalexandria.org.

PRAYER CORNER

If you or someone you know in our parish community is sick or ill, or has a family member who could use our prayers, please call our Parish Nurse, Kathy Fischer, at 762-2320. Names will be published for 6 weeks, and renewed for an additional 6 weeks upon request.



Please remember the following people in your prayers:

Ruth Partington, Betty Schlosser, Dan Woods, Kevin Richmond Sr., Andrew Herges, Phyllis VanKempen, Dan Ridler, Rosemary Rehovsky, Marie Peterson, Doloris Lorsung, Betty Henshaw, Marilyn Miller, May Vis Bruzek, Matt Sobiech, Mitch, Lawrence Cline, Virginia Schultz, Jack Determan, Dorothy Becker, Norma Lais, Ken Volk, Dennis Zaviska, Emily Stark, Irene Cline, Sally Bellicot, Kathy Bellicot, Kim Rose, Lorraine Sellgren-Davis, Mary Waldorf, Fran Didier, Dianne Otto, Ronnie Le Grange, Dixie Decker and Connie Looft.

Are you feeling isolated and anxious because of the coronavirus?

We want to assure you that St. Mary's remembers and prays for those who are in any kind of need.

Please call Kathy Fischer, Faith Community Nurse, at 320-762-2320 if you would like prayer or conversation, or if you would like help with any of the following tasks:

1. Errands (i.e. post office, library)
2. Buy groceries
3. Pick up medications and over-the-counter medicines
4. Pick up medical supplies

Please call if you would like support!

THE PARISH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED in efforts to slow down the spread of COVID-19, but staff will still be working either in the office or from home depending on developments. The parish staff will remain available via phone and email:

320-763-5781 | stmary@stmaryalexandria.org

Please use the dropbox outside the parish office for dropping off envelopes and other communications.

ABOUT LIFE

JUSTICE PEACE AND THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION (JPIC): **St. Oscar Romero** was born in El Salvador in 1917. He was named archbishop in 1977 in a time of widespread violence in El Salvador. As archbishop, he denounced the regime of the dictator and also refused to support the right-wing military-civilian junta that replaced the dictator. Romero focused on the church's 'preferential option for the poor' and was an outspoken defender of the poor and powerless. His advocacy for human rights made him a hero to many and he was nominated for the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize. His actions made him a target of others and, in 1980, he was assassinated at the hands of an unknown assailant, later determined to be someone connected with a right-wing death squad. During his funeral a bomb or bombs went off outside the cathedral in San Salvador where tens of thousands of mourners were gathered; gunfire then went off against the crowd killing 27 to 40 people. More than 200 were wounded from the violence and subsequent stampede. In 2015, Archbishop Oscar Romero was declared a martyr by Pope Francis and was canonized in October of 2018. His feast day is March 24.



The number one cause of death in America is the needless sacrifice of our children at the altar of convenience called abortion. Conservative estimates put the number of deaths at nearly 48 million.

Taken from *40 Days for Life*

Visit St. Mary's Sanctity of Life online at sanctityoflifestm.org for information and resources.

FAITH FORMATION

stmreled@stmaryalexandria.org | 320-763-9202

YOUTH FAITH FORMATION



Class Schedule

All classes are cancelled at this time to help slow the spread of COVID-19. We will communicate the rest of the year's schedule as soon as we are able.

BIGGEST YOUTH NIGHT EVER

It's been a crazy few weeks. There's a lot up in the air, and we're not sure when we'll start gathering at the church again – but that doesn't mean youth nights have to stop...

Thousands of teenagers from across the country are gathering on Sunday nights for the **BIGGEST YOUTH NIGHT EVER**. It's called ProjectYM Live and each week it'll feature some of the biggest speakers and worship leaders in the Catholic youth ministry world.

Our parish is signed up to participate – all your teenager has to do is head to PROJECTYM.COM/WATCH this Sunday at 7:00 PM Central.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

All bible studies, group gatherings, committee/ministry meetings, including Eucharistic Adoration, at St. Mary's will be cancelled through April 15 to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

ST. MARY'S PRAYER LINK: If you have a prayer request, please send to Wosepkak@aol.com or phone Kelly Wosepka at 320-815-4655 or Julie Desautels at 846-1842. All prayer requests will be kept confidential.

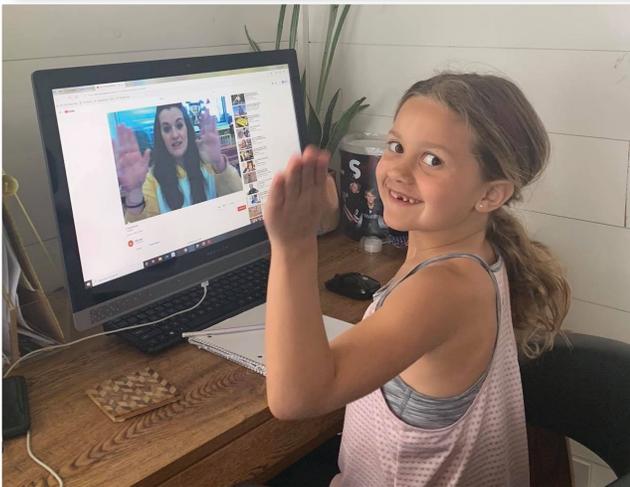
Watch, O Lord, with those who wake,
or watch, or weep tonight,
and give your angels and saints
charge over those who sleep.
Tend your sick ones, O Lord Christ.
Rest your weary ones.
Bless your dying ones.
Sooth your suffering ones.
Pity your afflicted ones.
Shield your joyous ones,
and all for your love's sake. Amen.

-St. Augustine

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

St. Mary's School educates the whole child within a nurturing Catholic Christian environment.
stmaryss@stmaryalexandria.org | 320-763-5861

E-learning is taking place for all St. Mary's School students. Teachers are delivering lessons via YouTube, Zoom, and Google Classroom.



Pictured are kindergarten students and their teacher, Mrs. Ihnen, all working from home.

CALENDAR RAFFLE WINNERS

MARCH

| | | |
|------|----------------------------|------|
| 3/22 | Kevin Flatau, Alexandria | \$35 |
| 3/23 | Patsy Waggoner, Alexandria | \$20 |
| 3/24 | Leslie Kirscht, Alexandria | \$20 |
| 3/25 | Charles Klimek, Alexandria | \$20 |
| 3/26 | Gail Feriancek, Alexandria | \$20 |
| 3/27 | Debbie Webber, Havana, IL | \$20 |
| 3/28 | Sheri Platto, Alexandria | \$20 |

Help Support Our School by Participating in:



MAKING PEACE WITH SUFFERING

Jesus receives word that his friend Lazarus has died. He returns to Bethany to be with Mary and Martha, Lazarus's sisters. Before Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, he shows genuine human compassion. His first response to seeing his friends' sadness is to weep with them.

Even in Jesus' time, people questioned why they had to suffer. When Lazarus becomes deathly ill, Martha and Mary send for Jesus. When he does not arrive until it is too late, Lazarus's sister challenges Jesus, asking why he did not come sooner to save her brother.

I remember sitting at the bedside of a thirteen-year-old girl who knew she was dying. She suffered for days before she finally died. At the funeral I listened to some of the comments. "God has his reasons," and "God is just testing us". I wondered who the God was they were talking about. Don't we say, and believe, that God loves us even more than we love our own children? I could not imagine any reason I would cause a child of mine to suffer that much. And what kind of a parent uses the suffering of his own little girl to test some grown-ups?

Suffering happens. It is part of life. No one, not the richest person or poorest, not saint or sinner, can get through life without suffering. God doesn't cause it; God doesn't plan it. Suffering is a part of our fallen human nature. God is just there to see us through it.

When you say yes to God, accept your humanness, and ask for God's help through your pain. God's strength and life becomes your strength and life. Your yes opens you up to the peace, courage and perseverance that God's love offers. It is so much easier to endure suffering when you know that your good God is with you, as close as the next breath you take.

FAMILY RESPONSE

Ask family members to talk about the most difficult thing that happened this week. Pray to let go of any uncomfortable emotions that are left over. Ask them to close their eyes and slowly breathe in and out. Ask them to imagine that their breath is the Holy Spirit healing their hearts.

PERSONAL RESPONSE

What has caused you the most suffering in your life? If it is still with you today, how can you ease the pain? What do you want to remember from last week? What are you looking forward to next week? What are your concerns?

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Handling Stress During COVID-19 Pandemic

Everyone reacts to stressful situations differently. Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can include:

1. Fear and worry about your own health and the health of loved ones
2. Changes in sleeping or eating patterns
3. Difficulty sleeping and concentrating
4. Worsening of chronic health problems
5. Increased use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs
6. Worry relayed to time taken off work and potential loss of income and job security
7. The challenges of securing things you need such as groceries and personal care items

Being proactive about your mental health can keep your mind and body strong. Taking care of your emotional health will keep you thinking clearly and more able to react to your needs and your family's needs.

Things you can do to support yourself:

1. Take breaks from watching, reading or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the coronavirus pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
2. Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, meditate, pray, exercise. Eat healthy well-balanced meals, get plenty of rest and avoid alcohol and drugs.
3. Make time to relax and unwind. Try to do activities you enjoy.
4. Connect with others. Talk to trusted people about your concerns and how you feel.
5. Maintain a sense of hope and positive thinking. Incorporate prayer into your daily routine, consider keeping a journal where you write down things you are grateful for and what is going well.

**** Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.**

What we know less about is more likely to make us nervous and anxious. Understanding the actual risks to yourself and people you care about can make an outbreak less stressful. When you share accurate information about COVID-19 people feel less stressed and allow you to connect with them. Reliable sources of information include the CDC and MDH.

A plan of action to deal with the coronavirus that includes biological, psychological, social and spiritual health factors can help us all feel a sense of calm and control in uncertain times. Anxiety is a blend of fear and hope—keep the hope part in mind too. If you're struggling with anxiety, know that seeking help is a strength, not a weakness. Text 741741 to talk with a crisis counselor, it's free, confidential and available at all hours.

SACRAMENTS

RECONCILIATION

Saturday at 4:00 PM in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel (room behind presider's chair; also has a separate entry)

BAPTISM

All parents must take the Baptism Preparation Course. Call the Parish Office to sign up. Check our [website](#) for dates.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Members of the parish (or children of members) must arrange for marriage at least 6 months in advance. Contact the Parish Office for more information.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

The 1st Sunday of the month, immediately following the 8:00 AM Mass. Those who wish to be anointed are asked to come to the front of the church.

WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE

- Tue.** †Toni McCarten
Wed. †Leonard Floding
Thurs. ††Sylvester & Erma Haase
†Kathryn Korf
Fri. †Elsie Platto
Sat. For the Parish
Sun. †David T. & David S. Hoffman
†Laura McCoy

Fr. Steve will be saying Mass privately each day for the Mass intentions and the well-being of the parish and all people of the Alexandria community.

WEEKLY READINGS - MARCH 29

- Mon.** DN 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62; JN 8:1-11
Tue. NM 21:4-9; JN 8:21-30
Wed. DN 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; JN 8:31-42
Thurs. GN 17:3-9; JN 8:51-59
Fri. JER 20:10-13; JN 10:31-42
Sat. EZ 37:21-28; JN 11:45-56
Sun. MT 21:1-11; PHIL 2:6-11;
MT 26:14—27:66

PARISH STAFF

- Steve Binsfeld**.....**320-763-5781**
Pastor
Todd Wentworth.....**320-763-5781**
Parish Business Administrator
Laurie Youngers.....**320-763-5781**
Director of Music & Liturgy
Kathy Fischer.....**320-762-2320**
Parish Nurse
Troy Sladek.....**320-763-5861**
Principal & Elementary Faith Formation

- Laurie Bienias**.....**320-763-9202**
Logistics Coordinator
Tammy Huss.....**320-763-9202**
Coordinator of Youth Ministries
Kathy Ballou.....**320-763-5781**
Communications Coordinator
Elmer Kobbermann.....**320-834-3103**
Francie Peterson.....**320-360-0325**
Parish Trustees

CONTACT US

www.stmaryalexandria.org

stmary@stmaryalexandria.org

320-763-5781

NEW MEMBERS

To register, stop by our Hospitality Desk located in the Commons Area of the church or visit our [website to complete the registration online](#).

OUR THANKS TO THESE MERCHANTS FOR SUPPORTING OUR PARISH BULLETIN

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| <p>THORNTON, DOLAN, BOWEN, KLECKER & BURKHAMMER, PA Attorneys At Law 1017 Broadway, Alexandria, MN</p> | | | | <p>1210 Broadway St. S 320-763-3040 </p> <p>The UPS Store</p> |
|  <p>www.zimnyinsuranceagency.com 320-762-2124 Auto Home Business Life Health LTC Ins. 1103 Broadway, Alexandria, MN</p> |  <p>KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS 722 6th Avenue East Membership: Bob Neale, 320-762-8685 KC Hall Rental: John Leesch, 320-763-3644 Bingo: Wednesdays 2:00 PM & Sundays 7:00 PM</p> | <p>Viking Garage Door Co. Doors & Openers JANET SCHILTGEN 320-762-2528</p> |   <p>Detailed . Distinctive . Sincere 320.763.5556 raukfamilydentistry.com</p> | |
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|  <p>The helpful place. 320-763-5200 406 Broadway Alexandria, MN 56308</p> |  <p>Elden's FRESH FOODS Live Love Local</p> | |  <p>“Mobilizing Churches to Transform Lives” Love INC Love In the Name of Christ Love INC of Douglas County Lakes Area Call to volunteer, donate or receive services! 44 Glenn Rd NW 320-759-3022 www.loveincdouglas.org</p> | |
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| <p>PAPPENFUS PERSONAL INJURY LAWYERS Robert H. Pappenfus Thomas J. Pappenfus Alexandria, MN 56308 320-763-6688 web: www.pappenfus.com</p> | | | | |