

The Church of St. Mary

420 IRVING STREET, ALEXANDRIA, MN
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OUR MISSION IS TO KNOW, LOVE AND SERVE GOD BY LIVING THE EUCHARIST.

JULY 12, 2020
THE 15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

SOWN



“The seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it.”

MATTHEW 13:23

FROM OUR PASTOR



Dear Fellow Members of St Mary's,

Thank you for your patience as we have begun gathering again. Thanks to the volunteers who came to special training to help us to gather again. As I have said, July is our time for evaluation of our process and what works and needs improvement to keep people who worship here as safe as we can. I suspect that August will bring about some changes maybe in times and also in who is admitted to Mass and when. We are doing the alphabet thing to

Fr. Steve Binsfeld see how many people from each category are able to come. (There are 325 HOUSEHOLDS or so within each alphabetical section in our schedule). Some parishes have differing ways of admitting people. So we will see where we go with that once we have a few weeks under our belt.

With 'pared down' rituals during COVID, I think about "normal" times when our community gathers for worship; we have a whole team of liturgical ministers: lectors, greeters, acolytes, communion ministers, musicians, technicians, sacristans, ushers, greeters... It takes a lot of work and good and generous spirit. One of those ministers we designate is that of "**cross bearer**," which at first glance doesn't seem so difficult. When we use that term "**cross bearer**," we generally mean a person who carries a cross or crucifix in procession in and out of Mass. It involves a total of about 3-minutes of time for a willing person with not too much stress or bother. On occasion when the cross bearer fails to appear, we can always tap a volunteer at the last minute who will say, "Sure, I'll do it."

While carrying the cross in procession is a blessing for us as a community, **it is very different to what Jesus understood it to be. Cross bearing is at the heart of Jesus teaching to his disciples.** For Jesus, to bear the cross was not a 3-minute task. It was *not* easy, nor was it a temporary role for a last-minute volunteer. It was about as near to the opposite of that as we could imagine; it always has been, and it still is.

At every liturgy for which we gather, the cross stands at the **center** of our worship, literally and physically. It is not a decoration. It is at the very head of ritual processions because **the cross is that thing that we pledge to follow all our lives.** It's at the **center** of what it means to be faithful to God--as Jesus himself was.

Jesus may have been a little suspicious as to whether his disciples really fully understood what they were about to step into, and what would be the ultimate demands of being a *cross-bearer*. This is the same challenge for us. **The Eucharist is a time to remember again what our professed allegiance to Jesus Christ may require of us, and to be prepared to do it.** It is not without its rewards here and now, and it promises eternal rewards later. But this is not a mission to be embraced and carried by the half-hearted, or at our own convenience when it is easy.

As we saw a few weeks ago, Jesus doesn't mince words. He spoke in ways that still can deeply trouble us, as they would have done in his day. "*Whoever loves father or mother more than me, or son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.*" Wow! Is he serious? He certainly is. That's not easy to hear. Fortunately, for most of us (most of the time) to love Jesus is to love the family and friends closest to us. Most often it's not an "either-or" proposition, but it's pretty clear that if it should ever come to that, true cross bearers had better know on which side of that "either-or" they stand, and they'd better decide it right up front. **To follow the cross** is not a short walk up the center aisle at church; **it is a demand upon our lives and our priorities that is absolute**, and not always pleasant.

Jesus says, "*In order to find your life you will have to lose it; and to lose it is the door to finding it.*" For most of us that doesn't mean our physical death, as it did for him (though for some it does). **It means living each day for the sake of the Gospel rather than for ourselves or for something or somebody else--living for Christ, God's reign.**

Jesus praised the prophets – both those whom he knew and those who are among us still. *Those who are prophets will receive the reward that is owed to prophets*, Jesus says. But anyone who has ever opened a bible would know that this is *not* a consoling promise on this side of heaven. You will never find a biblical prophet who lived a care-free life because they were *cross bearers*. That's still true about prophets who call us back to our truest selves as human beings and as followers of the Gospel. They are not popular; they are counter-cultural.

To make this all a bit more concrete--and even uncomfortable--we can ask what being a *cross bearer* or a *prophet* requires of us when things like George Floyd, racism, immigration policy, abortion, income disparity, climate change, nationalism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and "anti-Asianism" are thrown into our laps. To be a **cross bearer** does not mean picking fights, but it does mean standing for something by the way we live and speak each day. It's a duty.

Jesus attempts to push his disciples in the Gospel by asking in effect, "Are you sure you're ready for this? Are you really sure? Can you be a **cross bearer** rather than a spectator or a commentator? If so, come along... but know what you are signing up for." **We gather here for Eucharist again to remember exactly that, and to rededicate ourselves to the mission of following and bearing that cross.**

COMMUNITY NEWS

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:

Betty Schlosser, Dan Woods, Kevin Richmond Sr., Andrew Herges, Phyllis Van Kempen, Dan Ridler, Rosemary Rehovsky, Marie Peterson, Doloris Lorsung, MayVis Bruzek, Matt Sobiech, Virginia Schultz, Dorothy Becker, Dennis Zaviska, Sally Bellicot, Kathy Bellicot, Lorraine Sellgren-Davis, Mary Waldorf, Dianne Otto, Ronnie Le Grange, Eddie Dummer, Virgene Grubb and Brett Rima.

SUNDAY OFFERINGS	ACTUAL	BUDGET*	VARIANCE
Envelope	\$ 16,261	\$ 23,904	\$ (7,643)
Electronic	6,040	9,769	(3,729)
Other	588	1,058	(470)
July 5	\$ 22,889	\$ 34,731	\$ (11,842)
YTD Offerings	\$ 22,889	\$ 34,731	\$ (11,842)

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

THE PARISH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED in efforts to slow down the spread of COVID-19. 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.

SUNDAY MASS INFORMATION - Be sure to check stmaryalexandria.org for important information including videos to watch that will offer guidance on how we will be returning to Sunday Mass.

† We wish to offer our sympathy and promise of prayers to the family and friends of Norma Lais, Chris Ficenec and John Gilson.

— BAPTISMS —

Lucas John Patrick-Dropik
Child of Willis Dropik & Nancy Patrick

Jaxon Jerald Bradley
Child of Joseph & Sara Miller

— BANS OF MARRIAGE —
II Christopher Kronabetter & Melissa Bump

ABOUT LIFE

Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Committee (JPIC):

July Food Shelf Collection

"If someone who has worldly means sees a brother in need and refuses him compassion, how can the love of God remain in him? Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth." - 1 John 3:17-18

Due to continued cautions needed because of the pandemic, we will not have a Let's Bag Hunger food collection in July. This does not mean, however, that there is not still a need to help those less fortunate. Outreach Food Shelf continues to distribute food. **To best help them continue to do so, they have indicated that financial donations can be given.** They can use the money to purchase food. Contributions can be sent or dropped off at their address: 1205 Lake Street, Alexandria, MN 56308 or in the drop box by the Church Office. Thanks in advance for your willingness to share.



"The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life."

-Job 33:4

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



WEEKLY FAMILY SESSIONS - Are you looking for a resource to help your family keep holy the Sabbath day at home? Perhaps you are looking for a way to build up your family's faith life. Visit <http://familytogether.stcdio.org/> where you will find weekly sessions based on the Sunday Gospel.

ONLINE VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL - Camp Creation, Day by Day with God - A group of Faith Formation Directors is collaborating on an online Vacation Bible School based on Genesis 1 for the week of August 3-7. This will be hosted at <http://familytogether.stcdio.org/>. It will be an 'asynchronous' experience, which means parishes and families can join in during the week, or whenever they can afterwards.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

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 320-846-1842. All prayer requests will be kept confidential.

PRAY THE ROSARY WITH US EACH MORNING!

You are invited to join in praying the Rosary each morning at 8:00 AM with friends from St. Mary's Church and the surrounding community. Your prayers will be united via conference call. It is easy to do; please join in!

AT 7:55 A.M. EACH MORNING DIAL THIS NUMBER: 712-775-7465 AND THEN ENTER THIS ACCESS CODE 653790#.

YOU MAY INTRODUCE YOURSELF IF YOU WOULD LIKE. YOU WILL BE ASKED TO MUTE YOUR PHONE WHEN THE ROSARY BEGINS AT 8:00 AM.

QUESTIONS: PLEASE CALL JUDY CLAYTON 320-333-9892 OR DIANE GAY 320-766-7036.

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

St. Mary's School educates the whole child within a nurturing Catholic Christian environment.

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ST. MARY'S SCHOOL CALENDAR RAFFLE WINNERS

JULY

7/5	Amber Knick, Alexandria	\$35
7/6	Reese Sagedahl, Alexandria	\$20
7/7	Deb Schaffer, Alexandria	\$20
7/8	Earl Vanderheiden, Alexandria	\$20
7/9	Dave Dahl, Garfield, MN	\$20
7/10	Myra Nelson, Alexandria	\$20
7/11	Jessie Speed, Alexandria	\$20

Help Support Our School by Participating in:



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stmarysschoolalexandria



St. Mary's School Alexandria

PRAYER TO RECEIVE A NEW BISHOP FOR THE DIOCESE OF ST. CLOUD

Praise to you, Lord our God,
our eternal shepherd and guide.

In your faithfulness,
grant to the Diocese of Saint Cloud
a shepherd whose watchful care and
kindly zeal will continue the good work of
his predecessors.

In your love for us,
give us a shepherd who will lead us
in being Christ's heart of mercy,
voice of hope, and hands of justice.
Help him to fill our minds and hearts

with the truth of the Gospel,
the power of the sacraments,
and the desire to build up your holy
Church.

We ask this through Jesus Christ,
your Son and our Lord,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen



July 12, 2020 • 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year A

Open or Closed?

This Week's Readings at Mass

- ▶ Isaiah 55:10-11 - Triumph of God's word
 - ▶ Romans 8:18-23 - Destiny of glory
 - ▶ Matthew 13:1-23 - Parable of the seed
-

This is one of Jesus' more famous parables, commonly called "The Parable of the Sower" or "The Parable of the Seed." It briefly describes a scenario that makes sense to most listeners. Of course, seeds sown on a path, on rocky ground, and among thorns wouldn't produce much, if any, harvest. And, of course, seed sown in fertile soil should produce a very good harvest. Anyone who knows anything about seeds and plants would understand this, so what is the point Jesus is trying to make? Knowing Jesus, the disciples immediately realize that a seemingly straightforward parable has a deeper meaning than what we understand on the surface. They also recognize that not everyone will read a more profound message into a simple parable, so they ask Jesus why he teaches like this.

This Gospel passage comes after Jesus has just clashed with the scribes and Pharisees, the ones who think they "know-it-all" when it comes to God and religion. He had been healing people and casting out

demons, and many people in the crowds received him with humility and gratitude. The scribes and the Pharisees, on the other hand, wouldn't accept the good work he was doing at face value, and they accused him of working for Satan. Jesus points out to his disciples that those religious leaders are just like their ancestors who refused to listen to the prophets of old. As the saying goes, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't force it to drink." The Pharisees and scribes could see the good and miraculous things Jesus was doing, but they willfully closed their ears and eyes to how God was acting in and through Jesus. At the same time, many people in the crowd were proving to be "good soil," hearing and seeing how God was acting in the world.

Questions of the Week

- ① Share about a time when you have witnessed someone open to experience God's amazing or miraculous growth.
- ② At this point in your life, what kind of soil would you say you are?

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BRINGING HOME THE GOSPEL

July 12, 2020 • 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Matthew 13:1-23

Sowing the Seeds of Faith

Jesus, like all great teachers, shares his lessons in language his listeners can understand. His message is anchored in stories that will keep his listeners' interest. In the parable of the sower, Jesus talks about seeds scattered on different types of soil.

The parable of the sower has much to say to parents about bringing up their children in the faith. At baptism, each child receives the seeds of faith. It is God's free gift. Jesus generously scatters the seeds, but only the seeds planted in good soil will grow abundantly. Seeds of faith, like all seeds, need to be fed and nurtured, protected from harm.

In my early years as a parish director of religious education, I often told parents how important it was that they support their child's catechist or Catholic school teacher. As the years went by, I realized that I had things reversed. It is the catechist or teacher who is in the supportive role. What children learn or don't learn in their religion classes depends to a great degree on what they are learning at home, where the soil is tilled.

Parents and the parish work together to prepare that soil, but parents have the primary role. Parents turn pathways into fertile fields by living lives that promote Gospel values, by bringing to light the good in the world, and exposing and uprooting the evil. Parents cultivate and water rocky soil by providing a home where hope is encouraged and faith and love are shared.

Parents hack away at the thorns of a secular society—including self-gratifying consumerism and

the violence and voyeurism called entertainment—by diligently supervising and actively participating in their child's free time.

The seed of faith was planted in the hearts of our children at baptism. But it is up to you, as a parent, to cultivate an environment that will let that faith grow abundantly.

FAMILY RESPONSE

Let everyone take a turn talking about their favorite story about Jesus. When everyone is finished, ask each person why they liked their story. Make sure grown-ups share, too.

PERSONAL RESPONSE

Who helped nurture the seeds of your faith? What can you do on a daily basis to help the seeds of faith grow in your child? What do you want to remember from last week? What are you looking forward to next week? What are your concerns?

SACRAMENTS

RECONCILIATION

Starting June 8, Wednesdays at 11:00 AM and Saturdays at 11:00 AM. Please enter through door A1 (Courtyard Door). Health and Safety instructions will be posted.

BAPTISM

All parents must take the Baptism Preparation Course. Call the Parish Office to sign up. Contact Fr. Steve to schedule a baptism date at 320-763-5781.

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

Please call the Parish Office to arrange at 320-763-5781.

WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE

Tue.	5:30 PM
Wed.	8:30 AM ††Kevin & Chad Eddy
Thurs.	5:30 PM †Leonard Floding †Paul Jost
Fri.	8:30 AM †Steven Bartos
Sun.	8:30 AM †Jeanette Jost 11:00 AM For the Parish

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 - JULY 12

Mon.	IS 1:10-17; MT 10:34-11:1
Tue.	IS 7:1-9; MT 11:20-24
Wed.	IS 10:5-7, 13B-16; MT 11:25-27
Thurs.	IS 26:7-9, 12, 16-19; MT 11:28-30
Fri.	IS 38:1-6, 21-22, 7-8; MT 12:1-8
Sat.	MI 2:1-5; MT 12:14-21
Sun.	WIS 12:13, 16-19; ROM 8:26-27; MT 13:24-43

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](#).

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