REJOICE

“Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.”

MATTHEW 5:12A
Dear members of St. Mary’s Parish,

In the gospels of the New Testament, Jesus is asked more than once why He speaks to people using parables. His audiences sometimes get frustrated with that manner of speech and they request that He just “speak plainly.” We’ve recently finished a few weeks of Sunday gospels in which we’ve heard multiple parables from Jesus: the king’s wedding feast for his son; the vineyard owner and his wicked stewards; the employer and the day laborers who all get paid the same. Elsewhere, we can read parables about mustard seeds, lost and found coins, lost and found sheep.

We ought not pass over that simple question too quickly: Why DOES Jesus speak in parables rather than clear conceptual statements? There are at least a couple of very good reasons. For one, note that in each case Jesus is trying to speak about this thing called “The Kingdom of God.” It can be recognized partially already in this world, at least in fits and starts, but it is clearly not limited to the here and now. That “Kingdom” is ultimately transcendent, coming from and involving God himself. And God is not adequately defined in neat categorical language. That’s why we Christians often speak of Holy Mystery. If the Kingdom were capable of being concisely defined in a textbook, then Jesus would seem to have been cruel not to share that information plainly with us. The fact that He often chooses parables is already telling us something about the subject matter; it’s bigger than we can imagine.

The second good reason Jesus uses parables is that they have the capacity to speak to new people and situations throughout history and across cultures. They’re not supposed to mean exactly one thing for all time. I experience this when I prepare my Sunday homily. I’m now into my 41st year of doing this, which means that I have gone through the entire Sunday Lectionary, with all its parables, more than 14 times (3 year cycle—A, B and C...we are in A), and I’ve never preached the same homily twice. That’s not because of my cleverness; it’s because a parable says something different, for example, in a time of COVID-19 than it did before, or in a time of war rather than peace. There’s a richness of meaning in a parable that permits it to be heard uniquely every time. So there’s your unsolicited bible commentary for the week!

This afternoon — November 1, All Saints Day — we are holding a memorial service for all who have died this past year at 4:00 PM. If you have suffered the loss of someone you love, you are welcome. On Monday, November 2—we have the Commemoration of All Souls. I will celebrate Mass at 8:30 AM. Remember, Tuesday, November 3, is election day. Exercise your civic duty.

Fr. Steve

† We wish to offer our sympathy and promise of prayers to the family and friends of Joseph Thoennes and Steven Walsh.

— BANS OF MARRIAGE —
Ill Mark Ries & Lindsey Schneider
I Jake Dodds & Meaghan Baldwin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUNDAY OFFERINGS</th>
<th>ACTUAL</th>
<th>BUDGET</th>
<th>VARIANCE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Envelope</td>
<td>$18,258</td>
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<td>$(5,646)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electronic</td>
<td>7,437</td>
<td>9,769</td>
<td>(2,332)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>1,058</td>
<td>(380)</td>
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<td>For Oct. 25</td>
<td>$26,373</td>
<td>$34,731</td>
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<td>YTD Offerings</td>
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* Total year budget is spread equally over 52 weeks. Detailed financial reports may be viewed at the Parish Office.
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, Andrew Herges, Kevin Richmond, Sr., Rosemary Rehovsky, Marie Peterson, Virginia Schultz, Dorothy Becker, Dennis Zaviska, Sally Bellicot, Kathy Bellicot, Mary Waldiska, Dianne Otto, Ronnie Le Grange, Eddie Dummer, Brett Rima, Jerry Sacre, Lawrence Cline, Dan Radford, Curt Hilgers, Lorraine Sellgren-Davis, Jake, Ken Volk, Linda Rakowski, Juleann Kelley, Jesse Zens, Jody Koubsky, Todd Klinghagen, Kathy Moriarity, and Chris Berg

Community Thanksgiving Dinner

Due to COVID-19 this year the Community Thanksgiving Dinner will be delivery only on Thanksgiving Day, November 26. We offer delivery of 1 to 2 hot meals per address to those who are homebound.

- For meal deliveries to the homebound, call 763-9429 (from October 30 until November 19)
- To volunteer to help with the dinner or as a delivery driver, call or email: 618-292-0506 or 320-834-3722 or gracehlambert@yahoo.com (after October 30)

Bishop’s Annual Appeal: Thank you to everyone who is supporting diocesan ministries through the Appeal. Our prayers are with you as we navigate these challenging times together. As of October 19, the Appeal raised $1,198,679 in gifts and pledges toward the goal of $1,300,000. Every dollar raised goes directly to ministries that support our Catholic faith and is not used for any other purpose. Will you help these ministries meet their funding needs?
Visit www.stcdio.org/appeal.

ABOUT LIFE

Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Committee (JPIC): As in July, due to continued cautions needed because of the pandemic, we will not have a Let’s Bag Hunger food collection in November. 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 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. Please be sure to indicate on the check that it is for The Church of St. Mary November Food Campaign. Thanks in advance for your willingness to share.

“A monetary gift is a service of love, not a contribution. Love should be our motive and a dependence on Divine Providence part of our gift. This dispels arrogance on the part of those who can give or resentment on the part of those who must receive. Both are where they are to glorify God -- one by giving, another by receiving.”
— Mother Angelica from Prayer and Living for the Kingdom

“Only with prayer—prayer that storms the heavens for justice and mercy, prayer that cleanses our hearts and souls—will the culture of death that surrounds us today be replaced with a culture of life.”
—U.S. Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities
Visit St. Mary’s Sanctity of Life online at sanctityoflifestm.org for information and resources.
YOUTH FAITH FORMATION

CLASS SCHEDULE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grades 1, 3, 4 &amp; 5:</th>
<th>Nov. 4, 4:45 - 5:30 PM</th>
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<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8 (Wed):</td>
<td>Nov. 4, 6:00 - 7:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grades 9-11 (Wed):</td>
<td>Nov. 4, 7:30 - 8:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 8-11 (Sun):</td>
<td>Nov. 8, 6:30 - 7:30 PM</td>
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</table>

NEED SOME QUIET TIME WITH OUR LORD?
Eucharistic Adoration is available in our parish church during the day and there are several open chairs around the altar for those of you that want to drop by.

Below is the current schedule and please remember the following before attending:

(1) bring a mask
(2) bring your own reading materials
(3) be reverent

Monday/Wednesday: 12:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Tuesday/Thursday: 12:00 PM - 5:00 PM
Friday: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Jesus, We Trust in You!

MIDDLE SCHOOL & SR. HIGH FAITH FORMATION UPDATE!

Our remodeled faith formation year is off to a great start!

With last year ending so abruptly, it has been wonderful having students in the building on Wednesday evenings and now Sunday evenings as well! Adding the Sunday evening option is just one of the adjustments made to limit the number of students in the building at one time.

We shortened our class time and split our Wednesday evenings. Our Middle Schoolers are attending from 6:00 – 7:00 pm and our High Schoolers attend from 7:30 - 8:30 pm. The half hour window in between allows our catechists time to disinfect their space before the next group comes in.

We have also offered a Distance Learning option for those families who prefer to learn from home at this time and we are working on ways to connect with them.

The majority of our small groups contain 5 – 8 students, with the exception of a few of our Confirmation classes who have 10-12. Protocol is being followed regarding masking, social distancing, and sanitizing to keep our students as safe as possible. Please pray for our students and catechists for continued good health and a fruitful faith formation year!

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.

NEED SOME QUIET TIME WITH OUR LORD?
Eucharistic Adoration is available in our parish church during the day and there are several open chairs around the altar for those of you that want to drop by.

Below is the current schedule and please remember the following before attending:

(1) bring a mask
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Monday/Wednesday: 12:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Tuesday/Thursday: 12:00 PM - 5:00 PM
Friday: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Jesus, We Trust in You!

St. Mary’s Zoom Bible Study
Tuesdays • 6:30 - 7:00 PM
This bible study focuses on the upcoming Gospel reading each week.

If interested, contact Mike Sponsler for an email invitation to the Zoom meeting. sponslermc@gmail.com or 320-759-1911.
There is an Old Testament legend about wealth and possessions and how misunderstanding God’s purpose for them can steal a person’s freedom to enjoy all the gifts of God, that were freely bestowed already in the first chapters of Genesis.

Long ago, even before the Garden of Eden, before God gave mankind dominion over all the earth, God decided to give to animals and to man the gift of freedom. There was one condition: It was to be a time of testing. If, after the testing, they learned the secret of freedom, they were to be relieved of its torture. In the course of time, all of the animals gathered before the Lord God to report.

The lion spoke on behalf of all of the beasts of the forest. “When I first knew the gift of freedom,” it said, “I looked out over all the earth, with all of its wealth and possessions, and I wanted all of these things for myself. But after a while, I remembered that the Lord of the earth had given me life and food. So,” the lion concluded, “I resolved to use my freedom to tell all of the beasts of the forest my discovery.” Throughout the forests the lion roared, “All things come from thee, O Lord. “God said, “You have learned the secret of freedom. Return to the forest!”

Then the condor came forth to report for the winged creatures of the sky. “I discovered freedom,” it said, “as I soared high above the heavens and earth. All created things looked up to me in admiration. Quickly I pondered how wonderful it would be to have all of them bow down to me in reverence and awe. Then just as suddenly I came to my senses,” the condor, “that my every flight must come to an end, and that only you, O God, remain.” Thereupon I resolved to use my freedom to herald this message to the very skies of the universe. “The Lord is God, and he alone. Let all the earth bow down before God in reverence and awe.”

And the Lord God said, “You have learned the secret of freedom. Return to the skies!”

Then came forth the great blue whale as the spokesman for all the creatures of the sea. “I knew my power and my strength. I knew how wonderful it would be to soar through all of the seas, scattering all sea creatures before me in fear and terror. But, then I remembered that I am appointed to live only once, and then die forever, and that you, O Lord, rule and govern all things. After that I went forth to all of my fellow creatures and reminded them, ‘All

(Continued on page 4)
Sometimes we are inadvertently reminded of all that we have to be thankful for. My eyes stopped suddenly the other day on a sentence I read written by Allen W. Clark:

> “Those who can be thankful only for prosperity are forever threatened by adversity.”

To live in the Spirit of Christ endows you and me with the capacity to live thankful lives despite our circumstances. How I wish more of us really understood this.

The companionship of Christ ... whether traveling along the bright hilltops of life or through dark valleys filled with failure, sorrow, and challenge ... supports our whole outlook and approach to life. God yearns for us to find our joy, our satisfaction, our needs fulfilled, not in material things and prosperity, but in God.

The loss of prosperity, and indeed the disappointing search for it, can ruin any deep sense of thanksgiving. “Those who can be thankful only for prosperity are forever threatened by adversity.”

As Thanksgiving Day approaches, take time to think about your reasons for being thankful. How deep are they? Perhaps you will want to take this season to accept more fully God’s companionship as your richest possession.

Worship God with a thankful heart!
“Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you have proved trustworthy in a small way, I will now put you in charge of something big.”

Matthew 25:5

A steward is a person who manages the affairs and assets of another. Joseph as Potiphar’s steward (Genesis 39:1-6) was the manager of Pharaoh’s business affairs.

Likewise, God has entrusted the world and all it contains to us. We are responsible, as good managers, for the manner in which we use what God has placed in our hands.

A well-managed team may not finish first, but there is real satisfaction in knowing that as a manager one has done his or her best to develop and use the talents of all the players to the best advantage of the team.

Stewardship is being a good manager of our God-given talents. Like the man in the parable, we can bury our talents and not use them, only to discover that we have lost them, or we can invest them in a life of service and see them multiply over and over again. What are our talents? Our time, our abilities, our whole life! Stewardship is using all of these things to our best advantage and to the best advantage of others ... all for the honor and glory of God from whom they came.

Take It Off the Top

The latter part of the Book of Leviticus summarizes the financial law of ancient Israel. In the last chapter, we find this passage:

“But no devoted thing that a man devotes to the Lord, of anything that he has, whether of man or beast, or of his inherited field, shall be sold or redeemed; every devoted thing is most holy to the Lord ... All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord’s; it is holy to the Lord.”

Leviticus 27:28-30

The tithe was to be taken “off the top.” God was always to get the first ten percent of all income, of all produce. This was the way he ordained for the expenses to be covered that were incurred in building and maintaining first the Tabernacle, then the Temple, in supporting the priests and Levites, and in caring for the needy. A two-fold principle was evident, even from this early date.

First, this is God’s way of paying for God’s work. Of course, God doesn’t “need” people’s money. God owns the cattle on a thousand hills, the wealth in every mine. God doesn’t need anything! But, God has chosen to be dependent upon our faithfulness in this regard.

Secondly, the people were to give their ten percent joyfully and without question. The rest was theirs, but the tithe is God’s. They were to keep their promises, and not try to take back what was committed to the Lord. This was part of their covenant relationship with God.

Ask not what the church can do for you; ask what you can do for your instrument of God in shaping and inspiring other members of your church!

Do you have special skills that you could use for your church? Whatever your talent is, share it!
strength and power are from God, and God alone shall renew your strength.’”

And the Lord God said, “You have learned the secret of freedom. Return to the seas!”

Then it was man’s turn to assemble before the Lord God to report. “I have discovered that this freedom is a very heavy, burdensome thing,” he complained. “I have used my freedom to be taken up with possessions; anxious to maintain my standing and status amongst mankind; I became stricken with fear and anxiety over the possibility of losing it all. I used my freedom to hover and hoard; to accumulate and acquire more. I have not had time to learn its secret.”

So the man returned to earth, and to this day he struggles to learn the secret of true freedom. He spends much of his time and energy, laden with anxiety, dreading its loss. In a few rare and far apart moments of trust in the Lord, the giver of all, he comes to trust the Lord God. In those moments he offers it to God in praise and thanksgiving.

And the legend concludes: “O man, you have captured and conquered the lion, the condor, and the whale with your science and advanced technology. But you yourself have been made captive to greed, wealth, and the accumulation of things. You have lost your freedom in the very pursuit of it. What I gave you to subdue and enjoy captured you, made you its captive, and you have lost the secret of freedom. But you still have time, O man!”
Dear Parishioners,

It is that time of year when we start thinking about Thanksgiving, Christmas, and the Calendar Raffle. The raffle is one of our two major fundraisers conducted at St. Mary’s School and all the proceeds go directly towards the school’s operating expenses.

By this weekend every child who attends St. Mary’s School will be given their raffle tickets to sell. I encourage you to find a St. Mary’s School family, purchase a ticket(s), and try your chances at winning a cash prize. If you don’t know a St. Mary’s school family, there are a variety of other ways to purchase your tickets:

While at Church:
1. Go to the Hospitality Desk.
2. Fill out your ticket(s).
3. Attach payment to your ticket.
4. Drop in the Parish Drop Box. (outside Parish office door)
5. Keep your copy.

While on campus:
- Stop by the school office during school hours.

From your home:
- Contact the School Office - Call - 763-5861
- Email - stmaryss@stmaryalexandria.org

Being one of our major fundraising campaigns, it is important to our school that the calendar raffle is a success. With generous support from all of you, I am confident we will exceed our fundraising goals for the year.

Best of luck and thanks for supporting St. Mary’s School.

Mr. Sladek
When Jesus sees the crowds who are following him, he goes up a mountain. He wants to make sure everyone can see and hear him as he tells them how they can find happiness.

Moses went up a mountain to receive the Ten Commandments, and in Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus went up a mountain to give us the Beatitudes. The Ten Commandments are a set of laws to help us live in harmony with God’s love. The Beatitudes are broader and more subtle. They offer a vision and suggest a self-giving attitude that goes beyond the Commandments.

The Beatitudes talk about the poor and those who mourn, those who are hungry for justice, those who are merciful and peacemakers, those who are pure in heart, and those who are persecuted. Jesus tells us that all of these people will be happy. They will be blessed. How can this be?

Perhaps Jesus is just reminding us that life is difficult. Each of us will face our own hardships. We need to remember that nothing—not poverty or deep loss or suffering, not the worst injustice — can triumph over us. Jesus offers his own strength and endurance, his assurance that we will not be alone. We are blessed. We are gifted not only with faith, but with hope.

The Beatitudes ask us to be meek, not the doormat sort of meek, but the biblical idea of meek—tolerant and unassuming. We are to be poor in spirit. Money and possessions should not own us. We are to be peacemakers and hunger and thirst after justice. The Beatitudes offer a positive way to respond to difficult life experiences. They encourage us to live in a self-possessed, positive way.

Finding the Kingdom of God is not just about keeping the Ten Commandments; it’s keeping the commandments with the right attitudes—the Beatitudes.

**FAMILY RESPONSE**

Talk to your family about what difficulties they are facing this week. Encourage each other to be tolerant. Pray together to find ways your family members can be peacemakers.

**PERSONAL RESPONSE**

Which of the beatitudes do we find most difficult to live?
SACRAMENTS

RECONCILIATION
Wednesdays 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

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 AM All Souls</td>
<td>5:30 PM † Don Waletzko</td>
<td>8:30 AM † Dorothy Zimmer</td>
<td>5:30 PM † Doloris Lorsung</td>
<td>8:30 AM † Steven Ignowski</td>
<td>5:00 PM † † Henry &amp; Florence Tvrdik</td>
<td>8:00 AM † Rosie Koudela</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00AM For the Parish</td>
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</table>

WEEKLY READINGS - NOV. 1

|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|

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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Better Water: Pure & Simple
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763-6586 - 601 Nokomis St.

Runestone
HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING LLC
320-763-3954

NORTHWOODS CONSTRUCTION LLC
Mike Klimek 320-766-8709
Dan Klimek 320-766-8960

THORNTON, DOLAN, BOWEN, KLECKER & BURKHAMMER, PA
Attorneys At Law
1017 Broadway, Alexandria, MN

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763-3636 • 214 6th Ave. East
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PERSONAL INJURY LAWYERS
Robert H. Pappenfus
Thomas J. Pappenfus
Alexandria, MN 56308
320-763-6688
web: www.pappenfus.com

HeartlandOrthopedics.com

320.762.1144

THORNTON, DOLAN, BOWEN, KLECKER & BURKHAMMER, PA
Attorneys At Law
1017 Broadway, Alexandria, MN

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