

Our Way of Life



Living
a Life
of
Stewardship



The Church of
St. Mary

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STMARYALEXANDRIA.ORG

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A NOTE FROM FATHER MATTHEW

Dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ,

Our society today seems to be trending toward divisions. The “with us or against us” attitude leaves little room for peacemakers in the middle, and social media has amplified this effect. This divisive trend is directly at odds with the first principle of Catholic social teaching: **solidarity**.

Solidarity means that we share in the joys and sorrows of every member of the Body of Christ, the Church. We share our gifts with one another to build each other up. We are “with” each other by default, and we care for all people because God cares for them. As St. Paul says to the Corinthians: “*God has so*

constructed the body...so that there may be no division in the body, but that the parts may have the same concern for one another. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy.” [1 Cor 12:24-26] We *must* care about each other; we cannot reject each other—we are parts of the same body.

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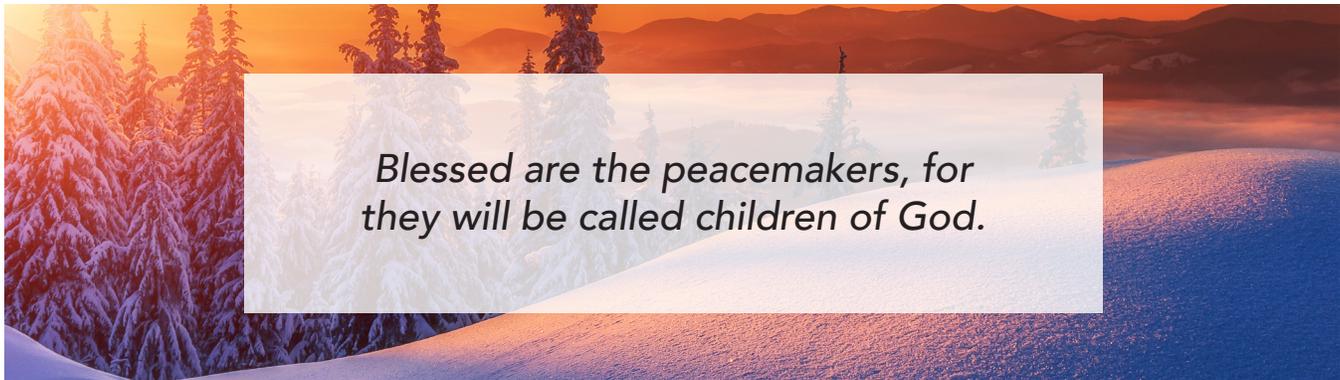
When parts of our physical body are at odds with one another, we immediately seek a remedy—to heal rather than amputate. We are *stewards* of each other. If we can use our God-given talents to build bridges and

strengthen relationships, then we truly fulfill what Jesus describes in the Beatitudes: “*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*” And, lest we think this is always a painless process, Jesus reminds us: “*Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*” Righteousness is not proving yourself right and others wrong; it is living in right relationship with God and His Church. This includes building bridges, resolving conflicts, and growing in relationship to one another so that you can have difficult conversations without alienating one another. We build up the Kingdom of Heaven by building up the Church here on earth as well.

May God grant us the gifts we need to be true builders, true peacemakers in His Holy Name.

Peace in Christ,

Father Matthew Kuhn



Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY
presents

DISCIPLESHIP

The Call • The Role • The Mission



LENTEN MISSION WITH VALLIMAR JANSEN

Blessed with an extraordinary voice, Vallimar is a highly regarded singer, composer and recording artist. Her presence on stage commands attention and her music draws people into the word of God in a new and deeper way.

Vallimar will be sharing God's love through music, storytelling and drama every night at 6:30 PM in the church.

Sunday: The Call - Created in the Image of God, for God's Purpose

Monday: The Role - Transformed and Filled with God's Spirit

Tuesday: The Mission - Sent Forth with God's Love

Vallimar will speak at all weekend Masses on March 26 & 27. There will be a light supper on Sunday, March 27 at 5:00 PM in the Great Hall. All are welcome!



LIVE

Performances will be livestreamed on our Facebook page.

MARCH 27 - 29, 6:30 - 8:00 PM

No reservations required.
stmaryalexandria.org



The Church of
St. Mary

HELPING TO END HUNGER HARVEST PACK - A FOOD PACKING EVENT

St. Mary's parishioners Jim and Marian Schoeberl are passionate about ending hunger. Their first experience at a food packing event was in 2002, and they haven't stopped since. Every year they have worked with the local community to set up packing events. Those efforts have resulted in hundreds of thousands of meals to help end hunger, both locally and in Haiti.

Their goal for 2022 is to have enough packed meals to fill one shipping container; that would be 270,000 meals! Once filled, the container will be shipped and delivered to Children's Health Ministries in Haiti. Jim is striving to go beyond

that goal. He is confident that the Alexandria area community can pack enough meals to fill two shipping containers, and Jim is working on that goal. He is speaking with community members to find organizations, clubs, businesses; anyone who can provide a space and

"For I was hungry and you gave me food."
- Matthew 25:35

a donation for a food packing event. These packing events not only benefit families in Haiti; 20% of the packed meals stay local. In Alexandria those meals go to the Outreach Food Shelf to address food insecurity.

The meals contain rice or oatmeal, and include soy protein, vegetables, flavoring and vitamins resulting in a simple, well-balanced meal. The cost of each meal, including packaging supplies, is \$.25/meal.

St. Mary's will be hosting a packing event on April 6 with five shifts throughout the day. Students from both St. Mary's School and Faith Formation will participate, along with parishioners and anyone else who would like to help. Many people are needed and anyone can help. Join in to end hunger and meet the St. Mary's goal of 60,000 packed meals!

**HARVEST PACK
FOOD PACKING EVENT**

Hosted by
The Church of St. Mary

**APRIL 6
10:00 AM - 8:00 PM**

The opportunity to provide food to those in need is within our reach. Get involved in a fun event with the whole family!

To donate and register for the event, go to:
stmaryalexandria.org

LENT & HOLY WEEK AT ST. MARY'S

Individual Confessions

SATURDAYS
2:00 - 4:30 PM

Beginning March 12 through Lent

Reconciliation Service

SUNDAY, MARCH 6
3:00 - 5:00 PM & 6:00 - 8:00 PM
(This is a brief service followed by individual confessions. Several priests will be available.)

Stations of the Cross

Every Friday during Lent at 5:15 PM in the Great Hall



Living Stations of the Cross

MARCH 9
6:30 PM

MARCH 12
7:00 PM

				
Palm Sunday	Holy Thursday	Good Friday	Holy Saturday	Easter Sunday
SATURDAY APRIL 9 5:00 PM	THURSDAY APRIL 14 7:00 PM Mass of the Lord's Supper	FRIDAY APRIL 15 9:00 AM Morning Prayer	SATURDAY APRIL 16 9:00 AM Morning Prayer	SUNDAY APRIL 17 8:00 AM Easter Mass
SUNDAY APRIL 10 8:00 AM 10:00 AM	(Eucharist will be reposed after Mass.)	12:00 PM The Lord's Passion 8:30 PM Tenebrae Service	8:30 PM Easter Vigil	10:00 AM Easter Mass
Incense will be used during some of the Holy Week Liturgies				

NCYC - NATIONAL CATHOLIC YOUTH CONFERENCE

Last November, 25 high schoolers from our parish traveled to Indianapolis to attend the National Catholic Youth Conference. Below are quotes from the students and pictures highlighting the experience.

“

After NCYC I began to pray nightly, and **God has been a constant.** I began to feel his presence all the time, but especially in the music at Mass. I could feel God everywhere I went. With these feelings came hope. The future doesn't seem as scary anymore and I have more hope that I will do what I was meant to do.



“

This was definitely **one of the best weekends of my life.** My heart was desperate for a refresher from the Holy Spirit and it happened. I'm so blessed to go home with the fire of Jesus in my heart and begin a new adventure with Him.



“

I really **connected with God throughout the course of the trip and heard Him speak to me** when we did Eucharistic Adoration. Whenever I went to church conferences in the past, I never really got much out of it spiritually. This was the first experience I had that actually strengthened and reinforced my faith.



“

My favorite part of NCYC was the whole group adoration because **it made me feel closer to God,** and it was really cool to see all of the people worshipping all in the same place.



MID-YEAR FINANCIAL UPDATE

Our St. Mary's parish has completed the first half of our fiscal year. Our fiscal year runs from July 1 – June 30. Because of your continued sacrificial giving, we have been able to operate efficiently and serve well our brothers and sisters in Christ. Here are some highlights from the past 6 months:

While still challenged by the pandemic, our **Mass** attendance made a continual climb before plateauing at around 80% of pre-pandemic counts. It has since slid a bit with the winter surge. The Eucharist remains the source and summit of our Catholic faith. We continue to livestream on Facebook our Tuesday daily Mass and a Sunday Mass for those who are unable to attend in person.

We have continued our **social outreach** by serving those in need. We continued our traditional community Thanksgiving dinner, serving 700+ meals. We have financially supported many individuals through our ongoing collaboration with area social service agencies. Through tithing, we contributed above and beyond collections to Haiti Relief and to area nonprofits, such as Alexandria Area YMCA, Alexandria Area Young Life, Eagle's Healing Nest, and Someplace Safe to name just a few.

After a year of wage freeze, we were able to increase **staff compensation** for our 42 regular employees. Because we believe in paying fair and just wages

as part of our Catholic social teaching, we were able to hire our new Director of Liturgy and Music in what is a highly competitive marketplace. Without just compensation, we would not be able to consistently hire such talented and professional people.

Our **youth and young adult programs** are thriving! We helped support a record 25 youth and 8 chaperones attend the National Catholic Youth Conference in November. Fr. Matt joined the group on this inspiring journey. Some of the kids shared their story before Mass in early December. Our school is at record enrollment of 242 kids; grades K-2 are full. Registrations for 2022-23 are open and are filling fast so, if you are remotely interested, please contact the school office for information/tour.

We have been able to reinvest in our **equipment and facilities**. 110 Chromebooks were purchased to ensure all kids in grades 2-6 have their own Chromebook and our computer lab has an updated set. The Northern Lighthouse (Scouthouse) received new flooring and a larger monitor with computer. This should enhance the experience for the bible studies and other groups using the space.

Looking ahead, we continue to hear that we are in a period of rising costs. With that said, we are called by Christ to move forward in building God's Kingdom. We will host a food packing event on April 6. We are hoping to pack

60,000 or more meals, but we need to purchase the ingredients. This could amount to \$15,000 or more. As I noted in the December 26 bulletin, we have hired an architect to draft some conceptual plans as we research solutions for the remodel of our school kitchen/lunchroom. This is one area that was minimally impacted during Phase III.

February is when many people work on their income tax returns and review their personal financial situation. We encourage you to take this time at home to review your situation and challenge yourselves to give more of your time, talent and treasure in an effort to strive to tithe. We do offer online giving, so if this is something you are interested in, instructions can be found at the Hospitality Desk, on our website, or call Todd at the parish office.

We are grateful for all our parishioners and blessed to be a part of this parish community. Thank you for getting involved in your parish. May God continue to abundantly bless you and your family!

With gratitude,

Todd Wentworth

Todd Wentworth,
Parish Business Administrator

ASH WEDNESDAY

BEGINS THE SEASON OF LENT

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2
8:30 AM & 6:30 PM

*Remember, that you are dust,
and unto dust you shall return.*

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY
ALEXANDRIA, MN

stmaryalexandria.org

Ash Wednesday Mass will be livestreamed on Facebook

420 Irving Street
Alexandria, MN 56308

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