



St. Nicholas, Belle River

Immaculate Conception, Osakis

The Church of St. Mary, Alexandria

2nd Sunday of Lent | FEBRUARY 25, 2024

I recently had an epiphany. It came to me last Sunday evening as I finally read a bit of a homesteading book I bought (I'm not a prepper, but I think more people should have more skills and ability. More on that later). The first half or more is about getting started; the bulk of my time was spent skimming the volumes on establishing a clean water supply.

Several techniques could be used, depending on local geography. All require a lot of work, and even the simplest require plumbing, which I haven't spent much time thinking about, much less studying. The principles and solutions seem obvious and second nature to a homeowner with a bit of practice, but to me casually reading about them for the first time, it struck me that: 1. I'm way out of my depth about a lot of things. 2. There are a ton of things we living in (post) modern times take very much for granted. 3. And this is the epiphany, I'll bet this is how most people feel about spiritual things, e.g. prayer, scripture, doctrine, sacred music: bewildered, dazzled, intimidated, embarrassed; shy to begin or attempt.

Thus, many never progress beyond a grade school level in their spiritual understanding, while their growth in understanding in other areas tempts them to abandon their child-like faith. This is a tragedy, because while good water is essential to live beyond a couple of days, "our souls are thirsting for God, the living God" and they will last forever. Avoiding the way of life He gives us doesn't solve the problem, it only makes it more likely that we'll be sick from diseased water, or dying of thirst, forever. My job, like a well driller, is to help you avoid that tragedy, and instead rejoice in God and His blessings.

That doesn't mean you have to be smart to be holy, but we do have to show up to work. Similar to how you can't simply throw a hose with a pump into a pond or lake (even one as pure as the boundary waters), or dig a hole until it gets wet and bury one, and even if you do take all the steps to filter and treat for microorganisms, you have to test for and steer clear of things like arsenic, so you can't just soak in whatever spiritual influence is lying around, you have to test the spirits and pray. This isn't complicated, St. John gives us a 1 step test: "every spirit that acknowledges Jesus Christ come in the flesh belongs to God" (read 1 Jn 4 for more).

Who is Jesus and what does that mean for our lives? That's work that we have to put in, but He will help us: He isn't only the answer at the end, He is the Way too. And we can help each other. Ask your neighbors in bible studies and the Catechetical Institute how to look up things in the bible and catechism, check out Formed.org, Bible in a Year and other solid resources. And pray, even if you think you're no good at it. Practice. Ask God for help. Ask others for help. Humility doesn't mean beating yourself up, but living in the truth. Knowing what's true should lead us to thanksgiving. One idea I have for that is a skill swap group, where people take turns teaching a skill they use as part of their job, e.g. plumbing, mechanics, spreadsheets, counseling, etc. Much as attempting to draw or paint a picture yourself will give you much greater appreciation for the achievements in a classical art museum, learning even a little in a new area will make you more grateful for the gifts God bestows on you through the talents of others, and desire to share yours.

- Fr Rick Aubol, Parochial Vicar

Mass Schedules and Intentions



9473 County Road 3 NE, Carlos, MN 56319

2/28	Wednesday	8:30 am	
3/2	Saturday	9 am	
3/3	Sunday	8:30 am	†† Sheldon Sibell & Jacob Gappa



306 W. Oak St., P.O. Box F, Osakis, MN 56360

2/27	Tuesday	10 am	at Galeon
2/29	Thursday	9 am	
3/1	Friday	8 am	
3/2	Saturday	4 pm	For the People of our Parishes
3/3	Sunday	10:30 am	† Seth Kallevig



The Church of
St. Mary

420 Irving Street, Alexandria, MN 56308

2/26	Monday	5:30 pm	† Skip Haen
2/27	Tuesday	8:30 am	Intention of Fr Matthew Kuhn
2/28	Wednesday	8:30 am 1:30 pm	† Hank Wessel at Edgewood Vista, † Vonnie Rader
2/29	Thursday	5:30 pm	† Pat Roers
3/1	Friday	8:30 am	Deceased Members of KC Council #4718
3/2	Saturday	5 pm	† Myrtle Prchal
3/3	Sunday	8 am 10 am	For the People of our Parishes † Larry Christenson

Sacraments

RECONCILIATION

By appointment at St. Nicholas.
Saturdays at 3 pm before Mass or by appointment at Immaculate Conception.
Saturdays from 3–4:30 pm in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel at The Church of St. Mary.

BAPTISM

All parents must take the Baptism Preparation Course.
Call Laurie Bienias at 320-460-5325 to sign up and to schedule a baptism date.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Members of the parish (or children of members) must arrange for marriage at least six months in advance. Contact your parish office for more information.

ALL OTHER SACRAMENTS

Please contact your parish office.

Announcements

Bulletin submissions due by Tuesday at noon. Please send submissions to stmary@stmaryalexandria.org.

FAITH STUDY

Please join us in Osakis for a faith study on the Eucharist. Tuesday nights at 7 pm at St. Agnes School. This study will continue through Lent. Come any time you can!

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

St. Mary's Stations of the Cross will be held every Friday during Lent at 5:15 pm in St. Mary's Great Hall.

Immaculate Conception

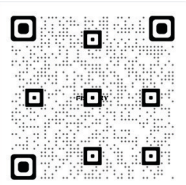
Stations of the Cross schedule:
Wednesday, March 13, 5:15 pm
Wednesday, March 20, 7 pm
Good Friday, March 29, 12:15 pm

St. Nicholas

Stations of the Cross schedule:
Friday, March 1, 6:30 pm
Friday, March 22, 6:30 pm

FRIDAY FISH FRY

St. Mary's has 2 more Friday Fish Frys during Lent: March 1 & March 15, 4:30-7 pm in the St. Mary's School Gym. Many hands are needed to help, so please sign up with your family and friends at stmaryalexandria.org, scan the QR code or call 320-763-5781.



Immaculate Conception is hosting a Friday Fish Fry on March 8, 4:30-7 pm at the Osakis VFW. Adults \$13, seniors \$12, age 12 and under \$6.

SMALL GROUPS FOR BISHOP NEARY'S LETTER

Parishioners interested in a small study group discussing the bishop's recent letter this Lent can sign up at the St. Mary's hospitality desk or contact Luke in the office at

320-460-5339 by February 25

YOUNG COUPLES/YOUNG FAMILIES

All young couples and young families of our ACC are invited for fellowship in this newly formed group on Sunday, February 25, 2-4:30 pm in the St. Mary's School lounge. For questions or child care, call Samantha at 320-808-5850.

MISSION QUILTING

Mission Quilting on Monday, February 26, 12:30-3:30 pm in St. Mary's Great Hall. Coffee and treats after we finish tying quilts. Questions call Joyce at 320-219-0055 or Gwen at 218-791-3768.

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

The Immaculate Conception parish office will be closed February 28.

FIRST FRIDAY & FIRST SATURDAY MASSES

First Friday Mass is scheduled for March 1 at 8 am at Immaculate Conception. First Saturday Mass is scheduled for March 2 at 9 am at St. Nicholas. Adoration and confession will follow Masses.

LIVING STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Join us for this great Lenten devotion on February 29 and March 2 at 7 pm at St. Mary's.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS BREAKFAST

KC breakfast on Sunday, March 3, after the 10:30 am Mass at Immaculate Conception in Osakis. Serving pancakes, sausage, scrambled eggs, caramel rolls, coffee, juice, and milk. Free will

offering. Everyone welcome for good food and fellowship!

EASTER CHOIR

Come sing with the St. Mary's seasonal Easter Choir at the 10 am Easter Mass on Sunday, March 31. Rehearsals will be each Tuesday, 5:30-6:45 pm beginning March 5 in the church space. Contact Luke to sign up at 320-460-5339 or lvancouverbeke@stmaryalexandria.org.

ACC-WIDE PARISH DIRECTORY

Get your smile on! Photos for a new parish directory for all 3 parishes of our ACC will be taken in May and June. Sign up after all Masses on March 2/3. More information to follow for online sign-ups.

ST. NICHOLAS COFFEE & ROLLS

Coffee & Rolls served after the 8:30 am Mass at St. Nicholas on March 10 by St. Ann Sodality. Join us for fellowship and find out more about the new pictorial directory scheduled to begin this Spring!

SYMPATHY

† We offer our sympathy and promise of prayers to the family and friends of Marlene Kreemer.

Announcements

Bulletin submissions due by Tuesday at noon. Please send submissions to stmary@stmaryalexandria.org.

PARISH OFFICE

The St. Mary's parish office is closed every Tuesday, 12-1 pm for a staff meeting. Thank you!

GUATEMALA MISSION TRIP

We have a group participating in a Mission Trip to San Lucas, Guatemala and invite others in our ACC to join us, May 31-June 6, 2024. We will also visit San Juan Mirador, St. Mary's partnership mission. If you sign up by February 28 we have very reasonable air flights, however you may sign up later. We have many interesting activities planned. Call Joe & Betty Roers 320-808-7183 for information.

CARING & SHARING ROOM NEEDS

The Caring & Sharing Room is in need of: gently used Queen & Full mattresses/box springs/frames, blankets and sheets, and kitchen items

ST. MARY'S RECTORY PROJECT

As you may have heard, a video of the existing parish rectory is available for viewing. Scan the QR code or visit stmaryalexandria.org to view it. Frequently Asked Questions can be found at the St. Mary's Hospitality Desk.



FR AL LUDWIG MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The St. Mary's of Alexandria Catholic Foundation is presenting scholarships as a continuation of Fr Al's legacy of giving. The application deadline for college/university students is March 1, 2024. To apply and for more information, scan the QR code or stmaryalexandria.org.



VALLIMAR JANSEN IS COMING BACK!

Join us for a Lenten Mission

at St. Mary's March 16 - 18, 6:30 -8:00 pm and a mini concert on March 15, 7:00-7:45 pm with ValLimar Jansen. ValLimar will help to renew love of our faith through Scripture, song, story and movement. She will also speak at St. Mary's Masses on March 16/17. All are welcome!

EUCCHARISTIC CONGRESS PILGRIMAGE

St. Mary's is offering a pilgrimage to the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis this July. The Congress will include faith inspiring talks, adoration, and the National Shroud of Turin exhibit. We have less than 30 tickets left. For more info/registration, scan the QR code or go to stmaryalexandria.org. *For those who'd like to attend on their own, discounted tickets are available for \$299. Scan the code to purchase.*



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 The Church of St. Mary at 320-763-5781. In order to print the bulletin in a timely manner, names must be submitted by noon on Tuesday to be added to the upcoming Sunday bulletin. Names received after will be added the following week. **Names will be published for six weeks and renewed for an additional six weeks upon request.**

Please remember these people in your prayers:

Betty Schlosser
Jim Ripka
Jack Lewis
Tyler Pomorin
Ben Smith
Julie Tully
Mark Petersen
John McHugh
Jodi McShane
Jane Doherty

Ruth Molloy
Paxton Lee
Tim Cullen
Jill Borrell
Vivian Annen
Mara Duscher
Betty Stroh Ostlund
Nancy Suneson
Judy Snowberg
MaryAnn Kack

Paulette Baumgartner
Rita Wille
Nick Matteson
Michael Russell
Margaret Kirkey
Wesley Ray
Doug Karsky
Alan Tyler
Mary Lou Michel
Tammy Tolifson

Lance Schoeberl
Joe Tegels
Carl Shaskey-Setright
Thomas Gerlach
Judy Hedstrom
Brad Knollenberg
Richard Wagner

Faith Formation

ADULT

APOLOGETICS BIBLE STUDY

Join this Bible Study led by Dr. George Jay of Morris. Dr. Jay is a Catholic evangelizer and instructor and has taught for many years to both college students and adults in the Morris area. All men and women are welcome, as well as young adults. Next meeting is Monday, February 26, 4:05 - 5:20 pm in St. Mary's Great Hall. This group meets on select Mondays and there is no homework and no fee! For more information or to sign up, contact Connee Thorstad at 320-808-0465.

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S STUDY

"My father's Father" with Fr. Dave Pivonka will be our next study. Plan to join us in the Lighthouse beginning Wednesday, February 28 at 9:15 am or Saturday, March 2 at 8 am. The Fatherhood of God will be the focus as we look to a deeper appreciation of the Sonship of Jesus, His obedience to the Father, and the Father's love of the Son. Contact Lori for more info at catholicwomenstudy@gmail.com.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION - SPENDING TIME WITH JESUS IN OUR BLESSED SACRAMENT CHAPEL...ALL ARE WELCOME!

Open Scheduled Holy Hours:

Monday: 8-9 am; 2-3 pm; 11-midnight

Thursday: noon-1 pm

Friday: several afternoon and evening times

To sign up, contact Sue at 320-491-7006 or suemcculloch66@gmail.com.

ROSARY LEADERS NEEDED

Volunteers to lead the rosary 25 minutes before weekday Mass begins are needed. Sign up at the tables by the Sacristy.

PRAYER LINK

If you have a prayer request, contact Kelly Wosepkak at wosepkak@aol.com or 320-815-4655. All prayer requests are confidential.

YOUNG ADULT GROUP

Join the Young Adult Group on Tuesdays from 6:30-9:30 pm at the St. Mary's Lighthouse. All are welcome! For more info, contact Emily at 320-287-1169 or Anna at 320-733-0081.

POWER HOUR FOR LIFE

Every Monday, 4:30-5:30 pm in the St. Mary's Chapel. This is a Holy Hour of silent prayer specifically for life intentions. Join for a few minutes or the entire hour any Monday!

TUESDAY EVENING ZOOM BIBLE STUDY

All are welcome every Tuesday, 6:30-7:30 pm, to study the upcoming Sunday readings. For more information, contact Mike Sponsler at sponslermc@gmail.com.

DIVINE MERCY HOUR

Every Monday, 3-4 pm in the St. Mary's Chapel. Questions, contact Barb Nei at 320-846-0022.

PRAY THE ROSARY WITH US EACH MORNING!

Our prayers are united via conference call and it's easy to do! Please unite your prayers with ours and join us daily. Dial 667-770-1484 at 7:55 am each morning and enter access code 653790#. Introduce yourself if you'd like. Mute your phone when the rosary begins at 8 am. Over 23,340 Rosaries have been prayed over the last three years! Questions: Judy Clayton at 320-333-9892 or Diane Gay at 320-766-7036.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDIES

Thursday mornings at 6:30 am in St. Mary's Great Hall. Come any time! For information, contact Mike at sponslermc@gmail.com.

Wednesdays at 2:30 pm in St. Mary's Commons Area. Join our discussions on the upcoming weekend Mass readings. Contact Russ Craigmile at rjcraigmile@gmail.com.



Faith Formation

YOUTH

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Faith Formation class for grades 7-11 will meet Wednesday, February 28, 7-8:30 pm.

Family Formation (grades K-6) will meet Wednesday, March 6. 4:30 pm rosary, 5 pm meal, 5:30 pm lesson.

CASTAWAY 2024

RETREAT FOR GRADES 9-12

Friday-Sunday, March 22-24 at Castaway Club in Detroit Lakes. To register, scan the QR code. For more info, call the Faith Formation Office at 320-763-9202.



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LENT 2024 PENNY CHALLENGE

Each year during Lent the students and staff at St. Mary's participate in a unique penny collection competition that benefits a non-profit organization. The Penny Challenge allows classrooms to compete with one another to raise the most money in pennies. The class with the most pennies at the end of the challenge will win.



The event rules could end there, however there is an interesting twist to the challenge. As the pennies are being collected, a class may put silver coins or dollar bills into other classroom jars. The amount of silver and paper money placed in the jars will be subtracted from the total amount of pennies. If a class has a large lead on the amount of pennies they have collected, a couple dollars placed into their jar will allow other classes to catch up. After all the pennies are collected and the silver and paper money is subtracted from the jars, a classroom winner will be determined.

The Penny Challenge began Friday, February 23, and will continue each Friday of Lent until March 22.

After March 22, the coins will be counted and the class with the most pennies, minus the silver and paper, will be the Penny Challenge winner!

This year's proceeds from the St. Mary's School Penny Challenge will be donated to the Alexandria Veterans Memorial Park.

ST. MARY'S CALENDAR RAFFLE WINNERS

2/18	Kimberly Hawkins, Garfield	\$35
2/19	Julie Bosek, Garfield	\$20
2/20	Gina Pohlen, Alexandria	\$20
2/21	Diane Hommerding, Alexandria	\$20
2/22	Shelly Snyder, Alexandria	\$20
2/23	Lisa Olson, Alexandria	\$20
2/24	Eileen Eiser, Alexandria	\$20

SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

Fish Fry — March 1 & March 15, 4:30-7 pm, School Gym



9473 Co. Rd. 3 NE, Carlos, MN 56319
320-859-2390
stnickbelleriver@gmail.com
stnicholasbelleriver.org

306 W. Oak St., PO Box F
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office@icosakis.org | icosakis.org

420 Irving St., Alexandria, MN 56308
320-763-5781
stmary@stmaryalexandria.org
stmaryalexandria.org

PARISH STAFF

Father Matthew Kuhn, Pastor 320-460-5335, emergencies 320-815-1230
Father Rick Aubol, Parochial Vicar 320-460-5332, emergencies 320-815-1230
Todd Wentworth, Business Administrator 320-460-5333
Tony Pasko, Deacon (retired) thadeac@aol.com

Youth Ministries, Grades 1–12
Ginger Schroeder
612-616-7619
gingerannschroeder@gmail.com

Parish Office
Sharon Marthaler, 320-859-2390
stnickbelleriver@gmail.com

Parish Trustees
Dennis Hillmer 320-766-8505
Dwayne Waldorf 320-219-0409

Family Formation, Grades K–6
Terri Anderson, 320-760-9119
Carrie Drevlow, 320-491-7676
familyformation@icosakis.org

Faith Formation, Grades 7–11
Sharon Marthaler, 320-859-2390
faithformation7-11@icosakis.org

Parish Office
Sharon Marthaler, 320-859-2390
office@icosakis.org

Parish Trustees
Bruce Pederson 320-491-7835
Bev Paul 320-815-2352

Parish Office
Janell Eddy 320-763-5781

Music Coordinator
Erin Takle 320-460-5337

Director of Liturgy & Music
Luke VanOverbeke 320-460-5339

Communications Coordinator
Kathy Ballou 320-460-5336

St. Mary's School Principal
Troy Sladek 320-460-5327

Faith Formation Office 320-763-9202

Youth Ministries, Grades 1–8
Laurie Bienias 320-460-5325

Youth Ministries, Grades 9–12
Tammy Huss 320-460-5324

Pastoral Care Coordinator
Patty Marriott 320-762-2320

Parish Trustees
Mark Maloney 320-491-9165
Francie Peterson 320-360-0325

GIFTS OF GRATITUDE

WEEKLY OFFERINGS FOR FEB. 18	
Envelope	\$1,595
Electronic	171
Other	256
TOTAL	\$2,022

WEEKLY BUDGET PROGRESS	
Actual	2,022
Budget	2,510
Variance	\$ (488)

YTD BUDGET PROGRESS	
Actual	\$95,395
Budget	80,320
Variance	\$15,075

WEEKLY OFFERINGS FOR FEB. 18	
Envelope	\$4,648
Electronic	655
Other	363
TOTAL	5,666

WEEKLY BUDGET PROGRESS	
Actual	\$5,666
Budget	4,050
Variance	\$1,616

YTD BUDGET PROGRESS	
Actual	\$144,924
Budget	137,700
Variance	\$7,224

WEEKLY OFFERINGS FOR FEB. 18	
Envelope	\$18,938
Electronic	6,663
Other	2,928
TOTAL	\$28,529

WEEKLY BUDGET PROGRESS	
Actual	\$28,529
Budget	38,496
Variance	\$ (9,967)

YTD BUDGET PROGRESS	
Actual	\$1,336,818
Budget	1,308,864
Variance	\$27,954

The fiscal year runs from July to June. Detailed financial reports may be viewed at each parish office.

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