

# St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

A PARISH OF THE WESTERN DIOCESE OF THE POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

March 2026

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## Technological Scripture

One of my biggest pet peeves as a Christian is the cherry-picking and weaponizing of scripture in order to fuel one's political or ideological beliefs.

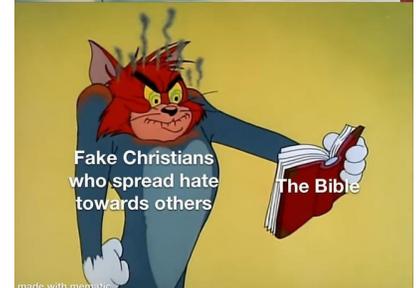
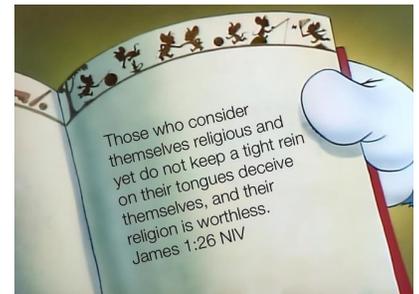
It is often in the form of quoting a portion of scripture without any appropriate form of context. I have seen and heard quotes to advocate for abortion rights, against abortion, against genocide, for arming civilians, for freedom of democracy, for freedom of speech, against freedom of speech, for more government oversight, for more state

rights...I suppose you get the picture. My point in sharing a long and contradictory list is to be aware that this stuff is out there and how easily influential it is.

These occurrences are often shared in the format of a "meme" – a picture on the internet, often with words, that tell a quick story. They are usually found within our personal algorithm, or shared by a friend or family member with like...or, perhaps fundamentally unlike...preferences.

We know our phones listen to us, and often feed back "things" we have recently said or often like hearing. If one were to look up enough Christian articles along with enough information on the Cleveland Guardians, one would eventually be presented, without prompting, an article on Christianity within your favorite baseball team. This seems lovely, right?

The counter to this is some of the existent dangers of AI (Artificial Intelligence). A number of members of our congregation have reached out to me with videos that look too inexplicable to be true...and it is because they have been doctored. For some, the idea of a doctored video makes little sense—the presence of video or a picture has for decades remained an end-all for evidence. It has been ingrained in us...and meanwhile, my son gets a kick out of using AI to take an



An example of a Christian Meme



I—Jesus Is Sentenced to Death



II—Jesus Takes Up His Cross

*St. Mary's Stations of the Cross are included in this Newsletter for your private meditation.*

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## Opening Article (cont)

existing picture of one of our cats and make him dance and wear a pair of sunglasses.

Recently, Pope Leo of the Roman Church begged his priests to stop the practice of using Artificial Intelligence to manufacture sermons. That is probably the best way to refer to this process – manufacture. I have tried it, so see what AI might say about the “Blank Sunday of Ordinary Time” and it works...barely. The sermons make sense, and yet, sound

robotic. The language is formal and dry, with not a hint of humanity to it. It really feels like reading the ingredient list on the package of a processed frozen food item. The ingredients...work... but they just don't sound right compared to what the product should be.

And there is a positive to what AI can do for sermons: I am well-aware of preachers who, while in this country, are faced with English being his second language. That, one could write a full Sunday homily in Polish and use AI's

wonderfully effective translate tool to create an English version of that same sermon.

Now, dry sermons and homilies do have their place at times; sometimes, we preachers really need to dig into deep theology or history to make our point. But these AI abuses only serve to reduce the spirituality of our people. No longer will they receive the Sacrament of the Word of God if priests take this shortcut...it is a weak and incorrect weaponizing of God's Word.

*Fr. Jason*

## February 2, 2026

The Solemnity of the Presentation of our Lord is celebrated each year on February 2nd and is the 40th Day of the Christmas Season (Lent and Easter also are 40 day seasons). This day is a solemn, festive one in the life of the church and is also known as “Candlemas” or the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Gospel chronicles the amazing events from Luke 2:22-40 that include the implied divinity of the infant Jesus as the Christ by Zechariah in the

Temple as well as the Holy Family's next realization of his importance.

Candles are ritually blessed prior to Holy Mass and then distributed at its conclusion. It is also the final salvo for Christmas music to be sung in church until December (or, November 1st on the radio).



III—Jesus Falls the First Time



IV—Jesus Meets His Mother

# St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

## Sunday, February 8th

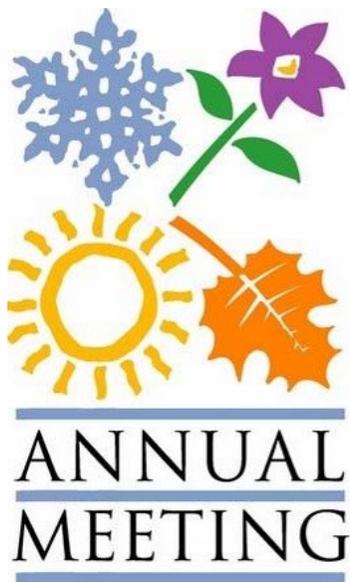
Sunday, February 8th was an exercise in strong Polish National Catholicism. Holy Mass was for the 2nd Sunday of the Pre-Lenten Season, also known as Sexagesima Sunday, or within 60 (something) days of Easter.

At the conclusion of Holy Mass, rather than greet the faithful, Fr. Jason called everyone back up to the Com-

munion Rail to receive God's blessing in a special way. Using candles blessed during February 2nd's Candelmas, God's blessing and the beseeching of the intercession of St. Blaise was imparted on all the faithful. May our prayers and actions continue what we desired of God- of health and protection.

Finally, after 9am Holy Mass, our Parish Annual Meeting took place, rescheduled from January 25th. Our reports were emailed out to parishioners ahead of time, but copies were available as well. The democratic processes available to our parish were in full action as reports were adjusted, directions were voted-for, successes were noted, challenges were recorded, and ideas were pitched for the coming months. Congratulations also to Elaine Ploskonka, who was elected delegate to the upcoming General Synod and to Pattie Dotson, elected as alternate.

Thank you to everyone who attended and offered his or her opinion. Voice and vote is a powerful thing in the life of the Church, be it on a national level at our General Synods, diocesan level in our Diocesan Synods and seniorate meetings, and a parish level at meetings like this and our monthly parish committee meetings.



V-Simon of Cyrene Helps Carry the Cross



VI-Veronica Wipes Jesus' Face

## Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, February 15 was quite the morning of all of those things that make for a healthy Catholic Community. Holy Mass was the 3rd and final Sunday of the Pre-Lente Season, also known as Quinquagesima Sunday, or within 50 (something) days of Easter. After the sharing of the Eucharistic Bread at our 9am Holy Mass, the congregation was invited to the Fellowship Hall for a sweetheart pancake breakfast.

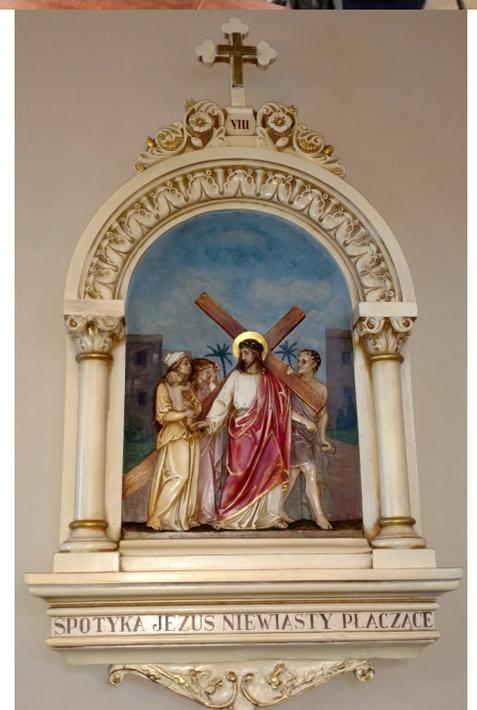
After pronouncing the blessing over the food, Fr. Jason invited the women of the parish first to be served. The menu included nalesniki, pancakes, and sausage. It was a relaxing and joyful morning as the lovers reminisced of the Valentine's Day "that was" the previous day and

the others enjoyed serving-after-serving of expertly crafted culinary concoctions.

Many thanks to Steve, Jim, Tom, Mike, and everyone else who chipped in with set up, prep, serving, clean-up and more. We all got treated like sweethearts!



VII—Jesus Falls the Second Time



VIII—Jesus Meets the Jerusalem Women

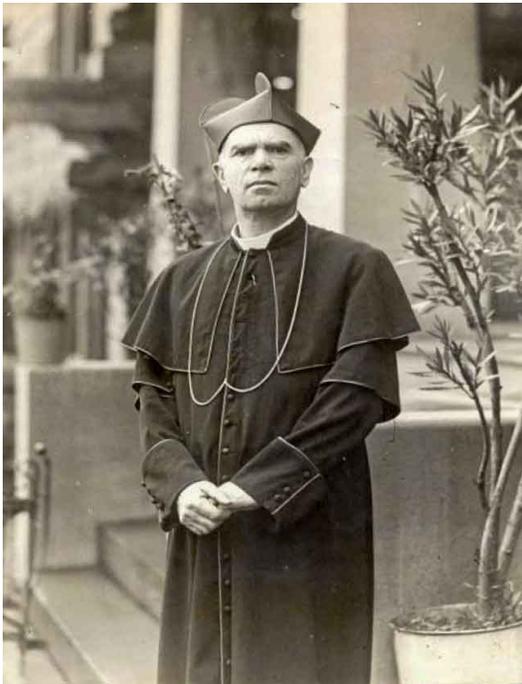
## St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

### Mass to honor the Most Rev. Franciszek Hodur

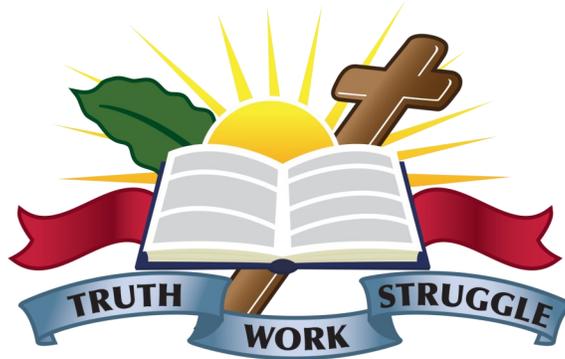
Monday, February 16th was the anniversary of the death of the organizer of the Polish National Catholic Church, the Most Rev. Francis Hodur.

Prime Bishop Hodur accepted the call of the first parish in Scranton, PA to lead parishioners who were desiring a dynamic pastor aligned with them culturally and spiritually. This ultimately led to a break from the Roman Church, the advent of a new denomination and Consecration from the Old Catholic Church.

Fr. Jason celebrated a 9am Requiem Mass on the anniversary of his death, using the Bishop Hodur Rite of the Mass that is in our pew books. This is a scripture-rich version of the Traditional Rite of the Holy Mass.



Fr. Jason celebrated a 9am Requiem Mass on the anniversary of his death, using the Bishop Hodur Rite of the Mass that is in our pew books. This is a scrip-



IX—Jesus Falls the Third Time



X—Jesus is Stripped of His Garments



XI—Jesus is Crucified

## Ash Wednesday and Lenten Devotions

Ash Wednesday acknowledges the opening for the Great Lenten Fast for Catholics. St. Mary's distributes ashes at two services: a Noon litany of the Passion of our Lord and at Holy Mass at 7pm.

Parishioners and visitors alike came to worship and receive blessed ashes on an unseasonably warm day that already had many thinking spring.

Fr. Jason preached about the season of Lent as a whole, and how as our Lord was made perfect on the day of His glo-

rious resurrection, so are we given this opportunity to prove and perfect ourselves to welcome Him that Easter day.



XII—Jesus Dies on the Cross



XIII—The Body of Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross



XIV—The Body of Jesus is Placed in the Tomb

## St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

### Various Announcements

**CANON** – For all of March, we will use the 3rd Eucharistic Prayer, based on the Canon of St. Basil, on p. 84.

**ADORATION** – On Saturday March 7, a Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament will once again take place as part of the Lenten Retreat of the Northeast Seniorate. It will be the Holy Hour of St. Augustine, guided aloud in prayer by the attending clergy.

**INSTITUTION OF THE PNCC** – As mandated by the Polish National Catholic Church, the denomination celebrates each 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of March the Solemnity of the Institution of the PNCC. This honors the first Mass celebrated on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of March, 1897, in what is regarded as the beginning of the PNCC. We note that today is a celebratory day, a pause from the Lenten Season, where the celebrant wears white, the Alleluia and the Gloria return, and the music is not of a Lenten lean. This Lenten pause occurs on other days as well- for many, St. Patrick's Day (3-17), St. Joseph's Day (3-19), and the Solemnity of the Annunciation (3-25). Like any Lenten Sunday, it technically is permissible to break your Lenten Fast, as it is a day of the Lord...but who doesn't like a challenge, right?

**WORD OF GOD STUDY** The next Word

of God Study has begun! See Fr. Jason for any questions or offer a simple prayer for the success and spiritual enhancement of this group

**SAVE THE DATE** – Saturday, March 7, from 10:30am-2pm, the Lenten Retreat of the Northeast Seniorate of the Western Diocese takes place at St. Mary's. Usually this is in the Toledo area, but it was voted to take place here for 2026. The theme is "We Adore you, o Christ, and We Bless You: Because by Your Cross & Passion..." Please pray for the success of our retreat.

**SCHOLARS CONFERENCE** - Save the Date - This year's Scholars Conference in the PNCC will be April 18, 2026 in Scranton, PA and online. If you would like further information, please feel free to contact Rev. Father Jim Ploskonka of the History and Archives commission at 216.650.5596

**YOUTH CONVO/RETREAT**— The 2026 PNCC Youth Convo/Retreat takes place in Jaffrey, NH August 3-7. Fr. Jason and Brady plan on attending—if any children from the parish are interested, please speak to Fr. Jason, as we must plan early for this travel.

**MISSION CROSS** – The Mission Team, as every Lent, has raised the prayer cross in the corner of the church near the votive candles. We encourage you to use

it as an opportunity to practice the first Lenten Disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Envelopes, papers, and pencils are on the nearby sill to offer your prayer to be pinned on the cross. All prayers remain anonymous and offered up to our Lord at the conclusion of Lent.

**LENT**—Friday nights will feature Lenten Devotions—please join your faithful Christians each week as we walk the Stations of the Cross and as we offer the Bitter Lamentations. The schedule & times is posted in our calendars as well as in our bulletin. We also have prayer booklets, donated by Carol S. from Michigan to guide us through the season.

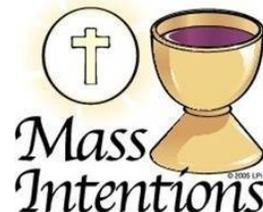
**ELEVATIONS** - On March 3 at All Saints Cathedral in Chicago at 10am (central time), Cleric Al Becker and Cleric Jason Fox were elevated to Subdeacon. Prime Bishop Anthony presided and bestowed the orders. On March 19, elevations take place at St. Stanislaus Cathedral on the Solemnity of St. Joseph for those matriculated in the Savonarola Theological Seminary of the PNCC.

**LENTEN FOOD COLLECTION** –We are collecting on behalf of our Food Ministry as well as the Parma Hunger Center, located at Parma Lutheran. We are partnering with the Polish National Alliance spring program "Roll Away the Stone of Hunger". See weekly bulletins for updates.

### Scheduled Mass Intentions at St. Mary's

- Mar 1– Helen Kasperczyk of. by son John & family
- Mar 8 — Bob Bernacki (5th Anv.) of. by Jo Orlowski & Deb Wilson
- Mar 15 – Joan Spilka of. by husband John Spilka
- Mar 22– Helen Satola of. by daughter Barb Bogzevitz & family
- Mar 29—Adeline Karabowicz (1st. Anv.) of. by daughter Trish Karabowicz
- Apr 5 – Resurrection Sunday—No intentions taken
- Apr 12 — Rose, Walter, & Edward Franczak of. by John Spilka
- Apr 19 – Adolph Kasperczyk of. by son John & family
- Apr 26– Greg Hodor (1st Anv.) of. by St. Mary's Parish Committee

There are only eleven Sunday Masses open for intentions for the rest of 2026: July 5, 19; Aug. 2, 9, 23, 30; Sep 6, 13, 27; Dec 13, 20. See Fr. Jason to schedule.



## March Days of Note



### March Birthdays

- 7<sup>th</sup> – Bill Kastak
- 8<sup>th</sup> – Gail Perz
- 11<sup>th</sup> – Mark Avondet
- 17<sup>th</sup> – Linda Sobolewski
- 18<sup>th</sup> – Barb Bogzevitz
- 18<sup>th</sup> – Lauren Hostman
- 19<sup>th</sup> – Karen Colwell
- 20<sup>th</sup> – Carmen Torres
- 25<sup>th</sup> – Marty Bengela
- 26<sup>th</sup> – Evonne Pryer
- 28<sup>th</sup> – Kathy Samelson
- 30<sup>th</sup> – Jeanette Chambers
- 30<sup>th</sup> – Linda Sydorenko
- 31<sup>st</sup> – Patty Bennett



### March Anniversaries

None— Most of March is always during Lent...and it is hard to get married during Lent at a Catholic Church! One of the only permissible days during let to get married is March 19, St. Joseph's Day

Subscribe to our  
**YouTube Channel**

*Have we missed a birthday or anniversary? Just give us a shout so we can fix any errors that have been made :-)  
We also will be going around the Fellowship Hall in the coming weeks looking to update parish information*



## “A Poem about Lent”

Jesus prayed and fasted for forty days  
In the desert a long time ago.  
He showed endurance and restraint  
With temptation as His foe.

The length of Lent is forty days  
For us a time of preparation.  
It starts on Wednesday we call Ash  
And it ends with Easter's celebration.

We follow Lent to follow Him  
A time of sacrifice and prayer  
We give up something we desire  
That His example we might share.

By giving up some things in life  
During this time of preparation  
We show Him that we too are willing  
To overcome our own temptation.

Oh, what joy that Lent will bring  
At the end of the forty days  
When Sunday's bells will ring  
With Resurrection's praise.

### • Elena del Friuli

## Our Prayer List

*Praying for St. Mary's Parishioners & Friends*

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Bill & Pat Glatzer       | Bob Kaczmarek          |
| Bill Kastak              | Gail Perz              |
| George Makovicka         | John Spilka            |
| Johanna Markiewicz       | Patrick Kmitt          |
| Eddie Kawa               | Lucy-Louise Hoegler    |
| Marty Bengela            | Tom Putynski           |
| Jeff Parady              | Millie Dominik         |
| Kathleen Beres           | Mike Paulus            |
| Donna Micka              | Ron Ference            |
| Ed Pierson               | George Bennett         |
| Florence Nemkovich       | Pattie Dotson          |
| Nicole McGivern          | Jack Spilka            |
| Elaine Repede            | David Vaden            |
| Wanda Clark              | Beth Chihill           |
| Michael Cosevin          | Helen Cummings         |
| Laina Dachtal            | Michael McGivern       |
| Jay Grabowsky            | Carmen Torres          |
| Cecelia Hall             | Caroline Kunes         |
| Linda Marks              | Thomas Lill            |
| John & Anne Nemetz       | Rhonda Smith           |
| Al Piniecki              | Carol Boesch           |
| Joanie True              | Daniel Rinella         |
| Penny Dennison           | Tom Slomka             |
| Pete James               | Tom Pietka             |
| Pam Tropiano             | Linda Vect             |
| Dennis and Sue Vect      | Marcus Vaughn, Jr.     |
| Bryson Dzuroff           | Carl Neutzling         |
| Doreen Stanley           | Jane Hunter            |
| Dennis Thome             | The Finnie Family      |
| Carlene Fliss            | Jim Fliss Jr.          |
| Josephine Ference        | Cathy Pieciak          |
| Nan Cramer               | Jim Lukas              |
| Sage McLane              | Dave Tuma              |
| Phil Repko               | Shyanna Tiller         |
| Jim Giles                | Kathleen Sobocinski    |
| Bill Zychowski           | Loretta Baldwin        |
| Donna Kidd               | Paulette Lilli         |
| Joseph Zubel             | Margaret & Lew Heifner |
| Marilyn Girard           | Courtney Austin        |
| Stephanie Milla          | Shannon Alberino       |
| Jayden Pieciak           | Joyce Zeigler          |
| Sam Bass                 | Katie Stallbaum        |
| Marcia Klein             | Kim Penney             |
| Laurie Slominski         | Amanda Monyak          |
| Roseanne & George Ziefle | Judy Alexin            |
| Connie Benko             | Joe Litto              |
| Tammy Knotek             | Diane Ellis            |
| Kenneth Parks            | John Beno              |

WE ALSO REMEMBER  
ALL ACTIVE & RETIRED CLERGY  
ALL SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN  
Bless them, O Lord.



## LENT 2026



**ASH**  
WEDNESDAY  
February 18



**PALM**  
SUNDAY  
March 29



**MAUNDY**  
THURSDAY  
April 2



**GOOD**  
FRIDAY  
April 3



**BLACK**  
SATURDAY  
April 4



**EASTER**  
SUNDAY  
April 5

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