

St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

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

February 2024

Pastor: Rev. Jason H. Soltysiak
frjason82@gmail.com
Cell: 216-978-6645

Parish Chair: Mrs. Susan Boehnlein
sboehnlein66@gmail.com
Cell: (440) 781-7912



St. Mary's P.N.C.C
5375 Broadview Road
Parma, OH 44134

Office/Hall Phone: 216-661-9246
Email: stmarypncc@sbcglobal.net
www.stmaryspncc.org
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Sanctuary Tour

While I laud our congregation for the collective, intense focus each and every Sunday during the liturgy of Holy Mass...I do see an eye wander around, here and there. It's ok- there is plenty to look at in a church. I wanted to write on two things in the sanctuary area of the church that have surely caught (and now will inevitably catch) your eye.

The first stop is one of the most asked-about features of our parish whenever someone new visits: the Communion Rail. Though changes in the Roman Catholic Church in the late 1960's led to the de-railing of many Catholic Churches across the world, parishes of the PNCC were not subject to this adjustment (though, some churches certainly took advantage and were made even more beautiful by removing their rails).

Historically, a rail is where people were noted to receive Communion. St. Augustine wrote that this was taking place at the choir rails. Older church architecture had the choir closer or in the sanctuary area, whether it was surrounding



Did you know?

or behind the altar. This area was often "railed off" from the main part of the sanctuary, often reserved for clergy and the attending altar party. This would evolve to the faithful approaching the rail that separated the rest of the sanctuary from the nave, or the main part of the church building.

There are only a couple of "rules" for a parish having a Communion Rail. One is that is set upon one raised step from the rest of nave (the main body of the church) in order to give the faithful the pious opportunity to kneel in order to receive the Eucharist. A second is that the material and design should not in any way detract from the unique symbolic significance of the altar. Simply, the rail should look like it belongs there, not that it

was placed there as a piece of art or as a focal point.

The second stop on the tour of the Sanctuary is the Eternal Candle, also known as Eternal Lamp/ Sanctuary Lamp/Wieczny Lampa/ Tabernacle Lamp/Chancel Lamp/Everlasting Flame/Lampara del Santissimo. The lamp may be freestanding, suspended above the Altar, or attached to the wall. It should never be far away from the Tabernacle in the Catholic Church. As Tabernacles have moved away from the centers of sanctuaries—the Eternal Light would then be located nearer to the place where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.

Exodus 27:20-21 states: "You shall further command the Israelites to bring you pure oil of beaten olives for the light, so that a lamp may be set up to burn regularly. In the tent of meeting, outside the curtain that is before the covenant, Aaron and his sons shall tend it from evening to morning before the Lord. It shall be a perpetual ordinance to be observed throughout their generations by the Israelites."

"Ner Tamid" is the "Eternal Light" that burns in Jewish Synagogues today. Per the Encyclopedia Britannica (2021): "It reminds the congregation of the holiness of the Torah scrolls



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Opening Article (Con't)

that are stored within the ark and calls to mind God's abiding presence and his providential care of the Jewish people. The Ner Tamid also represents the light that burned continuously in the western section of the ancient Temple of Jerusalem."

As we are a faith evolved from Judaism, we have taken this tradition and have used it to mark our holiest of holies in the church itself: Jesus Christ, present in the Tabernacle in the Consecrated Body. The lamps have evolved to be wax, oil, or electric-based: Roman Catholic churches were required to use burning olive oil up

until the 2nd Vatican Council... though many didn't.

The PNCC does not have any particular restrictions on this candle, except for one "rubric" or guide in the liturgy: When the sacrament is transferred out of the normal place (the tabernacle), the eternal light is to be extinguished, with another light/candle/etc. lighted to show the presence of Christ in its new place. This is done ceremonially at the conclusion of the Maundy Thursday liturgy, as the Blessed Sacrament is processed and placed upon the altar of repose,

requiring a new light to show God's presence there.

Candles throughout the entirety of the church are blessed on the Solemnity of the Presentation of our Lord, February 2nd, also known as Candlemas. As I offered the blessing with Holy Water and Incense this year, the Good Lord shot an arrow of inspiration at me to let the congregation learn about this candle. This knowledge will come in handy, as next year, February 2nd is a Sunday, so we will know why this special candle in the sanctuary receives a blessing as well.

Fr. Jason

Epiphany

Christmas 2023 came and went, and over the Christmas church holidays and Sunday worship, parishioners always track the "travels" of Gaspar (aka Kaspar, aka Caspar, aka Casper), Melchior, and Balthazar across the sanctuary from the altar of St. Mary to the manger scene in front of Joseph's Altar. This trek takes 12 days...significantly faster than the many, many months it took the Magi to find the Incarnate Lord!

Fr. Greg Gronn, retired priest of the Western Diocese, was the celebrant and homilist of our Epiphany Day Mass on Saturday, January 6th. He is pictured below, preaching his inspiring Epiphany homily. Fr. Jason provided the blessing of chalk and incense, prepared for the blessing of homes throughout the Epiphany season. Blessings were provided and doors were chalked with the +20 KMB 24+ marking. As you see with the various spellings of "Kaspar", the KMB is often displayed as CMB.



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Christmastime Pot-Luck

The annual St. Mary's Wigilia/Wafer/Oplatek/Potluck/Post-Christmas dinner took place after a 10am Mass on Sunday, January 7th, the Solemnity of the Baptism of our Lord.

Parishioners and attendees were encouraged, but not required to bring a dish to share at this event. Fr. Jason, Pastor, and Susan Boehnlein, Chair, greeted everyone in line for food with the traditional Eastern European Oplatek.

Well-wishes of an (extended) Merry Christmas and a (continued)



Happy New Year were exchanged, with some who experienced the traditional exchange for the first time.

Thank you to everyone for making it a relaxing morning and to displaying twelve desserts to put a close on the twelve days of Christmas!



New Lighting

The Nave of the church (see, we just learned that word 2 pages ago!) was outfitted with some new lighting in the early part of January.

The renowned T & C Electric Company came by on a Monday evening for the installation. The lumens and the temperature of the bulbs were carefully concocted by the T & C team and along with Fr. Jason in order to create an environment of worship that was brighter, but indeed, in the same vein as previous lighting moods.

Further lighting upgrades will be made in the near future to enhance our collective worship experience.



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National YMSofR Clothing Drive

On a beautiful (it was super, duper cold) and memorable Monday morning, January 15, men of the YMSofR Branch #29 and volunteers from the parish came together in the Fellowship Hall to deconstruct, collate, count, and package all of the clothing collected throughout the winter months.

The National YMSofR has led the call for parishes to have a used clothing drive for nearly a decade, and our parishioners, visitors, and hall-rental attendees have been supporting this annual drive tremendously.

Our bin fills and overflows usually by the middle of Advent, with crea-

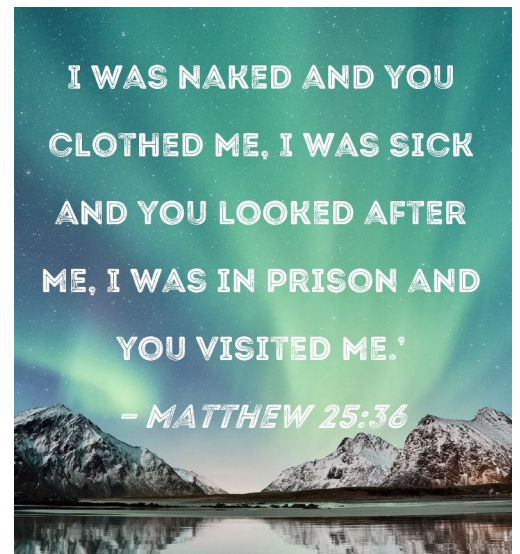
tivity taking the stage to keep the rising clothes pile stable.

After two hours of hard work on Monday morning, a total of 1,799 individual items were packaged, totaling 12,428 "points" on the YMSofR tally challenge. The packaged clothing was transferred to the garage and was subsequently picked up and donated to the "Rise in Love" Foundation, whose Mission is "A center for all in need to provide immediate resources for individuals and families, as well as assisting in developing the capability to help them rise above their suffering."

The Mission Team's collection from

the Sock Tree (with the sock monkey watching from above) was set aside for the Foundation as well: 100 pairs of new socks, along with a total collected of new 50 hats and mittens/gloves.

A pizza luncheon was enjoyed by all before heading home for the afternoon.



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St. Mary's Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting took place after 9am Mass on Sunday, January 28 after announcements were made in this newsletter and in weekly bulletins. Our God was worshipped at Holy Mass on the First Pre-Lenten Sunday, with a portion of the parishioners choosing to



execute his or her democratic right as a Polish National Catholic and attend the Annual Meeting.

Preceding the meeting, reports were emailed to parishioners, providing access to a digital copy in preparation for the meeting. Questions on the reports were fielded and addressed as they came in.

There was a solid balance of food to power us through our meeting. Lunch meats were at the ready to power us with protein, with coffee and sweets to give us the 5 minute shakes as well. The meeting includ-

ed discussion on the budget, procedures for future meetings, overall finances, and more. A desire for a fundraiser planning meeting to take place ASAP- was expressed, scheduled for February 7.

Though met with some questions, our parish voting body recognizes the challenges ahead. Like every parish across the world- we need more Christians, faithful to the cause of Christ in worship, support, and brotherly love. May all of your prayers and actions reflect the desire we share as a parish for an ever-improving portion of God's Kingdom on Earth.

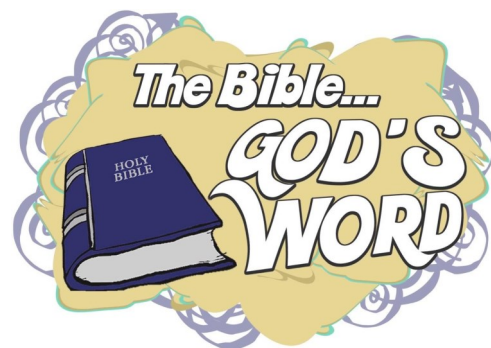


Bible Study Concludes

January 24th's 6pm Bible Study concluded a months-long foray through an Advent-to-Christmas-to-Epiphany Bible Study titled "Advent of the Savior".

Over this six-class study, we looked at the influence of the prophets, the life of John the Baptist, and read...pretty

much every moment of the life of Jesus from before birth to his 12-year-old visit to the temple. Each study was accompanied by a meatless soup, bread, and a dessert. Dessert from this study ranged from Brady's leftover Halloween candy (don't tell him) to cookies to brownies and more!



LE_NT 2024

Love Everyone iN Truth

Saturday, March 16, 2024

**Resurrection Parish
Temperance, Michigan**

LE_NT 2024

Saturday, March 16, 2024



- | | |
|----------|--|
| 10:00 am | Registration, Meet and Greet |
| 10:30 am | Welcome and Overview |
| 10:45 am | Session I: Love,
Father Senior Nowak |
| 11:15 am | Session II: Everyone, Father
Ploskonka |
| 11:45 am | Session II: In Truth, Father
Soltysiak |
| 12:15 pm | Sacrament of Penance, Father
Senior Zawistowski |
| 12:30 pm | Lunch |

*Appreciation to the Resurrection Parish for serving as
our hosts! Thank you!*

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Various Announcements

CANON – Today, and for all February, we use the 3rd Canon on p. 84.

FUNDRAISER MTG.– Thank you for the attendees of our Fundraiser meeting this past Thursday & their input.

BIBLE STUDY – Our parish bible study concluded its most recent study on the Advent/Christmas/Epiphany Season. We will begin anew on Wednesday, February 21st after enjoying a movie night on the 7th of February.

RESTAURANT FUNDRAISER – Thank you to everyone who popped by the Texas Roadhouse for our restaurant fundraiser for the month of February .

PACZKI –February 11th is the final day orders are being taken now for paczki, fresh from famous Michelangelo's Bakery! Fill out a flyer and place it in the box near the parish mail slots – there are a choice of 10 flavors for \$2.75 each and pickup is between 7 & 9am on Shrove/Fat Tuesday – no lines here at St. Mary's, just a free cup of coffee!

PRE-LENT – Pre-Lent is a Christian observance of devotion that was in preparation for the fasting and atonement of the Lenten Season. It allowed some to begin their fast even earlier. In this period, flowers are traditionally removed from the sanctuary, as is the Gloria. Thematically, it really is in be-

tween the "green" of Jesus's ministry and the "violet" of penance. The rose-colored vestments show that thematic bridge.

PARISH MINISTRIES – Help! We need more parishioners to serve in these capacities! See any of your beloved church lectors, greeters, or collectors and ask about the great perks of these unique ministries– we're looking to grow!

SUPERBOWL SQUARES – The Super Bowl takes place on Sunday, Feb. 11th– a repeat of a boring 2020, Kansas City & San Francisco. Add some excitement by purchasing squares 2 for \$5- see Ron Ference

HOLY HOTCAKES! – Our Annual Holy Hotcakes Dinner takes place on Fat/Shrove Tuesday, February 13th from 4:30-6:30pm. The cost is \$8 for Adults/\$4 Children, and includes all-you-can-eat plates that feature pancakes, sausage, an assortment of fruits and syrups, and drinks. See the flyers posted in the hall and online for more info- bring a friend!

FR. JIM–In his weekly Mass celebrations (Usually Thursdays at 8am) throughout 2024, he will be remembering the parishes and pastors of the Western Diocese – you'll see these noted in the weekly schedule.

MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP – Info for scholarships from the National United Choirs is

available– see Chris Paulus or Fr. Jim.

LENT–Begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14. We will have the blessing & distribution of ashes at a noontime service as well as at a 7pm Holy Mass. Please make sure to start Lent on the right foot, with the worship of our Lord. Friday nights will feature Lenten Devotions at 6pm—please join your faithful brothers and sisters in prayer each week as we walk the Stations of the Cross together and as we offer the Bitter Lamentations. The schedule is posted in our calendars as well as in our weekly bulletin.

SAVE THE DATE – St. Mary's will be hosting the National PNCC Bowling Tournament for the first time in over a decade! It will be Memorial Day Weekend, with bowling on May 25.

WORD OF GOD STUDY of the Western Diocese for the 2024 Lenten Season will be held via Zoom 8pm Tuesday evenings on Feb. 13, 20, 27, March 5 and 12. The focus will be "The Lamb's Supper" by Scott Hahn and will be facilitated by Fr. Sr. John Kowalczyk and Fr. Jim Ploskonka. See Fr. Jim for details.

PIEROGI DINNER – Mark your calendar: a deep-fried pierogi dinner will take place, hosted by the parish and the Mission Team on Friday, Feb. 23 from 4-6pm. For \$12, dinners include 4 fried pierogi, coleslaw, applesauce, soup, and dessert with a la carte drinks.

Scheduled Mass Intentions at St. Mary's

February 4 – Sophie & Martin Szpilka of. by son John Spilka

February 11 – Evdokia Szczerban & Sandra Schwartz of. By Edyta Schwartz

February 18– Walter Stepanik of. by son Gene Stepanik

February 25 – Helen Kasperczyk (birthday) of. by John & Eileen Kasperczyk & family

March 3 – Helen Kasperczyk (Anniversary) of. by John & Eileen Kasperczyk & family

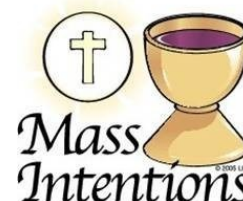
March 10 – Gregorio Alfonso of. by Ramon & Carmen Torres & family

March 17 – Joan Spilka of. by husband John Spilka

March 24 – Frank & Helen Satola of. by Bruce & Barb Bogzevitz

March 31— Easter Sunday—no intention taken

Next 6 months open dates: June 16, 23; July 7, 28



February Days of Note



February Birthdays

- 2nd – Andrea Grmovsek
- 3rd – Carole D’Arcy
- 5th – George Bennett
- 11th – Astrid Wisniewski
- 12th – Jay Jurczyk
- 13th – Matthew Moritz
- 16th – Owen Arnold
- 18th – Karen Bedocs
- 19th – Richard Sosenko
- 22nd – Amy Dreger
- 25th – Fr. Greg Gronn
- 28th – Tom Putynski



Happy Anniversary

February Anniversaries

- 14th – Ron & Nancy Roharik

Have we missed a birthday or anniversary? Just give us a shout so we can fix any errors that have been made :-)

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YouTube channel



“Saint Valentine: A Sonnet”

SAINT VALENTINE was a Christian Priest in 3rd C Rome AND CHRISTIAN MARIAGE was forbidden by Claudius IT WAS DIFFICULT for Valentine to refuse to marry the NEWLY converted Young Christians in a very permissive TIME when polygamy (several wives) was very popular !

VALENTINE had to marry the Young Couples in secret AND he was imprisoned for his illicit marriages. And EVENTUALLY he was condemned to death for his crime. A NOTE sent to the Judge's Daughter ~ who he cured from THE LOSS OF SIGHT ~ was signed "From Your VALENTINE" IN 269 AD Valentine was Beaten ~ Stoned and Decapitated. NOW we celebrate Valentine's Day with Cards & Red Roses EVERY CARD & TOKEN Is a symbol of Everlasting Love ~ AMEN

By Brian Sodes

February 14, 2024

Noon: Litany of the Passion & Ashes distributed
7pm: Holy Mass with distribution of Ashes

Our Prayer List

Praying for St. Mary's Parishioners & Friends

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Bill & Pat Glatzer | Bob Kaczmarek |
| Bill Kastak | Anna Dawidziuk |
| George Makovicka | John Spilka |
| Johanna Markiewicz | Patrick Kmitt |
| Jim Boehnlein | Sauna Smullen |
| Marty Bengela | Tom Putynski |
| Jeff Pardy | Millie Dominik |
| Kathleen Beres | Joseph Bischoff |
| David Micka | Phil Symons |
| Ed Pierson | George Bennett |
| Greg Hodor | Pattie Dotson |
| Nicole McGivern | Jack Spilka |
| Elaine Repede | David Vaden |
| Wanda Clark | Beth Chihill |
| Michael Cosevin | Helen Cummings |
| Laina Dachtal | Michael McGivern |
| Jay Grabowsky | Pam Chesar |
| 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 |
| Wojciech Fedorowicz | Ben Soltis |
| Pam Tropiano | Linda Vect |
| Dennis and Sue Vect | Marcus Vaughn, Jr. |
| Bryson Dzuroff | Fr. Sr. Joseph Soltysiak |
| Doreen Stanley | Jane Hunter |
| Dennis Thome | The Finnie Family |
| Carlene Fliss | Jim Fliss Jr. |
| John Wisniewski | Cathy Pieciak |
| Nan Cramer | Barb & Jim Lukas |
| Mike Pescitelli | Kathy Robertson |
| Phil Repko | Richard & Edna Samelson |
| 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 |
| Dan Ewanko | Amanda Monyak |
| Roseanne & George Ziefle | Judy Alexin |
| Connie Benko | Jenni Avondet |
| Karsen Winters | |

WE ALSO REMEMBER

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

