

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

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

**July 2025**

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## Mary Who?

Many years ago, I was privileged with the opportunity to preach at a Youth Convocation of the Polish National Catholic Church. Those Convos always seemed to take place roughly the same week every even-numbered year, which usually meant my birthday was spent traveling to some college campus to spend a week with church people...something I guess I never stopped doing!

I was tasked to preach on July 22nd at Holy Mass of the Day, and the Saint of the Day just so happened to be one of the more controversial saints on the Catholic Calendar. Controversial because of who she was before she met Jesus, and controversial because of the way people began to think of her in later years.

The day's gospel, John 20:11-18 says: "Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher"). Jesus said, "Do not hold on to

me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her."

After the initial confusion and struggling to see through tears, Mary does something amazing – something before Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – she evangelizes – she reveals God's glory of Jesus' Resurrection through her words: "I have seen the Lord"... And those words changed the world.

But Mary's story is bigger than this, isn't it? We are introduced to her in the Gospel of Luke, when in Chapter 8 it states that "some women began to follow, who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out." She is also mentioned in other Resurrection accounts.

We are, of course, tempted to call Mary Magdalene what most people associate her with being: a prostitute. Indeed, there is evidence in scripture (John 8:3-11) of an unnamed woman brought forth before Jesus to be stoned because of her sin of prostitution.

In John's Gospel, chapter 12, we read that a Mary took a pound of perfume, anointed Jesus' feet, and dried his feet with her hair. In Luke's gospel, chapter 7 however, we see an unnamed sinful woman do the same. In Matthew and Mark, it is an unnamed, unlabeled woman.

So now what? We don't see her called something bad...scripture wasn't saying it was a prostitute anointing the feet of Jesus. And although there is a temptation to scratch your head and think well, if she was so important, why wasn't she named by all? I remind you that, perhaps, get this: a man didn't want to give any more credit to a woman than he though she deserved- evangelists thought they were, they were still slaves to the typical prejudices of their era.

Mary of Magdala is the patron saint of repentant sinners – that should be all of us – hairdressers, and perfume-makers. Her reputation was thrown out-of-whack by one simple sermon by Pope Gregory the First, who, on this day in the year 597, associated her demons with the seven spiritual vices...the seven deadly sins...Lust is one that appointed her to be a worker with her body.

Modern Christians – of which we are – regard Mary Magdalene as a devoted follower of Jesus Christ. She had demons, but they were cured and her sins forgiven. It is a lesson of true repentance – of someone being truly sorry before the presence of God, of being forgiven, for promising to sin no more, and of doing the truest penance possible-following Christ, step by step.

Mary's official prayer is simple, meaningful, and reflects the words of the Savior she followed from his preaching to his passion to his death and to being the first witness of His Resurrection: "Saint Mary Magdalene, teach us to forgive ourselves, and then teach us to forgive others." Amen.

*Fr. Jason*

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

### Prayer Blanket Blessed

A new prayer blanket was blessed for our dear sister R.Z. after 9am Mass on Sunday, June 29.

As usual, the blanket was lovingly and prayerfully prepared by our Mission Team and friends until chosen to be blessed and given. Fr. Jason offered the prayers of blessing, laid his hands upon it and invited all to do so as well.



### 3rd Time is a Charm...ish

The Parish had all the best intentions to run a beautiful and quality Community Trunk Sale in the parish parking lot towards the end of Spring. Unfortunately, Mother Nature ran all sorts of interference to prevent this! Unseasonable cold and early morning thunderstorms and downpours postponed our first two dates.

Finally, despite a clear forecast the day before, our trunk sale was held...ish...on Saturday June 28. Unfortunately, a storm head came in, along with some driving wind and sideways rain and scared off the public and some vendors. Fortunately, our parish bakers came through and the bakery sold quite well, all things considered. We will attempt fate once again come the autumn!

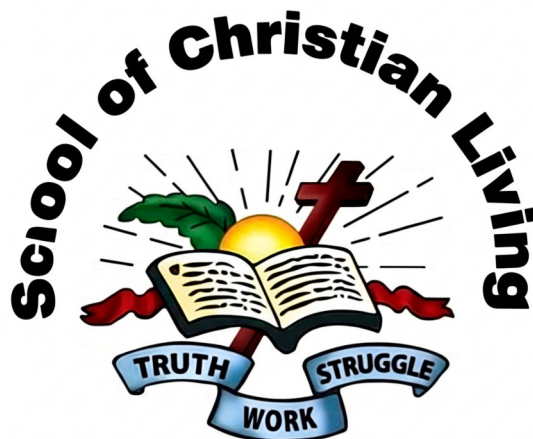


### Pentecost Sunday

The great Solemnity of Pentecost, the 50<sup>th</sup> Day of Easter, was celebrated on Sunday, June 8. Fr. Jason and Fr. Greg concelebrated Holy Mass on the only day where the color red is the required liturgical color of the day.

Closing exercises for the 2024-2025 SOCL (School of Christian Living) year were held as well. We remain incredibly grateful for the work of Mrs. Barb Bog-

zevitz as our teacher extraordinaire. "The boys" are always excited to spend time in class with her after Holy Mass.





## Corpus Christi Sunday

The Sunday within the Octave of the Solemnity of Corpus Christi (Thursday, June 19) fell on Sunday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> this year. St. Mary's has carried the tradition of holding the traditional Eucharistic Corpus Christi Procession on this day to conclude Holy Mass.

Mass was attended by Fr.'s Jim Ploskonka and Greg Gronn, who both assisted in the Eucharistic Procession, reading Gospels as well. Fr. Jason served as celebrant and homilist. Members and friends of the Love of God Sodality set up the altars for adoration.

It was a beautiful liturgy, featuring the St. Thomas Aquinas-penned Corpus Christ Sequence, a short and to-the-point homily, Eucharistic-themed prayers and all

three priests receiving Jesus together from the altar.

Unfortunately, due to the extreme sun & heat that day, the decision was made to hold the procession indoors. God was praised, Christ was adored in the Blessed Sacrament, and a little sweat to start a Sunday is never the worst thing!

# Boze Cialo

## CORPUS CHRISTI

BODY OF CHRIST





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

### Word of God Sunday

The final Sunday in June, the 29th, was the PNCC Solemnity of the Word of God, which features the Gospel Procession and enthronement of the Gospel to conclude the procession. It is a fitting Sunday to close out the Easter and post-Easter Solemnities, bridging that beautiful gap to the Sundays of Ordinary Time.

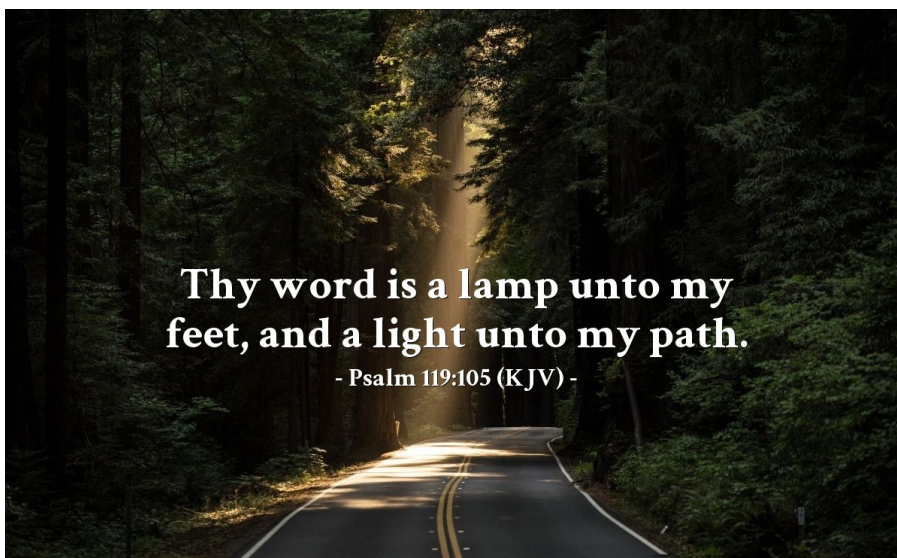
Afterward, coffee hour featured delicious cheesecake!

The Solemnity of the Word of God is celebrated in the PNCC on the Sunday following the Octave Sunday of Corpus Christi. This is a unique aspect of our Catholic denomination.

At the second Synod of the PNCC (1909), this incredible and important decision to elevate the Word of God to the status of Sacrament took place. The official title is the "Word of God, heard and preached."

This 100+ year history of the Word of God culminated in its recognition as Sacrament to be a Solemnity within the last few years. As sacrament, our Church proclaims our belief that Sacramental Theology can indeed evolve. The PNCC also therefore believes that Christ can be encountered in the hearing of the Word of God, which culminates in the preached sermon or homily of the ordained deacon, priest, or bishop.

For this reason, the PNCC never has pre-constructed messages or letters that are read in place of the Sunday homily. There will not be a financial letter read in lieu of that wonderful chance for a mystical encounter with Christ in the Holy Spirit-inspired words of the preacher.





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### 8th Annual YMSofR Bp. Stanley Bilinski Memorial Men's Spiritual Retreat

*Submitted by Father Jim Ploskonka*

The lush hills of Waymart, Pennsylvania once again welcomed men of faith from across the Polish National Catholic Church for the 8th Annual National YMS of R Bishop Bilinski Memorial Spiritual Retreat, held June 18–21, 2025. This year's theme, "For us men, and for our salvation"—invited participants to live out the creed they profess, focusing each day on a Person of the Most Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The setting of the Bp. Hodur Retreat & Recreation Center, known affectionately as Spojnia Farm, offered an ideal balance of peace, fraternity, and spiritual nourishment. With flags raised high, prayers lifted sincerely, and laughter shared freely, this retreat provided a sacred space for renewal of mind, body, and spirit.

The retreat began on Wednesday afternoon with arrivals and greetings among old friends and new faces. That evening, the retreat was formally opened with the Mass of the Holy Trinity, drawing attention to the central mystery of our faith. A hearty dinner followed, setting the tone for fellowship. The evening session and icebreakers helped ease participants into the rhythm of the retreat, culminating with the Litany of the Holy Trinity and a joyful bonfire under the stars.

Thursday, the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, centered around our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. The day commenced with breakfast and a reverent Corpus Christi Mass with exposition of the Blessed Sac-

rament. Through diocesan breakout sessions and a unified Litany of the Most Blessed Sacrament, men reflected deeply on the Real Presence of Christ.

Afternoon tournaments of darts and cornhole added a lighthearted touch, before the group journeyed to St. Adalbert's PNCC in Dickson City for a beautiful evening Corpus Christi service. There, retreatants were warmly welcomed and treated to fellowship and refreshments that extended late into the evening. Friday's focus on the Holy Spirit included quiet time before the Blessed Sacrament, Holy Mass of the Holy Spirit, and spiritual discussions meant to stir the heart. After lunch and the Angelus, attendees enjoyed well-deserved free time—with options including poolside relaxation, a historic trip to Honesdale, and even a 9-hole golf outing (or bowling, depending on the weather).

That evening's BBQ on the patio was followed by another engaging session and a Litany of the Holy Spirit, closing the day with both reflection and renewal.

Saturday morning's focus turned toward the First Person of the Trinity: God the Fa-

ther. Morning prayer and flag-raising led into a powerful session on the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds. A concluding reflection—"Something to Bring Home"—challenged men to examine their spiritual growth and commitment.

The final Holy Mass of a Spiritual Retreat gathered all reflections, prayers, and blessings into one sacred offering. The liturgy was the mountaintop experience of a four-day spiritual climb—a sending forth to live the Creed, not only in word but in deed.

As the retreat concluded, participants were invited to reflect on five key areas of spiritual impact:

1. Did you connect with yourself?  
By retreating from daily demands, each man had the opportunity to rediscover the voice of God within his own heart.
2. Did you find peace?  
Whether around a campfire, before the Blessed Sacrament, or in quiet conversation, many found moments of unexpected grace.
3. Did you build brotherhood?  
New friendships blossomed, and old ones deepened—sometimes sparked by a joke, a shared prayer, or even a simple can of soda.
4. Did you experience joy?





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### 8th Annual Men's Retreat (continued)

From light-hearted games to moments of quiet laughter, the retreat proved that joy and holiness walk hand in hand.

anchor and inspiration until we gather again next year.

5. Are you a better-equipped Catholic?  
Through engaging sessions, rich liturgy, and insightful side conversations, men left with more than just knowledge—they departed with conviction.

As one participant shared, "This might have been the most time I've ever spent in front of the Eucharist—and I'll never forget it." For another, it was "the first-time attending Mass four days in a row." For many, it was simply the rediscovery of what it means to be a man of faith, a man of the Creed.

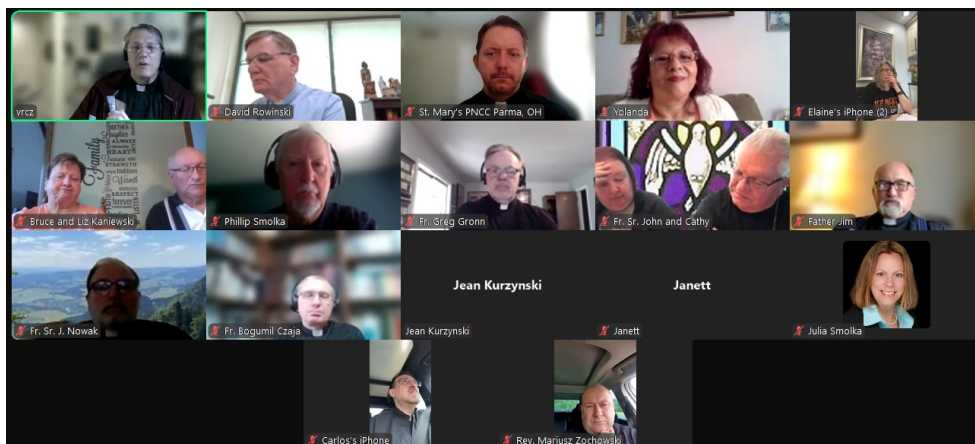
Whether pondering the mysteries of the Trinity, walking through the streets of Honesdale, or sitting quietly with hearing aids tucked away, the men who gathered at Spojnia Farm in June 2025 did more than attend a retreat—they stepped into a sacred rhythm of prayer, purpose, and community.

As they return to parishes, families, and daily routines, may the words of the Creed echo louder in all our lives. And may this retreat serve as both



### Diocesan Council Meets

The Council of the PNCC Western Diocese met for its annual meeting on Saturday, June 7 via Zoom. The council addresses all issues of the diocese and is made up of the bishop/administrator, the respective administrative seniors, an elected priest and an elected layperson from each seniorate, several at-large members and a few more. Prior to the meeting, reports were received and distributed on all facets of diocesan activity; organizations, investments, parish work, seniorate work, holy orders, education, as well as typical meeting "stuff".



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### Various Announcements

**EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER** For all of July, we use the 5<sup>th</sup> Eucharistic Prayer on p. 92.

**PARISH BIBLE STUDY** – Is there a different time of day or day of the week that you may be open to participate in a separate Bible Study from Wednesday evenings? Let Fr. Jason know! The Word of God is powerful and sacramental and I want to make sure the opportunity to study it is attainable for everyone.

**VISITATIONS** – A reminder that Fr. Jason is available to bring sacraments to anyone in need of a visit- please see him, text or email to schedule something if someone needs a visit.

**VISITORS TO ST. MARYS-** Please fill out the yellow cards found at each pew and drop in the collection basket – thank you!

**SAVE THE DATE**– The National YMSofR Golf Tournament takes place in the Buffalo, NY area Saturday, Aug 16.

**POLKA EVENT**— Discounted pre-sale tickets (\$15 from \$16) are available for purchase for the upcoming St. Mary's Polka Party on the grounds of St. Sava's on Sunday, August 10. Flyers are posted! We are hoping for a great turnout from parishioners and friends. If you are interested in trying to sell some tickets, please see Steve Fesz.

**SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING**— A parish meeting (the highest governing body of any Polish National Catholic Parish) takes place on Sunday, July 27 after 9am Holy Mass. The meeting includes an update to financial info, some capital projects being addressed, and a few other agenda items. Please make sure to strive to attend this meeting, exercising your democratic power in parish decisions that our laypeople enjoy!

**NOTE ON JULY 13TH'S LITURGY** – Although we celebrate what is sequentially the 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, the Polish National Catholic Church uses the propers (prayers for the Mass) and lectionary (scripture readings) from a separate Sunday (Ordinary 24C). This is so we do not hear the Good Samaritan Gospel twice in a few months (though it is an exceptional one to preach on!)

**YOUTH GATHERING** – Of the Western Diocese takes place July 21-24- Fr. Jason, Marzena, & Brady will attend. Pray for

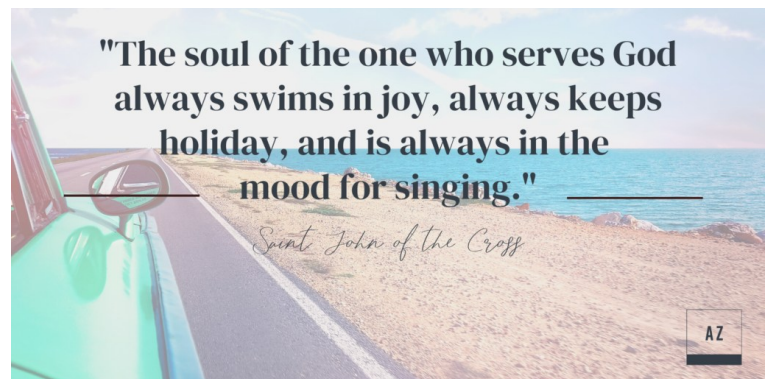
our youth!

**FAVORITE HYMN?** – Do you have a favorite hymn, be it from another church, radio, or wherever that you would like the choir to consider learning? The choir wants to know your favorites! Drop a note to our Choir Director Chris so we can try new things.

**FR. JIM**— Continues celebrating 10am Mass on Thursdays as well as leading the St. Mary's Food Ministry Team's weekly meals on Wednesday afternoons. Thank you, Fr. Jim!

**PASTOR AWAY**—Please make note that Fr. Jason will be away July 16-19 for a funeral of Very Rev. Joseph Krusienksi and July 21-24 for the Diocesan Youth Gathering in southern Indiana.

**CHOIR CONVENTION & WORKSHOP** Hosted by Holy Family PNCC in McKeesport, PA July 30-August 1. See Chris Paulus or Marzena Krulik for more info.

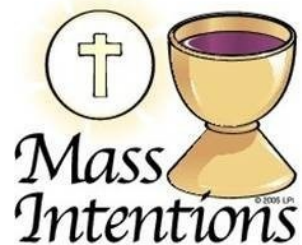


### Scheduled Mass Intentions at St. Mary's

July 6 – Linda Sosenko of. by husband Richard & family  
 July 13 — Janet Swiatkowski of. by the Karabowicz family  
 July 20 – Ed & Loretta Pietrovich of. by Elaine Ploskonka & family  
 July 27– Clarence & Margaret Sobocinski of. by Elaine Ploskonka

August 3– Honoring Chuck & Elaine Repede's 55th Wedding Ann.  
 August 10 — Linda & Jan Sobolewski of. by cousin Patty Temesi  
 August 17 – Carl Bogzevitz (113th Heavenly Birthday) of. by son Bruce Bogzevitz  
 August 24– Judith Ann Yokaitis-Skutnik of. by husband John Skutnik  
 August 31– Stanley Dobrowolski of. by daughter Pattie Dotson

Final open dates for Sunday Mass intentions for 2025 are Sep. 14, 28, Nov 2- Please contact Fr. Jason to schedule.





## July Days of Note



### July Birthdays

4th	– Jolanta Misiewicz
16th	– Chris Paulus
21st	– Father Jason
21st	– Zbigniew Starnawski
22nd	– Sara Long
24th	– Jennifer LeMassena
25th	– Martha Repede
30th	– Barbara Fesz



### July Anniversaries

14th	— John & Andrea Grmovsek
20th	— Michael & Carole D'Arcy
21st	— Jim & Elaine Ploskonka
24th	— Jim & Pam Nemec
27th	— Mike & Chris Paulus
28th	— Ramon & Carmen Torres

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

## "Jesus' Ministry"

### An Ode to Ordinary Time

He healed the lame.

He made the lunatic sane.

He let his light shine

Into our hearts and minds.

He set the captives free.

He died and rose again for you and me.

He preached throughout the Holy Land.

He came to earth in the form of a man.

He touched lost souls.

He gave sight to the blind.

He offered forgiveness to those who had committed crimes.

He did many wonders and signs.

He used parables to teach those during his time.

He fed the hungry.

He made the dumb to speak.

He made the lame to leap and walk.

He turned water into wine.

He showed us the power of The Divine.

He taught the Gospel to the poor.

He did all this and so much more.

He offered us hope and salvation.

The remission of sins for all nations

He is the true symbol of our God's divinity.

Sent from above to spread God's love

Whose main purpose is to save God's Creation

And heal the broken up nations.

## 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
Dee Mora	Shauna Smullen
Marty Bengela	Tom Putynski
Jeff Parady	Millie Dominik
Kathleen Beres	Mike Paulus
Al & 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	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	Tom Pietka
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.
Pete James	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
Matthew Penney	Diane Ellis
Josephine Ference	

WE ALSO REMEMBER

ALL ACTIVE & RETIRED CLERGY

ALL SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

Bless them, O Lord.

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*By Lakella L. Davenport, 2021*

