

St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

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

February 2021

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Food Ministry Battle Plan

Holy Mass on the Solemnity of the Epiphany was con-celebrated by Fr. Jason and Fr. Greg, with the assistance of Deacon Jim on Wednesday, January 6. Fr. Jason offered the homily as well, focusing on the fact that the Magi, though not Jewish, recognized Jesus as Savior of all. There was a nice little crowd at church and online, worshiping on this important Solemnity of Our Lord, wit-



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nessing the traditional blessing of chalk and incense.

Later in the day, there was a meeting of the Food Ministry Committee, with Deacon Jim giving a well-prepared report and potential plans for the 2021 year. This included a rotating menu, working in extra help and training new volunteers, as well as three very important blessings.

The first was a commitment to serve hot meals on a weekly basis indefinitely. This would be easier with more help, but attainable if no volunteers came forward. The second was the disclosure of a very generous donation made by Nate and Amanda Ploskonka and family- which was to cover costs of a weekly ministry on a quarterly basis for as long as the ministry remains active.

After mulling over this Food Ministry meeting and plans for a number of days, Fr. Jason was compelled to preach about the selfless nature of this ministry and our need for volunteers. "What are you looking for?" was

the question in John's Gospel that Father extended to the congregation in his homily...further explaining how selfless and humble preparing and serving food is.

Our parish has since been blessed and lifted-up by a number of volunteers who are now part of the schedule or will be once the clocks change.

Oh, that third blessing I mentioned before? The fact that besides being dedicated to preparing and serving food for 8 years now, Deacon Jim, being the statistics guy that he is, has tracked how many individuals meals have been served at each individual Food Ministry date since it's inception! After serving 84 on Wednesday, February 3, that has lead to a total amount of free meals served by our parish since inception at 9,949....and with our 2021 average of 69 served each week....that means we should break 10,000 meals served at our next meal...Thanks be to God!

With hopes for many more.

Fr. Jason



Wednesday Night
Dinner

Parish Officers Installed

On Sunday morning, January 3, 9am Holy Mass was celebrated in loving memory of Deacon Angelo Pierro, the recently-deceased father-in-law of Rev. Mark Niznik, one of our diocesan priests.

We enjoyed a nice crowd for this first Sunday of the New Year, and during our prayers of the faithful, the faithful of St. Mary's who were elected at our election-of-officers meeting on December 6 were formally installed for the 2021 parish year by our pastor, Rev. Jason Soltysiak. Our re-elected chairperson of the parish committee, Elaine Ploskonka, gave the formal presentation of those elected.

Bishop Jaroslaw Rafalko, the Bishop-Ordinary of the Western Diocese approved the election of our parish committee in a letter December 30, 2020.

Those installed on the Parish Committee were: Elain Ploskonka, Chairperson; Steve Fesz, 1st Vice-Chair; Mike Wisniewski, 2nd Vice-Chair; Patty Temesi, Secretary; Josephine Ference, Treasurer; Jo Ann Long, Fi-

nancial Secretary. Directors: Cathy Avondet, Bob Bernacki, Susan Boehnlein, Patti Dotson, Ron Ference, Greg Hodor, Rose Kronen, Nancy Roharik, John Spilka, Barb Wisniewski, George Ziefle.

Mary Ann Kasperczyk, Gail Perz, Nate Ploskonka and Natalie Soltysiak were installed as auditors. Chris Paulus and Bill Zychowski were installed to serve on parish tribunal as well as Cathy & Mark Avondet and Elaine Ploskonka as Seniorate Representatives.



**Meet our
Church
Leaders**



Final Clothes Collection Tally

St. Mary's once again participated in the National YMSofR Clothing Drive, an annual event that usually surrounds the Christmas Season. On Saturday, January 9 and Monday January 11, men of Branch #29 of the YMSofR met for a couple of hours to do a count and to collate the clothing that was donated. There were some gems in there! We were proud to have collected and donated over one thousand individual pieces of clothing.

The Mission Team had a separate annual Sock Collection, which was responsible for another 138 pairs of socks! All items were donated to the Greater Cleveland Big Brothers & Big Sisters.



Basement Revamping

Recently, a call-to-action took place at a monthly parish committee meeting and plans were presented to revamp the basement area. A committee met after 9am Mass on Sunday, January 10 and it was decided to look at the job portion-by-portion, checking in on a monthly (or so) basis.

The point of the project is to deep-clean and spruce up the basement, which includes our larger hall, larger



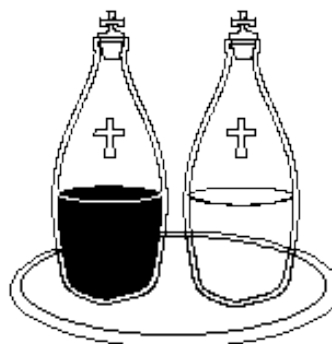
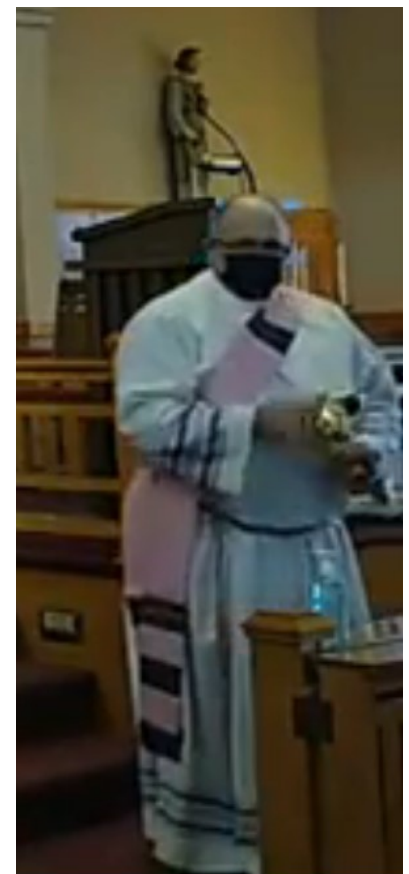
kitchen, storage areas, stage, bomb shelter, and bomb shelter wings. The goal is to have a usable area with multiple assigned storage areas with appropriate shelving in a much more efficient manner. An excellent proposal is being used as a working document and work has already begun. Our next meeting takes place Sunday, February 21. Please see Cathy Avondet or Fr. Jason with any questions.

Vestment & Cruet Blessing

On Sunday, January 24, a short blessing preceded the 9am Celebration of Holy Mass. A rose-colored deacon stole and 2 sets of wine and water cruets were blessed before being put into use at our parish.

Wine and water cruets unfortunately take somewhat of a beating and often get chipped, banged, dropped...like anything you use at home!

The rose deacon stole was a Christmas gift for Deacon Jim and is used for the 3rd Sunday of Advent, the 3 Sundays of Pre-Lent, and is an option for the 4th Sunday of Lent.



Blessing of Cruets

PNCC Spiritual Retreat

A church-wide Spiritual Retreat was proposed by the Future Directions Committee to help us get a jumpstart on our 2021 year of worship and discipleship.

A Zoom session was scheduled for 7pm on Wednesday, January 20 at 7pm. Information was posted and this event was available for all, but we took advantage of our giant screen in the Fellowship Hall and, after a bit of a technical hiccup, enjoyed the very well-done retreat together.

There were 6 total people in attendance at St. Mary's, with a number of others attending online.



1st Communion at St. Mary's

The First Holy Communion of Gracey took place at 9am Holy Mass on Sunday, January 31. As many Sunday mornings have been since the winter season...we had some weather! Gracey's family braved the 4 or so inches of snow to support Gracey on her big day.

Fr. Jason was her catechism teacher, beginning in August and running

weekly...sometimes a couple times a week, sometimes missing a week here-and-there. She proved to be a very serious and astute student, very much appreciating whenever there was a field trip in the church to prove a point Fr. Jason was trying to make in class. She is now an expert at spotting the French fries we have in church....just ask her!

God's continued blessings on our young friend as she continues to grow in love for our Lord.



Words from our Parish Chair

Random Acts of Kindness

If you look up a list of fun or wacky celebrations, some referred to as "National", you would find them celebrating anything from Make a Friend Day; last month's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity; all the way to Take Your Pants for a Walk Day; and Eat Ice Cream for Breakfast Day. Some are very meaningful and others are quite bizarre and just fun to smile about, and yes even celebrate... who wouldn't like ice cream for breakfast? Yes, I am going somewhere with this. February is the month which encourages us to carry out deeds during Random Acts of Kindness Week which is February 15-21. Who doesn't believe this world needs A LOT more kindness spread among us! The bible teaches: "By our purity, knowledge, patience, and kindness we have shown ourselves to be God's servants - by the Holy Spirit, by our true love," 2 Corinthians 6:6. I share with you now some history and information I found when searching the internet.

"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around."
– Leo Buscaglia

Sometimes it's the smallest act that makes the biggest impact, something as simple as saying please or thank you can turn a day around, and make a life seem that much better. Random Acts of Kindness Day encourages you to get out there and be the light you want to see in the world.

History of Random Acts Of Kindness Day
Random Acts Of Kindness Day was first created in Denver, Colorado in 1995, and nine years later it spread to New Zealand in 2004. Random Acts of Kindness can include just about anything, including something as simple as taking a tray of muffins to work. The idea behind this holiday is to make the world a better place by spreading a little light around. Lift someone up with your words, compli-

ment them on their appearance, all these things can help to really turn around someone who's having a bad day.

Additionally, research has shown that the very act of doing something for someone else gives us a chemical high, a higher one, in fact, than if something had been done for us. There was a wise man who once shared a concept "Do not think of those who are in need, such as panhandlers, as seeking charity. They are, instead, providing a service. A service that allows you to get your fix of feeling good while simultaneously paying someone for providing it." It may be a bit more open-minded than some people are ready for, but it certainly helps bring things into light!

How to celebrate Random Acts Of Kindness Day
Random Acts of Kindness come in all forms, large and small, and how you choose to perform yours is entirely up to you. It can start with dropping a bit of change in the cup of the homeless person along the street, or considering the time of year, providing a warm blanket to see them through. You could take a friend out to lunch, for no other reason than that they're your friend. See someone looking down? Drop a hot coffee or tea on their desk with a smile, and tell them to have a great day. Even just smiling at someone and telling them to have a good day could have a profound impact. On Random Acts of Kindness Day, help yourself by helping others, the smile on their face and yours will prove it's all worth it.

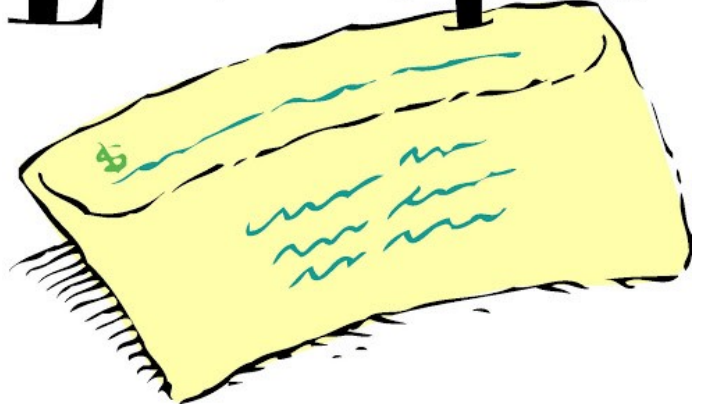
I challenge everyone during the week from February 15-21 to do one random act of kindness every single day. Why not even go a step further and make it a family challenge (get your children involved!) or challenge your co-workers. I've provided a calendar on page 7 to give some ideas of things to do or you can search the internet for more ideas and free printable calendars. Hopefully those receiving your gesture will pass it on to another and them to yet another - what a wonderful world this could be!

Notes from our Parish Chair (continued)

Offering Envelopes

With our in person attendance at Mass on Sunday's still low, there remains a number of offering envelope books that have not yet been picked up. For those of you that are unable to come to the church and would like your envelopes please contact me (216-536-3496 or elaineplosonka@gmail.com) and I will be happy to deliver them to you as possible. With the mailing cost of the books being obviously higher than a postage stamp delivery is just a way to save on expense. If there is anyone who finds the envelopes to not be a benefit, remember you are also able to provide your offerings without them as long as you are sure to include your name with the donation; we will track and allocate your money in the same fashion as if you use the offering envelope. Again please contact me, or Fr. Jason, to let us know your preference.

Offering Envelopes



To remind everyone again of the minimum annual contributions for a parishioner to remain a member in good financial standing the requirements are provided here.

1. Adult members age 18 to 74. Full time students will be exempt until age 23.

Sunday offerings	\$ 225.00 (<u>minimum</u>)
Utility Fund	125.00
Western Diocese Dues	25.00 per <u>each</u> adult (\$50.00 per couple)
PNCC General Fund Dues	100.00 per <u>each</u> adult (\$200.00 per couple)
=====	
	\$ 475.00 (\$600.00 per couple)

2. Adult members age 75 and older. Active military personnel.

(Donations to St. Mary's Parish welcome but not required.)

Western Diocese Dues	\$ 25.00 per <u>each</u> adult (\$50.00 per couple)
PNCC General Fund Dues	100.00 per <u>each</u> adult (\$200.00 per couple)
=====	
	\$ 125.00 (\$250.00 per couple)

2020 Contributions

You will be receiving your 2020 financial statements shortly. As always if you have any questions regarding your statement please talk with Jo Ann Long 440-785-0974. All donations are allocated and recorded for everyone and she is happy to look up any information you may need.

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Acts of Kindness Calendar

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Leave a nice note in a library book	Give someone an 8-Second Hug	Send someone a nice note	Donate old books	Don't complain all day long	Leave a nice note on a mirror	Give a compliment
Pick up trash in your neighborhood	Be kind to a stranger	Draw a picture for someone	Bake yummy goodies for someone	SMILE at everyone you see today	Do someone else's chores for them	water plants
Feed the birds	Write a gratitude list (20 things)	Pick up trash you see on the ground	Leave an extra tip	Bring someone flowers (or draw a picture of flowers)	Recycle	Share with another person
Donate old clothes	Help an elderly person	Walk someone's (or your own) dog	Make a list of 10 things you're thankful for	Tell someone the reasons you like them	Hold the door for someone	Donate to a local animal shelter
Offer water to those in need.	Help make dinner	Make a bird feeder	Donate old toys	Make someone laugh	Write positive messages on the sidewalk	write a thank you note

Various Announcements

MELT! – Thanks to all who participated in our Melt Fundraiser earlier this month. It was the first of our 5 planned restaurant fundraisers of 2021. The parish will be receiving a check for about \$150 as a result of this fundraiser – neat! We received a nice email from them on how nice it was to give servers extra 8 hour shifts and gratitude for our heavy tipping. If you didn't support this, you missed out!

ONLINE SPIRITUAL RETREAT – Thank you to any and all who attended the recent PNCC online Spiritual Retreat, “We Will Trust in You.” There were 6 total people in attendance at St. Mary's, with a number of others attending online.

EPIPHANY VISITS – Are unfortunately postponed for 2021. The current plan is to look at the latter part of the summer for some home blessings, should anyone desire one.

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING – As discussed at our recent Parish Committee (Board) meeting, we have decided to postpone

the Annual Meeting from January to Sunday, February 28. We are waiting for a few things to flesh out at other parishes to give us a guide of what they are doing and how we should proceed. Since parish-wide meetings are the highest governing body in our parish, we need to make sure that as many people attend as possible.

REPORTS DUE – As our Annual meeting has been recalled, we are asking for reports from the heads of each parish society to be emailed to our parish committee chair, Elaine, or to Fr. Jason. We would like to have them by Sunday, February 7 – this way, they can be distributed and read before our Annual meeting, rather than at it.

PRE-LENT – Pre-Lent is an ancient 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 were traditionally removed from the sanctuary, as were the Gloria and the Alleluia verse. Thematically, it really is in between the “green” of Jesus's ministry and

the “violet” of penance and the buildup of the case against Christ that is the Lenten Season. The rose-colored vestments show that thematic bridge in tone and in devotion.

THROAT BLESSING – Takes place today, optionally, after the conclusion of Holy Mass. Candles were blessed to honor the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas on February 2nd and throats may be blessed in honor of St. Blaise as a protection against ailments of the throat. His Day was honored on February 3rd and our parish tradition is to bless throats the Sunday after.

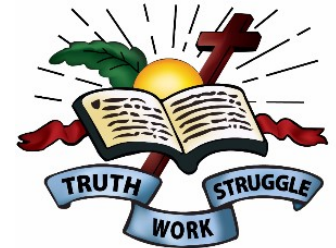
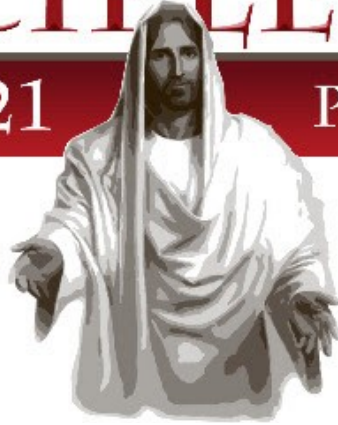
PACZKI ORDERS – Though we have to adjust some of our fundraising for the 2021 year, we will be having our Fat Tuesday Paczki sale taking place. Order forms are available at the table in the vestibule of the Fellowship Hall or by seeing Steve Fesz. 8 flavors are available, and pickup will be Fat Tuesday, February 16 from 7-11am. To encourage some foot traffic, we will offer a free to-go cup of coffee with every order! Avoid the lines! Prices this year are \$2 for a single, \$8 for a half-dozen and \$15 for a dozen.

PNCC Future Directions Update

DISCIPLESHIP

2021

PNCC



February 2021 – Jeremiah

As this year of our Lord 2021 moves swiftly along this month we focus on the Prophet Jeremiah and we thank Karen Sobiechowski for offering this uplifting reflection.

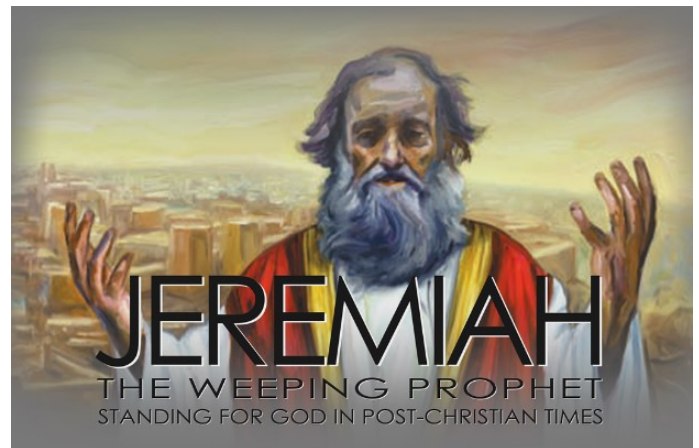
[Click Here to watch a short video message on Jeremiah by Karen Sobiechowski](#) (or visit PNCC Future Direction on Youtube)

Scriptures for Reflection

Jeremiah 1:1-10; 12:1-6; 20:7-18

Reflection & Action Item:

Perhaps more than any of the other Old Testament prophets, Jeremiah's story reveals both the inner struggles and external persecutions that come with being a faithful instrument of God's will. Yet, his journey only foreshadows the reality of the Cross as embraced by our Lord Jesus for our salvation and given to us as the daily means of our own discipleship (Luke 9:23).



We can all feel like Jeremiah sometimes, but as members of the Church, we are called to help one another remain faithful when times are difficult. Sometime this month, prayerfully review the ***Spiritual Works of Mercy*** and find 2 ways that you can apply them to help lighten the load carried by a fellow disciple of Jesus.

Spiritual Works of Mercy

- 1- Instruct the Ignorant (Matthew 16:15)
- 2- Counsel the Doubtful (John 14:27)
- 3- Admonish the Sinner (Luke 15:7)
- 4- Bear Wrongs Patiently (Luke 6:27-28)
- 5- Forgive Offences Willingly (Matthew 6:12)
- 6- Comfort the Afflicted (Matthew 11:28)
- 7- Pray for the Living and the Dead (John 17:24)

Song Recommendation: "God So Loved" by We The Kingdom - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PK9pljv_s-A

New Church Event Scheduled

We thank all who joined us for our National Church Discipleship Retreat "We Will Trust in You" on Wednesday January 20th. Due to the significant feedback and requests our Future Direction committee will be hold a PNCC wide virtual Lenten Retreat on Tuesday March 23rd beginning at 7 pm (EST). Save the day and time. More information will be forthcoming on this virtual gathering.

Prayer in time of National Anxiety

Let us pray...I come to You, Lord, in this time of uncertainty and confusion that has gripped our nation and our world. I pray that our leaders and representatives in government are filled with Your peace, strength and courage. May your gifts of wisdom and understanding, fortitude and counsel be sought and utilized by them for the well-being

of our country and all people. By their belief and trust in You may they provide capable leadership, promote unity and peace, and be attentive to the concerns of all people. May Your Church provide support and comfort; and help strengthen our hope for peace through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

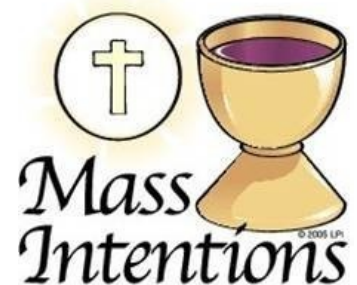
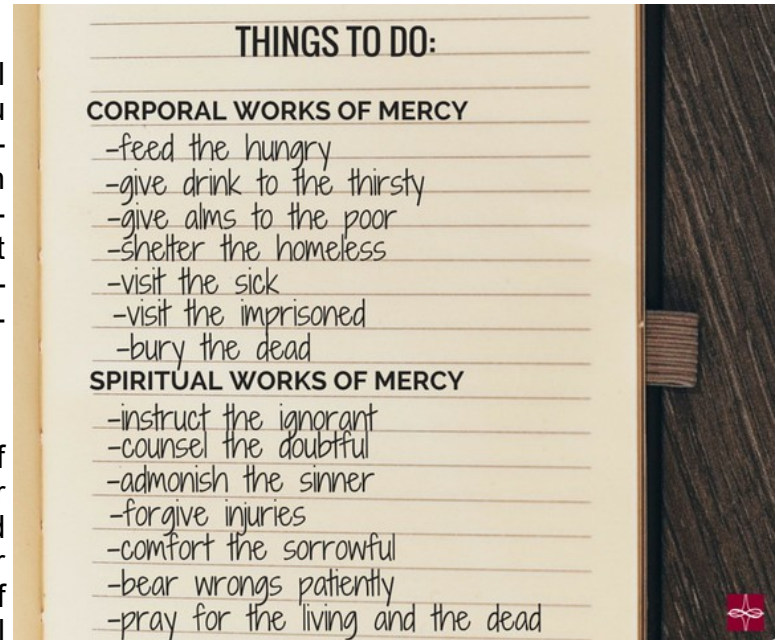
PNCC Future Direction is on Facebook! Like us and follow our updates on Facebook too. If you know of parishioners or friends who are not a part of our monthly email updates – please have them email us at FutureDirection@pncc.org to become a part of this important effort for our Holy Church.

Wishing you and your family a Blessed Pre-Lenten (Septuagesima) season. May God bless you; may our Lord calm this storm and may our Blessed Mother intercede for us. Have a blessed day and be safe, careful, healthy and faithful as disciples!

PNCC Supreme Council Future Direction Committee

Scheduled Mass Intentions at St. Mary's

- February 7– Sophie & Martin Szpilka of. by son John
- February 14– Frank Ference Sr. & Frank Ference Jr. of. by Josephine Ference
- February 21– Jan Sobolewski of. by cousin Patty Temesi
- February 28– Walter Stepanik of. by son Gene
- March 7 – John Paul Repko of. by daughter Cheryl Repko
- March 14– Joan Spilka of. by husband John Spilka
- March 21– *Open Intention*
- March 28– Hanna Pryer of. by husband Len & family



February Days of Note



February Birthdays

- 2nd – Mrs. Andrea Grmovsek
- 3rd – Carole D’Arcy
- 4th – Paul Wankowski
- 5th – George Bennett
- 7th – Louise Cygan
- 7th – Claire Hunek
- 8th – Pollyanna Gajda
- 11th – Teresa Kasperczyk
- 13th – Matthew Moritz
- 16th – Owen Arnold
- 18th – Karen Bedocs
- 18th – Maximilian Ploskonka
- 19th – Richard Sosenko
- 22nd – Amy Dreger
- 23rd – Joyce Knapp
- 25th – Fr. Greg Gronn
- 26th – Walker Ploskonka
- 28th – Helen Budney
- 28th – Tom Putynski

February Anniversaries

None—someone schedule a February wedding for us!



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Subscribe to our
YouTube Channel

"God's Valentine Gift"

God’s Valentine gift of like to us
Was not a bunch of flowers;
It had not been candy, or a book
To while away the hours.
His gift was to become a man,
So He could freely give
His sacrificial love for us,
So you and I could live.
He gave us sweet salvation, and
Instruction, good and true—
To love our friends and enemies
And love our Savior, too.
In order we give our Valentines,
Let’s thank our Lord and King;
The reason we have love to give
Is the fact that He gave everything.

Anonymous



Our Prayer List

Praying for St. Mary’s Parishioners & Friends

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Bill & Pat Glatzer | Barbara Baranowski |
| Bill Kastak | Anna Dawidziuk |
| Craig Atherton | John Spilka |
| Johanna Markiewicz | Mary Ann Loschelder |
| Ralph & June Zaun | Len Pryer |
| Marty Bengela | Tom Putynski |
| Polly Gajda | Millie Dominik |
| Kathleen Beres | Louise Cygan |
| David Micka | Carol Hreha |
| Chester & Ann Warzala | Tom Petrie |
| Amy Dreger | Patti Dotson |
| Elizabeth Starnawski | Jack Spilka |
| Elaine Repede | John Radon |
| Wanda Clark | Beth Chihill |
| Michael Cosevin | Helen Cummings |
| Laina Dachtal | Wendy Andrzejewski |
| Jay Grabowsky | Pam Chesar |
| Cecelia Hall | Caroline Kunes |
| Linda Marks | Thomas Lill |
| John & Anne Nemetz | Rhonda Smith |
| Emma Freshwater | Carol Boesch |
| Joanie True | Daniel Rinella |
| Fr. Tom Sheha | Tom Slomka |
| Gerl S. | Ben Soltis |
| Pam Tropiano | Lin da Vect |
| Dennis and Sue Vect | Marcus Vaughn, Jr. |
| Bryson Dzuroff | Fr. Sr. Joseph Soltysiak |
| Kelly B | Jane Hunter |
| Dennis Thome | The Finnie Family |
| Carlene Fliss | Jim Fliss Jr. |
| John Michalczyk | Cathy Pieciak |
| Nan Cramer | Bp. John Mack- |
| David Vaden | Bp. John Swantek |
| Mary Cawley | Richard & Edna Samelson |
| Jim Giles | Tammy Teubl |
| Wanda Heffner | Loretta Baldwin |
| Donna Kidd | Paulette Lilli |
| Anthony Grad | Azriel G. |
| Marilyn Girard | Courtney Austin |
| Stephanie Milla | Shannon Alberino |
| Jayden Pieciak | Baby Layla |
| Jeremy Steinbrick | Katie Stallbaum |
| Marcia Klein | Kim Penney |
| George & Linda Makovicka | Julie L. |
| Barbara B. | Patrick Kmitt |
| Michael McGivern | Daniel Morgan |
| Barb & Jim Lukas | Renee Lukas |
| Mike Matis | Leslie Rafalko |
| Ronald Tiffe | Mike Pescitelli |
| Ralph Crispino | Karen Colwell |

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