

News for the Pews

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St. Mary's parish is looking to jump start numerous activities previously halted by the overarching response to the Covid-19 pandemic. That's not to say events haven't progressed. For example, attendance at weekend masses has been slowly creeping upward despite Bishop Taylor's ongoing suspension of the rule demanding weekly mass attendance. I spent much of late spring and summer regularly watering the young trees planted in the first quarter. Unfortunately, it looks as if we have lost three small trees and may be losing a somewhat larger ginkgo tree. Deacon Brian and I were able to do a pretty good job of straitening and reinstalling the shed gutter damaged in the May 2019 windstorm. One very good bit of news concerning these activities is that I avoided damaging myself and the parish property. The parish also had Bo Holder and his crew replace the roofs on the Rectory and Sisters' House, while Miller Roofing replaced the roof on the Lawrence Hall/School building. No leaks!

The parish societies have met intermittently this summer and now seem set to meet more regularly this fall. The Knights of Columbus have been meeting since June, while the Daughters of Mary met again in late August. The quilters are faithfully working each Tuesday morning. Unless something comes up, the St. Joseph Society will hold an important meeting open to all parishioners on September 20. In particular, we will discuss preparations for the Thanksgiving Celebration later this year. The Parish Council voted to hold the Celebration in a limited format again this year. At this point, the plan is to sell Thanksgiving dinner take-out and delivery orders only, with the quilt auction being held online. The raffles will go ahead normally, with the drawing of the prizes likely being broadcast online somehow. We will very likely need a lot of technical help in getting these things done, so please volunteer your knowledge and

expertise. As one would expect, donations to the parish have suffered along with mass attendance in recent months, so a healthy return for our one big fundraiser would help greatly.

So...., do you know where this wooden column is located in the church? See the second-last paragraph to check your answer.



Several St Mary's events and activities have had to be canceled or postponed this year.

The John and Sophie Post family reunion was pushed back to the July 4 weekend next year. The late-summer Trivia Night, as well as the Halloween Party have been canceled.

However, the parish is pushing forward on the religious education front. Newly appointed DRE Debra Lynn Post is, as usual, doing a great job in organizing the CCD program for the parish youth. We are also ramping up our adult education and faith-building programs. Bible study leaders held another 5-week session of the “33 Days to Morning Glory” program ending on the Feast of the Assumption. Another group finished the study of the Gospel of Matthew begun last winter.

This morning (9/5) marked the beginning of a “Five First Saturdays” devotion in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This entails attending Mass, saying the rosary, going to confession and meditating upon the mysteries of the rosary. We had a very nice service this morning. This devotional exercise was requested by Our Lady of Fatima. She attached great promises to this devotion, including the Triumph of her Immaculate Heart and peace in the world, as well as the graces needed for the salvation for each person who makes the Five First Saturdays at least once in their lifetime. I can foresee the parish holding this devotion the first Saturday of every month. Attendance this morning was rather impressive. Please join us in the future.

We plan to start a 10-week program “Consoling the Heart of Jesus” beginning the week of September 13. This is another way to increase our knowledge and faith, with the ultimate aim, of course, being to bring us closer to God. Contact Bob Conrad or Diane Gray for more information. RCIA classes for 2020-21 are also set to begin soon. Noel and Lauri Sagullo have graciously agreed to teach the class this year. Be sure to thank them for this service and do so quickly if you or someone you know is interested in attending those classes.

Having the Sagullos take over RCIA has freed up some time for Deacon Brian, so he has volunteered to teach a weekly adult class on the Catholic religion after 9:00 mass on Sundays, if the demand is there. Please let him know if you're interested. We hope that parents of children attending CCD classes will prayerfully consider furthering their knowledge of their faith. After all, if your children don't see you as being committed to the Church, how committed will they be as they mature?

I would encourage all to resume regular attendance at weekend Masses. The following anecdote illustrates the reason for doing so. While I was living in St. Louis, I had gotten out of the habit of Mass attendance, but, as was customary, I went to confession at a St. Louis-area church just before Christmas. I talked about my usual sins and confessed that I hadn't been going to Mass. Then, I said something like, “...and even worse...” when the priest interrupted, saying the lack of Mass attendance, which essentially violated the first and third commandments, was my worst sin. He chewed me out pretty good. Ultimately, if we love God, we'll attend Mass regularly despite the Bishop's leniency.

So, did you identify the 'column' on page 1? The item on the left hand side kind of gives it away. It's on the Southwest corner of the high altar. Note particularly the numerous church-related symbols in the metal strips on both sides of the corner. As pointed previously, St. Mary's church is replete with symbols with significant meaning to the Catholic faith.

I close with a note that we've lost several fine men of the parish in recent months. Those include Art Timmerman, Charlie Holloway, Leo Anhalt and Richard Leding (my deepest apologies if I have forgotten anyone). Please keep them, as well as those parishioners who are sick and suffering, in your thoughts and prayers.

Daniel “Dan'l Boone” Vaught