



CHURCH OF

Saint Mary

Meet Longtime Parishioner Mel Roehrl:

A Life of Faith, Service and Teamwork

If you have lived in the Melrose area or attended St. Mary's for any length of time, you've almost certainly met Mel Roehrl. And, if you haven't, you will soon. Mel has been in town since he was about 4 years old. At 95, he's been in the area for a while. Never one to simply watch things unfold

from the sidelines, Mel spent years serving as the chairman of the Parish Council and was a member of the Repairs, Grounds, and Building Committee for over 20 years. He also served as an usher and helped start the Cemetery Committee. But these are only just some of the ways he's been involved at St. Mary's over the years.

More recently, Mel has stepped back from these committees and ministries, but he still regularly attends Mass and receives the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Mel's wife, Ann, passed away in May 2020, after more than 72 years of marriage.

"For all the things I have seen, from dirt roads and no sidewalks to TV and electric lights, there's been so much change in the world in these 90-plus years," Mel says.

Mel's father immigrated to the United States from Germany at the age of 17, and he recalls that his parents were devout Catholics.

"I saw the reverence they put into their faith," Mel says. "Their reverence is why it is embedded in me."

Through all these years of involvement at the parish, Mel has gotten to know every pastor. He credits every parishioner he has served with along the way for all their hard work. All the work in which Mel has been involved would not have been possible without a team, he says.

"I knew we needed a good team of people for the



Mel Roehrl

Church of Saint Mary
755 Kraft Drive SE
Melrose, MN 56352

MASS TIMES:

Saturday: 5:00 p.m. (English)

Sunday: 10:00 a.m. (English) & 12:30 p.m. (Spanish)

DAILY MASS:

Monday: 6:30 p.m.

Friday: 8:30 a.m.

VER AL DORSO
PARA ESPAÑOL



(320) 256-4207

www.oneinfaith.org/stmarys

continued on page 6

STEWARDSHIP: *The Four Pillars*

You've heard about the three Ts of stewardship, but what about the four Ps?

The three Ts – Time, Talent, and Treasure – describe the personal gifts we offer to the Church. The four Ps are the Four Pillars of Parish Stewardship described by the renowned pastor Msgr. Thomas McGread. They are the hallmark of a stewardship parish – Hospitality, Prayer, Formation, and Service. Let's take a look at each of them to understand how we can improve in each area.

Hospitality

Christian Kindness

"When I was a stranger, you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35). The Gospel teaches that whenever we welcome the least of our brothers or sisters, we welcome Christ Himself. That is why the first mark of a stewardship parish is hospitality. Being friendly is one of the first ways we can be Christ-like toward others.

Modern Catholic parishes are often so large and have so many Masses that many parishioners don't know one another. To create a sense of community, be sure to smile and greet others as you enter and exit the Church. Let's try harder than ever to be a welcoming community.

Prayer

Heart-to-Heart with God

"Do not become so involved in the work of the Lord that you forget the Lord of the work," a seminary professor once taught. In other words, don't get so caught up with parish projects and outreach efforts that you forget to draw aside to spend time with God in prayer. Every great saint has taught that prayer is the most essential component in the life of the Christian. Through prayer, we nurture our most important relationship – the one that will last for all eternity.

A healthy prayer life should include communal prayer such as Mass, as well as personal prayer and family prayer. The two biggest obstacles to prayer are lack of time and lack of understanding of how to pray. We have to schedule time for prayer just as we would for an important appointment. And we have to learn how to pray from other people. Many saints have written spiritual books that describe different methods of prayer.

Formation

Continuous Conversion

Pope John Paul II always emphasized ongoing conversion. From childhood through adulthood, our whole life must be a process of drawing closer to God. He never stops calling us forward to learn more and to examine ourselves more deeply.

Very often our society values material things more than interior virtues. But as personal experience shows, when we finally acquire the car or house or "toy" that we wanted so badly, it doesn't really satisfy. On the other hand, we don't tend to desire spiritual virtues with the same kind of longing, but when we actually have them, we find them far more rewarding than material things.

Service

Love in Action

"Amen I say to you, whatever you did to the least of my brothers, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40). This Scripture was one of St. Teresa of Calcutta's favorites. Each time she picked up a poor and hungry child, she knew she was ministering to Christ. While we may not view ourselves as saints, we too are called to such heroic service right within our own community. As St. Teresa of Calcutta said, "To be a saint is not the privilege of a few, but the duty of everyone."

We have many service opportunities right here within our own parish. If you have the willingness to serve and take the initiative to find where you are needed, you'll find that there is no end to the families and individuals who truly need help. How can you reach out to them in love?

A Letter From Our Pastor

Start 2022 with a Clean Spiritual Slate

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We were all taught in school that the month of January gets its name from Janus, the ancient Roman god of doors and gates. His image was always carved or painted with two faces, one looking forward and the other backward. This reflected, of course, that you can go either out a door or in through one. From this very specific function, his role was generalized to include all beginnings and new endeavors.

Because of Janus' place in the Roman pantheon, it seemed natural to the Romans to name the first month of the civil year after him. (The Church year began back with the First Sunday of Advent, you'll remember.) And although we no longer worship the pagan gods of the ancient Romans, the name has stuck down the centuries.

But we're not immune to the human instinct that moved the Romans to name the first month after Janus. His double countenance, facing forward and backward, reflects how we approach the coming of each new year.

The last week of the old year finds the newspapers and TV programs giving a glance back at the past year ("the 10 best, or worst, movies of..." and such) along with predictions of what the new year will bring. My personal favorite is always "the 10 worst predictions" for the year just ending.

Just like the secular world does – Janus-like – we both look back at our own successes and failures, happy events, and sad ones, during the year just ending, and forward to the new year as we prepare our resolutions.

When we reflect back on the blessings we've received, our hearts should be filled with gratitude – and blessings there have been, no matter how difficult the year has been. But for most of us, there have been failures and failings, too. That calls for repentance, and perhaps a trip to the confessional – but God, who makes "all things new" (Rv 21:5), will then give us a clean spiritual slate with which we may begin the new year.



I'd also like to challenge you to include your grateful response to God as you make your resolutions for the new year. You don't have to wait until you fill out a commitment card to decide this is the year when you're actually going to attend Mass once a week in addition to Sunday (or begin worshipping every Sunday if you haven't been doing so) or to pray the Rosary every week or to begin regular prayers with your family. Include in your resolutions how you are going to get involved in some ministry in the

parish or some service to the community, and then do so. Decide to become more faithful in your financial stewardship if your treasure commitment is less than it should be. Look forward to the new year and bring Christ and His Church to the center of your resolutions. Then see what a good year it will be, with God at the center!

Have a happy, and holy, New Year.

In Christ,

Fr. Marvin Enneking
Pastor



Understanding the Role of Sacramentals in Our Faith

Most Catholics are familiar with the idea of sacraments in the Church, of which there are seven. Sacraments are the foundation of the spiritual life for an individual and the Church. Sacraments are sources of grace – God’s very presence in our lives and unmerited favor from God. They are signs of God’s love, and these signs make present what they signify. Although a person benefits – receives the gift of grace – from the sacraments regardless of whether he or she is well disposed to them, one must cooperate with what the Spirit is doing in the sacrament to receive its full benefit.

Sacramentals are different. These are also sacred signs that can build holiness, but they do not work on their own. One must be aware and fully conscious of the sacred action. Sacramentals sanctify us to get the most benefit from the Sacraments (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1667). Sacramentals are given to us to make holy certain actions in life and life’s circumstances. There are many such sacred signs that are reminders to us of God.

The sign of the cross is perhaps one of the most fundamental of these signs, and for Catholics, this invocation is done at the start of every sacred action and prayer. Holy water is a sacramental, as it reminds us of our Baptism. By dipping our fingers into holy water and making the sign of the cross, we are combining two foundational symbols of the Christian life and the Paschal Mystery – the passion, dying and rising of Christ – and bringing them to life in us.

The exchange of peace in the Mass – and at other Catholic rites – is another example of a sacramental. By making some kind of meaningful sign of peace, we are giving the peace of Christ to another person. The chalice and other sacred vessels at Mass also are sacramentals, as they remind us of what they are to contain – the very Body and Blood of Christ.

It might be helpful to organize the types of sacramentals into categories, as author Michael Penock lists in *This Is Our Faith: A Catholic Catechism for Adults*:

“Actions (blessings; genuflections; the sign of the cross; bowing one’s head at the name of Jesus; church processions); Objects (candles; holy water; statues and icons; holy pictures; blessed ashes;



palms; rosaries; relics; incense; vestments; scapulars; church buildings; crosses; religious medals); Places (the Holy Land; Rome; Fatima; Lourdes; the National Shrine in Washington, D.C.; and other places of pilgrimage; chapels, retreat centers, and even Catholic cemeteries); Prayers (short prayers we say throughout the day; grace before and after meals; prayers at rising and going to bed; praying the rosary, praying a host of other traditional Catholic prayers and devotions); Sacred Time (liturgy; holy days; feasts of saints; your saint’s name day; special days of prayer; fasting and abstinence; retreats, etc.)” (*This Is Our Faith: A Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 176-177).

“Sacramentals...prepare us to receive grace and dispose us to cooperate with it” (CCC 1670). In a word, sacramentals, through the prayer of the Church, bring us to holiness in Christ. All devotions of piety, including sacramentals, should point us toward the liturgy of the Church, a connection to a local parish community, and to the Eucharist (CCC 1675).

The Church, through Christ’s passion, death and resurrection, has given us these sacred signs to lead us in holiness, and to better recognize an authentic Christian life. How many sacramentals can you recognize in your life? Probably more than you think.



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK:

Joyously Celebrating the Gifts of Catholic Education

Catholic education is something to be celebrated, especially after the interruptions of the past year due to the pandemic. Teachers, faculty, and students will use Jan. 28 to Feb. 5 as a chance to celebrate St. Mary's Catholic School for national Catholic Schools Week. Principal Autumn Nelson looks forward to the week each year.

"We have much to be grateful for at St. Mary's Catholic School," she says. "We have a wonderful, caring staff. We have the support of the parents in creating an outstanding partnership for our students. And finally, we have incredible students, who challenge themselves every day to learn and live out their faith."

The week kicks off on Friday, Jan. 28 with Family Fun Night. There will be food, games, and fellowship in the school gym. During the day, the students will go rollerblading at Skatin' Place in St. Cloud.

As part of Catholic Schools Week, students will participate in various ministries at Sunday Mass, and breakfast will follow.

During that week, students will enjoy some outdoor fun where the younger kids will go sledding and the older students head to Andes Tower Hills for skiing. The jam-packed week of fun will also include an afternoon with mini-classes – everything from art projects to hobbies and skills – taught by parents and community members. Students will also have an opportunity to learn about some of the many ministries at St. Mary's Church. Each day of the week has a dress-up theme, as well.

The main goal of Catholic Schools Week is to celebrate the importance of Catholic education to the church, community, country, and world.

"Catholic schools nurture prayer, safety, welcomeness, and they are a supportive place

continued on page 6



Students acted out the Gospel at a 2021 CSW Mass.



Students enjoy working on a project together.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK *continued from page 5*

to be," Mrs. Nelson says. "This is a time to say we are here and important."

Mrs. Nelson especially loves that Catholic Schools Week is a time to step away from the ordinary and celebrate the wonderful community at St. Mary's.

"It's an exciting time for me to build relationships with students," she says. "Family Fun Night and skiing are great opportunities for that."

One of the most wonderful aspects of Catholic Schools Weeks is that everyone gets to have fun and be together.

"We haven't been able to be together as much, due to the pandemic," Mrs. Nelson says. "It's going to be a fun time to build relationships."

Mrs. Nelson is thankful for the family atmosphere at St. Mary's. She's also thankful for all the parents who give their time, talent, and treasure to make the school extraordinary.

"The parents are the ones that drive the school and promote it," Mrs. Nelson says. "Through their involvement, you get to see how much they really care. They put in so much of their own time.

"St. Mary's Catholic School is a very special place to be," she adds.



Students did door decorating in 2021.

Be sure to follow St. Mary's Catholic School on Facebook at www.facebook.com/smsmelrosemn or learn more about our school at www.smsmelrosemn.org.

Meet Longtime Parishioner Mel Roehrl *continued from front cover*

committees, who were interested in helping," Mel says. "These guys were really great. Without a team like that, you don't get anyplace."

Mel has committed his life to jumping in when he sees a need, whether that be serving as Melrose Fire Chief or on Pheasants Forever and the Sportsman's Club. Mel also served many years with the American Legion and VFW. You can pretty much bet if Melrose has or had the club, Mel has been a member at some point!

"I believe you lead by action," he says. "I do things from the goodness of my heart. I don't have to have a pat on the back."

Mel is thankful for all the years at St. Mary's, and he is also grateful to be enjoying the new church. He loves seeing the stained glass windows and beams in the crucifix, incorporated from the old church. He knows that 50 years down the road, people will be there to step up

when repairs are needed, and that makes him proud.

"If you hang around with good people, good things will happen to you," Mel says. "Life is about working together. You have to be on a team and work together. You have to work with those around you. You can't do it alone."

One of Mel's secrets to longevity is to keep his mind sharp and stay busy. After 59 years, Mel still helps out with accounting at the Melrose Veterinary Clinic. He enjoys hunting and fishing in his free time and loves to garden. However, family is the most important to Mel. He believes we should all lend our gifts at the parish. We all have talents that we can use to glorify the Lord.

"You can think of stewardship as more than just money," Mel says. "It's like the Holy Trinity — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You have to have all three — time, talent, and treasure."