



CHURCH OF

# Saint Mary

## Meet the Hellermann Family

*Engaged in Active Discipleship by Living Stewardship*

Candice and Jason Hellermann are sometimes asked in a good-natured way if they “live” at St. Mary’s. While they don’t physically live at the parish, the Hellermann family has experienced a whole new sense of belonging through living stewardship.

“Helping with church ministries has given new light to our family and given us a place in the church community,” Jason says. “The children have learned great patience in the ministries and how to work with others. It has created that feeling of a church family.”

Jason is a lifelong member of St. Mary’s as he grew up in Melrose, and Candice joined the parish when they were married in 2006.

“At that time, we loved the old historic church, and we knew that we were going to live in Melrose and raise our children here,” Candice says. “All three of our children – Gretta, Westin, and Quintin – have received their sacraments at the parish.”

The Hellermanns became involved in church ministries when the new church was built and opened in 2020. They recommend serving as greeters or ushers if parishioners and families are looking for small ways to share their stewardship gifts.

“I would say these are low-key ministries, but they mean a lot to the functioning of the church,” Jason says. “All of the kids also help greet when Candice and I are



*The Hellermann family – (from left) Quintin, Jason, Gretta, Candice, and Westin*

greeters and clean when it is our team’s turn to clean the church.”

Jason and Gretta became involved with technology at the new church right away. The Technology Team works together at every Mass to set up livestreams, manage sound, and share information on the large screens. For Jason and Gretta, working on this team gives them a meaningful opportunity to live stewardship together.

“Gretta was really fast with the technology and has taught me so much,” Jason says. “You have to communicate with each other, listen carefully, and be flexible. You allow the Mass to run smoothly so that the church community has a good experience.”

Over the past two years, the Hellermanns have

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## THE TRAITS OF THE *Christian Steward*

**E**ach day, we strive to live stewardship in our lives, recognizing our roles as “God’s co-workers” in His creative, redemptive and sanctifying work. But in our quest to live as disciples of Christ, many obstacles often arise.

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One of the most prevalent roadblocks in living stewardship is understanding the traits that make up a good Christian steward. Surely, it would be much more convenient if we had some sort of “stewardship list” that could outline the necessary steps to becoming a good steward. Unfortunately, it more often feels like living stewardship is a lifelong journey that we will never fully comprehend.

Fortunately, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ pastoral letter on stewardship, *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, gives some insight into the characteristics that make up a good Christian steward.

The Christian steward should display some of the following traits:

**Insight** – Before the disciples could live what we know as the stewardship way of life, they needed a flash of insight, or a certain way of viewing the world and their relationship to it in a fresh light. This “divine grandeur,” more than anything else, is often what sets people on the path to Christian stewardship (*Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, 39).

**Conscientiousness** – Stewards are fully conscious of their accountability in sharing of their time, talent, and treasure. As caretakers of the gifts that God has given them, they have the opportunity and responsibility to use them to their fullest potential to spread God’s Kingdom on Earth (40).

**Generosity** – Christian stewards are generous out of love as well as duty. They should display a desire to share with and care for others based on the sacramental graces they have received. And they are also cognizant of the many warnings that the New Testament presents to those who fail in charity and authentic love (40).

**Joy** – Christian stewards are often presented with difficult obstacles, but they should remain joyful in the face of challenges to their lives of stewardship. Like Paul, the good steward is able to say, “I am filled with encouragement, I am overflowing with joy all the more because of all our affliction” (2 Cor. 7:4). Only by serving with a joyful spirit will stewards fully reap the rewards of their service, both in this life and the next.

Indeed, living as a Christian steward is a lifelong journey with many ups and downs along the way. But if we strive to consciously incorporate each of these characteristics into our giving of time, talent, and treasure, we will find that the responsibilities of a good Christian steward will become much clearer with each experience of service.

## “Coincidental” Stewardship

The famous author G.K. Chesterton once said, “Coincidences are God’s way of staying anonymous.” Since my own conversion to the stewardship way of life, such coincidences have become cherished experiences for which I thank God. After all, while God remains anonymous, coincidences are His unique way of interacting with the world He created.

I think back to an article I once read about a seminarian who recalled Chesterton’s quote at his ordination to the episcopacy. Since then, I also have relied on the wisdom of that statement. When it comes to the stewardship way of life, that statement couldn’t be truer.

As I continue to witness the grace-filled effects of the stewardship way of life on others at our parish, as well as on my own life, it is definitely God’s hand at work in our lives of faith. If some identify a coincidence as a “surprise blessing” that lifts the spirits and draws one closer to God, we cannot deny that, in those circumstances, God is giving us the grace to live and celebrate our faith. So, let’s celebrate the coincidences!

Is it probably no coincidence that although this famous author converted to Catholicism late in life, he had written book after book affirming and defending the Catholic Faith long before his conversion. Five years after Chesterton joined the Church, he wrote a phenomenal book called *The Catholic Church and Conversion*. It is one of the best works on conversion to Catholicism out there. It is also a wonderful description of conversion to the stewardship way of life — the same experiences or “coincidences,” apply when we find ourselves curious and then drawn into the understanding and practice of discipleship, known to us as “stewardship.”

Chesterton describes conversion in three steps.

“The convert takes his first step rather unwittingly when he decides he’s going to be fair to the Catholic



Church,” he wrote. “He does not think the Roman religion is true, but for the first time, he also doesn’t think that the accusations against the Church are true.” The convert to stewardship must also dispel the “myths of stewardship” and give it a chance.

The first step of conversion to Catholicism then leads to a long and enjoyable second step, which is the utter fascination of learning what the Catholic Church really does teach. Chesterton says, “It is like discovering a new continent full of strange flowers and fantastic

animals, which is at once wild and hospitable.” For the stewardship convert, it is recognizing that stewardship is a practical way of living the Gospel. It makes sense, and others are doing it with joy and passion. What they have, the convert also wants.

Finally, the third step for the convert to Catholicism is when the individual suddenly realizes that he or she can no longer be detached and impartial about the Catholic Church. The new convert then goes all in. The convert to the stewardship way of life realizes this is the way he or she wants to live and makes a conscious decision and commitment to do so.

If this were not true of what Christ has called us to be, I would not be writing this today. If this were not true of our commitment to stewardship, you may not be reading this today. And, if this were not true of a stewardship parish such as St. Mary’s, we would not be the faithful stewards we are today.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr. Marvin Enneking". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr. Marvin Enneking  
Pastor



# St. Mary's School

## *Ensuring the Good Stewardship*



2022-2023 School Board

(From left) Cindy Hemmesch, Pete Klaphake, Bob Arceneau, Ross Wiechmann, Ali Arnzen, Cory Ellering;  
Not pictured for 2023-2024 board is Jacob Primus and Pat Christenson.

***“The effort that the teachers and Autumn Nelson, our Principal, put forth is amazing. We don't have a big administrative support staff, so they all wear many hats and they do a great job.” – Cory Ellering***

**T**he School Board at St. Mary's is a vital link between the parish and the school. As parents and parishioners, the board members have a unique view into the daily workings of the school and give the Parish Council and our pastor the insight they need to help our school and students thrive.

Cory Ellering has served on the School Board for several years. As his four children attended St. Mary's School, he naturally got involved, although the School Board wasn't initially part of his plans.

“It's a small school and you get to know everybody, the teachers, and the principal,” Cory says. “It just morphs into people getting to know you and then nominating you. I accepted the nomination and was voted in.”

There are six members and Cory serves as the Vice Chairperson. When a member's term concludes, parishioners can nominate anyone by putting their name in the collection basket. If they accept, then parishioners can vote for them.

Although the School Board's role is advisory to the pastor who makes the final decisions, their input is valued and respected. The members play a role in the hiring process, help establish school policies, establish the budget, and monitor the school's finances. In addition, members share the school's needs with other parish committees.

Cory and the other members are available to answer questions from parishioners who might not be as involved. The well-being of the school is directly tied to the parish, so this support and understanding is critical.

As a Catholic school, St. Mary's lays a strong foundation for our students before they move on to the next phase of their schooling.

“We want the kids to come out with solid faith and the school does a great job,” Cory says. “The teachers are great at bringing faith into it. The students are kind and well-grounded when they move on to public school and you see them on the honor roll. Those kids are so focused on doing well in school. You see them as students of the month. You can tell it transfers over into their next stage of life.”

St. Mary's may be small, but its strength is the dedication of the teachers and staff. As a parent and

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# Board of Education

## *Support of Our Children's Education*

School Board member, Cory has witnessed the hard work that goes into the school.

"If you aren't involved, you might not see the amount of effort and love that the principal and staff have put in behind the scenes," Cory says. "The effort that the teachers and Autumn Nelson, our Principal, put forth is amazing. We don't have a big administrative support staff, so they all wear many hats and they do a great job."

Monthly School Board meetings are open to teachers and have a public portion to the meetings.



*To learn more about the School Board, contact  
St. Mary's School through the website at [www.smsmelrosemn.org](http://www.smsmelrosemn.org).*

## The Hellermann Family *continued from front cover*

continued to engage further in stewardship and have started being involved in a few more ministries. Today, their whole family is active in different ways. While Gretta works with technology and is an usher, Westin and Quintin both are altar servers and ushers as well.

"For me, becoming a sacristan and Eucharistic Minister has brought a whole new appreciation and deeper meaning to the Mass itself," Candice says. "A lot of the sacristans are getting older, so having younger people take that on is definitely needed in the parish."

Jason hopes that their family might serve as a small inspiration for other parishioners and families to become more involved in parish life. Similarly, Quintin hopes that other youngsters in the church will see his example and want to participate in the Mass as well.

"Serving is us doing our part as parents to influence our children and put what we believe is important in their hearts and minds right away," Jason says. "It's so important to create a strong faith-based family unit. It builds trust and respect. It allows us to pray for each other. It builds love for Christ and love for each other."

Candice and Jason are both available to talk with other faith community members who are wondering how they might also foster a sense of belonging through stewardship.

"Thank you for welcoming us and our kids, even with our flaws," Candice says. "We love seeing everyone at Mass, and we're happy to talk with others about getting involved in ministries. When you serve, you're part of creating that strong church community."

*"We love seeing everyone at Mass,  
and we're happy to talk with  
others about getting involved in  
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part of creating that strong church  
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## The Feast of St. Monica

### *An Exemplar of Catholic Stewardship and Discipleship*

Every year on Aug. 27, the Catholic Church celebrates the Feast of St. Monica, a woman whose unwavering faith, perseverance, and commitment to her family have made her an iconic figure in Catholicism. St. Monica's life serves as an inspiration for all believers, highlighting the virtues of Catholic stewardship and discipleship. Through her profound love for God, her steadfast prayers, and her selfless dedication to her family, St. Monica offers a timeless example of faith in action.

St. Monica, born in 331 AD in present-day Algeria, was raised in a devout Christian family. From an early age, she embraced the teachings of the Church and sought to deepen her relationship with God. Her faith sustained her through the joys and trials of life, providing a solid foundation for her stewardship and discipleship.

Her life exemplifies the concept of stewardship. She recognized that everything she had, including her family, possessions, and talents, was a gift from God. In her stewardship, she employed these gifts for the glory of God and the well-being of others. St. Monica's stewardship was particularly evident in her dedication to her family. Despite facing numerous challenges, including her husband's infidelity and her son, the future St. Augustine's, wayward path, she refused to give up on them. Instead, she poured her love, prayers, and guidance into their lives, consistently striving to bring them closer to God.

When her son, Augustine, strayed from the faith, St. Monica fervently prayed for his conversion for

over 17 years. Her unwavering faith and persistence in prayer are powerful examples of discipleship. Despite the challenges and setbacks she faced, she never wavered in her belief that God's grace could transform her son's life. Her steadfast commitment to praying for Augustine ultimately bore fruit, as he later became one of the Church's greatest theologians and saints.

St. Monica's life offers valuable lessons for contemporary Catholics seeking to deepen their faith and embody the principles of stewardship and discipleship. Her example encourages believers to trust in God's plan, even in the face of adversity, and to persevere in prayer and intercession for their loved ones. Moreover, St. Monica reminds us of the importance of family and the power of our actions as stewards of God's gifts. We are called to nurture and guide those entrusted to our care, recognizing that our love, patience, and prayers can lead others to encounter Christ and experience His transformative grace.

The Feast of St. Monica invites us to reflect on her profound impact as an exemplar of stewardship and discipleship. Her life inspires us to be faithful stewards of God's gifts, responsibly using them for the good of others. Through her unwavering love, prayers, and perseverance, St. Monica teaches us the power of discipleship, illustrating that our actions and intercession can lead others to a deeper relationship with God. As we honor her memory on this special feast day, may we strive to emulate her virtues and carry forward her legacy of faith in our own lives.



# “Be Transformed by the Sacred Liturgy”

## *The Celebration of the Paschal Mystery*

In a limited way, the liturgy can be compared to a story or a film – upon a first reading or viewing, we might understand the basic outline of the narrative, yet through every subsequent encounter, the story further unfolds before us, becoming richer and more complex.

Often, inquisitive children teach us about how to understand a story or the Mass. As a child inquires about the priest’s green vestments, the foregrounded wreath or the presence of palm branches, we might pause to recall the symbolism undergirding the rich rituals of the liturgy.

There is a sense of the sacred in the liturgy, but its rituals and ceremonies can appear as empty pantomimes when divorced from their meaning. Far from empty signs, the liturgy is the celebration of the Paschal mystery, of Christ’s passion, death, resurrection and glorification by which He “accomplished the work of our salvation” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1067).

From the Greek *leitourgia*, meaning public service or worship, liturgy in the Christian tradition refers to the communal participation of the people in the work of God, and God is always present and at work in the liturgy, acting in and with the Church through the sacraments.

Annually, the Church’s liturgical year is structured around the Paschal mystery, which we observe every Sunday. We begin each year with a season of anticipating Christ’s birth, and following a celebration of Christ’s Incarnation, we gradually enter a period of preparation for the Easter Triduum, for His passion, death and Resurrection. The year closes with a period of ordinary time – a time to grow in our faith and in living out the Gospel.

Daily, the Liturgy of the Hours unifies the Church Militant in prayers said by the clergy and increasingly by the laity. As the liturgical calendar structures our year, the Liturgy of the Hours structures our day, offering us an opportunity to consecrate each present moment to Christ.

Ultimately, the liturgical life of the Church “revolves around the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments” (CCC 1113), for we receive God’s grace to fortify us in our spiritual lives and as His disciples through the sacraments, particularly the Holy Mass.

The Mass nurtures us spiritually, inviting us to reflect on the Paschal mystery and to lift our hearts to God as individuals and a community through spoken and sung prayer.

The Mass moves us corporeally, drawing us to sit as we listen to the Word, to stand as we unanimously



profess our faith, and to kneel as the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.

The Mass inspires us apostolically, sending us out to proclaim the Gospel and to share Christ with our brothers and sisters.

Though the “source and center” of all prayer, the liturgy and a sense of the sacred has, in some ways, become marginalized in the American Church. Once

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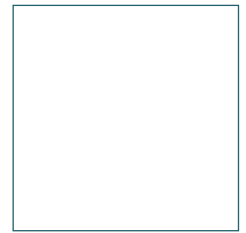
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## The Sacred Liturgy *continued from page 7*

robust parishes are seeking to rebuild, but they frequently overlook the connection between the empty pews and the decentralization of the liturgy, which was underscored by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.

“I am convinced that the crisis in the Church that we are experiencing today is, to a large extent, due to the disintegration of the liturgy,” Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI wrote in his autobiography *Milestones*.

Something in the simplicity of the child’s experience of the liturgy teaches us to return to what we might call the basics of the faith – meaning a love for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the sacraments and the rituals of the Church. Only through the liturgy are we nurtured on our stewardship journey and inspired to proclaim the Gospel.

*“If we are transformed by the sacred liturgy, then we, as believers, can help transform the culture.”*

**- Archbishop Alexander Sample,  
Diocese of Portland, Ore.**

As Archbishop Alexander Sample from the Diocese of Portland, Ore., writes, “If we are transformed by the sacred liturgy, then we, as believers, can help transform the culture.”