



CHURCH OF

Saint Mary

The Melrose Area Food Shelf:

Serving with Compassion for the Good of the Community

The Melrose Area Food Shelf has been working more than 40 years to provide food for those in need, from its beginnings on the rectory porch of St. Mary's, then to the rectory basement and, finally in December 2016, to its present location built by volunteer help at 255 Country

Club Road SW.

Clients can walk up during the open hours of 1-5 p.m. on Wednesdays, register, and receive food at that time. A special feature at the Food Shelf is one way the ministry acts in stewardship – clients are welcomed with hospitality in the waiting area where volunteers cook and bake food for the clients to sample. The volunteer uses items from the Food Shelf to demonstrate how to use what items are on hand.

Parishioner Bill Massman began volunteering for the Food Shelf by helping unload the delivery truck and picking up the donated food. Bill's wife, Karen, started volunteering shortly thereafter, serving for two hours after work. She helped the clients as they chose their food.

Karen continues to offer her talents at the Food Shelf

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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.

(320) 256-4207 • www.oneinfaith.org/stmarys



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PARA ESPANOL



The Melrose Area Food Shelf *continued from front cover*

by providing help as she answers phone calls from prospective clients and donors alike. She informs clients about how they can register and helps donors who want to give foodstuffs or money.

"I have been a board member for about 15 years," Karen says. "I keep records, and do reports, and coordinate the March Food Drive."

In 2017 the Massmans' grandson wanted to choose a project as he worked to earn the rank of Eagle Scout. The Food Shelf board had talked about starting a garden, so that became his project. It was completed in time for spring planting.

Karen has found that her work is much more than simply providing a box of groceries for someone in need.

"I do this for the families and for the good of the community," she says. "It is sharing and caring with all our clients. When someone said to me, 'May God bless you,' I knew I was doing the right thing."

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There are many ways our parishioners can help at the Melrose Area Food Shelf – they may volunteer during open hours, help unload the food truck deliveries, and help with the garden. Anyone wanting more information about the Food Shelf, or to volunteer, may call the agency at 320-256-2555.

ONE YEAR AGO: *The Dedication of Our New Church*



Giving Thanks to God for the Gift of Time

Dear Parishioners,

The next several weeks are certainly a busy time for us as Catholics, good stewards, good citizens, and faithful members of the Church and our parish. There are celebrations and commemorations both inside and outside the Church that are momentous in terms of faith, citizenship, and living as people of thanksgiving and gratitude.

We celebrate Veterans Day to honor and thank all those men and women who served in the United States Armed Forces in one capacity or another. Indicative of the importance of this day, every year at 11 a.m. Eastern, the President of the United States lays a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

We all understand that Americans celebrate a day of Thanksgiving on Nov. 25. What more can we say about this? It is a day that was based in faith from its very beginnings, and it is an indication of how much we have to thank God for in terms of the gifts we have received – our lives, our families, our Church, our Lord and Savior – everything we are and everything we have.

No sooner are Thanksgiving Day celebrations concluded, than we begin that glorious season called Advent on Sunday, Nov. 28. This prepares us for and



leads to Christmas. Indeed, this is both a busy and extraordinary time of year! There is, of course, much more on which we could focus and about which we could think, meditate and pray, but that is more than enough for us to consider and absorb.

From a stewardship perspective, I would like you to not only participate and focus on all the particular things that are about to happen but also on one of our special gifts – the gift of time. The gift of time, which we all receive from God in equal amount, is precious because it is a non-renewable resource. Although some of our time is committed because of family responsibilities, work responsibilities, or simply personal needs, we have an element of freewill with how we spend a certain amount of it. We need to spend some of that time in prayer, in thanksgiving, in worship, and in works of mercy and ministry. Our time is perhaps more precious than any material gifts we receive from the Lord. How are we doing with that gift?

In Christ,

Fr. Marvin Enneking
Pastor



MEET *Deb Klaphake:**Embracing a Life of Faith, Service and Gratitude**Deb Klaphake with her children and grandchildren*

Deb Klaphake admits she's never been one to just sit back and watch the work get done — involvement and participation in parish life are important. Her husband, Rick, was the same way — he even served as co-chair of the construction committee for our new building. Sadly, Rick passed away in September 2020 and never had the opportunity to see the finished church.

"But he gets a bird's-eye view every day," Deb says. "Rick had a plan, along with all those on the committee. They brought it to completion. It's so beautiful and it was all put together from the ground up."

A St. Mary's member for 48 years, Deb stays active by helping where she can, serving as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion and a lector, and through her involvement in prayer groups through the years. One day per week, she volunteers at St. Mary's in a kindergarten and first-grade room.

"I so enjoy being with the kids," Deb says. "They are so refreshing and so real. They want to learn and want to be there."

Even outside of church, Deb still doesn't take much time to sit idle — she also works part-time at the family businesses, Klaphake Feed Mill and R&L Turkeys.

With all Deb has been through — losing Rick and also being a breast cancer survivor — she has always relied on her faith to get her through.

"I really don't know how people survive without faith," she says. "You can have all the friends in the world and a great family, but you still need faith. It's what keeps me going."

Importantly, she has her church family for support. Along with being involved at St. Mary's, Deb believes it's important to support the church financially. Rick was always a big supporter, as well.

"It's important to support what you believe in all ways," Deb says. "It's part of being the church. We need to get involved in giving our time, talent, and treasure."

Grateful for the new parish building, Deb knows she has a lot of dedicated people, including Rick, to thank. She loves the gathering space and how people have space to spend more time visiting together after Mass. It's so easy to see, no matter where you are seated. She also appreciates the new building is handicap-accessible.

Deb grew up in Meire Grove. She enjoys being outside and spending time on the lake. She also loves to golf, travel, read and spend time with her three children and nine grandchildren.



THE SIGN OF THE CROSS: *A Powerful Prayer Tradition in the Catholic Church*

Since we say and make the Sign of the Cross so often, it may easily become a rote, perhaps even thoughtless, action. However, it is important to remember that the Sign of the Cross is much more than a simple gesture. Even in its most basic form, the Sign of the Cross — accompanied by the spoken or unspoken words “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” — is a prayer, a creed stating our belief in the Holy Trinity, the dual nature of Jesus Christ, and the dependence of our salvation on His crucifixion and resurrection.

In addition, making the Sign of the Cross is an indication of a willingness to take up our own cross and suffering for the sake of Christ. The prayer is considered one of the greatest weapons against Satan and all demons, and an added strength against the temptations of the flesh.

In the Roman Catholic Church today, the Sign of the Cross is typically made with either three fingers or an open hand touching first the forehead, then the chest, followed by the left shoulder and then the right (in the Eastern Church, the right shoulder is touched before the left). The concept of making a sign, or “setting a seal,” upon the forehead of those who place their faith in the Lord appears in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible — see Ezek. 9:4 and Rev. 7:3, 9:4, and 14:1.

Early versions of the Sign of the Cross were traced on just the forehead, using the thumb and forefinger held together in the shape of a tiny cross. We still see this version of the blessing performed during Baptisms (with the cross traced on the infant’s forehead) and on Ash Wednesday (with the cross traced in ashes on the foreheads of the faithful). Similarly, when the Gospel is read during the Liturgy of the Word, the priest or deacon leads the congregation in forming this small cross on the forehead, mouth, and chest,

indicating a willingness to keep the Word of the Lord in our minds, on our lips, and in our hearts.

There is no doubt that our early Church fathers were strong believers in the sanctifying power of the Sign of the Cross. A second-century ecclesiastical scholar, Tertullian, and a third century saint, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, both wrote about the necessity of performing the Sign of the Cross at one’s waking and one’s lying down, at entering and leaving a room, at mealtimes, and more. St. Augustine also referenced the importance of marking the cross on the faithful’s forehead during the administration of the sacraments.

It is likely that the sign transformed from the tiny cross on the forehead to the larger, full-body cross used today sometime in the fifth century, when heretics began questioning both the dual nature of Jesus Christ — fully human and fully divine — and the unity of the Holy Trinity. Believers in these crucial Church doctrines began forming the cross with three extended fingers (representing the Trinity), keeping the ring finger and little finger pressed down into the palm (representing Christ’s dual nature), and tracing a cross on their entire upper body so there could be no mistaking the gesture.

Today, the Sign of the Cross still figures predominantly in our prayer life as Roman Catholics. We commonly perform it upon entering a church; at the beginning and end of the Catholic Mass, a Benediction, or the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament; when opening and closing our personal prayers; at mealtimes; and when passing by a Catholic Church (in recognition of Christ, present in the tabernacle). As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us, the frequent, intentional use of the Sign of the Cross can help the faithful dedicate each day to the glory of God and provide strength in the face of trial and temptation (2157).

Stewardship of Treasure

Giving to God First

Have you ever wondered why no one really becomes uneasy when someone brings up the first two “Ts” of stewardship – giving of your time or talents – but when the third “T” comes up, many of us become uncomfortable?

That third “T” is treasure, and some people simply become so annoyed by the subject, they tune out the words from the pulpit.

Why is there seemingly such an adverse reaction?

Our finances are such a personal subject. Discussing money issues with others is not easy, and having someone tell us what to do with our finances is even worse. We earn the money, after all. So shouldn't we decide what to do with it?

Of course, the answer is “yes” – we decide every day how to spend our hard-earned dollars. Indeed, the monetary choices we make will either keep our finances in check, or put us into the red. The average American family has about \$7,000 in credit card debt – so finances certainly represent a challenge to our current society. Tight budgets, trying to “keep up with the Joneses” or poor financial management may be to blame for our tight

resources. Does this mean we do not have anything left over for God?

Stewardship, at its roots, teaches that we are not supposed to give God our “leftovers.” We should instead strive to return to God a portion of our “first fruits” – giving to God first and then using the rest for our other needs. God gave us our talents that help us earn a living, after all. He should come first.

This idea can be worrisome for many. If our finances are already strained, how will we ever find enough to give back to God? Or, if we do try to give God our “first fruits,” will there be enough left over to cover our required expenses?

Taking the correct financial steps toward good stewardship simply boils down to trust – believing that God, who takes care of all of His creation, will take care of us. Trust that in giving to God first, we are both acknowledging that our multitude of blessings come from Him, and that we are thankful He chose to give them to us. And finally, trust that if we give to Him first, that all else will fall into place – because He is in ultimate control.

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