

# ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

*Staff Quarterly Newsletter – February 2026*



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## From the Pastor's Desk

Greetings!

Every day give thanks. To someone, in some way, give thanks. Since it is that the very word Eucharist means thanksgiving, it seems almost written into our Sacramental life that we are to be a people with lives marked by gratitude for the many blessings and graces we receive.

What can that thanksgiving look like. Firstly: Say the words. To God and neighbor, say them intentionally and say them often. Next, live in a way that conveys your gratitude. I think of a person who has received a gift, and how they respond to that gift. Does their action and reaction convey delight and hopefulness, or does it convey disappointment and discouragement? How do we respond to the will of God for us, and the opportunities for discipleship each day?

With the good help of Katie Roerick, we are beginning this quarterly newsletter, which allows us to even more effectively recognize the many activities of the parish and the people who help to make it possible. A special thanks to Katie for kickstarting this effort, and for each of you who have given her something to write about.

And so, give thanks each day, and may your lives be marked by the joy which gratitude brings. Thank you, and may God bless you.

In Christ,

## Parish Life & Ministry Updates

### Liturgy & Worship:

- Thank you to everyone who donated for Christmas flowers & environment and to those who decorated the church for the Christmas Season.
- The music room has been cleaned and updated. We have a beautiful countertop with storage and carpeting in the room. Stop by and check it out.
- New musicians are always welcome in our choirs. Parish Choir sings 4-part music, rehearses on Tuesdays, and sings 2-3 times per month. The Youth Choir is open to students in grades 6-12 and usually sings the first Sunday of the Month. The Resurrection Choir provides music for funerals. Please contact Sarah Woeste for more information about any of our music ministries.  
320-256-9516.
- Palm branches are being collected near the parish office. They will be burned and the ashes used on Ash Wednesday.

### Family Faith Formation:

- Big THANK YOUs to:
  - **First Sacraments students** who collected donations for the **Food Shelf** in October! We do this service project every year, as a way to follow Jesus' call to feed the hungry.
  - **FF elementary school families**, who are taking turns visiting **Roseview Manor Apartments** for a game night! We have

been doing this for 2 years now, as a way to follow Jesus' call to love our neighbor.

- **FF 7-8 graders**, who will be helping with many of the **liturgical ministries** at some weekend Masses during Lent. We train young people for new ministries, support them in ministries they already do, and invite them to discern what gifts the Holy Spirit has given them as members of the Body of Christ.
- **FF 9-10 graders**, who made the **invitations to our All Souls Mass**. We mail these invitations to families of parishioners who have died in the past year, as a way to follow Jesus' call to comfort those who mourn.
- **Confirmation candidates** who helped with **roadside clean-up** on our stretch of CR 13, east of Meire Grove! We do this service work every Fall and Spring, as a way to follow God's call in Genesis to be good stewards of the earth.
- We invite you to PRAY for:
  - our young people preparing to celebrate First Eucharist
  - our Confirmation candidates
  - our two young people who are going through the OCIA (formerly known as the RCIA) process in preparation to celebrate Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.
  - Prayer trees with the names of all these young people will be in all 4 of our parishes soon.
- The **Castaway Retreat** for grades 9-12 is coming soon! Please contact Pam in the office by February 13th if your young person is interested in attending this fabulous experience!

**Building, Grounds, Maintenance:**

- The Baptismal Font is being used again! It has been sealed and we have seen no signs of leaking.
- The new speakers have been installed in January and the feedback has been positive.
- 'Tis the season for snow removal and salt.
- Updated cemetery rules and regulations are still in the works. Please stay tuned for updates.

### **Finance:**

- The Christmas collection came to \$32,711.00. Thank you for your generosity during the Christmas season.
- Special thank you to those who donated towards the parking lot repair, new speakers, and liturgy/environment. Your contributions help us foster a welcoming space for our mission.
- The Lenten season is upon us. Please watch your envelope packets to see the different upcoming collections that will be happening. If you have any questions, please contact the parish office and we will do our best to answer them.
- Have you thought about giving your contributions electronically? Do you give annual donations and no longer want to receive your envelopes? If the answer to either of these is yes, please contact Katie in the parish office and she can help with the process!

### **Parish Administration:**

- We extend our sincere thank you to Pedro Hernandez for his dedicated service to our church community over the past three years. Pedro's hard work, commitment, and willingness to serve have made a meaningful difference, and we are deeply grateful for all he contributed. Please join us in thanking Pedro and keep him in your prayers.

- Parish office hours are: Monday - Thursday - 8 AM - 3 PM & Friday - 8 AM - 12 PM. There is usually someone in the office beyond these hours so feel free to call or stop in.
  - Did you know? You can use a funeral home even if you have signed up with a cremation provider. Please contact Pam if you have questions!
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## Adult Faith Enrichment

“Catechesis strengthens faith and builds up the Body of Christ.” – Catechism of the Catholic Church, 4

- Did You Know? **One option we could go with:**
  - The weeks leading up to Easter used to be a time of preparation only for those wanted to become followers of Christ (and who would join the Christian community at the Easter Vigil) or for those who had separated themselves from the God and the Church (by committing a very serious sin) but who now wanted to return (they also would be welcomed back into relationship with God and the Christian community at the Easter Vigil). Over the ages, the 40 days of Lent became a time for the entire Christian community to fast, pray, and give alms, as a way for all to prepare to renew our baptismal call to be followers of Christ at Easter.
  - Recommended spiritual resource: **(one option we could put here: the Pray As You Go app offers short audio reflections on the Scripture readings of the day, stations of the cross, etc.)**
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## **Prayer for the Quarter**

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Light of the World.  
As we step into this new liturgical season, guide our hearts to  
serve with joy, love our parish community more deeply, and  
walk humbly with You. Amen.

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