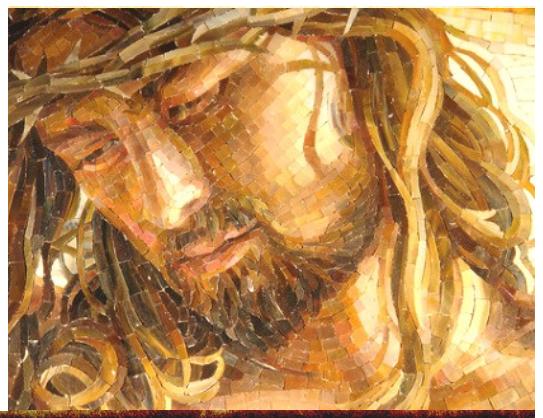


YEAR OF MERCY

DECEMBER 8TH, 2015 - NOVEMBER 20TH, 2016

*"Lord Jesus Christ,
You have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly
Father, and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him.
Show us your face and we will be saved."*



FEBRUARY 2015



To create and maintain a Christ-centered Catholic Community where our personal call to holiness, service and spiritual growth leads to continued authentic wit-

A Note From Fr. Tim

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis has called us to enter into a Jubilee of Year of Mercy, dedicated to living out, in our daily lives, the mercy which the Father constantly extends to each of us. He asks us to allow God to surprise us, as God never tires of casting open the doors of his heart and of repeating that he loves us and wants to share his love with us. **All we need to do—is open the doors of our hearts** to “draw from the spring of his mercy that never runs dry, no matter how many people draw from it.” And so I ask each of you to....

Open the doors of your hearts to celebrating Ash Wednesday Mass with us. Pope Francis says this is the “opportun moment to change our lives! This is the time to allow our hearts to be touched!” Each season of Lent presents us with a new opportunity to turn our hearts back to Christ, His Gospel, His Ways, His Truth, His Mercy. Begin your season of Lent with Mass on Ash Wednesday.

Open the doors of your heart to the sacrament of reconciliation. I will be here each Monday evening during Lent so all can participate in this great sacrament of Mercy. Pope Francis reminds us, “When faced with the gravity of sin, God responds with the fullness of mercy. Mercy will always be greater than any sin, and no one can place limits on the love of God who is ever ready to forgive.”



Pope Francis walks through the Holy Door in St. Peter's Basilica, inaugurating the Jubilee of Mercy. *“To pass through the Holy Door means to rediscover the infinite mercy of the Father who welcomes everyone and goes out personally to encounter*

Open the doors of your heart to our women and men conferences. We have inspiring speakers who will help women discover anew their beauty, worth and purpose as God’s beloved daughters. And help men respond courageously to the Holy Spirit’s calling to protect and uphold those God has entrusted to their care. Our parish will be blessed with men and women whose faith is renewed with confidence, conviction and hope.

Open the doors of your hearts to daily prayer. Pope Francis asks us to encounter Christ each day in prayer, especially with scripture and *“to do this unfailingly each day.”* Each month our parish provides copies of **the Word Among Us** with daily scripture and meditations. During Lent we will also have the **Little Black Books.** These are in our gathering space.

Come Ash Wednesday, when we are marked and reminded to, “Repent, and believe in the Gospel.” To turn our lives around and look at the Son who shows us the way to our heavenly Father.

Fr. Tim

SOLON IOWA

St. Mary Parish
Newsletter

1749 Racine Ave NE
Solon, IA 52333
319-624-2228
www.solonstmary.org

Our Parish Family

New Parishioners We're glad you're here!

Sean & Michala Bechtold

Michael & Melanie Graves

Christopher & Hannah Johnson

Luke & Nicole Greazel

Bill & Crystal Kluesner

Jane Carr

Calvin & Lisa Corrin

Luke & Brittnee Pruter

Adam & Stephanie Kaefring

Michael & Mallory Janechek

Brett & Jessica Petersen

Christine Traufler

Madison Adams

Clinton Marks & Miranda Meggers

Chase & Jennifer Holtz

Ryan & Ashley Chizek

Chad Schmidt & Andree Izoco

Deaths We pray and remember:

Patrick Murphy November 9, 2015

Jean Pavelka December 1, 2015

Agnes Hagen January 12, 2016

Gene Erenberger January 26, 2015

Eternal rest, grant unto them O Lord

and let perpetual light shine upon them.

May they rest in peace. Amen.

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed,

through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



Weddings Congratulations!

Gavin & Mandi Kerschner

Ryan & Krystle Braumann

*Father, Give them your blessing, and
strengthen their love for each other.*

Pilgrimage with Fr. Tim

MEDJUGORJE: May 22-30

ROME: May 30-June 2



-All Taxes & Tips included
-Round Trip from Chicago
-7 Nights in Medjugorje
-Twin bed rooms with private bath
-Double or Triple Occupancy
-Breakfast & Early Dinner Daily
-English Speaking Guide
-Full Pilgrimage Schedule
\$2,999.00

-Air to Rome from Croatia
-4 Nights Michelangelo Hotel with breakfast double/triple occupancy
-Papal Audience
-Guided Vatican Museum Tour
-Guided Christian Rome Tour
-Entrance through the 4 Holy Doors for the Year of Mercy
\$1,440 (add onto Medjugorje)



SIGN-UP BY FEBRUARY 13

Trinity Pilgrimages trinitypilgrimages@cox.net
480-443-3912 602-319-5289

Or **Fr. Tim Sheedy** sheedyt@diodav.org
319-624-2228

Please Keep Those Entering our Church, In Your Prayers

Michala Bechtold

Anna Helle

Matthew Clarke

Paige Steinbrech

Robert Cowell, Jr

Lord,

We pray for all those who journey to you.

Strengthen their faith.

Ease their fears and doubts.

Open their hearts to

the fullness of your love.

Deepen their understanding

of your plan for their life.

Set their hearts afire

for the building of your Kingdom.

Let our prayers of thanksgiving and support
be a sign of our love for them.

As we continue to seek your plan for our lives
let our witness of bringing your way, truth and

life into our family, parish, and

Community encourage their yes to you.

We ask this through Jesus,
who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.
for all. Amen

Baptisms We welcome you with great joy!

Marshal Jay, Patrick & Kelsey Swancutt

Taylor Mary, Matthew & Stacey Kern

Nora Katherine, Ethan & Trisha Davis

Dominick Joseph, Marcus & Kaitlin Hall

William Leo, Jeff & Lisa Piper

Gabriel Francis, Christopher & Chandra Wojno

Benjamin Flynn, Nathan & Karla Adair

Maddux Edward, Mark & Sandra Woods

Maya Ann, Shawn & Lindsey Carey

Jack Patrick, Jeffrey & Jamie Zearley

Emmet William, William & Crystal Kluesner

Casimir Donald, Aaron & Olivia Brau

Addison Ann, Travis & Lindsey Meade

Louis Daniel, Luke & Kathleen Linz

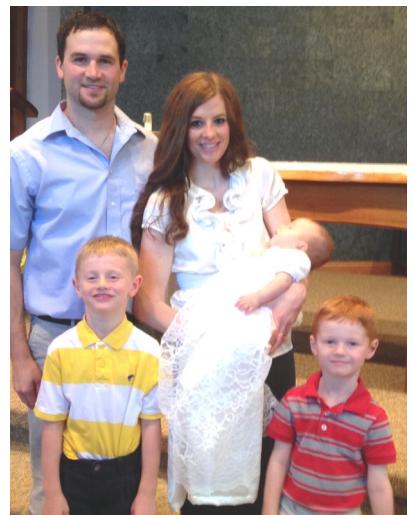
Benjamin Orrin, Jacob & Jennifer Fetzer



Addison Meade



Jack Zearley



Taylor Kern



Maya Carey



Maddux Woods



Casimir Brau



William Piper



Addison Meade





Discover **ANEW**

women's CONFERENCE

Saturday, Feb. 20
8:30-4:00

Hospitality 8:30-9:00
Conference 9:00-4:00

**Your Beauty,
Worth & Purpose
As God's
Beloved Daughter**

*"The world
doesn't need
what women have,
it needs what
women are."*
St Therese Benedicta

**Register by
February 14**
Online or by form,
\$20 includes lunch
Invite Friends & Family



Kelly Wahlquist is a wife, mother of three, inspiring Catholic author and speaker residing in Minnesota. Her new book, ***Created to Relate*** inspires women to live fully their beautiful God-given gifts to build His kingdom

God Doesn't Call the Equipped, He Equips the Called: Kelly's personal story of how the actions of one sneaky friend, changed her life radically. A new found love of Scripture transformed her heart and instilled a passion to share the joy in Him with all.

What Does a 21st Century Woman Disciple Look Like?: In a country drifting from God, as also in the days of our Lord—we can learn from the first women who answered Jesus' call to "follow me" with an openness to God's will and desire to give selflessly.

Created to Relate: The Radical Role of Women in Family, Church & Society: Women have been created, in a very special way, that allow us to bring those in our lives—fully alive! Walk away inspired to live our faith on fire with renewed confidence, conviction and hope!



Barbara Heil was a widow for eight years before becoming the wife of Jeff, together they have 8 children and 10 grandchildren. She has traveled extensively, ministering in 45 nations as a missionary, evangelist and pastor.

How to Win a Catholic: The inspiring story of growing up in an un-churched family, a life-changing encounter with Christ's love as a student, becoming an international Pentecostal minister who in recent years found her way back to the Catholic Church.

Life in the Kingdom: God is Calling! Discover how God is calling us women. Learn from Barbara's life of service, prayer, discernment and guiding others to an intimate relationship with our Lord.



Mary Beth Helgens lives in Cedar Rapids with husband Bob, of 31 years; they have 4 adult children and 4 grand-children. Her coaching company, The Well-Woman, uses faith to help others live abundant and joyfully.

God Uses Cracked Pots: Hear how Mary Beth allowed the "Light of Christ" to help heal her from her brokenness. God's Grace guided her through difficult life challenges. Through these challenges she has encountered Christ in a very powerful way.



Be Strong in the Lord

Men's CONFERENCE

Saturday, Feb. 27

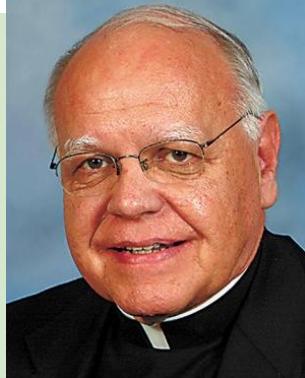
Hospitality 8:30-9:00
Conference 9:00-4:00

8:30-4:00

**Respond boldly
and courageously
to the Holy Spirit's
call:**

*to serve,
protect, and
uphold those
God entrusts
to your care.*

**Register by
February 21**
Online or by form,
\$20 includes lunch
Invite Friends & Family



Rev. Michael Phillips is a retired priest of the Davenport Diocese. This year marks his 47th anniversary: serving half of those years in education and half as a pastor. He loves being a priest and continues to minister in a variety of ways.

What Does it Mean to be a Real Christian Man?: Beginning in Genesis with God's creating man in his own image and giving him stewardship over creation, Fr. Phillips explores the Christian man's vocation and responsibilities, specifically given to him by God.

Being a Man of Mercy: In this Year of Mercy, Pope Francis has called each of us to open our hearts to God's mercy and become effective signs of His mercy. Fr. Phillips helps us rediscover our need for God's forgiveness and mercy and to be bearers of it in the world.



Devin Schadt lives in the Midwest with his wife and five children. He is an author and speaker who transmits the message of the necessity and power of fatherhood. He is the cofounder of the **Fathers of St. Joseph**, which works for the renewal of authentic fatherhood.

Show Us the Father: Secrets to Becoming a Father on Earth, Like the Father in Heaven: A Father's mission is to be a link between God and his children. He becomes the voice of the Father his children cannot hear, the face they cannot see, the touch they cannot feel. This is his challenge and his call to glory.

What if Every Man Discovered His True Identity, Power & Necessity? Devin's talk will help men enter the battle, fully armed, with the bold commitment to sacrifice themselves for their wives, children and future of humanity by becoming like St. Joseph.



Nathaniel Gee converted to Catholicism while at Loras on track and football scholarships. He spent a year with the Dominican Order discerning religious life, and now teaches theology at Wahlert Catholic High. Nathaniel speaks at many Catholic events.

Personal Encounter with God's Mercy: Nathaniel didn't consider spiritual growth to be part of his college experience. Through his conversion and the sacraments, God transformed his life

Intimacy with God: God desires to enter into a personal friendship with each of us. Learn how, as Pope Francis says to: "unfailingly encounter Jesus every day-no one should think this invitation is not for him." We begin with an openness to Jesus, which leads to a life changing relationship.



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

Solon Food Pantry 1st Weekend Collection

Bring your food donations to Mass February 6-7. Items on their wish list include; breakfast cereals, peanut butter, jelly, and soups.

KC Breakfast Sunday, February 14

Serving: 8:00-noon

All You Can Eat

Pancakes, Scrambled Eggs,
Omelets, Sausage, Pastries,
Biscuits & Gravy



KC Sweetheart Dance Saturday, Feb. 13

KC Hall on American Legion Rd in Iowa City

Contact Alan: woodarch6652@gmail.com



KCs working Kinnick Booth this Fall as Fundraiser.

Thanks to the many who helped set-up and prepare for the Christmas Eve Mass in the Parish Hall.

The Monday night chair group, finishing the 780 chair set-up.



Sunday, February 21

(following the 8:30 and 10:30am Masses)

This short gathering is designed for those who are new to our parish or would like to know more about us. Get a "behind the scenes" look at our parish, learn about our different ministries, and take a tour of our facilities. Remain in the pews after Mass and we'll begin from there.

If you know someone who is interested in possibly joining our parish, please invite & join them!

We hope you can join us to learn more about our parish family & facilities!

FORMED

THE CATHOLIC FAITH.
ON DEMAND.

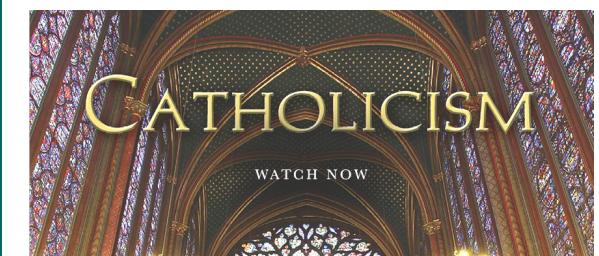


Create **YOUR Family's Account**

www.formed.org

Parish Code: **QXJ8P6**

Use your computer, tablet, smart phones or TV to create your account... and begin getting "formed today!"





December
Marriage
On Tap
Christmas
Party &
Couples
White
Elephant
Gift
Exchange



Marriage on Tap is a monthly date night bringing a healthy dose of fun, fellowship and enrichment to your marriage and our parish family at large. ALL married couples are invited to attend (newly married, those with children any age and empty nesters) and

Grab your spouse and join us for
DATE NIGHT:
Saturday, February 13
6-8:30 pm

Father Corey Close, from the Newman Center in Iowa City, will share about the differences between male & female and how God intends for us to utilize those differences to work together as one in marriage.

Meal will be catered by Zio Johno's.

Please bring beverages of your choice (beer, wine, soda, etc.) Water, coffee and tea will be served.

Please register online at www.solonstmary.org by February 10
Questions? Contact Lindsey Carey at Lindsey@solonstmary.org.

Save the Date for Future Events:
April 16(TBD)
Tentative Wine Tasting Bus Tour June 18



Our TOOL group (minus one wife who could not come)

Once a month, we drive to Cedar Falls to meet with our group. Over the course of the last few years Nick and I have prayed for God to direct us in how to continue here, our passion for this spiritual team we have grown to love and cherish. There have been times when we dreaded the drive to Cedar Falls. And all it took was us making the effort, and in return for this little effort we made, we were once again ignited, refocused and guided in our commitment to God and to each other. And now we feel God has called us to bring this movement to our St. Mary church community in Solon. At the very least, plant the seed of this enrichment of "marriage spiritually" into the minds of couples at St. Mary's who might be seeking this for their own marriage.

Our team currently consists of five couples—between us we have 25 children. We have made a commitment to meet as a group eight times per year, plus an annual retreat that we organize. In the summer our families gather for a fun social event. To learn more, contact Nick & Amber at: nw_jedlicka@hotmail.com or 319-215-8247.



Teams Of Our Lady

*By Amber Jedlicka
Nick and I are in our 4th year of Teams of Our Lady.*

*What is "Teams of Our Lady"?
A movement which brings Christian couples together who wish to deepen the graces of their Sacrament of Marriage. A team is a group of five to seven couples who meet once a month to share, pray and discuss challenges of living a Christian marriage and life.*

As married couples, the goal is to grow closer together in love and holiness. Yet in today's busy society, with forces and stresses that can undermine both marriage and faith, where can couples find the time to connect not only with one another but with Christ?



The Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Healing of Hearts,
Minds & Souls

"In this Year of Mercy, let us place the Sacrament of Reconciliation at the center once more in such a way that it will enable people to touch the grandeur of God's mercy with their own hands. For every penitent, it will be a source of true interior peace." -Pope Francis

God holds nothing back from us—His nature is to give...

..to freely give love, mercy, kindness, forgiveness, everything we need. He gave us His only Son, when we needed saving. His Son gave His life, when we needed a way back to the Father. And they give us Mary. They ask us to invite her into our hearts and homes, she will help us with her motherly love, prayers and compassion.

From the beginning of Jesus' life, when an angel appeared to Joseph and said, ***"do not be afraid to take Mary into your home,"*** until the end of His life, when He looked down from the cross and said, ***"Behold, your mother"*** Jesus encourages us to invite His mother into our lives.

In this Year of Mercy, our parish is inviting Mary into our lives, under the title of **Mary, Untier of Knots**



Throughout time , a knot has been used to symbolize tension and struggle. The undoing of it symbolizes freedom from these burdens. In the tradition of Mary, Undoer of Knots, Pope Francis' favorite artwork, parishioners will be able to add or remove knots, symbolizing their personal struggles and sharing the burdens of others—at our "grotto" in the Gathering Space.

In this Year of Mercy—ask Mary to pray for the knots in your life and let's pray for the untying of knots in other's lives.

Fr. Tim will be in
the confessional from

6:30-8:00pm on
these Mondays during Lent:
February 15, 22 & 29
March 7 & 21

And Saturdays from 4:00-4:30

Parish Communal
Reconciliation
Wednesday, March 9
6:30pm

"This is the moment to change our lives!"

This is the time to allow our hearts to be touched!"
-Pope Francis

From Deacon Mitch Holte's Homily: Mark 1:40-45

When this leper said to Jesus, "If you wish, you can make me clean", he was expressing his faith in Jesus. He was saying that he believed that Jesus had the power to cure his leprosy. **But maybe he was also** giving Jesus his permission to heal him. Maybe he was inviting Jesus into his life. Like this leper, sometimes all of us feel like we have little to say about what happens to us, but Jesus always waits to be invited, he never forces his grace upon us.

This Gospel has some interesting similarities with us.

Jesus does will to be in our lives.

He does want to make us clean.

He wants to reach out and touch us.

In Jesus' time no one wanted to touch a leper. They were considered 'unclean'.

But Jesus reached out and touched this leper anyway.

Maybe we have some deep, dark, secret places in our lives that we would never want anyone to see; never want anyone to know about.

Well, Jesus knows all about these places; he knows about all our sins.

He knows everything that there is to know about us.

He loves us anyway. He wants to reach out and touch us... anyway.

But he waits to be invited. He lets us make the first move.

We need to open our hearts to Jesus and ask him to make us clean.

We need to invite him into our lives, even into those secret places...

and we need to do this every day.

The Jesuits have a spiritual exercise they call the 'Examine' which they do every night.

Part of the 'Examine' is to thoughtfully recall your day and think about all the good things that happened that day, all the blessings, then thank God for these good things.

Then they recall all the times they might have failed to please God during the day; maybe they failed to be loving or failed to be kind. Then they ask God to forgive them for these failures, and they ask God to help them do better the next day.

This is something that we could be doing every day, just before going to bed.

It only takes a few minutes.

It's a great way to invite Jesus into our lives, in the Mass, daily prayer & reconciliation.

It's a great way to say "Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean."

Jesus is just waiting to hear from you.

"In order to be capable of mercy, we must first of all dispose ourselves to listen to the Word of God. This means rediscover the value of silence in order to mediate on the Word that comes to us. In this way, it will be possible to contemplate God's mercy and adopt it as our lifestyle." -Pope Francis



Rediscover Jesus! Are you searching for a deeper sense of purpose? A clearer understanding of God's plan for your life? What matters most and what matters least? Then it's time to rediscover Jesus. Our parish has already given out 500 copies of Matthew Kelly's new best seller: Rediscover Jesus. Pick up your free copy on Ash Wednesday. **And SIGN-UP** online at dynamiccatholic.com for their free email program—taking you on a 40 day spiritual journey to encounter Jesus and yourself in a deeply personal way. And begin (or nourish) daily prayer.

Pray Daily THIS WEEKEND pick up your free copy of **the Word Among Us** (daily scripture & mediations) or **the Little Black Book** and let God's Word renew, challenge and transform your life this Lent.

Stations of the Cross 5:45 on Wednesdays during Lent in Church

Adoration 6:00-10:00pm on Mondays and 7:00-noon on Fridays. Stop in the church and spend quiet time in the pew, letting the Eucharistic presence of Jesus in the Monstrance on the Altar fill your heart with peace. Books are available to pray with, or spend the time in quiet meditation & conversation with Him.

Fasting & Abstaining On Ash Wednesday and Good Friday abstain from Meat and eating between meals—eating smaller meals. On Fridays during Lent, abstain from eating meat. Fasting is a matter of prayer and spirit, learning discipline and self control that leads us to trust in and dependence on God.

Almsgiving Use a Rice Bowl for Lenten Almsgiving, learn more at crs.org

Be Mistaken! In this Year of Mercy—be mistaken for Christ—by the mercy, kindness, compassion and forgiveness you unceasingly give to others.

Scenes from December...



Santa visited the Knights of Columbus Breakfast on December 6. The proceeds from the breakfast were given to Informed Choices Medical Clinic of Iowa City. They provide free testing, early prenatal care, counseling and support to local women who are facing a crisis pregnancy.



St. Mary's Youth Group had our third annual Ugly Sweater & Gift Exchange.

Over 40 of our 9-12th students joined in the white elephant exchange, gifts ranging from fuzzy socks to inflatable animals!

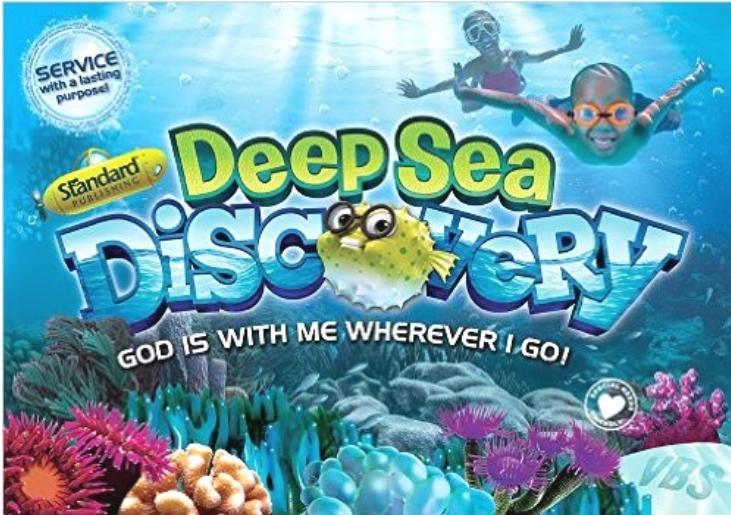


5:00 Christmas Eve Mass Prelude Music and Children's Homily with Fr. Tim singing Happy Birthday to Jesus.



120+ gifts were given for Care Center Residents! Retagging the gifts and delivering them to resi-





Vacation Bible School SAVE THE DATE: July 11-15

This April watch for sign-ups
for those going into grades in Fall 2016...

K-6th: VBS Participants

7-12th: Youth Volunteers

VBS Adult Volunteers Needed:

VBS requires an army to be successful, which is why the more volunteers we can have the better!

We are building teams of 3-4 adults who will help plan activities and determine the supplies needed at the station they choose. Each team will meet when convenient for them and utilize the VBS resources to determine what activities to do or you can be creative and come up with your own! Each team will have a designated person to be a Site Leader who can attend each day of VBS. (Monday-Friday July 11-15th) The rest of the team members would ideally be help out in their area at least once or twice during the week of VBS. The areas still needing team members are:

Bible Stories 3-4 volunteers (1 Site Leader)

Service Projects 3-4 volunteers (1 Site Leader)

Nursery 4-5 volunteers (Leader: Megan Laing)

Snacks & Games 4-5 volunteers (1 Snack Leader, Game Leader: Robin Kelly)

Decorating Team 3-4 volunteers who have an eye for decorating. Brenda Platz will apprentice the team. Teen volunteers do any drawing/painting, etc. necessary; the decorating team comes up with the decorating plan & supply list. It would also be very helpful if you have a flexible schedule and can stop in some morning/afternoons leading up to VBS to help direct the teens as well as help set up the Friday before and take down on the last day.

If you are interested in being part of a planning team or would like more information about a specific team, please contact Lindsey Carey at lindsey@solonstmary.org or 319-400-2484

Easter Egg Hunt — Sunday, April 10 After 10:30 Mass

Come celebrate the Easter
Season with free lunch,
crafts & an Easter Egg Hunt

St. Mary Parish Hall
For families with children
ages 1-10 years old





NCYC

Here I Am Lord. Aquí Estoy Señor

National Catholic Youth Conference
(NCYC) - November 19-21 - 2015

Ten students and four adults from St. Mary had an awesome time traveling to Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, IN to attend NCYC. The conference was attended by 25,000 high school Catholics and their adult chaperones. The three day event was filled with countless opportunities to experience Christ with inspirational speakers, nationally-renowned musicians, prayer, reconciliation, adoration and a concluding Mass with over 400 priests, 25 Bishops and presiding Cardinal Oscar Maradiaga of Honduras.

On Friday evening, Bishop Amos joined our group for dinner at a local restaurant. It was fun to see the youth interact and ask Bishop Amos questions about his vocation and experiences as a bishop. We even got to celebrate his birthday! Our trip to NCYC was only possible through the many individuals who donated during our fall NCYC fundraisers - THANKS!

"I thought it was really fun - and powerful!" Jeni Tucker

"The conference was really fun and brought me closer to God. One of my memorable moments was sharing a wheelchair with father and getting front row seats because of it." Molly Duckett

"I liked how we built the altar. It was cool to see all of the different stones people brought and how it all came together. Also, I really liked seeing Crystallina and Jason Evert. We have been



watching their videos in youth group since freshman year - so it was neat to finally see them in person." Angela Erusha

"I loved NCYC and the whole experience that come with it. I met a lot of new friends – ones from Solon that I got closer to, and ones from all over the country that I still talk to! I loved seeing so many teens of fire for their faith. It was really eye opening and inspirational. The speakers were awesome and I learned so much more about the Catholic faith!" Kate Benzing



Sign-up now for Steubenville North Conference Open to current 8-12th Graders

We are going to St. Paul at the University of St. Thomas **July 29-31**.

We hope to bring a 50+ students. The total cost is \$250. **\$50 deposits to hold spots are now due.** Bring a check, payable to St. Mary, on Wednesday

day Nights or drop off in the Church Collection basket. Please put them in an envelope marked "Attention Nick: Steubenville."

I cannot express how much of a life-changing experience this retreat is! It is a great way for students to get to know other students within the youth group and get ready for high school. Students take so much way from this weekend towards their friendships, families, and most importantly their relationship with Christ! Each year is a different experience, so please encourage your child to go even if they have attended in years past. Nick

And Jesus said
to his disciples:

Come away with me
to a deserted place
and rest awhile

As a pastor, I was very glad to be a part of St. Mary's first women and men retreat weekends. God continues to call us together as his chosen people. The Holy Spirit was a live and moving in each of the retreatants, who experienced the love of God who is so merciful.

Our women's weekend touched over 75 lives and our men's weekend—50 lives. Thank you to all who opened their hearts to this weekend and to the many who gave their time and talents making these weekends a reality. Fr. Tim

Women's Weekend October 23-25



"There was a great feeling of love among all the women. I liked the thought we are enough for Jesus just the way we are."

"I found this weekend very inspiring and motivational."

"I found this weekend very inspiring and motivational. It was a very much needed retreat. Thank you for a very blessed weekend - that I will always remember and cherish. You all have helped im-

prove my faith, knowledge and love of Jesus, God and our faith."

"It was truly an overwhelming, powerful, engaging weekend. Amazing Experience. Thanks"

"It was a wonderful weekend

and met many women in our parish that I see often, but didn't really know. I feel closer to the women of our parish. Thank you!"

"The experience was exceptional!"

Men's Weekend November 6-8



The conference was done very well. The speakers did a wonderful job and very moving. I was pleased to see so many men of all age groups come together and seek growth in their faith.

Great Experience! I thought the whole weekend was excellent. I feel the pace and flow was good. Great speakers sharing their stories. Great food! Fantastic experience!

I very much enjoyed the weekend. I experienced the Holy Spirit a couple of times. Reconciliation and Adoration were my favorite—so powerful/moving. Thank you for doing this!

Wow! Thanks for a great weekend! Everyone shared wonderful stories that were very moving. I The food was awesome. It was just what I needed. I am proud to say St. Mary parish is my home.

A Look Back at Fall 2015



Confirmation Mass: October 7, 2015

Bishop Martin Amos' Confirmation Homily:

When you think of all the commercials we see—there is always good news: the lady who gives up her broom for a swiffer mop, the pill that takes off pounds with no effort, a new car that will go from zero to 60 in just a few seconds, and the people touting these products always look so good. All of these products will make you feel so good and happy.

I think Jesus or at least the evangelists could have used an advertising agent. What starts as good news: *You are the Christ, the anointed one, the messiah...* doesn't seem to end on a feel good, happy note. If you try and save your life you are going to lose it. They will manhandle and persecute you. Some will be put to death. Now, pick up your cross and follow me. Our motto: "We offer you pain, suffering, rejection, sorrow, imprisonment and death. Why don't you come join us?"

We need to re-examine what the word cross might mean. I wonder if it could be taken for commitment and all that it entails. If you are involved in athletics and want to be good, you take up a cross daily to achieve a higher level. You might forgo some foods, give up leisure time, work out, and practice, practice, practice. The goal of the higher level you achieve, make the commitment or cross worth it.

Farmers take up a cross. Each day they rise early, they go out to work no matter the weather. They need to be home each day to take care of their animals. They work long, long days. The goal makes the commitment worth it.

How about married people? If you want a successful marriage, each has to take up his/her cross. There are commitments to keep, patience to practice, compromises to make. Certainly raising children involves daily sacrifices. It is a lot of work and it does involve crosses, but the goal makes the commitment worth it all.

If you want to get a good education, it takes commitment, it takes a cross. You need to get to school every day. You need to pay attention, do your homework, and study, study, study.

If you want to be my disciple, take up your cross and follow me. Take up the commitment of being a disciple. We are talking about ultimate things. They are free gifts: grace, salvation, eternal life. You can't merit them, buy them, or bargain for them. But you need to take up the cross and follow Jesus. What are we willing to do to achieve that goal?

There is a cost to discipleship. A relationship with God means loving God above all things, yes all things. A relationship with God means loving others as we love ourselves and our loved by God. It means trying to stay in right relationship with everyone. It involves being with God by taking time for prayer and reflection. It involves listening to the Spirit—who is given to you in a special way today and following that lead. It means coming together weekly for Eucharist. It means patience, kindness, compassion, forgiveness and understanding.

How much do you really want this?
Enough to be a disciple?

Jesus said to his disciples, 'Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.'
Matthew 16:24

Those of you who are here to be confirmed are saying to me that you are ready to fully accept this commitment and cross even in a world that thinks this is impossible. If you think confirmation is some kind of ending, you are missing the point. It is a strengthening, a new beginning to each day pick up your cross and follow Christ. We learn from Christ who first picked up his cross for us.

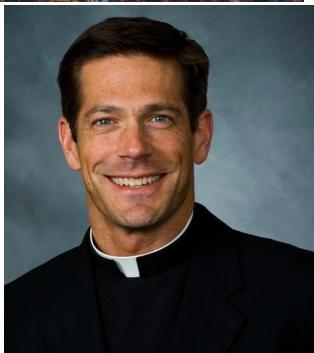
There is no crown without the cross. There is no Easter without Good Friday. There is no salvation without following in the footsteps of Christ. The goal makes the commitment worth it.

A Look Ahead at Fall 2016



Archbishop Charles Chaput

The leader of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, is known for his lively discussion on wide range of topics with our faith and culture. This Capuchin friar is the first native American ever to be named Archbishop



Father Michael Schmitz has a unique talent for speaking directly to the heart about what matters most. Known for his hilarity and "genuine coolness," he notes, "Too many live too small a story," and urges all to "live the story that God wants for our lives."

Make plans to attend the 4th **Christ Our Life Catholic Regional Conference in Des Moines** at the Wells Fargo Arena on Saturday and Sunday, **September 24 and 25, 2016**

Wherever we are in our faith journey... asking, exploring and learning are critical to deepening our faith. **We invite you now.** Gather your family, friends, neighbors, co-workers and fellow parishioners to hear the teaching and witnessing of world-renowned Catholic speakers.

CHRIST OUR LIFE



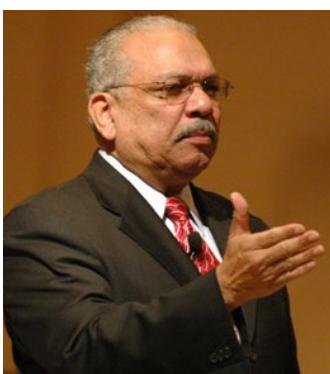
Mark Hart Generating incredible excitement in 2014, the Bible Geek returns. Mark's global appeal continues to grow as he applies the Word of God to tough topics, as well as inciting great laughter through his creative storytelling and holy humor.



Jackie Francois Angel This California girl divides her time as wife, mother, speaker and songwriter. She reinforces informs young people of the true joy found in chastity while facing challenges in seeking purity today.



Jesse Romero radio host, author and former sheriff shares ways in which Jesus Christ, faith and the Church are under attack, he explains the power of spiritual warfare in effecting positive change.



Alex Jones retains his firey, entertaining style from his days as a Pentecostal preacher in Detroit. He stunned family by becoming Catholic. And led his wife, 14 relatives and many of his flock into the Church by helping them understand the truth of Catholicism.



Father Tom Hagan Living in a Haitian slum of for 20 years, he knows the pain of unspeakable violence, starvation, five hurricanes and 2010 earthquake. He serves the least of God's people and shares with others the lessons, challenges & hopes of his experiences.



Steve Angrisano Musician, composer and story weaver Steve brings pure joy and reverence to worship as he reminds us that our Faith is a great gift from God and that we are all called to be saints.

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Mercy:
the bridge that connects
God and man,
opening our hearts
to the hope
of being loved forever
despite
our sinfulness.



-Pope Francis

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



ASH WEDNESDAY
February 10 Masses:
7:00am & 6:30pm

"The season of Lent during this Jubilee Year should be lived more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God's Mercy." -Pope Francis



Come and begin the Season of Lent by celebrating Mass with us on Ash Wednesday.