

LENT & EASTER 2017

February 2017

St. Mary Help of Christians, Briggsville

St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Portage



From the Pastor's Desk

This edition of the parish newsletter for St. Mary Help of Christians and St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception is filled with information for you to read, ponder, pray about and respond to. Whether you are reading this on-line or as a paper copy, it is our most significant means of communication to keep you informed and in-touch with what's happening in our parishes and in the church. A few highlights in this edition:

- ◆ Information about the upcoming Parish Mission, March 5-8 with Fr. John Meoska, OSB
- ◆ A listing of Catholic periodicals, both paper and on-line
- ◆ A well-written booklet about the parts of the Mass and why we do what we do called "From Mass to Mission"
- ◆ A reflection on Lent, and a schedule of Lenten and Easter Season services - including opportunities for Reconciliation, Stations of the Cross and Easter Triduum.
- ◆ An update regarding "Foundations for our Future" capital campaign and our very first steps in planning for the renovation of the church in Portage.

There is a lot to read, so please don't try to do so in one sitting! Take your time to digest the information. If you have any questions, please call one of the parish staff or any of the parish leadership on the Pastoral or Finance Councils listed below.

I wish you a blessed Lenten Season and Easter!

Fr. Gary

MASS SCHEDULE

St. Mary, Portage

Saturday, 4:00 pm
Sunday, 9:30 am & 11:00 am

St. Mary, Briggsville

Sunday, 8:00 am

Pastor— Fr. Gary Krahnenbuhl
garyk.stmary@gmail.com

Deacon— Dennis Sutter
dsutter.stmary@gmail.com

ST. MARY, PORTAGE

Phone— 742-6998

Director of Faith Formation & Youth Ministry— Brenda Collins
brenda.stmary@gmail.com

Director of Worship & Pastoral Ministry— Teresa Gracyalny
teresag.stmary@gmail.com

Secretary— Kari Caulum
kcaulum.stmary@gmail.com

Bookkeeper— Christine R. Daly
cdaly.stmary@gmail.com

Parish Nurses

Jim & Barb Donovan— 981-2289

Maintenance

Darrel Germain

Cemetery Sexton

Joe Weber—jweber79@aol.com
608-742-5784 or 608-617-6046

Pastoral Council Chair

Natalie James— 608-697-5355

Finance Council Chair

Ken Griep— 608-697-0283

ST. MARY, BRIGGSVILLE

Phone— 981-2282

Pastoral Minister
Sr. Jovita Winkel, CSA
stmaryhofc@maqs.net

Director of Faith Formation

Teresa Romain
teresa.smhoc@maqs.net
608-432-2956

Bookkeeper— Barbara Poppy
253-2100

Maintenance

Bob Gauger

Pastoral Council Chair

Charles Newling— 608-981-2150

Finance Council Chair

Steffanie Murphy— 608-981-2393

Cemetery Sexton

Jim Dinegan
981-2183

Mission Statement

We, the parishes of St. Mary Help of Christians (Briggsville) and St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception (Portage), in a spirit of faith and service rooted in the mission of Christ as revealed in the Gospel, are committed to creating welcoming communities that actively pursue opportunities for formation in our Catholic faith, spiritual growth and outreach to others in need.

Parish Website

www.stmaryportage.com

St. Mary, Portage Email

portage.stmary@gmail.com

St. Mary, Briggsville Email

stmaryhofc@maqs.net



From Ashes to Easter

There is no surer sign that Lent has arrived than the ashen cross on people's foreheads as they show up at work or school or in the line at the grocery store. That cross of ashes has long been both a sign of Lent and a sign of Catholic identity. However, the essence of Lent is so much more than a dark smudge on the forehead and habits of "giving up" the same thing every year. That cross of ashes is the starting line of a closer journey with Jesus to Easter.

Our lives are filled with distractions that take us away from living a life with Christ. Sometimes we try to fill the emptiness inside us with mindless TV, meaningless chatter, too many activities or other irrelevant stuff. We run away from life and from God.

Lent is a time to return to God and re-focus our lives to be more in line with Jesus. It is a time to open us up to the Word of God, to the world around us, to the needs of others, and to allow the Holy Spirit to work in us. It is a call to conversion – to a change of heart. It is that change of heart that best prepares us to celebrate the joy of the Easter mysteries.

Each Lent we turn again to the Church's ancient practices to awakening our often – complacent spirits. We fast, give alms, and pray.

Journey of Fasting

Fasting and abstinence are not sacrifices for the sake of pain or vain discomfort. Sacrifice for the sake of sacrifice is not a Christian virtue. Fasting and abstinence help us to ask ourselves the question: "What sustains me and gives me life?" What nourishes me on my journey of life? We will find the answer, in choosing holiness over earthly pleasures, and at the end of these forty days of Lent—in the Resurrection of Jesus.



Journey of Almsgiving

Every day we witness situations of injustice, violence, and hatred. Television and the Internet bring these into our living rooms, but we also observe and live them in our own cities and homes. The Church challenges us to be generous stewards of all God's gifts and calls us during Lent to be especially conscious of the needs of others and to act accordingly. Giving materially to another is an act of Christian charity known as "almsgiving."

Preparing for Lent

- PRAYER
- FASTING
- Almsgiving
- Penance

Journey of Prayer

We know the importance of prayer in our lives—as individuals, as families, and as a community. Prayer is especially important during Lent. The Lenten season is a time for reflection, evaluation, and repentance. It helps us to learn patience, perseverance and the ability to accept suffering in whatever form it takes. It is also a time to come to know and love our Savior more intimately and completely. We believe that the fullness of joy comes in communion with God.

As we journey from Ashes to Easter, may our fasting be a hunger for justice, our alms be an offering of peace and our prayers the reflection of humble and grateful hearts so that when Easter arrives we can sing our "Alleluias" with refreshed spirits.

Wills and Estate Planning

Please consider remembering St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish or St. Mary Help of Christians Parish in your estate planning. Having been a part of your life for many years, leaving a part of your estate to the parish is both an honorable and spiritual way to remember the past generations who have done the same, and the generations to come who will continue to be educated and worship in our parishes.



Ashes will be distributed at all Masses on Wednesday, March 1.



10:00 am— Tivoli at Divine Savior Healthcare

2805 Hunters Trail, Portage, WI 53901

12:00 pm— St. Mary, Portage

5:30 pm— St. Mary, Portage

7:00 pm— St. Mary, Briggsville

St. Mary, Briggsville Adult Faith Formation Lenten Opportunities

♦ Walking the Journey— Presenter: Sr. Jovita

Sunday, March 12— following 8:00 am Mass

♦ Conversation and Coffee

Wednesday, March 29 following 8:15 am Mass

Holy Week Schedule

Holy Thursday, April 13th

St. Mary, Portage—7:00 pm

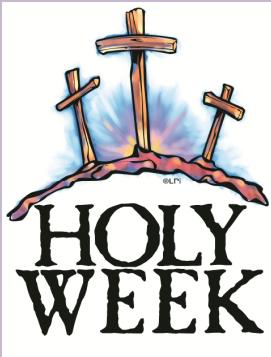
Good Friday, April 14th

St. Mary, Briggsville— 12:00 pm

St. Mary, Portage— 2:00 pm

St. Mary, Portage— 7:00 pm

(Tenebrae Service)



Holy Saturday, April 15th

St. Mary, Portage

Blessing of Easter Baskets— 11:00 am

Easter Vigil Service— 8:00 pm

Easter Sunday, April 16th

St. Mary, Briggsville—7:50 am (please note early start time)

St. Mary, Portage—9:30 & 11:00 am

Stations of the Cross & Reconciliation

Stations of the Cross

Tivoli at Divine Savior Healthcare

2805 Hunters Trail, Portage, WI 53901

Fridays, 10:00 am

(March 10th-31st)

St. Mary, Portage

Fridays, 12:00 pm

(March 10th-31st)

St. Mary, Briggsville

Wednesday, March 22— 7:00 pm

Shadow Stations of the Cross

As we reflect upon each station of the Passion of Our Lord, we also endeavor to see our own lives reflected, and remember how Jesus our Lord is with us. Please join us in this special tradition presented by our St. Mary, Portage Faith Formation & school students in grades 6-12.

St. Mary, Portage

Wednesday, April 5— 6:00 pm

Individual Reconciliation (Confession)

St. Mary, Portage

Saturdays, 9:00— 10:00 am

(March 4— April 8)

St. Mary, Portage—Parish Mission

Wednesday, March 8 from 6:30-7:45 pm

St. Mary, Portage

Tuesday, March 14 from 4:00 -4:45 pm

Communal Penance Service

Sacred Heart, Reedsburg

Wednesday, March 22— 7:00 pm

St. Joseph, Baraboo

Thursday, March 23— 7:00 pm

St. Cecelia, Wisconsin Dells

Wednesday, April 5— 5:30 & 7:00 pm

Parish Mission to Embrace Mercy and Faithfulness

As you read in the article on page 2, the season of Lent is about more than “giving things up” – it’s also a time for us to actively engage in opportunities for spiritual growth and renewal.

For the first time in many years, the parishes of St. Mary, Portage and St. Mary, Briggsville have such an opportunity through the upcoming Parish Mission taking place March 5th - 8th.

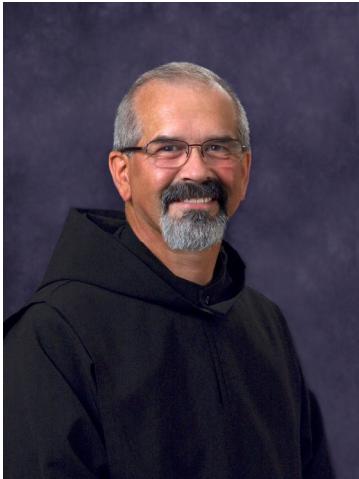
Parish missions have a long tradition in the Catholic Church.

According to Sr. Jovita of St. Mary, Briggsville missions have historically been “a form of adult formation that could reach a large part of the parish population.”

Fr. Gary echoes, “missions were an opportunity for parishioners to be exposed to preaching and teaching that would deepen their personal faith and help them retain or recognize their own call to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

When asked what he hoped a person attending the Mission might expect or hope to experience, Fr Gary paused for a moment before answering. “I would hope that all would come ‘hungry’ and come away ‘well fed’, he answered. “Missions can affect a person in many different ways. People can be comforted or they may be challenged; others may find peace or healing from old wounds; still others simply find themselves more grounded in their faith; some might be motivated to live their faith more fully.” When asked what his own hopes were for this upcoming Mission, Fr. Gary said simply, “My greatest hope is that people come. Once that happens I’m content to let the Holy Spirit do what the Holy Spirit does.”

(Parish Mission con't on pg. 5)



Fr. John Meoska, OSB,
will be the presenter at our
Parish Mission
March 5th – 8th

Born & raised in southwestern Wisconsin, Fr. John was ordained a priest for the Madison Diocese in 1982 and served as Associate Pastor at St. Mary, Portage from 1983-1986. He lived a contemplative life for 21 years at the Spiritual Life Institute and has previously given retreats and parish missions throughout the United States, Canada and Ireland. He now serves as Formation Director and Novice master at St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota.

Parish Mission Schedule

Fr. John will preach at all Masses the weekend of March 4th and 5th.

Sunday, March 5th

6:30 pm— Presentation on *God's Mercy, Our Mission* followed by a social

Monday, March 6th

6:30 pm—Presentation on *Living Faithfully in a Secular Age* followed by a social

Tuesday, March 7th

10:00-11:00 am— *Coffee, Conversation & Catholicism* An informal time of question and conversation with Fr. John over a hot cup of coffee or tea in the lower level meeting room of the Parish Center.

Tuesday, March 7th

5:00 pm— Mass

5:30 pm — Community Dinner
(reservations required for planning)

6:30 pm — Presentation on *Mercy and Faithfulness: The Prayer and Example of Jesus* followed by time for silent prayer in church

Wednesday, March 8th

6:30 pm— Individual Sacrament of Reconciliation – Several priests will be available

Need a babysitter?

Babysitting is available during the mission presentations for children age 2-12 years.

Advance sign-up by Monday, February 27 is required so that we can make sure we have sufficient volunteer babysitters.

To sign up your child(ren) for babysitting, please call the Parish Office at 608-742-6998 or sign up on the parish website: www.stmaryportage.com

(Parish Mission Con't)

The theme for the upcoming mission, presented by Fr. John Meoska, OSB, is "Mercy and Faithfulness Have Met" based on Psalm 85:10.

Fr. John's presentations will focus on the mercy and faithfulness which God shows His people and our call to answer

Him in the same way. The message will allow all who attend the opportunity to reflect on the challenges we face in living out our Catholic faith in today's world and how we can open our hearts to grow more deeply in our experience of God's faithfulness and mercy.

Fr. John will preach at all Masses the weekend of March 4-5. Special mission presentations and opportunities for community fellowship will follow March 5th-8th. (**see Mission Schedule on page 4.**) The mission will conclude on Wednesday night with an opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and spend time in individual prayer.

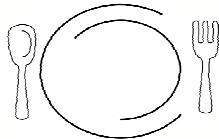
Need a ride to the Mission?

As parishes, we are committed that ALL who want to attend the Mission are able to do so. If you want to attend some or all of the Mission events but are unable to drive or don't have a vehicle, volunteers have come forth who are willing to provide transportation. If you need someone to give you a ride, please call Teresa Gracyalny at 608-742-6998 x227 or 608-751-3436 no later than Monday, February 27.



Planning to Join Us for Dinner Tuesday night?

Reserve your seat(s) for the dinner being held at 5:30 pm on Tuesday, March 7 in the school cafeteria in Portage. The dinner will be followed by Fr. John's presentation in the church.



Reservations MUST be made no later than Monday, February 20. You can make your reservation by calling the Parish Office at 608-742-6998 or on the parish website: www.stmaryportage.com.

St. Mary, Portage

Foundations For Our Future

Thank you to all who have pledged to our ongoing capital campaign to eliminate debt and improve our facilities. Recently we reached our dream goal of \$1,500,000. With over \$690,000.00 collected, this has enabled us to pay off our loan and start the process of a design study to help address our church facility needs, including structural and liturgical improvements. **River Architects** from LaCrosse has been selected to conduct this design study. We will continue to involve and inform the Parish throughout the process.



It was beautiful to see over 40 people gather on February 1 for the first session of our Alpha Course. We came together seeking community, an opportunity to explore the meaning of life, and to deepen our faith. It was nice to experience on-going Adult Faith Formation.

We were treated to a delicious spaghetti dinner prepared by one of our Parish Prayer groups, listened to a presentation, broke into small groups, light-heartedly shared who we are, and briefly discussed what more life has to offer us.

We had many more than 40 sign up for Alpha but were limited due to space constraints. The good news is that we will be offering a Fall Alpha Course, date and time to be determined. You may sign up on our website to be put on the waiting list for the fall course—www.stmaryportage.com

Thank you for your interest. Please keep all those involved in Alpha in your continued prayers.

God's Peace,
Deacon Dennis

ACA - Annual Catholic Appeal

Every Lent the Diocese conducts its Annual Catholic Appeal in all its parishes. Most of you will soon be receiving a direct mailing from the diocese in regard to the ACA. We encourage you to be as generous as possible in the support of the ministry that is extended beyond parish boundaries in our name, and the services that we receive from the diocese. Please read the material you received very carefully. If you do not respond at that time, you will have an opportunity to do so at church on the weekend of March 18-19. The diocese has set "goals" for each parish:

St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception: \$41,882; St. Mary Help of Christians: \$6,207.

Catholic Periodicals

As adult Catholics, we have an obligation to ourselves and to our faith community to remain informed and educated about our ever-changing Church. We do this through a variety of sources: active membership in the parish and regular worship, involvement in Adult Education opportunities offered at the parishes and at the diocesan level - and good periodicals that keep us up-to-date and well-educated.

One of the most inexpensive and readily accessible subscriptions available to us is the "*Catholic Herald*". This newspaper is published weekly and is mailed directly to your home or you can read the on-line edition. It contains stories about the local church (parishes), diocesan news, as well as a good overview of what is happening in the world-wide Church. It has special sections for children and the youth and is the official newspaper for the Diocese of Madison. Bishop Morlino has expressed his wish that **every** Catholic household receive this paper. It is his primary source of

communication to all of us in the diocese.

If you wish to begin receiving or continue to receive the "*Catholic Herald*", please fill out the form on page 8 and return it with the cost of the subscription: \$22.00 per year. You can subscribe to the paper edition, the on-line edition or both all for the same price. (You may mail it in, drop it off at the office, or just include it in the weekend collection.) **If you wish to receive it but cannot afford to do so, please indicate this on the form and the parish will pay your subscription cost.**

We are also including a list of other good Catholic periodicals that you may wish to subscribe to. These periodicals are an excellent source of information in regard to the Catholic faith. Please take the time to look over the selection. Many offer the opportunity to receive a free copy or two.



St. Anthony Messenger is always current, beautifully illustrated, and right on target with the topics Catholics want and need to know more about. Each issue provides a blend of contemporary spirituality, news, and practical articles on church life and teaching.

St. Anthony Messenger Press
28 W. Liberty St., Cincinnati, OH 45202
\$39.00/year (13) issues
www.franciscanmedia.org

U. S. Catholic is a very popular magazine that offers refreshing, thought provoking commentary on topics that affect Catholic life as it is lived in the home, on the job and in the world.

U.S. Catholic
ATTN: Customer Service
P.O. Box 408
Congers, NY 10920-0408
\$30/year — 12 issues
www.uscatholic.org

America is a published by the Jesuits; a lively journal of opinion including crisp editorials and incisive articles on contemporary theology and current events.

America Magazine
106 West 56 St.
New York, NY 10019 (800) 627-9533
\$56.00/year (28 issues)
www.americamagazine.org

Catholic Digest presents a generous selection of appealing reading: Human interest stories, stimulating topical articles, humorous anecdotes, quips, and quotes.

Catholic Digest
P.O. Box 6015
New London, CT 06320
\$19.95/year (9 issues)
www.catholicdigest.com

National Catholic Reporter is an independent Catholic newsmagazine connecting local, national, global issues and social concerns with the faith of our church.

National Catholic Reporter
P.O. Box 410890
Kansas City, MO 64111 (800) 333-7373
\$49.95/year (26 issues)
www.ncronline.org

Other daily reflection or on-line sources:

Word on Fire Catholic Resources www.wordonfire.org
(One of the overall best and informative sites - and it's free!)

The Word Among Us www.wau.org
Give Us This Day www.giveus>thisday.org
United States Council of Catholic Bishops www.usccb.org

Diocese of Madison www.diocesofmadsion.org
Ronald Rolheiser OMI www.ronrolheiser.com

Notable Catholic Periodicals and Websites

The Catholic Herald is the official newspaper of the Diocese of Madison. It includes news from around the diocese, feature articles, bi-weekly children's page, articles for families, reflections on Sunday readings, and more. \$22.00/year
www.madisoncatholicherald.org

Use the form in this newsletter to subscribe to the paper copy, on-line edition or both.

ST. MARY BEST FEST-2017

Save the weekend! Our 18th Annual St. Mary Best Fest will be held May 19-21, 2017 and planning has already begun. Many of the popular traditions will continue this year including the carnival hosted by Christman Amusements, Friday Night Family Night, Mini-Raffle, Bob Viking Entertainment, great food and great camaraderie.

The central theme of Best Fest is a sense of community, both in our parish and in our city. Best Fest is one of the parish's largest fundraisers and in order for it to be successful, we welcome and need involvement from all of our parishioners. We can't do it without you! This year's festival will be co-chaired by Sarah Kravick and Heather Stenberg.

The Best Fest Committee will be looking not only for many, many volunteers to help throughout the entire weekend

but a couple of activity chair people as well.

A committee for publicity/advertising has been created. We need a chairperson for that as well as Entertainment, and the Mini-Raffle.

If any of these interest you and you would be willing to help out, please contact Sarah Kravick at sjk0812@msn.com, 608-697-1912 or Heather Stenberg at stenny@charter.net. Look for more detailed information to follow in the Sunday bulletins.



What's New at School?

St. Mary School celebrated National Catholic Schools Week earlier this month. The theme for the National Catholic Schools Week 2017 was "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service." We observed this celebration by kicking off the week with Mass on Saturday, January 28, followed by our annual spaghetti dinner hosted by the Home and School Association, along with a variety of fun activities throughout the week.

As a Catholic school, faith is the key component to the education we provide. We are blessed to be able to teach our Catholic faith and the Gospel of Jesus Christ openly in our classrooms and integrate values into all the content areas taught. We are able to

provide service learning opportunities so that students can help make the world a better place. They learn how to service their local community and gain an appreciation for how they can continue to serve others their entire lives.

St. Mary School is able to thrive for over 150 years due to the continuing support of our parish community. We benefit all year long from volunteers, religious guidance, prayers, and support our parish provides. This is worth celebrating!

Thank you to everyone, past, present, and future who has been a part of this school family and committed to Catholic Education. You are forever part of our growing legacy!

Jamie Hahn, Principal
jamhahn@stmarysportage.org



St. Mary School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at this school.

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of our educational and employment policies and athletic and school administered programs.

Catholic Herald Order Form

If you wish to receive the "Catholic Herald", please fill out the "subscription form" below and return it with the cost of the subscription: \$22.00/year for the paper edition or on-line edition. There is no additional cost to receive both. (You may mail it in, drop it off at the office, or just include it in the weekend collection.)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Please check the edition you would like to receive.

mailed paper copy on-line copy paper & on-line copy

I have enclosed my \$22.00.

Please include your email address below if you would like the online edition.

You may also go to our website to sign up for the on-line edition- www.stmaryportage.com

Love Begins Here

Christianity is a call to love and a call to serve. We invite you to put your faith in action this summer and serve alongside hundreds of high school and middle school missionaries through a local mission program called **Love Begins Here**. Inspired by Blessed Mother Teresa's call to begin love in one's own community, **Love Begins Here** invites you to encounter the Lord in an intimate way through service, community, and fun.

LBH provides youth in our Diocese with an opportunity to encounter Jesus Christ in a life changing way through local Mission Trips where they live in Catholic community and continue His work on earth. Our parish has been bringing teens for the past 3 summers, and it's always a highlight of the year for them and the adults who join them.



Please mark the following dates on your calendar for your teens!

- ◆ **High School Mission Trip**
\$120, Current 9th - 12th Graders:
HS2, June 18-23rd - Monroe
- ◆ **Middle School Mission Trip**
\$100, Current 6th - 8th Graders,
MS3, July 5-8, 2017 - Portage

Registration materials are available for your families in the back of church or on our parish website. While you're saving those dates for your teens, I'd love it if you thought about keeping one of those weeks open in your schedule, too. Adults who serve as lead missionaries usually love to experience just as much as the teens do. We will need 2-3 adults to help out with each of those trips.

LBH Host Site

We are so excited to announce that this summer, July 5-8; our parish will be hosting a crew of about 100 teens for a **Love Begins Here** mission trip! While they are in here they will be doing service projects for our parish and the community. Please keep our planning teams in your prayers as we prepare.

A big part of what they enjoy doing is helping individual parishioners with outdoor/indoor projects they could use assistance with! **Love Begins Here** missionaries work in groups as small as 4-5 teens accompanied by 1-2 chaperones and depending on the size of your project we could send out multiple groups for one or more days! If you or anyone you know would be interested in having a group of teens and chaperones help you out this summer please contact Brenda Collins in the Parish Center. (742-6998)