



ST. MARYS CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT

2019



216 BELMONT RD
Grand Forks, ND 58201
www.stmarysgfnd.com

Pastor's Report

By Rev. James Gross

Greetings and peace in the Lord Jesus! It's hard to believe that we have begun a new decade! We look to the Holy Spirit and especially to the loving intercession of Mary, our Blessed Mother, to guide us in living out our vocation to holiness as a faith community in the heart of Grand Forks.

I want to begin by thanking the many parishioners who volunteer their time and talent in our various groups and committees. Your efforts are often unsung and behind the scenes, but they contribute significantly to the life of our parish. Each of you help to make St. Mary's a warm and joyful place. We simply could not fulfill our mission without you!

That being said, there are a great many of our parishioners whom we invite to engage more fully in what St. Mary's has to offer. I say this not just to increase our activity within the church walls, but to welcome more and more people into a deep and dynamic relationship with our Triune God. Robust evangelization needs to be a central part of what every Catholic parish does: as a fellow priest recently remarked, "If we're not growing, we're dying." Let us together pray about and work toward expanding our outreach, so that more of our brothers and sisters will find the consolation we seek and the life-changing encounter that comes only from Christ.

During the past year, 2019, we celebrated the sacrament of Baptism for 18 children and their families. We celebrated the marriage of Chris and Rachel Suhr on June 15th. Laurie Safranski was received into Full Communion in the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil. 15 third-grade students received Confirmation and First Holy Communion at a Mass with Bishop Folda Saturday, May 18th. And we prayed for the repose of 15 loved ones at funeral Masses and services, offered either at the church or at area funeral homes.

We know that God has great things in store for us in 2020. I look forward to seeing them unfold and sharing in them with all of you! Again, feel free to contact me with any concerns, questions, or suggestions. May God continue to bless you and your families!

Fr. James Gross

Finance Council

By Russ Prochko, Finance Council Director

A Finance Council is comprised of at least three appointed members (Canon 492). These members are to be endowed with special competence in financial matters and of prudent judgement. They must have a truly Catholic understanding of the mission of the Church. They are to advise the pastor.

In 2019 the Finance Council approved the income statements each month in addition to:

- 1 – Upgrading of the camera system to better ensure security within the church and daycare.
- 2 – Finalized a document which will be used yearly to delineate dollars to honor our commitment to Holy Family/St. Mary's School, St. Michael's and Sacred Heart.

As for our financial status, (see last page for details), we are in good standing. In 2020 we will continue to meet the first Thursday of each month to discuss the financial status of the church. The monthly minutes can be found on the parish website.

St. Mary's Altar Society

By Linda Palmiscno, President

The purpose of St. Mary's Altar Society is to promote education by truly Christian women, to unite all Christian women (single, married or widowed), to edify one another by word and deed, to support one another by fervent prayers and be a fruitful source of blessing to the home and community. The society shall willingly care for St. Mary's Church.

Altar Society meets on the first Monday of each month, with exception of summer months and begins and ends with prayer. The balance of the meeting is usually taking care of business such as approval of expenditures and planning of upcoming activities.

To start 2019, Fr. Gross met with us and asked us to pray and plan how to enlist new membership as typical attendance is 12 members. We haven't been very successful at having others attend meetings, but have enjoyed meeting new members at Fall dinner preparation and serving, and more women helping with funerals.

We sponsored many activities including:

- Adult Catechism on the 2nd and 4th Mondays at 6:30pm. We used the Catholic Faith Handbook as a guide. In the fall of 2019 we purchased 100 copies of BIBLE BASICS FOR CATHOLICS for distribution after Masses in Dec. and will be using it along with a study guide in 2020.
- Several women did a post construction clean up at the rectory and a few finishing items were purchased after the remodel.

- Soup Supers on 5 Wednesday's during Lent. The "free will offering" in the amount of \$726. Was donated to the Grand Forks Foundation for Education, which supports needs of homeless children. A program sponsored by the Health Ministry /Social Concerns committee followed each week.
- Scholarship for graduating senior, who is chosen by essay and volunteer activities. This year's recipient was Kelsie Narlock.
- The Month of Money (December)raffle tickets were mailed to each household (about 450) with about half of them being returned sold. Additional tickets were printed to be sold. A total of 432 of the goal of 500 were sold.
- St. Anne's Bingo is attended by 25-35 residents on the 4th Tuesday of each month Sept-May. We provide sandwiches, pickles and prizes for Bingo and assist residents as needed.
- The last Tuesday in April St. Mary's assists with a birthday party at Valley Memorial Homes and provides cakes.
- A reception for Fr. Gross' 20th Anniversary was served on June 20.
- The annual Fall Chicken & meatball dinner was served on Sept. 22. Approximately 450 people were served. 1 Bishop Emeritus, 7 Priests and 3 sisters took advantage of the complimentary tickets. Children with free meals were not counted.
- A number of volunteers were unable to help due to heavy fall rains and basement water, but those who were there willingly filled in the gaps.
- The Senior Christmas Party was held on Dec7. The Lents family's entertainment was enjoyed by all. Attendance was low. We may consider another idea for socializing.
- The Sacristan manages the needs of the Altar and liturgies by purchasing candles, baptismal stoles, vestments, altar server albs and many other items as needed. She works with the Liturgy committee to determine these needs.
- Lunch was served for 11 funerals.
- Many behind the scenes activities took place, such as preparation of bread to be blessed at Thanksgiving, meals for the priests before Reconciliation services, etc.
- Costs of paint for the dining room, repair of the coffee urn in the kitchen and a garbage disposal were paid.
- Scheduled payment of \$6000. to the parish and donation of \$1600 was made to St. Joseph Social Care.

With God's grace we will continue service to St. Mary's and will hopefully see more women who will feel the calling to join us.

Religious Education

By Don Palmiscno, Director of Religious Education

Our enrollment for our Religious Education classes is at 104, 81 on Sunday's for Pre – 5th grades and 23 on Wednesdays for 6th – 12th grades. Our High School is at 8 with 2 being 12th graders. Our Pre-school is at 7. We Confirmed 16 3rd graders with 10 scheduled for 2020. Our 2nd grade is up to 15 with our 1st grade up to 12.

We continue to use "Alive in Christ" produced by Our Sunday Visitor. It is used by all Fargo Churches starting this Fall. So far, we are happy with it.

Our High School Students used "Theology of the Body" series under the guidance of Emily Bibow and Fr. Gross. They now are using Decision Point under the guidance of Chelse and Mat Kippley

Our 6th – 12th grade students had "The Living Stations" for our parish the week before Holy Week to help the parish get ready for Lent.

We hosted the Fargo Diocese Middle School "Youth Rally" in April. Our High School Youth ran a Concession stand as a fund raiser for their trip to the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis next November. We took 2 of our Student's and 3 from Holy Family.

We also ran a Concession stand for the parish Bingo.

We participated in a "Teen Mass" by having our Teens lector, usher, and choir.

Our fun activity was going to the Twin Cities in June. We went to the Twins game and Valley Fair.

Music Ministry

By Alyce Stokke, Choir Director

In 2019 St. Mary's musicians strived to make each and every Mass a prayerful experience. Our dedicated musicians often aided in the liturgy for more than one Mass per weekend and our accompanists continued stretching themselves to play the organ, even if piano was their primary instrument. We have also had a few new singers added to our list; some experienced and some new to the leadership role. The children's choir continued to help with approximately 6-7 Masses throughout the year.

St. Mary's FUTURE

By Mary Jo Schill, President

St. Mary's Friends United Toward Urban Religious Education (FUTURE) was incorporated in 1977 as a non-profit organization dedicated to providing extra financial support to St. Mary's Parish in order to educate the children of the Parish in the Catholic Faith. The mission of FUTURE is to support our children's education at a Catholic school or through the Parish Religious Education program. FUTURE income is derived from new memberships and donations. During 2019, FUTURE received \$900.00 in memorial and special donations.

During the past year, FUTURE investment income provided \$4200.00 to fund \$300.00 tuition scholarships for fourteen parish children who are attending either Holy Family/St. Mary's School, St. Michael's School or Sacred Heart School. In addition, FUTURE provided \$3700.00 to the Parish for dedicated use to purchase updated technology equipment to the Religious Education program and to support Holy Family-St. Mary's School. FUTURE will continue to sponsor the scholarship program and provide financial support to the Parish during the upcoming year. Also, during 2020, FUTURE will work on locating and starting a data base of St. Mary's School alumni.

FUTURE invites all parishioners to join the organization as a way to support our children in the development of their Faith. A lifetime membership is \$500.00 and this can be paid over a 5-year period. There are FUTURE membership/donation envelopes available near the Church entrances.

"St. Mary's knows children are the world's most valuable resource and best hope for the FUTURE"

Health, Social Concerns and Prayer Shawl Ministries

By Virginia Esslinger, Parish Nurse

Health Ministry

- Blood pressures continue to be offered by the parish nurse on the third weekend of the month after the masses with the exception of the months of June, July and August.
- Booklets from Abbey Press on a variety of topics are available to parishioners at the time of the blood pressure checks.
- Advance directive forms from the ND Catholic Conference are available at the blood pressure check times.
- A flu vaccination clinic was held on Sunday, September 22nd at St. Mary's during the Fall Dinner. A total of 72 people received flu vaccinations. That compares with 47 in 2018, 46 in 2017, 31 in 2016, 54 in 2015, 51 in 2014, 66 in 2013, 82 in 2012 and 73 in 2011. The WelCore organization headed by Molly Soeby provides the vaccine and the nurses to administer it. Although flu vaccinations are now being provided in the schools and in many workplaces, providing them at the church is still beneficial to people who do not have access to them at the other places. Some parishioners expect to receive their flu vaccination at St. Mary's.
- The parish nurse continues to make hospital, nursing home and home visits to parishioners, makes phone calls to check on parishioners, provides rides as needed, has taken parishioners to doctor visits, ER visits, lab tests, etc. as needed, provides health-related articles for the bulletin periodically, participates in the regional parish nurse meetings and is available on an on-going basis in many settings to answer questions and provide health-related information to parishioners and staff.
- Health Ministry arranged for speakers for four of the soup suppers held by the Altar Society during Lent. The topics included: A Moment with Dementia, End of Life Planning, Ways to Stay Alive in Mind and Body, and Inclusion of Faith. Speakers were from the Edgewood Company. They were well attended and well received.
- The parish nurse checks and replaces batteries and pads in the AEDs as they expire.
- Therese Linnertz continues to make and donate memory aprons for people with dementia. She takes them to the Memory Café meetings at Calvary Church.

Social Concerns

- Social Concerns was in charge of the Jesse Tree in 2019, receiving and distributing gifts to Valley Senior Living residents in the Heartland Neighborhood, St. Gianna's Home, the Women's Pregnancy Center and the Northland Rescue Mission.
- Gift cards for groceries and gas using social concerns funds were purchased by Ellen Rose at the request of the Social Concerns Committee to be used to assist persons in need. Office staff were invited to present them to people that they determined were in need.

- Assistance was provided to a staff member who was in need.
- Social Concerns held the annual Cookie Walk fundraiser on December 14th which resulted in raising funds surpassing last year. Leftover cookies were sold at the KC breakfast the following day and some cookies were taken to home-bound parishioners as gifts.
- Social Concerns partnered with United Lutheran Church and St. Paul's Episcopal Church to organize a fundraiser for our parishioner, Paul Helgeson. It was held on April 14th from 3 to 6:30 p.m. It included a spaghetti dinner, silent auction, raffle and bake sale. It was very successful in raising a substantial amount of funds to support the Helgesons. NDAD was involved and is the repository for the funds which are distributed to the Helgesons as needed. We very much enjoyed working with our partner churches.
- Members of Social Concerns met at the home of Therese Linnertz to make blankets to donate to the AASK (Adults Adopting Special Kids) organization sponsored by Catholic Charities. The blankets were presented to the AASK staff at the Catholic Charities offices.
- Social Concerns also donated quilts to Altru Hospice to be used as prizes for a Quilt Bingo fundraiser to support Camp Good Mourning which is a camp for children and teenagers who have experienced the death of someone close to them. Therese Linnertz provided the quilts.
- Several members of Social Concerns helped to serve the noon lunches provided by United Lutheran during their summer lunch program that ran four days a week from July 29th to August 15th. Social Concerns also provided \$100 worth of food for the program.
- Gretchen Graf spoke to Social Concerns about a meal program at LaGrave on 1st, the Homeless facility. Churches are being asked to provide one meal a day for the residents. Social Concerns submitted an article in the bulletin describing the program and requesting volunteers who might be interested in helping to cook meals. Discussion of participation in this program is on-going.
- Social Concerns donated 20 pies for the Christmas Eve dinner held at St. Michaels Church.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

- Prayer shawls are distributed as needed. There are quite a few in the cupboard in the alcove by the dining room.
- Labels for the prayer shawls were made and attached to the prayer shawls.

Liturgy Committee

By Virginia Wilson, Pastoral Assistant

Liturgy committee serves by assisting Father Gross in creating a prayerful experience for everyone that participate in worship at St Mary's. This is an overview of the last years' experience.

January:

Reviewed Advent and Christmas. Jesse Tree responsibility was given to Social Concerns Committee to fill and deliver the gift requests. The first week of January weekday Masses were held in the Chapel until Holy Week. First Friday Adoration was also held in the Chapel. Church environment was set for Ordinary Time.

February:

Blessing of Throats took place at the first weekend Masses and a small number of candles were blessed for parish use and for others to take home for personal use. A plea was made for more people to attend Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on the First Friday. World Day of The Sick and World Marriage Day prayers were presented in the general intensions.

March:

Safe Haven Sunday; anti-pornography booklets were handed out to parishioners as recommended by Bishop Folda and Father Gross. Lent began with a Parish Mission, March 4th - 7th, featuring presenter, Brendan Case. Sessions with praise, worship, music, and talks were held in the social hall from 9-11am and evening were in the church from 7-9pm. One evening meal was served by the ladies of the Altar Society. Three Masses were scheduled for Ash Wednesday; 10 at Parkwood, 12:10pm and 7pm at St Mary's. Environment changed to purple for the Lenten season with no banners and the last supper in front of Altar was covered. Fridays, except Good Friday, Station of the Cross, reflection, prayer, and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Benediction, were held at 5:15p.m. Good Friday Divine Mercy Hour 3pm. and Passion of the Lord 7pm (note time change from our usual 12 noon Lenten service). Tuesday Bible study and Monday's adult catechism studies continued. Wednesday evenings during Lent, Altar Society presented religious films and talks with a light meal.

April:

Religious Education presented the Living Stations, Penance service was offered for the youth and parish. Palm Sunday began with a procession from the gym with blessed palms. Father Gross received the oils at the Chrism Mass in Fargo and were presented to the parish at the Holy Thursday Mass and Holy Thursday Adoration was set up in the Chapel. Ushers, altar servers, Eucharist ministers, readers, presenters of the oils and people for washing of the feet were sought. The choir prepared special music for Holy Week and Easter. The environment for the season was put in place.

May:

Divine Mercy Chaplet was recited at the Sunday Masses. The Statue of Mary was placed in the sanctuary for the month of May. Crowning of Mary was done at the 10:30am Mass by the youth.

Father Gross gave a Mothers' Day Blessing. Confirmation, May 18th, red flowers were ordered. Senior graduates were invited to be recognized at the Mass they attend. Father Gross presided at the Memorial Day Mass at North-side Cemetery, Alyce, choir director, and Father Gross selected the music for the Memorial Mass.

June:

Month of the Sacred Heart; the statue of Sacred Heart was placed in the sanctuary for June. The hours of Confession were changed to better serve the community 11am – 12 noon to 9:30 – 10:30am New Reconciliation signs were ordered for more transparency. Two Eucharist ministers are scheduled with Father during the summer months for all masses. Father Gross celebrated his 20th Anniversary of Ordination June 9th, Altar society served coffee and rolls after Masses. Father's Day a special was given to the men. Security refresher was presented by Duane Simon to the greeters and ushers with more education on security to come. EMHC hospital visitation were discontinued. EMHC patient visits can only be done by family request, in compliance with hospital laws and increased privacy.

July and August:

Independence Day, Father offered Mass at 8:00am. August 15th, a Holy Day of Obligation, two Masses were offered. All schedules were updated for the summer months. Father Gross featured a summer series in the bulletin of recently beatified/canonized saints.

September:

Grandparents were remembered in the Prayers of the Faithful. Catechetical Sunday, children and parents were given a blessing before RE classes began. Catholic Charities video was viewed at all Masses. Father offered RCIA classes to anyone interested in coming into the church or as continuing education. Virginia Achen led a Bible study after Friday coffee, twice a month. Altar Society held a Catechism Study the second and fourth Monday of the month during the year minus summer months. Deacon Sam celebrated his 40th Anniversary September 8th at the 10:30am Mass, Bishop Folda was present.

October:

Month of the Rosary, Catholic Daughters led weekday Rosary at 1:00pm during the month. Respect Life Sunday, a white rose was brought up with the offertory. Time and Talent sheets were dispersed to all parishioners indicating the opportunity to show their interest in helping the parish in many ministries.

November:

All Saints Day, two Masses were offered and All Souls Day, Remembrance of Souls was at the 5:30pm Saturday Mass. Memorial Book was placed at the church entrance for names of deceased members. Daily Mass moved to the Chapel from November to Advent. Altar Society baked bread to be blessed at the Thanksgiving Mass and given to those in attendance to share with families. New set of vestments were ordered for Sunday use which were donated through the Altar Society by an anonymous donor. Books were changed for the coming liturgical year. Christmas environment orders were placed.

December:

Immaculate Conception transferred to Monday, December 9, Father offered Mass at 8am. Church Environment was changed for Advent, Advent wreath was set up. Christmas environment decorating times and dates were set. Reconciliation service was held December 16th at 7 p.m. with three area priests assisting. Sign-up sheets for Christmas Masses were placed in the sacristy for sacristan, lectors, Eucharist ministers, and at the church entrance for ushers. Don Palmiscno scheduled altar servers. Christmas Masses were held at 4:30pm and 11:00pm Christmas Eve and 10:30am Christmas Day. Solemnity of Mary Mass was celebrated December 31st at 5:30pm and January 1st at 8:30am.

Thank you to all who volunteered to make St Mary's an inviting place of worship. Your God-given time and talent is very much appreciated. Our Liturgy meetings are open to all parishioners, please consider joining us.

Knights of Columbus

By Ryan Brunner, Grand Knight

2019 was great year for St. Mary's Knights of Columbus Council #10837! We hosted five parish breakfasts which raised funds for a wide variety of worthy causes including area seminarian Riley Durkin, St. Joseph's Social Care, Grand Forks Women's Pregnancy Center, St. Gianna Home, Holy Family / St. Mary's School, Propagation of Faith, and other worthy causes. Our total reported financial contributions to these causes were \$4,282. We also have monthly food collections at the parish which go to St. Joseph's Social Care. From July to the end of the 2019 those collections totaled 5,216#. In cooperation with the other local councils, we donated over 100 winter coats to those in need through our Coats for Kids Program.

Our council is involved in many community activities every year. In January we hosted our annual Youth Free Throw Competition, and in September helped host the city-wide Youth Soccer Challenge. We sponsored family nights at the church including an Easter Egg Hunt which has been a growing success. We had members compete in the ND K of C Foundation Golf Tournament where proceeds raised go to support seminarians, walked in the Potato Bowl Parade, delivered beds for the Slumberland Homes for the Holidays event, rang bells for the Salvation Army, and put our nativity scene up at Christmas in the Park. Our council's reported volunteer hours totaled 4,682.

In addition to fund raising efforts and community involvement, our Catholic faith is dear to the hearts of our members. In order to help us and other Catholics in our community practice our faith, we host many prayer programs within our council, St. Mary's parish, and around Grand Forks. In January we pray a Novena for Life, in October we host a rosary rally that was moved indoors due to weather, and in December we pray a Holy Family Consecration prayer. We have rotating prayer programs throughout the state including a Marian Icon Prayer Program, a Perpetual Rosary for Vocations, and a Perpetual Rosary for Respect of Life. Several new programs have been introduced by supreme through their new Faith In Action program series.

In 2019 we also began the Fr. Dan Mrnarevic Scholarship Fund to benefit local students attending Catholic schools. Our first two \$250 scholarships were awarded in the fall. Thanks to a number of generous donors there is already enough in the account to continue this fund for several years and plan to make this a permanent program through fund raising efforts and continuing donations.

It's not all work though. We had a couple of cookouts and potluck dinners that gave us and our families the opportunity to socialize, get to know each other, and play some games with the kids.

I'm sure I've left some things out, but these are some of the continuing fund raisers and events we typically host. We are always looking for new members to help us in our efforts and to bring new ideas on ways we can help out in our church and the community. Contact me for more information about how to get involved.

St. Mary's Church
Annual Financial Report
For The Year Ended December 31, 2019

<u>Revenues and Other Support</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>PARISH</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Adult Envelopes	\$ 297,039.00		\$ 335,000.00
Youth Envelopes	\$ 92.00		\$ 4,500.00
Plate Offering (Loose)	\$ 24,421.00		\$ 20,000.00
Donations - Non Offeratory	\$ 4,631.00		\$ 400.00
Donations from Organizations	\$ 3,000.00		\$ 6,000.00
Flowers/Environment	\$ 4,550.00		\$ 4,000.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 1,883.00		\$ 2,100.00
Interest Income	\$ 9,097.00		\$ 11,000.00
* Memorials	\$ 76,588.00		\$ 1,000.00
Space Rental	\$ 6,950.00		\$ 11,950.00
RE/Youth Ministry	\$ 8,238.00		\$ 7,500.00
St. James Contribution	\$ 3,786.00		\$ 2,000.00
JFT O'Connor Endowment	\$ 9,106.00		\$ 8,500.00
FUTURE Contribution	\$ 3,700.00		\$ 5,000.00
Oil & Gas Lease Inv.	\$ 5,377.00		\$ 3,000.00
Bulletin Income	\$ 667.00		\$ 1,500.00
Total Revenues and Other Support	\$ 459,125.00		\$ 423,450.00

*Anonymous Donor

<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Actual</u>		<u>Budget</u>
Pastoral Staff	\$ 186,915.00		\$ 190,898.00
Rectory Expenses	\$ 21,074.00		\$ 29,900.00
Church Operating & Office Expenses	\$ 219,754.00		\$ 228,194.00
Liturgy, Worship & Music	\$ 21,388.00		\$ 27,750.00
RE & Youth Ministry Expenses	\$ 11,193.00		\$ 13,000.00
Holy Family/St. Mary's School Exp.	\$ 36,835.00	incl. JFT O'Connor	\$ 38,500.00
Sacred Heart Tuition	\$ 5,000.00		\$ 5,500.00
Total Expenditures	\$ 502,159.00		\$ 533,742.00

Expenses - Income **\$ (43,034.00)**

<u>Revenues and Other Support</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>ST. MARY'S ECC & PRESCHOOL</u>	<u>Budget</u>
St. Mary's ECC & Preschool	\$ 337,768.00		\$ 325,000.00

<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
St. Mary's ECC & Preschool	\$ 241,791.00	\$ 238,175.00

Income - Expenses **\$ 95,977.00**

Parish Special Collections:

	\$ -
Cookie Walk	\$ 1,871.15
	\$ -
Total	\$ 1,871.15

Diocesan Collections (Dedicated Funds)

Propagation of the Faith	\$ 591.00
Holy Father	\$ 733.00
Holy Land	\$ 339.00
Black & Indian Mission	\$ 138.00
Retirement for Religious	\$ 1,113.00
Home Mission	\$ 265.00
Total	\$ 3,179.00

<u>God's Gift Appeal</u>	<u>Our Goal</u>	<u>\$ Rec'd</u>	<u>Appeal Deficit</u>
	\$ 72,090.00	\$ 46,406.00	\$ 25,684.00

Endowment Fund Total \$129,511.55

