



Weekly Update | March 14, 2021

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Happy St. Patrick's Day!



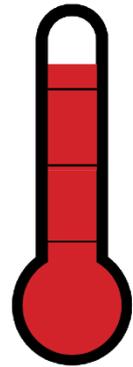
2021 Bishop's Appeal

We're getting close! Thank you to all who have contributed already! We've never failed to achieve our goal - let's keep the streak alive. If you haven't yet contributed, please prayerfully consider doing so.

Remember to send your contribution directly to the Green Bay Diocese, not the parish office.

2021 Goal: \$60,000

Reached: \$47,957 (80%)



COTS Collection - March 13/14 & 20/21

We've received a note from COTS that they are in need of disposable gloves and bleach. We'll have collection bins out the weekends of **March 13/14 and 20/21** for these items. Thank you!

Lenten Alms

This year our parish Lenten Alms Project will benefit **REACH** (Resources for Enhancing Alzheimer's Caregiver Health). REACH is a program that supports in-home caregivers of those with memory loss. COVID-19 has placed a greater burden on this group as they have faced greater isolation, limited respite opportunities, and decreased community support.

The **REACH Program** is offered at no charge to caregivers, is tailored to meet individual needs and open to families in Outagamie, Waupaca, and Winnebago Counties. They have provided 1:1 support to 78 families and connected with caregivers through 583 visits/meetings. Data collected shows that the **REACH Program** decreases caregiver's sense of burden, depression scores, desire to move their loved one to a facility and stress resulting from a loved one's symptoms of dementia. Alms can be dropped in the collection box near the back of church. You can also choose "**Lenten Alms Project**" as a "**One Time Gift**" in [Faith Direct](#). Thank you to those who have already contributed!

Prayer Shawls

The St. Mary/St. Joseph Prayer Shawl Ministry has been busy making and blessing Prayer Shawls for anyone who is ill, in the hospital, having a rough time, or otherwise in need of some warmth and love. Stop in the parish office during business hours or ask an usher at a weekend Mass to pick one up for someone you know - or yourself!

Want to help make prayer shawls? The prayer shawl group meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1pm at St. Joseph in Rooms L12 & L14.

A Grateful & Blessed Family

Ripples of God’s Love - Through Our Hearts - To All Hearts!

St. Mary Parish Support

February 2021	Budget	Received	Variance
received 2/22- 2/26/2021		5,870	
February- month to date:	65,000	56,687	-8,313
7/1/20-2/28/2021			
Fiscal Year To Date :	614,000	560,923	-53,077



Mass Times Intentions

Mon., March 15, 5:30pm	Parishioners of St Mary
Tue., March 16, 5:30pm	--
Wed., March 17, 12:05pm	Ralph Krabbe
Thur., March 18, 12:05pm	Debbie & Dave Wagner
Sat., March 20, 4:30pm	William & Sue Van Eeckhout
Sun., March 21, 7:45am	--
9:45am	Frances Fisher
6:30pm	--

Mass Attendance

In an effort to help you determine your safest options, we are providing Mass attendance numbers from the previous week. For reference, our church capacity at 25% is 120.

Monday, 5:30 pm (17)	Saturday, 4:30 pm (86)
Tuesday, 5:30 pm (8)	Sunday, 7:45 am (56)
Wednesday, 12:05 pm (45)	9:45 am (97)
Thursday, 12:05 pm (43)	6:30 pm (36)

In Loving Memory

Please pray for the family of Greg Hillman, son of Richard and Barbara Hillman. May fond memories comfort you at this time. If you have lost a loved one and would like them to be remembered in the bulletin, call the parish office at 739-5119.

Prayer Needs

Contact Mary Jo Zilisch (920-734-1182 or 920-843-1249) or Laurie Richter (lauriejrichter@gmail.com) if you have a prayer need. Please remember the requests in our prayer baskets.

Events Calendar

Monday, March 15

7:00pm Boy Scouts/St. Anne Room

8:00pm Al-Anon/L6

Tuesday, March 16

1:00pm St. Mary & St. Joseph Prayer Shawl Group/@ St. Joseph, L12 & L14

2:00pm Rosary Group/Chapel

6:15pm Lenten Prayer Service with individual confessions after/Church & Chapel

Wednesday, March 17

8:00am Quilting Group/St. Anne Room

Thursday, March 18

5:30pm Stations of the Cross/@ St. Joseph

6:00pm Fox Valley Veterans Council/Community Room

Friday, March 19

Parish office closed

9:00am Adoration/Church

Saturday, March 20

8:00am Adoration/Church

9:00am Confessions/Chapel

10:00am THEO/L1 & L3

Sunday, March 21

11:00am RCIA/Community Room

6:00pm Beacon - Middle School/virtual

Ministers & Support Staff

Fr. Bill Swichtenberg, Pastor

wdswitz@stmaryparish.org
cell 920-422-4316

Nadine Duncan

Pastoral Care
nduncan@stmaryparish.org

Emily Jenks

Neighborhood Outreach & Parish Vitality
ejenks@stmaryparish.org

Mary Ann Otto

Missionary Discipleship
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Chip Acker

Cemetery & Facilities Management
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Tom Walter

Liturgical Music
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Theresa Rohm

Business Administrator
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Dcn. Gerry Schraufnagel

Deacon
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Pam Acker

Bookkeeper
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Julie Morse

Administrative Assistant
stmary@stmaryparish.org

Parish Trustees

Joseph Galarowicz 920-419-1166
Ted Suess 920-636-8855

Pastoral Leadership Council Chair

Beth Power 703-819-4829

Finance Council Chair

Larry Bonneville 920-419-3097

St. Mary Cemetery

920-882-4158

Xavier Catholic School System

920-735-9380

Marriage

Congratulations! Contact Fr. Bill at least 6 months before your planned wedding date.

Baptism

Congratulations! Contact the parish office for information.

Confession

Sat. 9-10am and Tues. 6:15-7:15pm (except for the 1st Tuesday of the month)

St. Mary Parish Office

312 S. State Street
Appleton, WI 54911
stmaryparish.org

Monday – Thursday, 8:30am-4:30pm
Closed Fridays

Contact Us

920-739-5119

stmary@stmaryparish.org

In Joy & Sorrow with guest columnist Nadine Durcan

Here is the text of the video catechesis I gave on the Sacrament of Confession.

A key moment on the journey through the desert of Lent is the honest realization that I may be headed in the wrong direction when it comes to my relationship with the Lord and with the other people in my life. Instead of growing deeper in appreciation and friendship, I am not in a place where I feel good or peaceful about those relationships. Lent is a time to stop in my tracks and to look to reconciliation and healing. Lent is a time to fix my heart's gaze on the goodness of the Lord and to trust again that he can make a difference for the better in my life.

I especially like one of the titles for Mary, the Mother of God and the Mother of the Church. Mary is the Untier of Knots. I think of sin as being the knots in our lives. How am I all tangled up? What keeps me from being whole and free? What churns around in my heart and head and feels burdensome? What do I need to let go of?

I would like to propose to you that you think of Confession as the telling of your story. What has been happening in your relationship with the Lord and with others? Going to Confession is simply having a conversation with the Lord about what has been going on in your life that has just not felt right to you. It is your time to just let go of some of the messiness in your life.

Saint Augustine suggests that Confession is prayerfully telling God about our lives, so that, in the sound of the story, we can see where God has been all along. We see that God has

been pursuing us, even through our sin and sadness.

Father Terrance Klein, SJ, suggests that "you ask the Lord to make sense of your life. Sin has sown confusion, separated you from the meaning of life, which we call God. As any therapist knows, the very act of gathering your story to share with another person already begins to impose meaning upon it. Grace builds upon nature. In Confession, your act of telling your story opens the way for God's act of forgiveness. Put another way, we gather up our words so as to be gathered into the Word, the Word of God that is Jesus Christ."

Pope Francis assures you and me, "Never be afraid to go to Confession for it is there that you will meet Jesus, who will look upon you with tender love and forgive all of your sins!"

It may be that you have last been to Confession a month ago or a long time ago. That doesn't matter. It may be that you have no idea about what to say or how to say it. You may think that there is a right way to go to Confession and that there is a standard script that must be followed or else the Lord will not forgive you or the priest will put you on the spot.

I want to assure you that all of this anxiety is not necessary. As I said, just come prepared to tell a bit of your story which is about the knots that tie you up on the inside. Come to talk about your struggles in your relationships with the Lord and other people. There is no need to fret about any of that other stuff.

There is not a right way or wrong way to go to Confession. Just go!

Pope Francis reminds priests that they stand in the place of Jesus, who always extends a merciful embrace to those seeking Jesus' forgiveness and healing. The Confessional must never be a torture chamber, Pope Francis tells priests.

Perhaps you have had a bad experience in Confession. I want to sincerely apologize to you for that should never have happened to you or anybody else. Confession is a Sacrament of Healing and shame on priests who get in the way of Jesus' healing love.

Let me suggest some words to get you started with your Confession, which you may or may not use. You might say something like: "Bless me, Father. I am a sinner. Here is a bit of my story about my friendship with the Lord and others. Here is what I am struggling with and I ask the Lord's help and forgiveness."

It is your choice to include how long it has been since your last confession. Don't include it if this is somehow hard for you to say because you wonder about the priest's reaction. Remember, though, that the priest is there to extend a loving embrace not a rod.

Don't worry about saying an approved act of contrition. There is no such thing. You are welcome to use your own words or ask the priest for an act of contrition you can use. Look for a little worship aid that the parish will publish to help you with the "nuts and bolts."

Know that even without the help of a worship aid, you are invited to celebrate Confession. Just bring yourself and what is truly and sorrowfully in your heart. Trust that Jesus is happy to forgive you and heal you!

I promise you that anxieties about the logistics

of going to Confession cannot be allowed to be just one more knot you have to deal with. Truly, there really are no logistics. Jesus is just so elated when you simply come as you are.

After sharing your contrite confession, the priest will encourage you and suggest a penance, which is an act which serves as an outward gesture of your commitment to draw nearer to the Lord and others. Oftentimes, I simply will hand you a meditation of some sort that you can take home with you that will be bread for your prayer and reflection.

Finally, the priest offers the Prayer of Absolution. This is a formal prayer that always includes the words "I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." An image that I will suggest to you in the prayer is that of the Lord's love filling your heart and becoming like a fountain of living water, spilling over onto all your thoughts, words, and actions. I don't know if this image works for you, but I often remind myself that the Lord and his love are at the center of my life, like a dancing fountain always flowing outward into my living.

Opportunities to celebrate Confession at St Mary Parish are on every Tuesday evening, from 6:15 to 7:15 pm in the Chapel (following the 5:30 pm Mass in Church) and on every Saturday morning from 9:00 to 10:00 am in the Chapel.

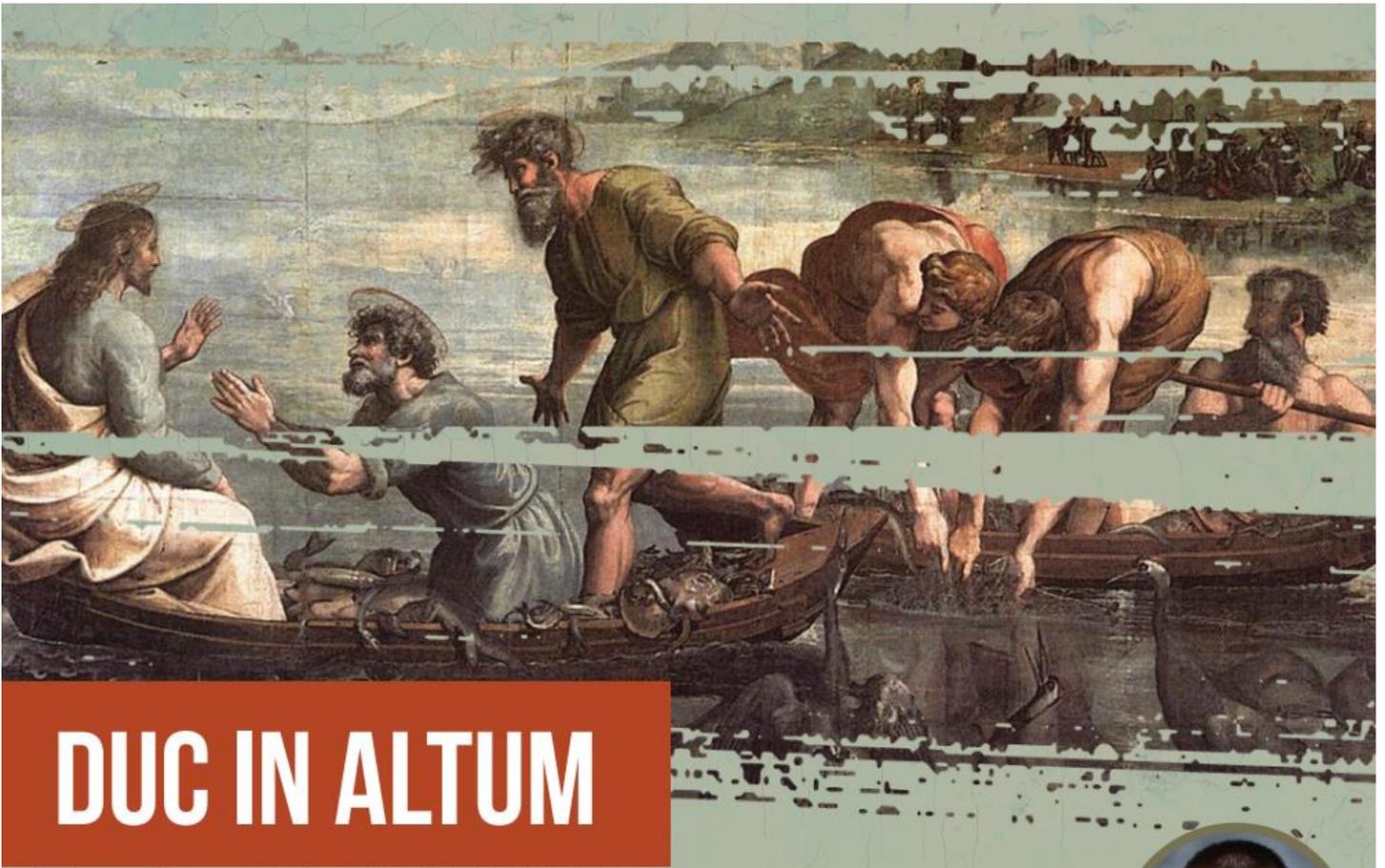
For Lent, there will be an opportunity to gather as a community who seeks the Lord's forgiveness on Tuesday, March 16, at 6:15 pm in Church for a brief prayer service, which will also be livestreamed, to be followed by individual confession. I and two other priest confessors will be present.

On Tuesday of Holy Week, March 30, the Church lights will be kept on for you for Confession from 6:15 to 9:15 pm in the Chapel.

Safety protocols will be observed for each of these opportunities.

Pope Francis reminds us that the Church is to be like a field hospital where hurting, broken, and knotted-up people can come and receive healing and hope. The Church's Sacrament of Confession is an important floor in this beautiful hospital. Come and be embraced by your loving and forgiving, patient and understanding, and gentle and good Shepherd, Jesus!

Father Bill +



DUC IN ALTUM

SILENT PRIESTLY DISCERNMENT RETREAT

- **WHO:** Young men in high school
- **WHEN:** March 26-28, 2021
- **WHERE:** Mount Tabor Center in Menasha
(522 2nd St., Menasha, WI 54952)

Fr. Mark Mleziva, Fr. Adam Bradley, and Taylor Geiger of the Diocese of Green Bay will lead this retreat. In a world of great distractions, this is the perfect opportunity for young men discerning the priesthood to enter into silence and allow God to speak to their hearts.

TO REGISTER: gbvocations.org/duc-in-altum-registration
or contact Taylor Geiger at tgeiger@gbdioc.org



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Diocese of
Green Bay