

4TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, FEBRUARY 1, 2026

# ST. MARY PARISH

PHONE: (920) 739-5119 • EMAIL: [STMARY@STMARYPARISH.ORG](mailto:STMARY@STMARYPARISH.ORG)

312 SOUTH STATE STREET • APPLETON, WI 54911



When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them. Matthew 5:1-2

## Regular Mass Times

**Saturday** 4:30pm

**Sunday** 7:45am, 9:45am

**Monday** 12:05pm

**Tuesday** No mass

**Wednesday** No mass

**Thursday** 12:05pm

**Friday** No Mass

## **Pastor - Fr. Bill Swichtenberg**

[wdswitz@stmaryparish.org](mailto:wdswitz@stmaryparish.org)

cell 920-422-4316

## **Deacon - Gerry Schraufnagel**

[dcngerry@stmaryparish.org](mailto:dcngerry@stmaryparish.org)

cell 920-540-9594

## **Cemetery Info - Chip Acker**

[cacker@stmaryparish.org](mailto:cacker@stmaryparish.org)

cell 920-882-4158

## **Parish Office Hours:**

920-739-5119

Mon, Tues, Thurs, 9am-4pm

Wed, 9am-6:30pm

Friday-Office Closed

## **Sacrament of Matrimony**

Getting Married?

Congratulations! Call Fr. Bill at least six months before your planned wedding date.

## **Interested in joining the Parish?**

Contact Lori Lavallo

[llavalle@stmaryparish.org](mailto:llavalle@stmaryparish.org)

## **Confession times:**

Saturdays 9-10am or by appointment



SCAN ME

## **Eucharistic Adoration**

Wednesdays 4:30-8pm

Sign up for a time to sit with Jesus.

We must have one person

with the Eucharist at all times.

Or scan with your phone.



# SIGN UP FOR STATIONS & SOUP

**Thursdays at 5:30pm**

Stations of the Cross first, soup to follow.

**February 19** - St. Joseph

**February 26** — St. Mary

**March 5** — St. Joseph

**March 12** — St. Mary

**March 19** — St. Mary

**March 26** — St. Joseph

Everyone, young and old, Catholic and non-Catholic, can take part in this prayerful and popular Lenten tradition.



Sign Up!



<https://bit.ly/4sxrXk8>

## The Bells of St Mary

*Handbell Choir*

**URGENT NEED**



Consider being a part of our handbell choir that brings joy to our Christmas and Easter Masses!

Contact Martha Paalman at [mpaalman@stmaryparish.org](mailto:mpaalman@stmaryparish.org)

## ASH WEDNESDAY MASSES

Feb 18

8 am, 12:05pm, 5:30 pm



## The Blessing of Throats

After all Masses this weekend, you are invited to receive the Blessing of Throats in honor of St. Blaise (Feast Day: February 3). In this traditional blessing, candles are crossed at the throat as we pray for God's protection from illness, especially ailments of the throat. All are welcome to receive this beautiful sacramental sign of God's care.

ST. MARY - APPLETON

# shamrock shenanigans

**MARCH 14 | 6 PM**

**Fox Club @ the Fox Cities  
Timber Rattler Stadium**

Tickets go on sale on January 31  
Get your tickets after Masses or  
contact the parish office



# LENTEN *Small Groups*



## **Little Sins Mean a Lot by Elizabeth Scalia**

**Tuesdays | 9am | starts Feb 17**  
**Host: Mary Ellen Julien**

Join me this Lent on a journey to grow closer to Jesus by reading *Little Sins Mean a Lot: Kicking Our Bad Habits Before They Kick Us* by Elizabeth Scalia! We will share much laughter as well as our thoughts and stories while on our journey together.



## **Gospel of St. John Bible Study**

**Sundays | 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm | starts Feb 22**  
**Host: Andrew Reimer**

Explore with me this deeply spiritual account of the life of Jesus and take a closer look at the text itself. Whether you encounter John's Gospel at Mass or in personal prayer and reading, this series will help you discover new depth and meaning each time you return to it.



## **Pope Leo's Apostolic Exhortation On Love for the Poor**

**Mondays | 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm | starts Feb 23**  
**Host: Fr. Bill**

Join me for 5 sessions to study Pope Leo's First Apostolic Exhortation "*Dilexite* (I have loved you)." We will discuss one chapter per session. I will also embellish with my impressions of Pope Leo and share some of the stories about the Holy Father which are touching my heart.



## **Inner Peace in Divine Love Retreat**

**Wednesdays | 6:30pm | starts Feb 25**  
**Host: Nadine Duncan**

Come on a five-week Lenten retreat and experience a deeper, love-filled relationship with God as you reflect on your own experience of being loved, recognize how God has loved you, and grow in gratitude, love, and generous service.



Please scan the QR code to register for your group(s), or call the parish office at (920) 739-5119. Registering ensures there are enough materials prepared for everyone.

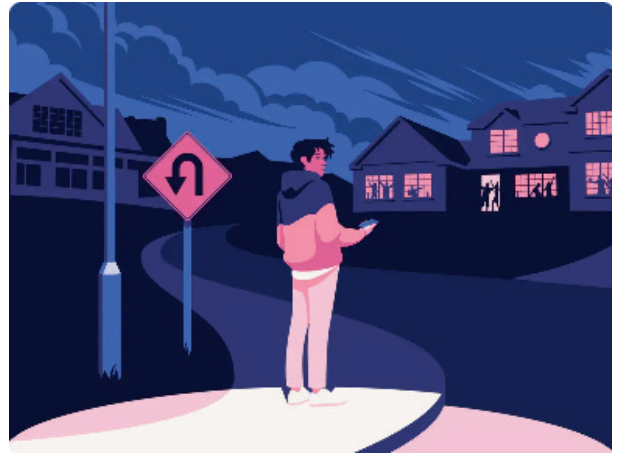
# JOIN OUR HALLOW LENTEN CHALLENGES



## Kids Lent: Miracle Hunters

Join Mia, Paul, Brad, and Grace on a fun Lenten adventure to discover how God is always at work in our lives. Kids ages 6–12 will enjoy saint stories, games, prayer, and inspiring faith-filled episodes—while learning that God’s love is active, even when miracles look different than we expect.

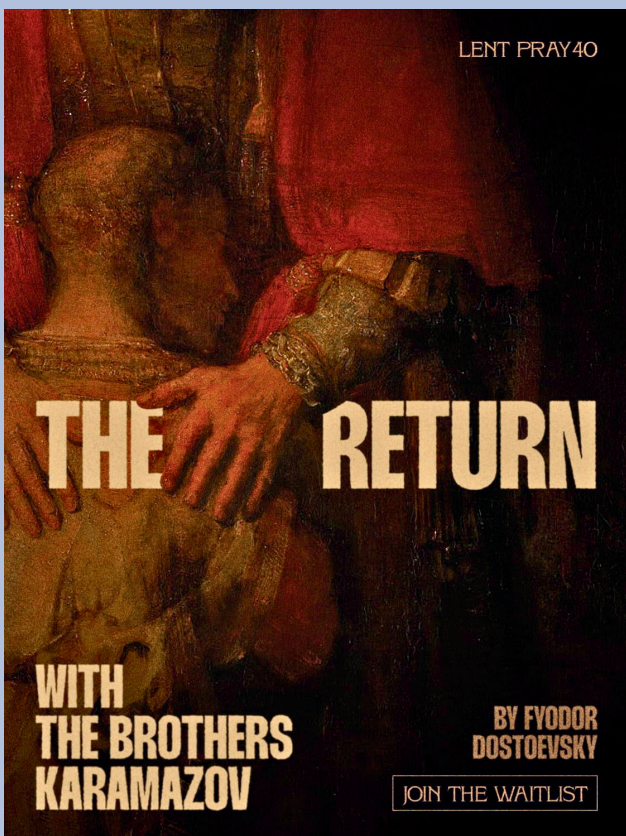
<https://hallow.com/collections/2872/>



## Teen Lent: The 180

Join Mark Hart, Sr. Josephine, Fr. Frankie Cicero, and more for The 180—a Lenten challenge for teens from Life Teen. Designed for busy schedules, enjoy 180-second daily sessions to help you turn your heart toward Christ. Reflect on the Gospel, learn from the Saints, and take on a weekly fasting challenge. This Lent, take a daily step closer to Christ.

<https://hallow.com/collections/2764/>



## Adult Lent: The Return

Join us on a journey back to the Lord—no matter our sins, our struggles, or how far we’ve wandered. Through the Parable of the Prodigal Son, we’ll be reminded that while we often drift from God, He is always waiting with open arms, running to meet us even when we are still far away.

To bring this powerful story to life, Pray40 will also explore *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoevsky—a profound and moving reflection on mercy, repentance, and God’s relentless love.

# Help our parish make an impact on Earth Day!

ASH WEDNESDAY (Feb 18) - EARTH DAY (Apr 22)

Bring in these hard-to-get-rid of items:

- Christmas lights
- Compact fluorescent lightbulbs
- Batteries (rechargeable and non)
- Printer cartridges
- CDs/DVDs/Blue Ray discs/albums
- Books/magazines
- Egg cartons
- Reuseable fiber, paper and plastic bags (Clean and dry)



Items will be reused or properly recycled by:

- Outagamie County Resource Recovery Park
- St. Joes Food Pantry
- Office Depot
- Half Price Books
- Home Depot

Any proceeds go to St. Joseph Food Program

Sponsored by the St. Mary Care for Creation Ministry



Please prayerfully consider making a gift to the 2026 Bishop's Appeal at [www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give](http://www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give)



*Send Mass Intentions*  
FOR LIVING & DEPARTED LOVED ONES

**Offering a Mass is a powerful and beautiful way to:**

- Pray for the souls of the faithful departed
- Ask for God's blessings, healing, or protection for those still with us
- Celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, or other special intentions

If you would like to request a Mass to be celebrated for someone dear to you, please send their name(s) to the parish office or call 920-739-5119. Please include whether the intention is for someone alive or departed. You may also include a specific occasion (e.g., healing, birthday, thanksgiving, anniversary, repose of soul, etc.)

The diocese suggested donation offering is \$20

# ST. JOSEPH FOOD PROGRAM

Fighting Hunger  Sustaining Hope

## February 7th & 8th

We are collecting canned soup, preferably ready-to-eat, easy-open cans. Also needed are items to make soup such as broth, easy open canned vegetables, pasta or anything else that can go in soup. Nothing perishable, in glass or past the use by date.

*Thank you for helping those who are in need.*



We're Sure You are Wondering What Has Happened to the Brunch Bunch.

We are Very Anxious to start up again BUT the weather has been so brutal we felt it wise to wait for late February or March to start up again.

PLEASE, don't hesitate to share ideas you have for the group with Laurie Richter, Sue Rogers or Barb Rowland.

WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU SOON.

WANT IN  
ON THE FUN?

JOIN THE



## St. Mary/St. Joseph Book Club

We will meet Tuesday, February 17, from 1:00pm to 2:30 pm, at St. Mary on State Street in Room LL7. The selected book is *Ban This Book* by Alan Gratz. Please reach out to Mary Schulz, 920-809-4474, with questions or to request the list of books scheduled through July 2026.

## Bingo Night!

Save the date



Join us for fun on Saturday,  
**February 21st from 5:30-7:00 PM**  
in the Community Room

## Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament



Want to grow closer to Jesus this Lent? Come, enjoy some time with Him in Adoration on Fridays, 9am-9pm, and Saturdays, 8am-noon during Lent.

What is the commitment? One hour. Or if you are feeling called to a deeper relationship with Jesus this Lent, consider signing up for one hour of adoration each week.

## Performing Baptisms During Lent

A Reminder for Parents Seeking Baptism for Their Child

Lent is traditionally a season of preparation for baptism, especially for adults (catechumens). During Lent, the Church generally refrains from celebrating baptisms, though exceptions may be made for infants, emergencies, or other pastoral needs.

If you have questions or would like to discuss baptism for your child during Lent, please contact Fr. Bill.

# KID'S NIGHT OUT!

## PARENTS' NIGHT OFF!

FEB 13

We got this covered!  
Enjoy a special Valentine's  
date out or free time off  
while we take care of  
the kids!

**REGISTER FOR  
YOUR SPOT NOW!**

Please complete the form using the  
link below or QR code by Friday,  
February 6th.



(920) 739-5119 x 121 |  
llavalle@stmaryparish.org |  
<https://bit.ly/26KidsNightOut>

### EVENT DETAILS

- Friday, February 13th
- St. Mary Parish - St. Anne Room
- 4:30-8 PM \*Drop in anytime.
- \*Pickup at 8 PM sharp.
- Open to children ages 2-12
- Activities include: movie night, face painting, games and crafts!
- Includes dinner and snacks for the kiddos.



**The Hotel Shelter is extending it's days to 2/1 in order to cover this extreme weather!**

Scan the QR code or click <https://bit.ly/49Wm3k5> to volunteer to cover a shift.



For more information contact Mike Mailand at [mmmailand@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mmmailand@sbcglobal.net).

**St. Joe's Overflow Shelter is now operating under the name of Blessed Solanus Casey (BSC) Companies!**



Scan the QR code or click <https://bit.ly/4q2T9ok>. Learn more about BSC Companies and how you can volunteer or donate to support their life-saving winter shelter ministry for neighbors in need.

Checks may be made payable to BSC Companies and dropped off at the parish office or at St. Joe's.



# Pancake Breakfast

buttermilk pancakes  
french toast sticks  
bacon, sausage, fresh fruit

**SUNDAY, FEB. 15**  
**8:30-11:30 AM**  
**COMMUNITY ROOM**

All are welcome!  
free will offerings accepted



## OLD PALMS? WE WANT THEM!

We kindly ask that you bring your old palms to the back of the church by this Sunday, as we plan to recycle them for Ash Wednesday. Thank you for your cooperation.



What are the three theological virtues?





# Catholic Schools Week

Enjoy this video  
from the Students at  
Xavier Catholic Schools.



GLOBAL OUTREACH  
LET'S BUILD A CIVILIZATION OF LOVE

## 17th Annual "Taste of Europe" Fundraising for Scholarships

Hosted by the Global Outreach Catholic  
Exchange Program  
St. Patrick Catholic Community,  
320 Nicolet Blvd, Menasha.  
February 14, 2026, 4 pm - 8:30 pm

Join us for an evening of Faith, Food,  
Fellowship, Family, and Fun starting with  
Mass at 4 pm, featuring Global Outreach  
student musicians, followed by student  
entertainment, a European dinner buffet,  
and desserts.

Cost: \$40 (13+), \$10 (ages 5-12), free under 5.

NEW: Table Sponsor — \$250 (7 guests).

**RSVP by Feb. 6** at  
[globaloutreachprogram.com/taste-of-europe](http://globaloutreachprogram.com/taste-of-europe)  
or mail your check to Dorothy Flees, 9522  
County Road T, Marshfield, WI 54449.



## Meet & Greet SPIRITUS Missionaries!

Inspiring Youth & Forming Leaders

Friday, February 6, 7:00am

St. Thomas More Church  
1810 N. McDonald St.  
Appleton, WI

- Weekday Mass + 30 minute social
- Light refreshments
- Great stories, fun giveaway
- Be inspired like our youth

Please meet us there and bring a friend!



# EVENTS CALENDAR

## Week of Feb 1 - Feb 8

### Sunday, Feb 1

Coffee and Donuts after the Masses  
Throat Blessing All Masses  
7:45 am Mass  
9:45 am Mass/LS/Lucy Camille Conness Baptism

### Monday, Feb 2

12:05 pm Mass  
6:00 pm New Horizons Practice/CR  
6:00 pm St. Mary Bell Choir practice/Loft  
6:00 pm Shenanigans Committee Mtg/SR

### Tuesday, Feb 3

9:00 am Connect Group/LL7  
1:00 pm SMP/SJP Prayer Shawl Group at St. Joe's  
6:30 pm Pastoral Council/CR

### Wednesday, Feb 4

9:30 am Connect Group/LL7  
4:30 pm Adoration  
4:45 pm-7:45 pm Beacon Faith Formation

### Thursday, Feb 5

8:00 am Quilt Retreat/CR/Day 1  
10:00 am Mom's Group - Babysitting Rm  
12:05 pm Mass  
1:00 pm Hooks & Needles/St. Anne Rm  
6:00 pm Adult Choir/MR  
6:00 pm Women's Ministry/LL7  
7:00 pm Cor Jesu

### Friday, Feb 6

8:00 am Quilt Retreat/CR/Day 2  
9:00 am Small Group/LL7

### Saturday, Feb 7

**St. Joe's Food Program Collection**  
8:00 am Quilt Retreat/CR/Day 3  
9:00 am THEO/CR  
9:00 am Confessions  
4:30 pm Mass

### Sunday, Feb 8

**St. Joe's Food Program Collection**  
Coffee & Donuts after Masses  
7:45 am Mass  
9:45 am Mass/Livestreamed  
11:00 am Flock of Sparrows/LL5

## Mass Intentions

Sun, Feb 1	7:45am 9:45am	Available Available
Mon, Feb 2	12:05pm	Available
Thur, Feb 5	12:05pm	Available
Sat, Feb 7	4:30pm	Available
Sun, Feb 8	7:45am 9:45am	Available Members of St. Mary Parish



Prayer Requests Contact **Laurie Richter** (lauriejrichter@gmail.com), **Mary Jo Zilisch** (920-734-1182) or **Ann Walkowski** (920-428-0969) if you have a prayer need. Please remember these requests in our prayer baskets.

## Generosity CORNER

As January comes to a close with some of the coldest temperatures of the season, we are grateful for your support that helps keep the church warm not only in its temperature but also through our community.

MONTH	INCOME	BUDGET	VARIANCE
January	\$59,976.59	\$75,083.33	\$-15,106.74

### Your giving at work in the parish:

- This weekend kicks off ticket sales for our Shamrock Shenanigans. This year we will have an early bird discount of 25% for each ticket. So be sure to buy your tickets by February 15th. You can get tickets after Mass, online or in the office.



faith, hope and love. 1 Corinthians 13:13

# *in Joy &* **SORROW**

ST MARY PARISH - APPLETON // 2.1.2026  
WITH FR. BILL SWICHTENBERG



I am suffering from compassion fatigue. My heart is overwhelmed by all that is battering our nation and the values that we have always held sacred, as enshrined in our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution. These are dark, cold and bleak times. I cannot imagine what it would feel like for us in Appleton and beyond if we woke up tomorrow and there were a significant number of ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) agents in our midst. The fear would be immediate and palpable. Our immigrant sisters and brothers would be terrified. I am certain that some of the ICE agents would be afraid, too, struggling with what they have been asked to do.

How tired and angry and heartbroken are our sisters and brothers of Minneapolis on these grotesque days. Too many of them have witnessed firsthand the horrific end of the lives of Renee Nicole Good and Alex Jeffrey Pretti.

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and angry  
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days.

We can all agree that nobody wants to see the lives of two 37-year-old adults snuffed out so tragically. We want, too, to be apprised of the truth of what happened, as revealed in a detailed report from an independent criminal investigative team, which includes MN's investigative agencies. Conclusions made without an official and unbiased investigation are uncalled for and border on being lies and complete fabrications. How can you and I be asked to believe something that our own eyes and ears contradict! We are headed in a dangerous direction if we are coerced by our government to override what we actually see and hear! What an inconceivable cruelty it is to slander the memory of Renee and Alex, which just heaps more heartache upon their families and friends.

It is the truth that will set us free. For too long we have been exposed to alternative truth (which seems an oxymoron to me!) and have become numb to the lies that have been disproven by reputable sources. Leaders who are chronic liars are dangerous to our future. We need to seek out the truth and hold people accountable for their twisting of that truth.

The death of a human being is irrevocable. Not one of us can turn back the clock. Because every human being is precious to the Lord and created in His Image and Likeness, we cannot just move on without honoring those tragic deaths with the truth. Every person in law enforcement knows that every fatal shooting of a human being is either justifiable or not. An investigation determines that fact and people are held accountable for unjustifiable occurrences. The officers involved in the death of George Floyd of Minneapolis now know that from their prison cells.

A real living person, Jesus Himself, is the truth. So we who follow Jesus must look to His words and His deeds to see what truth looks like. Jesus had a big, wide open heart which took delight in every person, especially lepers, prostitutes, tax collectors, those who were hungry and thirsty, or sick and in prison, and even great sinners. Jesus embraced strangers and welcomed them into his heart. We can do no less.

The great Lutheran Pastor, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was executed for speaking out against the hatred and violence which Hitler's thugs spewed upon holy Jewish people, gay people, and political opponents during WWII, said this: "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil."

As disciples of Jesus, we can no longer remain silent!

Rare in the history of the papacy is the occasion when a Pope writes specifically to the body of Catholic Bishops in a particular country where an injustice is being inflicted on its people. Pope Francis did exactly that on February 10, 2025, when he expressed his concern about indiscriminate mass deportation in the US. It would do you good to pray over his entire letter.

Here is the link:

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/letters/2025/documents/20250210-lettera-vescovi-usa.html>

Here are paragraphs 4 and 5, which I feel are courageously prophetic:

*I have closely followed the major crisis that is taking place in the United States with the initiation of a program of mass deportations. The rightly formed conscience cannot fail to make a critical judgment and express its disagreement with any measure that tacitly or explicitly identifies the illegal status of some migrants with criminality. At the same time, one must recognize the right of a nation to defend itself and keep communities safe from those who have committed violent or serious crimes while in the country or prior to arrival. That said, the act of deporting people who in many cases have left their own land for reasons of extreme poverty, insecurity, exploitation, persecution or serious deterioration of the environment, damages the dignity of many men and women, and of entire families, and places them in a state of particular vulnerability and defenselessness.*

*This is not a minor issue: an authentic rule of law is verified precisely in the dignified treatment that all people deserve, especially the poorest and most marginalized. The true common good is promoted when society and government, with creativity and strict respect for the rights of all — as I have affirmed on numerous occasions — welcomes, protects, promotes and integrates the most fragile, unprotected and vulnerable. This does not impede the development of a policy that regulates orderly and legal migration. However, this development cannot come about through the privilege of some and the sacrifice of others. What is built on the basis of force, and not on the truth about the equal dignity of every human being, begins badly and will end badly.*

Thanks for sticking with me to the end of this **IN JOY AND SORROW.**

Finally, another letter that brought tears to my eyes.

From Jessica Hauser:

*I was Alex Pretti's final nursing student. [Alex lost his life in an altercation with ICE agents in Minneapolis on Saturday, Jan 24.] He was my friend and my nursing mentor. For the past four months, I stood shoulder to shoulder with him during my capstone preceptorship at the Minneapolis VA hospital. There he trained me to care for the sickest of the sick as an ICU nurse. He taught me how to care for arterial and central lines, the intricacies of managing multiple IVs filled with life-saving solutions, and how to watch over every heartbeat, every breath, and every flicker of life ready to act at the moment they wavered. Techniques intended to heal. Alex carried patience, compassion and calm as a steady light within him. Even at the very end, that light was there. I recognized his familiar stillness and signature calm shining through during those unbearable final moments captured on camera. It does not surprise me that his final words were, "Are you OK?" [as he was helping a woman to get up who was shoved to the ground by ICE agents.] Caring for people was at the core of who he was. He was incapable of causing harm. He lived a life of healing, and he lived it well. Alex believed strongly in the Second Amendment [the right to keep and bear arms] and in the rights rooted in our Constitution and its amendments. He spoke out for justice and peace whenever he could, not only out of obligation, but out of a belief that we are more connected than divided, and that communication would bring us together. I want his family to know his legacy lives on. I am a better nurse because of the wisdom and skills he instilled in me. I carry his light with me into every room, letting it guide and steady my hands as I heal and care for those in need. Please honor my friend by standing up for peace, preferably with a cup of black coffee in hand and a couple of pieces of candy in your pocket, just as he would. He would remind you that caring for others is hard work, and we must do whatever it takes to get through the long shifts. Step outside with your dog, breathe in the world, hike or bike as he loved to do, and let yourself find peace in the quiet moments within nature. Stand up for justice and speak with those whose views differ from your own. Hold your beliefs with strength, but always extend love outward, even in the face of adversity. Take one step, no matter how small to help heal our world. Through these acts, carry his light forward in his name. Let his legacy continue to heal.*

Eternal rest grant unto Renee and Alex of Minneapolis! Lord, may your perpetual light shine upon them! Comfort their heartbroken families and friends and heal our hurting nation!

*Fv. Bill +*