



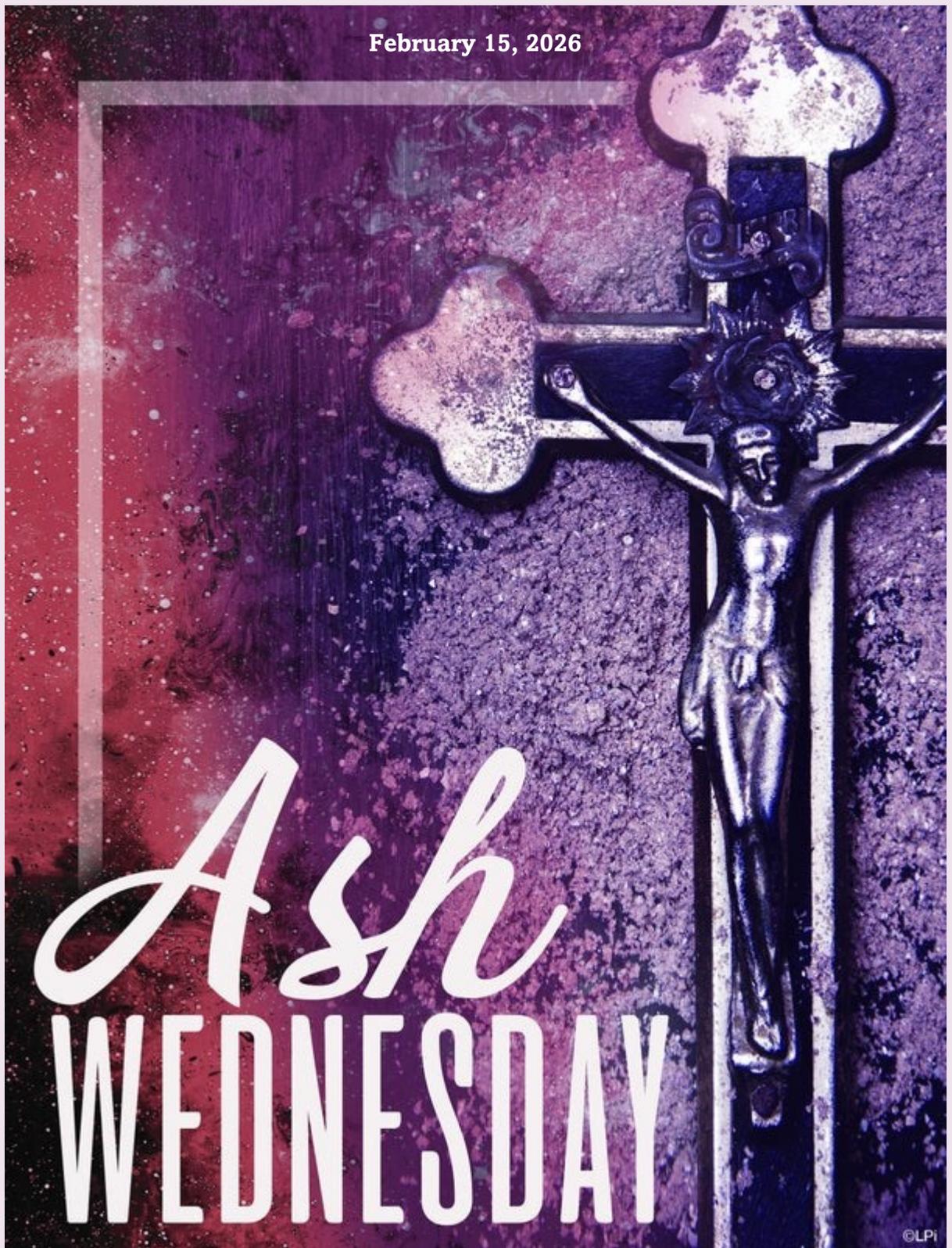
# SAINT MARY'S

CATHOLIC CHURCH | A FRANCISCAN COMMUNITY

ALL ARE WELCOME!

17 POMPTON AVENUE  
POMPTON LAKES, NJ 07442  
P 973-835-0374 F 973-835-8173  
WWW.STMARYS-POMPTON.ORG  
SMC@STMARYS-POMPTON.ORG  
PARISH OFFICE HOURS:  
MON-THU 9:00-4:00, FRI 9:00-12:00  
CLOSED FOR LUNCH 12-12:30 MON-THU

February 15, 2026



# Ash

# WEDNESDAY

©LPI

# FRIAR'S DESK

## Ash Wednesday: Marking Our Foreheads, Opening Our Hearts

“Repent and believe in the Gospel.” These ancient words accompany the sign of the cross traced in ash upon our foreheads this Ash Wednesday. They invite us into forty days of transformation through Lent's three pillars: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

**Prayer** draws us closer to God, creating space to listen for His voice amid life's noise.

**Fasting** isn't merely about giving something up—although that's always a good thing to do! It's about turning toward something greater. When we fast from excess, we create room for God to fill us with what truly satisfies.

**Almsgiving** transforms our hearts outward, recognizing the face of Christ in our neighbors. Through generous giving of our time, talent, and treasure, we practice the selfless love at the Gospel's core.

This year, we're introducing a powerful new tradition to our Lenten practice. From 6 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., we'll be on the pavers not only to distribute ashes, but also to participate in “Letters to God.”

We will keep a fire burning on the pavers throughout the day, and we'll have pen and paper available so you can write down what you are giving up or letting go of this Lent; what prayers you have that need God's attention; what you will strive to do during these forty days. As your letter catches flame and rises skyward, you'll physically enact what Lent asks spiritually: letting go of what holds us back and lifting our deepest needs to heaven.

Come with your burdens, your hopes, your honest struggles. Receive the mark of our mortality and God's mercy. Write your heart's truth and release it to the flames. Enter this holy season with ashes on your forehead, openness in your heart, and hands ready to receive the abundant grace that flows through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

The fire will be waiting. So will we.

—Father John Aherne, OFM

## Miércoles de Ceniza: Marcando Nuestras Frentes, Abriendo Nuestros Corazones

“Conviértete y cree en el Evangelio.” Estas palabras antiguas acompañan la señal de la cruz trazada en ceniza sobre nuestras frentes este Miércoles de Ceniza. Nos invitan a cuarenta días de transformación a través de los tres pilares de la Cuaresma: oración, ayuno y limosna.

La **oración** nos acerca a Dios, creando espacio para escuchar Su voz en medio del ruido de la vida.

El **ayuno** no se trata solamente de renunciar a algo—¡aunque eso siempre es algo bueno! Se trata de volvernos hacia algo más grande. Cuando ayunamos del exceso, creamos espacio para que Dios nos llene con lo que verdaderamente satisface.

La **limosna** transforma nuestros corazones hacia afuera, reconociendo el rostro de Cristo en nuestros prójimos. A través de dar generosamente nuestro tiempo, talento y tesoro, practicamos el amor desinteresado que está en el centro del Evangelio.

Este año, estamos introduciendo una nueva y poderosa tradición a nuestra práctica cuaresmal. Desde las 6 a.m. hasta las 9:30 p.m., estaremos en los adoquines no solo para distribuir cenizas, sino también para participar en “Cartas a Dios.”

Mantendremos un fuego encendido en los adoquines durante todo el día, y tendremos papel y pluma disponibles para que escribas lo que estás renunciando o dejando ir esta Cuaresma; qué oraciones tienes que necesitan la atención de Dios; qué te esforzarás por hacer durante estos cuarenta días. Mientras tu carta se enciende y sube al cielo, representarás físicamente lo que la Cuaresma pide espiritualmente: soltar lo que nos detiene y elevar nuestras necesidades más profundas al cielo.

Ven con tus cargas, tus esperanzas, tus luchas honestas. Recibe la marca de nuestra mortalidad y la misericordia de Dios. Escribe la verdad de tu corazón y entrégala a las llamas. Entra en esta temporada santa con ceniza en tu frente, apertura en tu corazón y manos listas para recibir la gracia abundante que fluye a través de la oración, el ayuno y la limosna.

El fuego estará esperando. Nosotros también.

—Father John Aherne, OFM

**PARISH OFFICE PHONE NUMBER: 973-835-0374**

**FRANCISCAN FRIARS SERVING YOU**

Fr. John Aherne, OFM, x139 jaherne@stmarys-pompton.org  
Fr. John Alderson, OFM rochester14220@gmail.com  
Fr. John Coughlin, OFM, x169 jcoughlin@stmarys-pompton.org  
Deacon Tom Kimak Tkimak@stmarys-pompton.org

**BAPTISMS**

Lynda Rogalski lrogalski@stmarys-pompton.org

**BUSINESS OFFICE**

Toma Dedio tdedio@stmarys-pompton.org

**FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS**

Keith Orotosky, x145 korotosky@stmarys-pompton.org  
Phillip Epstein, x140 pepstein@stmarys-pompton.org

**HISPANIC MINISTRY**

Milagros Anto, x703 Milagros@stmarys-pompton.org

**MUSIC MINISTRY**

Craig & Dorothy Limey, x158 cdlimey@stmarys-pompton.org

**OUTREACH MINISTRY**

Food Pantry 973-831-4442 foodpantry@stmarys-pompton.org  
Value our Veterans valueourveterans@stmarys-pompton.org

**PARISH SECRETARY**

Nicole Pizza-George ngeorge@stmarys-pompton.org

**PASTORAL MINISTRY**

Dr. Pamela Hall, 973-835-6337 Pathways Counseling Center  
Clare Russo, 973-835-0374 x113 Stephen Ministry

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 973-835-7750**

Toni Wong, x102 Grades 1 to 5 twong@stmarys-pompton.org  
Cathy Feld, x103 cfeld@stmarys-pompton.org  
Grades 6 to 8 & Confirmation  
Debbie Borroto, x130  
Admin. Asst./ Local Youth Protection/  
Safe Environment Coordinator debbie@stmarys-pompton.org

**SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY YOUNG ADULT & ADULT**

Karen Niemann kniemann@stmarys-pompton.org

**SPECIAL NEEDS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Andrea Piccirillo apiccirillo@stmarys-pompton.org

**WEDDINGS**

Getting married at St. Mary's? We'd love to celebrate the sacrament of marriage with you! Please contact Lynda Rogalski at lrogalski@stmarys-pompton.org six months to a year before your desired date.

**YOUTH MINISTRY**

Trevor George, 862-274-5171 tgeorge@stmarys-pompton.org

**FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!**



UPDATE YOUR  
**CONTACT INFO**

Please call **973-835-0374** or send an email to [smc@stmarys-pompton.org](mailto:smc@stmarys-pompton.org) if:

- your address, email address or telephone number has changed, and/or
- a parishioner has been married and/or
- a parishioner has moved.

Parish records need to be current, so please be sure to inform us of any changes as soon as possible.

Thank you!

Calendar of Events

Please see our Parish Calendar for all the current events and activities going on at St. Mary's!

<https://stmarys-pompton.org/parish-calendar>



LENTEEN MISSION  
**3/1, 3/2, 3/3**

**Beyond The Days:**

***A Lenten Journey of Identity, Encounter and Transformation***

Sunday, March 1st at 7:00 p.m.

Monday, March 2nd and Tuesday, March 3rd: abbreviated mission after noon Mass with the full mission at 7:00 p.m.

Our parish will embark on a mission that leads us to the very heart of Christian life. Through preaching at all Sunday Masses and three evening presentations, Fr. Ricky Manalo, CSP, will guide us into a deeper understanding of who we are, what we celebrate, and how God continues to transform us through sacred time, worship, and the way we live together as Church.

**Day 1:** We will explore why the Lenten and Easter seasons form the spiritual core of the Church's year—the great "90 days" that tell the story of our Christian identity and call us to ongoing conversion.

**Day 2:** We will reflect on the Eucharist as the sacred threshold where heaven and earth meet, and where we are continually formed, re-formed, and transformed in Christ as one Body.

**Day 3:** We will reflect on the reality of polarization in our Church and society and how it shapes the way we see one another. Drawing on the Gospel and the Church's spiritual wisdom, this evening invites us to name division honestly while discovering paths toward healing, reconciliation, and deeper communion in Christ.

This mission is an invitation to slow down, listen more deeply, and enter the Paschal Mystery with renewed faith and hope. All are welcome—come and be strengthened for the journey ahead.



## DAILY READINGS FOR THE WEEK

**Sunday:** Sir 15:15-20/Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34/1 Cor 2:6-10/Mt 5:17-37 or 5:20-22a, 27-28, 33-34a, 37

**Monday:** Jas 1:1-11/Ps 119:67, 68, 71, 72, 75, 76/Mk 8:11-13

**Tuesday:** Jas 1:12-18/Ps 94:12-13a, 14-15, 18-19/Mk 8:14-21

**Wednesday:** Jl 2:12-18/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 and 17/2 Cor 5:20-6:2/Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

**Thursday:** Dt 30:15-20/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6/Lk 9:22-25

**Friday:** Is 58:1-9a/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 18-19/Mt 9:14-15

**Saturday:** Is 58:9b-14/Ps 86:1-2, 3-4, 5-6/Lk 5:27-32

## MASS SCHEDULE

### **SATURDAY**

9:00 AM—Liturgy of the Word with Communion (Prayer Room)

Vigil Masses:

5:00 PM—English

7:00 PM—English

### **SUNDAY**

7:30 AM—English

8:45 AM—Español (livestreamed)

9:00 AM—English (Carnevale Center)

10:30 AM—English (livestreamed)

12:00 PM—English

### **WEEKDAYS**

8:00 AM—Monday-Friday in English (livestreamed)

12:00 PM—Monday-Friday in English (during Lent)

7:00 PM—Wednesday en Español (livestreamed)

### **MASSES ONLINE AT:**

[www.stmarys-pompton.org](http://www.stmarys-pompton.org)

[www.facebook.com/smcpompton](https://www.facebook.com/smcpompton)

[www.youtube.com/c/stmaryspomptonlakes](https://www.youtube.com/c/stmaryspomptonlakes)



## CONFESSION AND ADORATION

**CONFESSION:** Thursdays from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. or call for an appointment.

**ADORATION:** The Blessed Sacrament is exposed for Adoration on Thursday from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and for one hour after morning Mass on the first Friday of each month.

During Adoration, please maintain a reverent silence.



This week, the Bread and Wine have been donated in loving memory of **Tina Spages** from her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.



This week, the Altar Flowers have been donated with love from Loretta Brown in loving memory of her husband, **Joseph Brown**.



The Parish Office will be closed on Monday, February 16th in observance of Presidents Day. Daily Mass will be at 9:00 a.m.



### What is a Sensory Mass?

A sensory friendly Mass offers the opportunity for those individuals with auditory and visual processing sensitivities to celebrate mass along with their families. The Mass is shorter in length, church lighting is dimmer and music is softer providing a warm, inclusive environment for all. Everyone is invited to stay after Mass for an activity and some refreshments.

Masses will be monthly at 3:00 p.m. in the Carnevale Center on the following dates:

February 22nd, March 22nd, April 19th, May 17th, June 14th



### HOLY BONES

Healthy treats for your dog!

Holy Bones provides a work experience program to individuals with developmental disabilities in making and packaging all natural dog bones and bits.

There are 3 flavors in 8 oz. bags: peanut butter, sweet potato and chicken. Price is \$8 per bag (two for \$15) for bones.

The bones and bits are on sale in the Parish Office, and orders can be placed on their website: [www.holy-bones.org](http://www.holy-bones.org).

Holy Bones is looking for volunteers to help with the sale of their dog treats. If interested or for more information, please email [mcioletti@stmarys-pompton.org](mailto:mcioletti@stmarys-pompton.org).

# MASS INTENTIONS † = Deceased, L = Living



<b>Saturday</b>		February 14
5:00 p.m.	† Maryanne LaHowchic (2nd Ann.) † Joseph Brown (7th Ann.) L William Smart	
7:00 p.m.	† Anthony Giacoio † Helen & Paul Konarski	
<b>Sunday</b>		February 15
7:30 a.m.	† Cheryl Brandt (2nd heavenly birthday) † Rose Brancato	
8:45 a.m. (Spanish)	People of the Parish	
9:00 a.m. (CC)	† Mary Cipoletto	
10:30 a.m.	† Cheryl Brandt (2nd heavenly birthday) † June Brandt (10th Ann.) † Ron Kelemen † Patricia Warren † Luisa Munoz	
12:00 p.m.	People of the Parish	
<b>Monday</b>		February 16 DAILY MASS AT 9:00AM
9:00 a.m.	† Michael Nelson † Josephine Torio	
<b>Tuesday</b>		February 17
8:00 a.m.	† Tina Spages (19th Ann.)	
<b>Wednesday</b>		February 18 ASH WEDNESDAY
6:30 a.m.	People of the Parish	
8:00 a.m.	People of the Parish	
12:00 p.m.	People of the Parish	
7:00 p.m.	People of the Parish	
8:30 p.m. (Spanish)	People of the Parish	
<b>Thursday</b>		February 19
8:00 a.m.	† May Garofalo † Rosemary Conway	
12:00 p.m.	† Brenda Post	
<b>Friday</b>		February 20
8:00 a.m.	† Alfred Barbato	
12:00 p.m.	People of the Parish	
<b>Saturday</b>		February 21
5:00 p.m.	† Nancy King † Lester Kurylo † Tommy Dowd † Karen Butkieicz † Katherine Raczko	
7:00 p.m.	People of the Parish	
<b>Sunday</b>		February 22
7:30 a.m.	† Lori Kim Colella (heavenly birthday) † Anne Helmstetter	
8:45 a.m. (Spanish)	People of the Parish	
9:00 a.m. (CC)	† Phylis D'Onofrio	
10:30 a.m.	† Marlene Annarumma (1st Ann.) † Kathy Marshall † Marco Sciarra † Albert & Mary D'Aloia † Lori Kim Colella (heavenly birthday) † Marie Cioletti	
12:00 p.m.	† James Nolan	

## ...THOSE WHO ARE SICK

Angelo, John, Frank Furnari, John Molaro, Marc Rocco, Kellie Diemer, Lynn Hutman, Susan Esposito, Kathy Green, Paula Tedesco Carreras, Ana Panzardi, Ed Dittman, Eric Huss, Magnus Slyfield, Rozalia Maziarz, David Grish, Lucy Matyisin, Bob Kruk, Jess Harman, Edmund Loniewski, Morgan Mahon, Ella Rose Mahon, Maria Gambatese, Terry Medino, Joy Wechter, Robert Rinaldi, Elisa Baisley Darin Piccoli, Jama Rothschild, Linda Bedell Kwaitkowski, Eileen Donnelly, John Donnelly, James McMahon, Denise & Ray Karlyk, Jinni Fiornio

To add a loved one to this list, please call the Parish Office at 973-835-0374. Names are kept on the list for 30 days unless we are notified otherwise.

## ...THOSE SERVING IN HARM'S WAY

Lt. Jessica T. Atterbury, PFC Nathan Hunt, CMCN Michael LeTennier, MCS, PFC Sean Jennings, SGT Ryan Cronin, US Navy SO, SSG Kevin Carey, SPC Brian R. Sudol, CSM Robert Hammerle, Sgt. Mark Ashley, SGT Ryan J. Heppel, SPC Dean V. Lucas, LCpl Michael Vignuli, Major Daniel J. Ciccarella, Sgt. Justyn Shovlowsky, Captain Austin Canning, SSG Tiffany Thumann, TSSgt. Scott Miller, Capt. Krystal Thumann, Cpl F. S. Raza, Sean Flanagan, Capt. Matthew W. D'Amico, USMC Lt. 1st Thomas Seneski; Sgt. Anthony W. Gabriel; Brian Hansen, Sgt. Ashlee Quigle; Capt. Daniel M. Kearney, USMC; 2nd LT Emily Simone and Navy Lt. Ryan Hackett, Tracie Kasko, LT Vincent Bellomo, Staff Sergeant Andrew Murphy, Emmanuel Folleco, Sergeant Denise Gonzalez, Staff Sergeant Victoria Zimbaro.

**IF THE STATUS OF SOMEONE ON THIS LIST HAS CHANGED, PLEASE INFORM THE PARISH OFFICE ASAP. THANK YOU!**

From the  
Parish Council



Please feel free to come up to one of the Parish Council members if you see us around or email [parishcouncil@stmarys-pompton.org](mailto:parishcouncil@stmarys-pompton.org)! For the most up-to-date report of the Parish Pastoral Council, please scan the QR code.



**Diane**



**Toma**



**Zach**



**Kristine**



**Greg**



**Mark**



**Joanne**



**Dino**



**Katie**

# Please join us in singing!

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15th

### 1. Here I Am to Worship

Light of the world,  
you stepped down into  
darkness,  
opened my eyes, let me see.  
Beauty that made this heart  
adore you,  
hope of a life spent with you.  
Here I am to worship,  
here I am to bow down,  
here I am to say that you're my  
God.

You're altogether lovely,  
altogether worthy,  
altogether wonderful to me.

King of all days,  
oh so highly exalted,  
glorious in heaven above.  
Humbly you came to the earth  
you created,  
all for love's sake became poor.  
Here I am to worship,  
here I am to bow down,  
here I am to say that you're my  
God.

You're altogether lovely,  
altogether worthy,  
altogether wonderful to me.

And I'll never know how much  
it cost  
to see my sin upon that cross.  
I'll never know how much it  
cost  
to see my sin upon that cross.  
I'll never know how much it  
cost  
to see my sin upon that cross.

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Blessed are they who follow  
the law of the Lord!

### 2. I Will Choose Christ

Chorus  
I will choose Christ I will  
choose love  
I choose to serve  
I give my heart I give my life  
I give my all to You

Verse 1  
Some days are hard  
And I fight to see the truth  
But I'm gonna take a stand

In all I say and do

Verse 2  
Some fall away  
And some refuse to see  
A willing and humble heart  
I pray You'll find in me

You are grace You are peace  
You are hope and healing  
You are faith You are joy  
You are God revealing Jesus  
My Lord and King

### 3. Find Us Ready

Chorus  
Find us ready Lord  
Not standing still  
Find us working and loving  
And doing Your will  
Find us ready Lord  
Faithful in love  
Building the kingdom  
That's here and above  
Building the kingdom  
Of mercy and love

Verse 1  
We must wait for the Lord  
For we know not the time  
So here and today  
We gather and pray  
Discovering love in our midst

Verse 2  
We must make straight the  
path  
God's love revealed  
With sin cast aside  
God's mercy alive  
Fear not for here is your God

Verse 3  
Lifting up those bowed down  
We prepare for our God  
Rejoice in the Lord  
For hope has been born  
In hearts where our God  
Finds a home

### 4. Love The Lord

Verse 1  
Love the Lord your God with  
all your heart  
With all your soul with all your  
mind  
And with all your strength

Chorus  
With all your heart with all  
your soul  
With all your mind with all  
your strength  
Love the Lord your God with  
all your heart  
With all your soul with all your  
mind  
And with all your strength

Verse 2  
I will serve the Lord  
With all my heart with all my  
soul  
With all my mind and with all  
my strength

With all my heart with all my  
soul  
With all my mind with all my  
strength  
I will serve the Lord with all  
my heart  
With all my soul with all my  
mind  
And with all my strength

## ASH WEDNESDAY

### 1. Be Thou my Vision

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of  
my heart;  
Naught be all else to me, save  
that Thou art.  
Thou my best Thought, by day  
or by night,  
Waking or sleeping, Thy  
presence my light.

Riches I heed not, nor man's  
empty praise,  
Thou mine Inheritance, now  
and always:  
Thou and Thou only, first in  
my heart,  
Great God of Heaven, my  
Treasure Thou art.

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Be merciful, O Lord. Have  
mercy on us, for we have  
sinned. We come before you,  
cleanse us from within. Have  
mercy on us, Lord.

### 2. Great are you Lord

Verse 1

You give life You are love  
You bring light to the darkness  
You give hope You restore  
ev'ry heart that is broken  
And great are You Lord

Chorus  
It's Your breath in our lungs  
So we pour out our praise  
We pour out our praise  
It's Your breath in our lungs  
So we pour out our praise to  
You only

### 3. I Am the Bread of Life

I am the Bread of Life, I am the  
hope in night,  
I am the door wide open, I am  
the shepherd's might,  
I am the truth and light, I am  
the way and life, I Am Who Am  
and I am for you: come and  
follow me.

I am bread for the world, hope  
for the hopeless.  
Come to me, and know that I'll  
always be there with my arms  
open wide.  
I Am Who Am and I am for  
you: come and follow me.  
I give my heart to those in  
sorrow, I come to those who  
are in need;  
hope for today and for  
tomorrow, light for all who  
want to see.

### 4. Ashes

We rise again from ashes  
From the good we've failed to  
do  
We rise again from ashes  
To create ourselves anew  
If all the world is ashes  
Then must our lives be too  
An offering of ashes  
An offering to you

Then rise again from ashes  
Let healing come to pain  
Though spring has turned to  
winter  
And sunshine turned to rain  
The rain we'll use for growing  
And create the world anew  
From an offering of ashes  
An offering to you



# LENT AND HOLY WEEK



## Lenten Disciplines of Fasting & Abstinence

Catholics in good health ages 18 to 59 are required to fast and to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

Fasting consists of eating only one meal, with the possibility of two smaller snacks that do not add up to a single full meal.

Catholics age 14 and older are to abstain from meat on all Fridays in Lent.

### Confessions

Tuesday, February 17th  
7:00 p.m.-8:00 pm in the church

### Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 18th

- Masses at 6:30 a.m., 8:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m., 8:30 p.m. (Spanish)
- Distribution of ashes from 6:30 a.m. - 9:30 p.m. on the pavers
- Adoration will be held in the Prayer Room. Please scan the code to volunteer.



### Weekdays During Lent

Mass at 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. in the church

### Stations of the Cross

After the 12:00 p.m. Mass on Fridays in the church

### Soup and Stations of the Cross

Fridays during Lent

- 6:00 p.m. Soup in Spina Hall
- 7:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross in the church
- March 13 (bilingual)

### Confessions

- Mondays from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Prayer Room
- Thursdays from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the church
- Good Friday from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Prayer Room

### Lenten Mission

- Sunday, March 1st: 7:00 p.m.
- Monday March 2nd and Tuesday,

March 3rd abbreviated mission after noon Mass. Full mission at 7:00 p.m.

- All in the church

### Lenten Penance Services

- Saturday, March 7th at 11:00 a.m.
- Tuesday, March 24th at 7:00 p.m.
- All in the church

### No Greater Love

- Friday March 27th at 7:00p.m. in the church
- Presented by Xavier Company
- Experience the Passion of Christ in drama, song and dance

### Palm Sunday

Sunday, March 29th  
Regular Mass Schedule

### Women of Jerusalem

Monday, March 30th 7:00 p.m. in the church

### Seder Dinner

Tuesday, March 31st  
Mack's Restaurant – please pre-register !

### La Santa Misa en español

Wednesday, April 1st  
7:00 p.m. in the church

### Holy Thursday

Thursday, April 2nd

- 8:00 a.m. Morning Prayer in the church
- 7:00 p.m. Bilingual Mass of the Lord's Supper in the church

### Good Friday

Friday, April 3rd

- 8:00 a.m. Morning Prayer in the

church

- 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Confessions in the Prayer Room
- 3:00 p.m. Service of the Passion of the Lord in the church
- 7:00 p.m. Tenebrae/Service of the Passion of the Lord in the church
- 7:00 p.m. Via Crucis y Celebración de la Pasión del Señor (Carnevale Ctr.)

### Holy Saturday

Saturday, April 4th

- 8:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
- 12:00 p.m. Blessing of the Baskets
- 7:30 p.m. Bilingual Easter Vigil
- All in the church

### Easter Sunday

Sunday, April 5th

- 6:30 a.m Sunrise Mass (Pompton Lakes Elks Parking Lot)
- Regular Sunday schedule in the church (additional Masses at 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. Carnevale Ctr.)

### Divine Mercy Sunday

Sunday, April 12th

- 2:00 p.m.– 2:45 p.m. Confessions
- 3:00 p.m. Divine Mercy Chaplet
- All in the Prayer Room

### Hispanic Ministry

- Domingo, 15 de febrero, 10:00 a.m. Charla de Cuaresma en Spina Hall.
- Viernes, 13 de marzo, 7:00 p.m. Vía Crucis bilingüe en la iglesia; antes tendremos una comida sencilla de sopa en el sótano.
- Miércoles, 18 de marzo, 7:30 p.m. Servicio de Reconciliacion con confesiones individuales.

**ALL  
HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENTS  
WELCOME!**



**EMMAUS RETREAT  
FEBRUARY 27TH-MARCH 1ST  
CAMP SHILOH**



Saint Mary's Youth Ministry is offering its annual Emmaus Retreat, from February 27th-March 1st.

This retreat experience gives our high schoolers a great opportunity to continue growing in their faith while also developing their own faith community. It will be taking place at Camp Shiloh in Hewitt, NJ, and all high school-aged students are welcome to attend!

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our 2nd grade students are continuing their preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The children attended their 2nd mandatory Reconciliation Workshop on Saturday, February 14th. Please keep our 2nd graders in your prayers as they continue their sacramental journey!

This week begins the season of Lent. Ash Wednesday is on Wednesday, February 18th. There are many opportunities for you to bring your children to start this most sacred solemn season in the Catholic Church. Refer to the website or bulletin for times of Mass and distribution of Ashes on that day. We did introduce the meaning of receiving ashes so they would be aware if you take them. Please check for the date of their upcoming Lenten Workshop!

There will be no Religious Education classes the week of February 16th through February 20th. Classes will resume on Monday, February 23rd.

*"Lent comes providentially to reawaken us, to shake us from our lethargy." —Pope Francis*



# COME AND SING WITH US! CHILDREN'S CHOIR

GRADES Pre-K-5

4-5 PM In the Church

Fridays, February 27th -March 27th

Sing Easter Mass April 5<sup>th</sup> at noon

CONTACT DOROTHY  
DLIMEY@STMARYS-POMPTON.ORG

Scan to Register



**SPECIAL NEEDS**  
Religious Education Program

Registration is open for our  
Special Needs Religious Education classes.

Anyone wishing to register their child and/or would like further information, please contact Andrea Piccirillo at 973-835-0374.



# \$15

## GIFT CARD FOR ALL DONATIONS

Donate in February using code **GIVELOVE-2026-V** when scheduling an appointment at [vitalant.org](http://vitalant.org) or call 877-25-VITAL

**St. Mary's Knights of Columbus  
& BPO ELKS # 1895 BLOOD DRIVE  
Friday, February 20th, 2026**

**Carnevale Center 10 Lenox Ave.**

**Pompton Lakes, N.J. 07442**

**2:30pm to 6:00pm**

Contact Ray @ 973-835-4487 for more information

### A JOURNEY THROUGH GRIEF

Wednesdays, March 18th through April 22nd from 7-8:30 p.m.  
Carnevale Center, Banta Room (handicapped accessible)

Susan Fecko, LCSW, will facilitate this bereavement group which is open to all who have recently experienced the death of a significant loved one. We aim to create a supportive group in which one's unique journey through the grief process is examined and respected.

Participation is free of charge through the sponsorship of Pathways Counseling Center and St. Mary's Church.

Registration is required. Please call Pathways at 973-835-6337 or visit [www.stmarys-pompton.org](http://www.stmarys-pompton.org)

### SPIRITUAL GUIDED MEDITATION HOUR

*Dry Bones*



Thursday, February 19th at 7:00 p.m. in The Prayer Room

Join us for prayer, reflection and guided meditation as we journey with hope to the Valley of Dry Bones. In the words of the Prophet Ezekiel, "Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Listen! I will make breath enter you so you may come to life."

*"Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, we are done for."  
Ezekiel 37:11*



There will be a meeting of the Bereavement Support Group on March 9th at 7:00 pm in the Banta Room of the Carnevale Center. This group is open to anyone whose significant loved one has died more than one year ago. If you are struggling in the aftermath of your loss, or if you just want to connect with others who are rebuilding their life after loss, then THIS GROUP IS FOR YOU! You will find a welcoming, supportive, comforting space to discuss your journey.

### FOOD PANTRY

#### Upcoming Food Pantry distribution dates/times:

Saturday, February 21	9:30am to 3:30pm (arrive by 3:00)
Wednesday, February 25	4:00pm to 7:00pm (arrive by 6:30)
Saturday, February 28	9:30am to 3:30pm (arrive by 3:00)
Wednesday, March 4	4:00pm to 7:00pm (arrive by 6:30)
Saturday, March 21	9:30am to 3:30pm (arrive by 3:00)
Wednesday, March 25	4:00pm to 7:00pm (arrive by 6:30)
Saturday, March 28	9:30am to 3:30pm (arrive by 3:00)
Wednesday, April 1	4:00pm to 7:00pm (arrive by 6:30)



#### Current needed items:

Decaf coffee, regular and decaf instant coffee, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste and toothbrushes, paper towels, tissues

The Food Pantry is located at 22R (Lower level, rear) Lakeside Avenue, Pompton Lakes (accessible from the municipal parking lot) and the phone number is 973-831-4442.

All donations are requested to be dropped off in the shed directly behind the church. It is open 24/7.

**Donations can be purchased online and shipped directly to the church at  
31 Pompton Avenue, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442**

**NO CLOTHING DONATIONS PLEASE.**



St. Mary's Church invites you to be part of

### WOMEN'S CORNERSTONE

*Many Paths, ONE Destination*

March 13th-14th 2026

We are grateful to be able to offer this event to all women of

our community. Cornerstone is a time to escape the daily grind and find some much needed quiet, reflective time to grow in our faith, reflect on our lives, make new friends, and give thanks for our blessings.

Online registration is open at <https://stmarys-pompton.org/womens-cornerstone>. For more details, please reach out to Amy Testino, 862-228-4096 (call or text).

Bilingual members welcome! Talks will be in English but there will be a small group facilitated in Spanish.

***The Cornerstone Retreat makes a great gift for that special woman in your life!  
Call for more info!***



Whether you wish to honor a loved one, or celebrate a special occasion, submitting your intention is now just a few clicks away.

Visit our parish website to fill out the simple online form:  
<https://stmarys-pompton.org/mass-intentions>



# IRISH DANCING WITH FATHER JOHN

Learn to dance in time for the Ringwood St. Patrick's Day Parade!

Wednesday, February 25th to Wednesday, March 25th  
7-8 p.m. in St. Clare Hall (Carnevale Center)

Suggested donation \$25 (\$5 per class)

Dancers should be prepared to sweat a little, so comfortable workout clothes and water bottles are recommended. Light, flexible, and smooth-soled shoes or dancing sneakers are best but regular sneakers are fine, too!

For this semester, we will put together a little routine to dance in the Ringwood St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Please register at  
<https://www.stmarys-pompton.org/irish-dancing-with-father-john>  
or call the Parish Office.





Saturday, March 7th at 6:00 p.m.  
in the Carnevale Center



\$25 p/person for an Irish dinner including corned beef, cabbage, shepherds pie, Irish soda bread & more!  
Coffee, tea and soft drinks included with the meal.  
BYOB (beer and wine). Music and entertainment included!

For reservations, please contact Keith Ahearn at  
201-388-7346 or [kofc3801@gmail.com](mailto:kofc3801@gmail.com)



**St. Mary's  
Knights of Columbus**

# Ash Wednesday FISH FRY

Catered by **'TASTEFULLY BRITISH'**

## Wed. Feb. 18th

### 6-8 pm, Carnevale Center

\$20 includes Fish\* & Chips, coleslaw,  
drink & dessert. Eat-in or take-out.

★ **Orders are due by Sun. Feb. 15th** ★  
**No orders will be taken at the door**

Reserve your meal(s) now by emailing us at  
[kofc3801@gmail.com](mailto:kofc3801@gmail.com) or you can call/text Keith Ahearn at  
(201) 388-7346

Proceeds benefit St. Mary's Food Pantry and  
Knights of Columbus Marian Council 3801 charities

\*Chicken substitute available at no additional cost

# CANDY BAR BINGO

Sunday February 15th  
3pm Carnevale Center

Join us for an unforgettable afternoon of excitement, camaraderie, and the thrill of the win at Bingo Games! Candy Bar Bingo is a fun, family-friendly game where players exchange candy bars for bingo cards and play multiple rounds of bingo, with candy bars as the prizes

Bring your family and 2 King Size Candy Bars per person.  
Each person will receive 2 Bingo Cards  
This is a family friendly event, All Are Welcome!




We are looking for volunteers to join the team of Eucharistic Ministers who bring communion to our brothers and sisters in **Chilton Hospital, Care One and other institutions.**

Sunday and Wednesday shifts available. Volunteer monthly, weekly or whenever you can! Please call the Parish Office or email [smc@stmarys-pompton.org](mailto:smc@stmarys-pompton.org) for more information.



# WELCOME TO ST. MARY'S!

## WHAT TO EXPECT

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### Worship

A Dynamic and upbeat Liturgy, with engaging sermons and music in a contemporary style. Masses last about an hour.



### Community

There are so many opportunities at St. Mary's to Pray, Serve and Give. Our english and spanish speaking communities look forward to welcoming you!



### Hospitality

Divorced, single, parent LGBTQ+, families with children, people with disabilities and those with special needs. All are welcome at all Masses!

St. Mary's Parish is a unique Christian Community rooted in the Catholic and Franciscan traditions. Here religious and laity strive to be equal partners in ministry. We seek to live and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. We welcome, celebrate and nourish one another through outreach, evangelization and joy-filled worship.

Please read on to discover ways to connect, grow, serve, learn and worship with us.

We also have many programs to support you, your family and your community.

Call the Parish Office at 973-835-0374 or email [smc@stmarys-pompton.org](mailto:smc@stmarys-pompton.org) for more information!

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## CONNECT WITH US

**Active Seniors:** We are group for men and women over 55. We meet regularly, host speakers and plan trips and outings to promote community.

**Filipino Ministry:** We are a lay ministry of St. Mary's Parish. Most of us are both affiliate members of Our Lady of Fatima Prayer Group and the Missionary Families of Christ. We pray the Rosary and recite the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy. We meet on a regular basis as a household to worship, pray and hold fellowship.

**Hispanic Ministry:** We are people who promote a truly Catholic formation that will help the community better respond to the challenges they face today. We are also all the people who speak Spanish as a first language. We are from different countries of the Americas: Honduras, Mexico, Colombia, Argentina, Bolivia, Cuba, Peru, Guatemala, Ecuador, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and El Salvador. Most of us are immigrants who want to have legal status to be citizens of the United States and contribute to this country based on honesty, integrity and justice.

**Knights of Columbus:** We are the world's largest Catholic benefit society, providing both financial aid and volunteer hours to those in need. Our principals are Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism.

## **CONNECT WITH US (continued)**

**LGBTQ+ Ministry:** All are welcome at St. Mary's! We acknowledge and respect the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church and strive to create an environment that provides support, prayer and faith-sharing opportunities for all God's people.

**Original St. Mary's Seniors:** We are a group of Seniors 55 years or older who reside in Pompton Lakes and get together for fellowship in social and educational experiences.

**Young Adult Ministry:** We are a group of men and women between the ages of 18 – 35 years old who desire to grow closer to God and to each other through service, prayer and fellowship.

**Youth Ministry:** We are a group of high school age, young men and women who gather weekly and go on periodic retreats to grow in our faith with God and friendship with one another.

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## **GROW WITH US**

**Alpha:** We gather for a meal, a short film on faith and time for sharing and connection. We provide an opportunity to enhance your faith journey and connect/reconnect with your St. Mary's family.

**JPIC (Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation):** We take our inspiration from the life of St. Francis and the Franciscan movement. We are guided by our passion for peace, justice and sustainability for the Earth.

**Men's Emmaus Fellowship:** We are a men's group that gathers to consider the scripture readings for the current weekend. We discuss the scripture message and often look to how it applies to the challenges and opportunities we have as Catholic Christian men today.

**Rosary/Divine Mercy Ministry:** We pray the Holy Rosary/Divine Mercy Chaplet after Daily Mass as well as prayers from other Catholic luminaries.

**Special Needs Ministry:** We provide children and adults with religious and social services. The children's portion of the ministry provides special education religious education for students receiving the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. The adult portion of the ministry provides social events such as going out to dinner, game nights, dinner dances, and social hours. Workshops, day-long retreats and camps may be scheduled throughout the year.

**Spiritual Guided Meditation Hour:** We gather monthly for prayer, reflection and guided meditation.

**Women of Prayer & Spirit:** We are a group of women who bring prayer intentions to the group and meet to discuss spiritually-themed books, one chapter at a time.

**Women's Cornerstone Ministry:** We provide an opportunity for women in the community to revitalize and deepen their spiritual lives through a combination of quiet reflection, prayer and social interaction and sharing the story of one's own personal faith journey.

**Women's Faith Reflection:** We are a group of women that gather and reflect on the upcoming Sunday readings.

## **SERVE WITH US**

**Food Pantry Ministry:** We are a ministry of the parish that provides food and household supplies to people in need from Pompton Lakes and the surrounding communities.

**Good Works Gang Ministry:** We help other parishioners and members of the community who are in need of transportation or help with various projects, i.e. light yard clean ups, moving personal items and projects that, for various reasons, they are unable to do themselves.

**Helping Hands/Social Worker Ministry:** We provide concrete services and material assistance to needy, sick or disabled persons or families in our local community.

**Holy Bones:** We work with adults with intellectual disabilities in the making and packaging of all natural, no preservatives added, dog biscuits.

**Hospitality Ministry:** We provide and serve food and drink at Parish events both large and small. Opportunities to volunteer include: baking, decorating, setup, food service, and cleanup, and each role is essential to the success of the event.

**Meals with Love:** We help the NJ Buddies serve people living with HIV/AIDS while they rebuild their lives. It is simply a ministry of making home-cooked meals for 8 people and delivering them twice a month to Paramus.

**Value our Veterans:** We serve Northern NJ Veterans and their families who are facing food insecurity. Every other month, our parishioners make baked ziti and brownies. We distribute the home-cooked meals and desserts directly to the Veterans.

**Thanksgiving Dinner Ministry:** We prepare and cook Thanksgiving Dinner for residents of local Care Centers on the Saturday before Thanksgiving.

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## **LEARN WITH US**

**Bible Study:** We offer periodic scripture study experiences that typically study a particular book or theme of the Bible. Sessions are conducted in a faith-sharing style of learning. They are facilitated scripture study groups in English and Spanish alternately.

**Baptismal Preparation:** We offer catechesis to parents interested in having their babies or other young children baptized in the Catholic Church. The class gives instruction on the sacrament of baptism and other key teachings of the Church. It also provides ideas, resources, and inspiration to parents in their efforts to raise their children as practicing Catholics.

**Book Group Ministry:** We are a group of parishioners who gather to read and discuss books based on religious and spiritual themes.

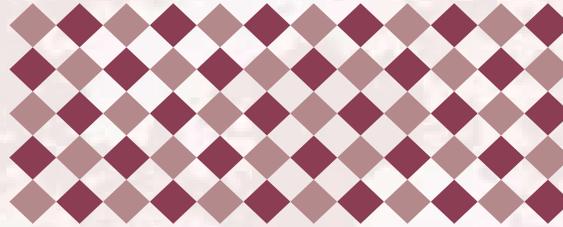
**Marriage Preparation:** We are a team of married St. Mary's couples who lead an interactive and uplifting seminar illustrating aspects of a successful Catholic Christian marriage. We use personal experiences, small group discussions and base the day on the St. Mary's Franciscan spirit of openness.

**Men's Book Group:** A group of men who meet throughout the year to read and discuss books on faith.

## **LEARN WITH US (continued)**

**OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults):** The OCIA is designed for adults as a process for people who wish to become part of the Catholic community of faith including those who have never been Baptized, Catholics who have been Baptized but never received the sacraments of First Eucharist or Confirmation, and those from a different faith who wish to convert to Catholicism.

**Religious Education:** Religious education begins a lifelong process that helps children develop a strong religious foundation which will continue with their family, community and the Church. Religious Education and the Confirmation program provides religious education and sacramental preparation vital to a child's development as a Catholic.



## **WORSHIP WITH US**

**Altar Servers:** We are a group of young men and women, ages 7-18, who assist the priests, deacons and Mass captains during the celebration of the Eucharist. Altar Servers learn more about the Mass and grow in their faith. Scheduling is flexible and based around their normally attended Mass.

**Children's Liturgy of the Word:** During our Sunday 9:00 a.m. Mass, we provide an opportunity for young children to leave the sanctuary during the Liturgy of the Word, and hear the scripture readings proclaimed and explained at an age-appropriate level.

**Church Ambiance:** We gather to clean and tidy up our church building on a regular basis.

**Church Decorators:** We add a welcoming, beautiful, spiritual and reverent atmosphere as we worship together.

**Eucharistic Ministry:** We distribute the body and blood of Jesus Christ at Masses, and also bring Eucharist to people in hospitals, rehab facilities and to people who cannot make it to Church.

**Funeral Servers:** We assist the friars in setting up for and serving funeral Masses at St. Mary's Church.

**Lectors:** We proclaim Scripture at Sunday Masses, as well as at other liturgical celebrations throughout the year.

**Music Ministry:** We provide music for all Parish Masses and celebrations. We are open to every parishioner, no matter their age or level of experience.

**Purificator Ministry:** We take home, wash, and press the sacred linens that are used during the Mass. These linens are considered sacred because they touch the body and blood of Christ during the Mass.

**Sensory Mass:** We offer the opportunity for individuals with auditory and visual processing sensitivities to celebrate mass along with their families. This monthly Mass is shorter in length, church lighting is dimmer and music is softer providing a warm, inclusive environment for all.

**Ushers:** We assist at our Sunday Liturgies by welcoming parishioners, showing people to their seats, and taking up the collection.

## **SEEK SUPPORT FROM US**

**Baptismal Aftercare:** We prepare joyful gift packages of prayer cards, care booklets, special items, and handmade items made with love from St. Mary's Hearts and Hands ministry. The gift packages are presented to the families at the Baptism of their children.

**Bereavement Support Group:** We offer comfort and community to those grieving the loss of a loved one. Join us for a time of sharing, prayer, and healing in a safe, supportive space through Pathways Counseling Center.

**Consolation Ministry:** We send cards of condolences to the families who have lost a loved one and have made arrangements with St. Mary's for church, funeral home or graveside services. The card includes information for additional help, if needed, through the Stephen Ministry and/or Pathways Services.

**English Language Learning:** We provide classes to adult immigrants from various backgrounds (non-denominational) and countries. Classes provide immigrants an opportunity to learn to speak, comprehend, read and write English, as well as learn about our history and customs.

**Hearts & Hands:** We get together to crochet and knit at all levels. We encourage anyone who would like to learn to knit or crochet to attend one of our gatherings.

**Homebound Connections:** We provide social connection to individuals who could benefit from a personal visit. Visits are made to residences, nursing facilities and other home situations of parish members.

**Lost Angels:** We are a bereavement/support group for families and loved ones who have lost someone to addiction/overdose.

**More Than Ever:** We are a ministry of healing for parents and grandparents that are estranged from their children or grandchildren. We honor the memory of Veronica Picone, who started this ministry in 2022.

**Pathways Counseling Center:** We are a state-sanctioned mental health center offering professional counseling to children, adults and families. We accept most major commercial health insurances in addition to Medicare and Medicaid.

**Prayer Shawl:** We are a group who knit and crochet prayer shawls which we gift to members of the St. Mary's extended community who are in need of comfort and prayer.

**Stephen Ministry:** We are highly trained Stephen Ministers who meet with and provide emotional and spiritual support to those facing life challenges like grief, divorce, dealing with illness, or any other serious issue.



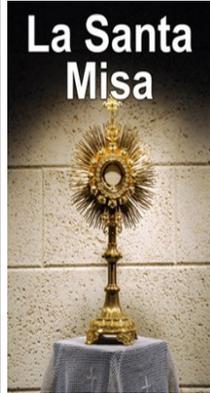
## MINISTERIO HISPANO DE SANTA MARIA

### La Santa Misa en español

Miércoles a las 7:00pm

Domingos a las 8:45am

En la iglesia Principal



### Bautismos en español

Requisitos: Certificado de Nacimiento del(a) niño(a), padrinos y asistir a una clase antes de la celebración del Sacramento (padres y padrinos). Información: Milagros Anto. Si desea bautizar su hijo(a) en inglés debe asistir a una clase y llamar a Lynda 973-835-0374 Ext 192.



### Visita de "Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe" a tu hogar.

Si deseas que Nuestra Morenita visite tu hogar ponte en contacto con **Angelina Nuci** después de nuestra misa dominical o escríbele al siguiente correo electrónico: [angehannuci@yahoo.com](mailto:angehannuci@yahoo.com). Cada domingo en misa con la bendición de nuestra comunidad; "Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe" es enviada a visitar cada familia que así lo requiere.

Iglesia Católica de Santa María y  
Comunidad Franciscana

Donaciones  
en línea

escanea para donar



stmarya-pompton.org/olffortory

Al hacer un donativo recurrente, usted puede proporcionar un apoyo continuo a las necesidades esenciales de nuestra parroquia, sus programas, sus ministerios y otras iniciativas de ayuda y asistencia.

Porque es dando que recibimos



# ANUNCIOS

1.- **Adorar al Santísimo** es un encuentro personal con Dios. Habrá exposición al Santísimo después de la misa en español el miércoles 25 de febrero de 2026. Si alguien no puede comulgar por enfermedad u otra razón, avisa al Padre John Coughlin para una visita.

2.- Expresamos nuestro sincero agradecimiento a todos los que han colaborado en la ceremonia de la Confirmación el domingo pasado 8 de febrero. Gracias catequistas por su ayuda, talante y compromiso. Así como también agradecemos a nuestros monaguillos por su disponibilidad y apoyo.

### 3.- **Cuaresma 2026:**

\*La Misa de Miércoles de Ceniza será el **18 de febrero a las 8:30 p.m.** en la iglesia principal. Empecemos unidos este tiempo de reflexión, oración y encuentro con Dios, permitiendo que Su llamado transforme y fortalezca nuestra fe.

\* Se invita cordialmente a toda la comunidad hispana a participar en una charla de reflexión para prepararnos para la Cuaresma 2026 el **domingo 15 de febrero a las 10:00 a.m.** en el Spina Hall (sótano de la iglesia). Esta enseñanza estará a cargo del padre Huberto Obando. ¡Te esperamos para caminar juntos como comunidad de fe rumbo a la Cuaresma!

\* **VIA CRUCIS BILLINGUE:** viernes 13 de marzo a las 7:00pm; en la iglesia; antes tendremos una comida sencilla de sopa en el sótano.

\***SERVICIO DE RECONCILIACION:** miércoles 18 de marzo a las 7:30 p.m., después de la Misa en la Iglesia Principal. Les invitamos a participar para fortalecer juntos nuestra vivencia de este tiempo de fe.

### Lecturas Bíblicas –VI Domingo Ordinario - Ciclo A – (15 de febrero de 2026)

**Primera Lectura:** Sirácides 15, 16-21

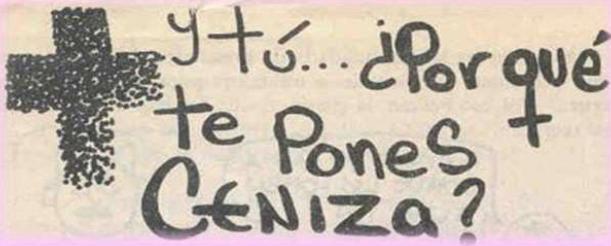
**Salmo Responsorial:** Salmo 118, 1-2. 4-5. 17-18. 33-34

**Segunda Lectura:** 1 Corintios 2, 6-10

**+Evangelio:** Mateo 5, 17-37

### Ministerio de Proclamadores de la Palabra

Por favor comunicarse con Lourdes Huerta (973-270-3453). Este Ministerio se reunirá el lunes 23 de febrero de 2026 de 7:30pm a 8:30pm en el salón Alma Banta del Centro Carnevale.



El Miércoles de Ceniza marca el inicio de la Cuaresma y nos recuerda dos verdades esenciales: somos frágiles y necesitamos a Dios. Al recibir la ceniza en la frente escuchamos palabras que nos invitan a la conversión y a tomar en serio el Evangelio en nuestra vida diaria. No es un gesto mágico ni solo una costumbre, sino un signo que nos llama a revisar el corazón, a dejar el pecado y a caminar de nuevo hacia el Señor con humildad y confianza. Para los cristianos, este día debe ser un momento de reflexión profunda sobre nuestra vida cotidiana: cómo hablamos, cómo tratamos a los demás, en qué usamos nuestro tiempo,

qué lugar ocupa Dios en nuestras decisiones. El Miércoles de Ceniza nos invita a unir oración, ayuno y obras de caridad, no como cargas, sino como caminos para sanar el corazón y renovar nuestra relación con Dios y con el prójimo.

Es una ocasión para preguntarnos con sinceridad: ¿qué necesito cambiar?, ¿a quién debo pedir perdón?, ¿cómo puedo amar mejor en mi familia, en el trabajo y en la parroquia?.

En la comunidad de nuestra parroquia de Santa María, este día tiene un significado especial porque nos recuerda que, aun siendo inmigrantes o hijos de inmigrantes, somos una sola familia en la fe. Vivimos en un país con muchos desafíos: divisiones sociales, tensiones culturales, cansancio económico y preocupaciones por el futuro. El Miércoles de Ceniza nos enseña que, en medio de todo, estamos llamados a ser testigos de esperanza, a apoyarnos unos a otros, a construir puentes y no muros. Como comunidad cristiana católica en los Estados Unidos, la reflexión es clara: regresar a Dios de todo corazón, cuidar la unidad, defender la dignidad de cada persona y dejar que la Cuaresma sea un tiempo donde Jesús transforme nuestra vida y nuestra parroquia desde dentro. Además, este día nos invita a mirar más allá de nosotros mismos y a reconocer el sufrimiento y las necesidades de quienes nos rodean.

La ceniza que recibimos nos recuerda que nuestra vida es breve y que vale la pena gastarla en lo que realmente cuenta: amar, servir, perdonar y buscar la justicia. Para nuestra comunidad hispana, esto significa estar atentos a los hermanos que se sienten solos, a los que cargan preocupaciones por su situación migratoria, a los jóvenes que buscan sentido, y a los ancianos que necesitan cercanía. Dejar que el Miércoles de Ceniza toque nuestro corazón es decidir que esta Cuaresma no será una más, sino un nuevo comienzo en nuestra vida personal y comunitaria.

**FUENTE: VATICANONEWS.COM**

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