

# Saint Mary's Church

15164 Juniper Dr. Marne, MI 49435 / 616.677.3934 / [www.saintmarysmarne.org](http://www.saintmarysmarne.org)

August 13, 2023 ~ The 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time



## Weekend Mass Schedule:

Saturday 4:30PM St Mary

Sunday 8:30AM St Michael

Sunday 10:30AM St Mary

Sunday 4:30PM St Michael

## Weekday Mass Schedule:

Tuesday 9AM St Mary

*Adoration begins after Mass until 2:00 pm*

Wednesday 9AM - St Michael

*Adoration begins after Mass until 2:00 pm*

Thursday 9:00 AM St Mary

Friday 9:00 AM St Michael

## Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday 3:30 PM—4:15PM-St Mary

Sunday 3:00PM -4:00PM St Michael

Tuesday 2:00 PM—3:00 PM St Mary

Wednesday 2:00 PM—3:00 PM St Michael

*(or anytime by appt. please call parish office)*

## St. Mary Parish Office

Monday - 8:00AM - 4:30PM

Tuesday - 8:00AM - 4:30PM

Wednesday - 8:00AM - 11:30AM

Thursday - 8:00AM to 4:30PM

**St Mary's Mission Statement:** *We, the Roman Catholic community of St. Mary's, by our baptism have become the People of God, dedicated to living and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are a community built on faith and the sharing of individual talents, abilities and skills for the sake of the Kingdom of God. Empowered by the Holy Spirit and strengthened by prayer and the sacraments, we continue the mission of Jesus to reveal God's presence in all of human life.*

## Pastor:

Rev. Michael Hodges / [frmhodges@grpriests.org](mailto:frmhodges@grpriests.org)  
616.677.3934

*For emergency please call: 616.745.1409*

## Deacon:

Deacon Tom Roberts / [troberts@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:troberts@saintmarysmarne.org)  
616.677.3934

## Business Manager:

Todd Kline / [businessmanager@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:businessmanager@saintmarysmarne.org)

## Parish Secretary:

Cathie VanGessel / [secretary@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:secretary@saintmarysmarne.org)

## Director of Religious Education:

Rebecca Chicklon / [dre@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:dre@saintmarysmarne.org)  
616.677.5065

## Youth Minister

Rebecca Chicklon / [dre@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:dre@saintmarysmarne.org)  
616.677.5065

**Director of R.C.I.A:** Jill Brown-616.677.3934

**Maintenance/Custodian:** Jim & Marian Looks: 677.3934

## Liturgical Minister:

Gary Karr / 616.677.3934 / [gkarr@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:gkarr@saintmarysmarne.org)

## Music Director:

Dr. Bernie Stanko 616.490.3836 /  
[berniestanko@hotmail.com](mailto:berniestanko@hotmail.com)

## Pastoral Council:

Sharon Davis, Becky Warners,  
Vito Dolci, Geary Farrell, Doug Frantz

## Finance Council:

Lisa Bradley, Jose Gomez, Todd Kline,  
Scott Lampe, Mel Northup

**Martha League:** Parish Office: 616.677.3934  
(assistance with meals during illness or injury)

## Prayer Line:

Parish Office 616.677.3934  
or Linda at 677.3269 for evening requests  
call Darlene 616.453.0157  
or email: [bfa1414@yahoo.com](mailto:bfa1414@yahoo.com)

## Our Cluster Parish:

St Michael's - 17150 - 88th Avenue  
Coopersville, MI 49404  
616.384.4026  
[www.saintmichaels.us](http://www.saintmichaels.us)

# Mass Intentions

## Saturday August 12

4:30PM † Judy Wensink by M/M Duane Perrin..... **MA**  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:30 PM—4:15 PM - St Mary

## Sunday August 13

8:30AM † Al Spencer by Winne Spencer & Family ..... **MI**  
 10:30AM † Bruce LeMieux by Mary LeMieux and Family ..... **MA**  
 4:30PM † Gene Hodges by Fr. Mike ..... **MI**  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:30 PM—4:15 PM - St Michael

**Monday August 14**..... No Mass

## Tuesday August 15 The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

9:00AM † Monica Zahm by M/M Duane Perrin ..... **MA**  
**No Adoration/No Confessions**  
 7:00PM Our Parish Family ..... **MI**

## Wednesday August 16

9:00AM † Edna Schumaker by Norma Umlor ..... **MI**  
 Adoration begins after Mass until 2pm  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 2:00 PM—3:00 PM - St. Michael

## Thursday August 17

9:00AM † Betty Oziemkiewicz by Family ..... **MA**

## Friday August 18

9:00AM † Steven Rohen by Family ..... **MI**

## Saturday August 19

4:30PM † Bob Bacon by Family..... **MA**  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:30 PM—4:15 PM - St Mary

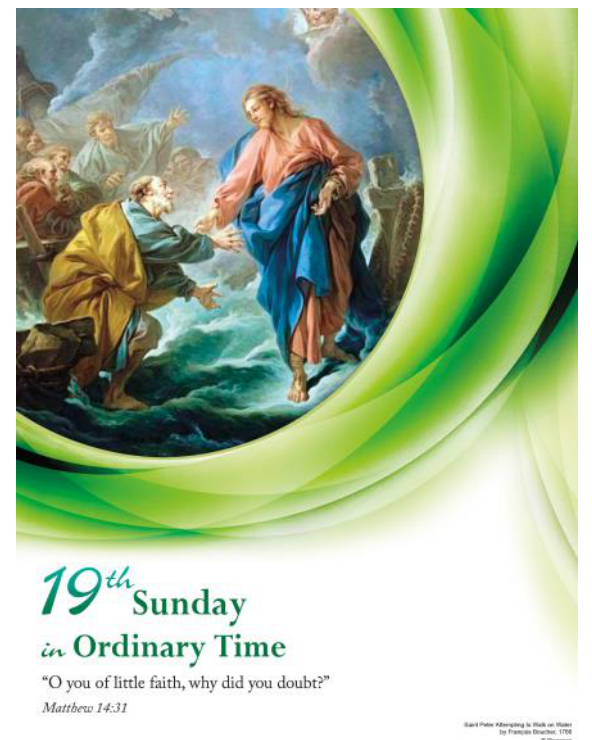
## Sunday August 20

8:30AM † Eli O'Bradovich by Family ..... **MI**  
 10:30AM † Pat O'Connor by Margie Jirous ..... **MA**  
 4:30PM † Caroline Idziak by Bob Idziak and Family..... **MI**  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:30 PM—4:15 PM - St Michael

**MA**=St. Mary      **MI**=St. Michael's

St. Michael's Liturgical Ministers		
	Aug 20 / 8:30 AM	Aug 20 / 4:30 PM
Altar Servers	Peter Nielsen Bryson Lindberg	Madelyn Jonaitis Molly Jonaitis
Eucharistic Ministers	Deacon Tom Debbie Veneklas Chris Albrecht Sharon Carlson Kenny Harker Denise Parish Paul Schmidt	Deacon Tom Greg Helsen
Lector	Lyndsey Kosten	Joe LeMieux
Sacristan	Jane Vituskas	Karen Helsen
Ushers	Ed Irwin Ray Maka Calvin Lindberg Curt DeVos	Greg Helsen Bob Jonaitis
Music	Craig Bleckley	Craig Bleckley

St. Mary's Liturgical Ministers		
	August 19 - 4:30PM	August 20 - 10:30AM
Sacristan	Need One	Gary Karr
Altar Servers	Need Two	Lauren LeMieux Ty Ricord
Precious Body	Deacon Tom Matt Karr Lisa Potts	Geary Farrell Margie Jirous Bruce Kamp
Precious Blood	Jose Gomez Breton Petrauskas Need One Vito Dolci	Christina Withers Janette Ney Need Two
Hospitality	Bryson Potts MJ Potts Matt Potts Madison Potts	Jeanne Leale Rick Leale Anthony Leale Nettie Leale
Lector	Kathy Gomez	Rita Carmody
Music	Bernie Stanko	Bernie Stanko



## For the Week of August 13, 2023

**Sunday** **Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
 1 Kgs 19:9a, 11-13a; Ps 85:9, 10, 11-12, 13-14; Rom 9:1-5; Mt 14:22-33

**Monday** **Memorial of Saint Maximilian Kolbe, Priest & Martyr**  
 Dt 10:12-22; Ps 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20; Mt 17:22-27

**Tuesday** **Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**  
**Vigil:** 1 Chr 15: 3-4, 15-16; 16:1-2; Ps 132: 6-7, 9-10, 13-14; 1 Cor 15:54b-57; Lk 11:27-28  
**Day:** Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; Ps 45:10, 11, 12, 16; 1 Cor 15:20-27; Lk 1:39-56

**Wednesday** **Memorial of St. Stephen of Hungary**  
 Dt 34:1-12; Ps 66:1-3a, 5 & 8, 16-17; Mt 18:15-20

**Thursday** Jos 3:7-10a, 11, 13-17; Ps 114:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Mt 18:21 - 19:1

**Friday** Jos 24:1-13; Ps 136:1-3, 16-18, 21-22 & 24; Mt 19:3-12

**Saturday** Jos 24:14-29; Ps 16:1-2a & 5, 7-8, 11; Mt 19:13-15

**Sunday** **Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
 Is 56:1, 6-7; Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; Rom 11:13-15, 29-32; Mt 15:21-28

## Cluster News and Community News and Events

HOSTED BY  
THE CHURCHES OF COOPERSVILLE

**BACK TO SCHOOL BASH**

INFLATABLES  
GAMES  
FOOD  
And MORE

**Tuesday  
August 22nd**  
5:00-7:00PM  
Vets Park  
250 W Randall St

**FREE FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY**

### Coopersville Cares Benefit Sale

At Grace Lutheran Church, 300 E. Cleveland .  
Thursday Aug 17 Early Bird Sale, \$5 admission. 6 -8PM  
Fri. Aug 18 & Sat. Aug 19 free admission, 9AM-7PM  
Saturday, Aug. 19, 2023 - 9AM-Noon. We will be able  
to accept donations On; Tues. & Wed. - Aug 15 & 16 -  
9:AM-9PM (please do not drop off prior to these dates  
or times) Coopersville Cares is a nonprofit charitable  
organization, dedicated to assisting area residents in  
need. If you are interested in volunteering some of your  
time, please contact Christy at [kcalderink@gmail.com](mailto:kcalderink@gmail.com)

### Help Wanted

Catholic schools, parishes, affiliated organizations, and  
the diocese are hiring! Visit the diocesan website to see  
available opportunities, and check back regularly for new  
openings: <https://grdiocese.org/employment/>

### Please Pray for our Engaged Couples

**Christian Hall & Kayleigh Kutchin**  
.....August 25, 2023 (St Michael)  
**Marissa McDonald & Christopher Barczak**  
.....October 7, 2023 (St Mary)  
**Julia Delaney & Logan Brouwer**  
.....April 13, 2024 (Cathedral of St Andrew)

Lord God, the source of all love, the wise plan  
of your providence has brought these young  
people together. As they prepare themselves  
for the sacrament of marriage and pray for  
your grace, grant that, strengthened by your  
blessing, they may grow in their respect for one another and  
cherish each other with a sincere love. We ask this through  
Christ our Lord, Amen



### Youth Ministry

#### Youth Ministry (6-12 Grade)

Youth Ministry Discipleship Gatherings will  
resume in the fall. Feel free to contact  
Rebecca for more details.



6th-12th grade youth are invited to help with the St.  
Michael Festival and St. Mary Parish Picnic. If interested,  
please contact our Director of Youth Ministry, Rebecca  
Chicklon at the contact information listed below.

Questions or comments

Please contact Rebecca Chicklon at 616-677-5065 or  
[dre@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:dre@saintmarysmarne.org)

### Fr. Mike's Musings



As an educator I am always open to increasing learning opportunities,  
whether for the young or the not-so-young. Below is a re-print of a  
presentation made after the Sunday morning Mass at St. Michael's in Coop-  
ersville. For my two-cents worth, the Pre-School program offered at St.  
Michael's is enlightening and enriching for all concerned. My day is made much brighter  
when I visit these youngsters knowing that they are being cared for, educated, and  
nurtured in a life to love and serve the Lord.—Fr.Mike

\*\*\*\*\*  
"My name is Kelli Ferguson and I am a parishioner at St. Michael's and attended the  
school through the 6th grade. Some of you may know my son, the child that bounces  
on his way up to give his offering to father. Or the one who likes to hold the book for  
the 'Children's Liturgy of the Word' so high and proud. I have to say there are many  
contributing factors to his love of God and His word, and there are a few that I want to  
share with you today.

There is a little classroom you can find all the way at the other end of the school build-  
ing. It is filled with prayers decorating the walls, little cubbies for snacks and drinks, a  
bookshelf with tons of books, and in the morning right before class starts you will find a  
wonderful teacher that greets each student and parent that are arriving to start their  
day. Mrs. Cindy Lindberg is not only an educator, she wears many coats here at St.  
Michael's, but to me her most important role is being a teacher. She has used her gifts  
and talents that God has placed in her to love, nurture, and impact the little hearts and  
minds of each student that attends. I know, every teacher is amazing, but Cindy has set  
the bar very high for future teachers. The handmade crafts that my son brings home  
hang proudly on our refrigerator and one in particular is a 'Jesus Loves Me and I Love  
Jesus' cross. I know it is cute hanging among our refrigerator door clutter, yet when he  
walks by and says, "Ha! Jesus LOVES me and I LOVE Jesus! Did you know that  
mom?" I can tell you that it not only warms my heart but gives me validation that St.  
Michael's pre-school was the best decision we made in beginning his education.  
Crafts are not the only thing that he brings home. I listen to his endless songs about  
Jesus that he sings in the car and around the house, and when it's time to pray before  
meals, he raises his hand and picks either the 'Hail Mary', 'Glory Be...', or the 'Our  
Father'. These are only a few of the priceless moments that set this little classroom  
apart. Not only is St. Michael's pre-school, amazing in more ways than one, it's SUPER  
affordable. Last year Cindy was able to get a grant and cut down tuition costs for each  
student. We also participate in 'Scrip' which is a program that is offered that gives us  
money back to use towards education just by purchasing gift cards to places we already  
shop. Here is a little secret, anyone can participate in this program and if you yourself  
don't have a child enrolled in preschool or faith formation you can choose a family to  
pass your savings on to.  
So, I will end with this little thought. Do you know a little 3 1/2 - 5-year-old child that  
would thrive in a classroom filled with faith, love, and learning? If you are a great grand-  
parent, grandparent, parent, aunt, or uncle please reach out to Cindy Lindberg for fall  
enrollment and let's fill her classroom with tiny hands and big hearts and show them  
the love and support of the St. Michael's family."

**Contact Info:**

**Cindy Lindberg-Preschool Director- 616-384-4026 - [preschoolsaintmichaels.us](http://preschoolsaintmichaels.us)**

### Made for More

Join us for a very well done nationally known event called, Made for  
More. Made for More is about Theology of the Body. Guest Speak-  
er; Christopher West. This event is for all adults but is also good  
for families with teens. St. Mary & St. Michael are co-hosting this  
event with St. Mary, Spring Lake, MI. For more information please  
contact Debbie: 616-384-4026 or [childrensministry@stmichaels.us](mailto:childrensministry@stmichaels.us)  
OR Rebecca: 616-677-5065 or [dre@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:dre@saintmarysmarne.org)



### Meal Train for Fr Mike

Have you signed up yet? It really is as easy as making an extra serving of whatever you  
are preparing your family for dinner. Put it in a microwavable container and drop it off  
at the Parish Office on our way to (or home) from work.. Or call the office to make  
special drop off arrangements. (Sign up online: or call the parish office)

<https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/8vv97n>

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## St. Mary's Parish News

### Religious Education

**Religious Education** meets on Wednesdays, 6:15-7:30 p.m. and will resume in September.

Children's Liturgy of the Word meets during the 10:30 a.m. Mass and will resume in the fall.

#### Questions or comments:

Please contact Rebecca Chicklon at [dre@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:dre@saintmarysmarne.org) or 616-677-5065

#### High School Youth Ministry

See Cluster Page for more information.

### Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The Assumption Of Mary is a feast day that is celebrated on August 15th every year. This feast day commemorates Mary's death and her assumption into heaven. Because it commemorates this sacred occasion – which is viewed by many as Mary's divine birthday.



Almighty ever-living God, who assumed the Immaculate Virgin Mary, the Mother of your Son, body and soul into heavenly glory, grant we pray, that, always attentive to the things that are above, we may merit to be sharers of her glory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

### Save the Dates

<b>August 22</b>	Back to School Bash-Vets Park 5PM
<b>August 27</b>	St Michael Parish Festival
<b>Sep 10</b>	St Mary Parish Picnic
<b>Oct 8</b>	Knights of Columbus Council #11581 Breakfast & Blood Drive
<b>Oct 24</b>	Flute Recital - St Mary 7:30PM
<b>Nov 3</b>	Mass of Hope, Health & Healing St Mary 7:00PM
<b>Nov 22</b>	Thanksgiving Eve Mass, Grocery Collection
<b>Nov 23</b>	Thanksgiving Day Mass

### Catholic Service Appeal 2023

Thank you for your gifts to 2023 Catholic Services Appeal! Your generous support funds essential diocesan ministries that strengthen us in Christ.

**CSA 2023 Pledge Goal: \$51,834.00**

Total Pledges Made: \$41,630.00 (81%)

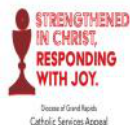
Balance: \$10,204.00

Participation: 112 of 292 Active Households (39%)

Totals as of August 8, 2023

**Thank you for your stewardship**

**Please Note, if we do not reach the parish goal set by the diocese, the shortage will need to come out of our church operating account. Please help us reach our goal and send in your pledge card this week! If you have returned your CSA pledge card, thank you! If you have not responded, please do so as soon as possible**



### Welcome

We are pleased to **welcome** our newly baptized child of God into the St Mary's parish family

**Casey James Pawlukiewicz**

Baptized on August 12, 2023

Son of Scott & Tanya (Andryscik) Pawlukiewicz



Through this baptism you have received the light of Christ; walk in this light all the days of your life. Shine as a light in the world, to the glory of God the Father. Congratulations and May God Bless you All!

### Parish Picnic Planning Meeting ~ August 22-6PM

THANK YOU SO MUCH to everyone that attended the Parish Picnic Meeting. It was a great turn out with a lot of great ideas. The Next Planning Meeting will be on **Tuesday, August 22 at 6PM**. The Meeting will be held in the church community room. Please plan on attending the meeting to see what you can do to help your parish picnic.

#### St Mary's Parish FAMILY REUNION

#### Mass & Picnic - September 10.

Join your parish family (past & present) for an afternoon of FOOD, FELLOWSHIP & FUN! Grilled Hamburgers & Hotdogs, Baked Beans, Potato Salad, Coleslaw, Chips and Punch & Punch will be provided.. Please bring a DESSERT to share.. All are Welcome! Come and Visit... Stop by and say HI to your old friends and make some new friends. 50/50 Raffles, Yard Games, LIVE Music, Cake Walk and More... 10:30AM Mass at the Cemetery Altar. (Please bring a lawn chair. In case of inclement weather, Mass will be celebrated inside) Picnic Reunion will be at the Parish Hall at 12PM. Please RSVP... Sign Up Sheets in the Narthex. Questions call the Parish Office or email [secretary@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:secretary@saintmarysmarne.org)



### Knights of Columbus #11581 News

To learn more about the Knights of Columbus' activities and what they do to support our parish community, the surrounding area and the world, please contact Grand Knight: Rob Rander at: [robrander82@gmail.com](mailto:robrander82@gmail.com) or come to a General Membership Meeting. Meetings are held the 1st Thursday of the month at 7:00pm in St Mary's Parish Hall. **Next Meeting - September at 7PM at the Parish Hall.**

**Save the Date: October 8** - Community Breakfast and Blood Drive Register here: [https://donate.michigan.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/149333](https://donate.michigan.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/149333)

#### Knights of the Month

Knight Person of the Month for August - Joe Lothschutz

Knight Family of the Month for August - Jim & Marian Looks

The Knight Person / Family of the month is a way of recognizing someone who has gone above and beyond, or done something extra for the council or the church community. Congratulations and Thank You for your service and commitment to our Parish Family



### Giving Back to God

	August 5/6
Regular Contributions	\$5077.80
Capital Improvement	\$355.00
Online Contributions	\$1009.00
Children's Contributions	\$14.00
Total	\$6455.80

**Thank you for your continued support and generosity!**

**St. Mary's Sponsor of the Week**  
**NORTHERN PHYSICAL THERAPY ~ IVY REHAB**

[northernpts.com](http://northernpts.com) ~ 616.997.6172

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR BULLETIN!**

## Welcome to the Cluster Parishes of St. Mary and St. Michael

View this bulletin online at [www.DiscoverMass.com](http://www.DiscoverMass.com)

## St. Michael's Parish News



**Scrip News**— Scrip numbers will be updated next week.



What is it? The PaperGator® is a fundraiser where St. Michael's is paid to collect paper products for recycling.

### What CAN go in the bins?

Newsprint  
Catalogs/Magazines  
Junk Mail  
Phone Books  
Office/School paper  
Hard and soft cover books

### What CANNOT go in the bins?

Paperboard  
(Grocery Item boxes)  
Plastic  
Metal  
Trash  
Glass  
Cardboard

## St. Michael's Preschool

Have you considered St. Michael's Preschool for your child or grandchild? If not, you should! Come see what a great experience St. Michael's Preschool can provide. Come meet our Director/Teacher, Cindy Lindberg! Preschool meets on MWF from 8:45—11:45 am (Mon. 8:45am-2:30pm for 4-year-olds). For more info, call the Parish Office at 616-384-4026. Now enrolling for the 2023-24 school year!



## St. Michael's Faith Formation

**It is time to register for Faith Formation. Attention families with children ages 3 through grades 8. Please registered your child for Faith Formation. You can find registration forms on the parish website and forms are also located in the church narthex.** Contact Debbie if you have any questions (616)384-4026.

**Children's Liturgy of the Word:** program is offered on Sunday during 8 and 8:30 Masses. Children 3-9 years old are welcome to join us each week as we pray, read and explore the Sunday Gospel from a child's viewpoint. We include the Gospel Acclamation so children understand the importance of preparing our mind and heart for the Gospel reading. **CLW will start on 9/24.**

**Elementary Faith Formation:** The elementary program is for students in grades 1-5. We meet on Wednesday from 6:15- 7:30 pm. Registration forms are in the back of church and on the parish website. **Classes start on 9/20.**

**Middle School Faith Formation:** Grades 6, 7 and 8 will meet on Sundays after the 8:30am Mass from 9:45 to 11:15 in the Youth Room. The 8th Grade students will also receive Confirmation Preparation. **Classes will begin on 9/24.**

## St. Michael's Parish Family

**Remembers in Their Prayers:** Kevin Johnson, Anne Pols, Alexandria Gordon, George Langlois, Brooke Campbell, Linda Abel-Carroll, Jackie May, Brad Boerma, Dennis Goosen, Jean Mayse, Ken Heflin, Payton Patterson, Winnie Spencer, the victims of abortion, & the men and women in the military.



## St. Michael's Sanctuary Lamp

for +Carl Goosen  
by Marcy Goosen and Family



## St. Michael's Chicken Dinner



Come one, come all. Our parish festival is August 27, 2023! We will have big raffle, chicken dinner, mini-affle, kids' tent, grocery wheel . . . something for all ages! We will need many volunteers to help out. Sign-up sheets are in the glass hallway. There will be another festival meeting today after 8:30 AM Mass.

**Large Raffle:** We are looking for a chairperson to lead this important event. Raffle tickets will be available after Masses. We are asking that each family try to sell at least 2 packets.

**Mini Raffle:** You may bring donated items into the office during regular hours. If you would like to donate money for the committee to purchase items, please do so by August 20.

**Kitchen:** In need of donations — 2 large decaf cannisters of coffee; 2 large regular cannisters of coffee; fresh cherry tomatoes; 1 jug of bleach; 1 large bottle of dish soap.

**Country Store:** The following is meant to be suggestions only: any and all baked goods, canned preserves, pickles, fruits, homemade jewelry, greeting cards, quilts, wood work, ceramics, homemade doll clothes, produce and herbs from your garden, honey, homemade soap. And books are always welcomed! If you aren't sure it is appropriate for the Country Store, please call Mary Turbessi 231-865-3468 or Cindy Lindberg

**Pie Collections:** We will take a special collection for pies today, August 13.

Please contact our co-chairs, Cindy Lindberg (616-822-1213) or Jenny Lindberg (616-862-3588), with any questions.

## Giving Back to God

August 6, 2023

Adult Envelopes	\$4,666.00
Loose Cash	\$98.00
Children's Envelopes	\$12.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,776.25</b>
Pie Collection	\$894.00
Building Fund	\$170.00

**Thank you for your continued support!**

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# Great Sorrow, Unceasing Anguish

Saint Paul felt “great sorrow and unceasing anguish” because his fellow Jews had not as a people accepted Christ as Messiah. Elijah wanted to die because God’s enemies controlled Israel. Jesus left his disciples feeling alone and powerless in a small boat battered by waves and wind. Why?

On the wall in a Nazi concentration camp an unknown prisoner wrote:

I believe in the sun, even when it isn’t shining.  
I believe in love, even when there’s no one there.  
And I believe in God, even when he is silent.

Elijah had just triumphed over all the false prophets of Baal, calling down fire from heaven. After that God sent wind and rain, ending the drought in Israel. But in spite of these signs and wonders, his enemy Jezebel retained her power and was threatening Elijah’s life. That is when discouragement hit him. He complained to God, “I’ve had enough; take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors.”

God’s answer was to reveal himself to Elijah, not in the power of the wind “splitting mountains and breaking rocks,” or of the earthquake or the fire, but in a “tiny whispering sound;” or, as it is also translated, in “a sound of sheer silence”—stone silence.

Scholars compare this event with God’s giving Moses the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, shaking the mountain and wrapping it in fire and smoke. But, in spite of this, the people lost faith and worshiped the golden calf. After that God showed his innermost self to Moses, his true divine glory, which could only be translated into words as “a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in stead-

*God, in his deepest  
nature is love, not power;  
forgiveness, not retaliation*

AUGUST 13, 2023

19TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

I Kings 19:9a, 11-13a; Romans 9:1-5;  
Matthew 14:22-33

fast love and faithfulness” (Exodus 34:6).

John’s Gospel picks up this description of God and declares Jesus Christ the embodiment of it; “The law was indeed given through Moses; grace and truth [one translation says “enduring love”] came through Jesus Christ” (1:17). Jesus was the ultimate, the most perfect revelation of God’s true personality, of his glory, on earth. Jesus revealed that glory most fully in the hour of his crucifixion and resurrection, the hour of his greatest vulnerability and love (see John 17:1).

At Jesus’ death there were also signs of power: “At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, ‘Truly this man was God’s

Son!’” (see Matthew 27:51-54). But the true revelation of God in Jesus was his acceptance of the Father’s silence during the crucifixion and the gentleness, the “steadfast love” Jesus showed after his Resurrection, when he appeared to his disciples saying, “Peace be





with you” (Luke 24:36). Believers recognized that it was through powerlessness, vulnerability and love that God revealed in Jesus the full divine glory. God reveals himself to us, too, in the “stone silence” of his apparent absence from the world. When there are no external signs of God’s power and the emotional comfort of interior consolations is gone, then we discover his most authentic, most reliable, most strengthening presence in our hearts. It is then that we experience the depth and the reality of purest faith, purest hope and purest love.

God, in his deepest nature is love, not power; forgiveness, not retaliation; a God who is patient to the point of appearing powerless, who appeals to freedom rather than using force. Jesus on the cross reveals him as he truly is.

## REFLECTING ON THIS WEEK'S GOSPELS

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### Nineteenth Week of the Year

***Pray daily:** Father, we come, reborn in the Spirit, to celebrate our oneness with you in Jesus Christ. Touch our hearts; help them grow. Touch our lives; make them signs of your enduring love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**Monday:** Matthew 17:22-27. Jesus said, “‘The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised.’ And they were greatly distressed.” Do you see it as defeat or victory when someone suffers injustice, oppression or violation and yet loves back?

**Tuesday:** Matthew 18:1-5, 10, 12-14. “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” Are you willing to be as powerless and vulnerable as a child? What do children get through love that you cannot obtain through power?

**Wednesday:** Matthew 18:15-20. “If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone.” Have you ever done this? With what results? Why is this so risky to do?

**Thursday:** Matthew 18:21—19:1. Peter asked, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus answered, “Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy-seven times.” How much will you take before getting violent in word or act?

**Friday:** Matthew 19:3-12. Some Pharisees tested him, saying, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?” If they had asked instead about “killing for any cause,” how do you think Jesus would have answered? Why?

**Saturday:** Matthew 19:13-15. Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.” What is special about children that makes them eligible for the Kingdom?

## LIVING THIS WEEK'S GOSPELS

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**As Christian:** Choose one thing you are trying to change by power; use Jesus’ method of love instead.

**As Disciple:** Read one of the four Gospels completely. See if you can identify a value for which Jesus says we should be willing to kill.

**As Prophet:** Ask how you most frequently use violence against others (for example, in words) and decide how you can change that into a way that witnesses to God’s “enduring love.”

**As Priest:** Think of one thing which recurs in your life that you could accept as a way of offering yourself in union with the Lamb of God, a way of working against sin in the world by enduring evil with love. Offer yourself for this during Mass.

**As King:** Count the ways you or those you are associated with (at home, at work, as an American) try to force people by intimidation or threats to do what is right. Take one concrete step toward changing this so that you can work through persuasion (conversion) and respectful love instead.



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