

*Beloved Disciples
of Christ the Lord*

Roman Catholic Family of Parishes
bdclfamily.org

*Family
Magazine*

August/September 2023

*St. Martha
Parish*



Parishioner Focus

Meet Mary Bauer
of St. Martha Parish



BDC Family Update

In my last letter, I began by acknowledging that much information about the creation of the Family of Parishes model that the Diocese is adopting has been relatively slow in coming. I mentioned that this was mostly done on purpose by me as I was hesitant to release news prematurely. There was still a lot that was in flux, and I did not want to make an announcement only to have to retract it a few months or even weeks later. As we enter our second year as a Family, I believe my reluctance has been well served. It is only recently that more clarity has been given to the future structure of priestly ministry, and I will try now to explain the new reality. Many have noticed that while many priests were named as Pastor of the new Families being created, I was announced as Moderator.

There is a key difference in Canon Law. Canon 517 states, "When circumstances require it, the pastoral care of a parish or of several parishes together can be entrusted to a team of several *priests in solidum* with the requirement, however, that one of them should be the moderator in exercising pastoral care, that is, he should direct their combined activity and answer for it to the bishop." This is the model under which we are operating. I am the Moderator of our Family and am one of three Priests *In Solidum* given authority over all 6 of our Parishes. Father Bart Lipiec and Father Lukasz Kopala join with me as the three Priests *In Solidum* for the Beloved Disciples of Christ the Lord.

We, three share in the pastoral care of the entire Family. As Canon 543 states, "Each of the priests who as a team have been entrusted with the pastoral care of some parish or group of different parishes is obliged to perform the duties and functions of the pastor...in accord with an arrangement determined by themselves; ... to be

exercised however, under the direction of the moderator." As a result, none of us now has the title of "Pastor" and we will stop using that title. We are three Parish Priests *In Solidum*, in a team ministry arrangement, with myself serving as Moderator, the one who answers to the Bishop.

In addition, when the Family was first being formed, we were told there would be four priests in total assigned to the 6 Parishes. We were blessed when it was decided that Father Paul Steller would continue to live at St. Mary's on the Hill and minister to the Parish as he retired. Fr. Paul has been a blessing for us as he has continued to serve St. Mary's in multiple ways. In effect, we have had 5 priests ministering to our Family. Now as the shortage of priests begins to have a greater impact, we have been informed that our sole Parochial Vicar, Father Aaron Kulczyk, who has worked tirelessly this past year, mostly at Our Lady of Pompeii and St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, has been transferred. We thank Fr. Aaron for the diligence and energy he has demonstrated the past 12 months. He will be missed.

In essence, our Family going forward will be served by 4 priests, Fr. Bart, Fr. Lukasz and myself as Parish Priests *In Solidum* and Fr. Paul in retirement. That withdrawal of one priest will have a great impact on our plans as we will have to look at all our Parish offerings once again and will be forced to make adjustments. We will continue to work with the Family Council and the lay leadership of each Parish Community in planning these modifications. St. Pope John Paul II often quoted Jesus' frequent words of counsel, "Do not be afraid." I hope we can heed these words as together we move forward to face a challenging, but hope-filled future. Peace,

Fr. Rich



Mass Times

Our Lady of Pompeii
129 Laverack Ave. Lancaster
716-683-6522
olpparish.com

Tuesday, Thursday: 6:30 pm
Saturday: 8:00 am, 4:30 pm
Sunday: 10:00 am, 11:30 am

Sacred Heart of Jesus
5337 Genesee St. Bowmansville
716-683-2375

sacredheartshrine.org

Monday - Friday: 8:00 am
Saturday: 4:00 pm
Sunday: 8:30 am, 11:00 am

St. Martha
10 French Rd. Depew
716-684-6342

stmarthadepew.org

Monday - Friday: 8:15 am
Saturday: 5:00 pm
Sunday: 8:00 am, 10:00 am

St. Mary of the Assumption
1 St. Mary's Hill Lancaster
716-683-6445

stmarysonthehill.org

Monday - Friday: Noon
Saturday: 7:00 pm
Sunday: 8:00 am, 10:00 am, Noon

St. Philip the Apostle
950 Losson Rd. Cheektowaga
716-668-8370

spaparish.org

Monday - Thursday: 9:00 am
Friday: Noon
Saturday: 4:30 pm
Sunday: 8:30 am, 10:30 am, Noon

St. Teresa of Calcutta
496 Terrace Blvd. Depew
716-683-2746

blessedmotherteresaparishdepew.org

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 6:30 pm
Saturday: 4:00 pm
Sunday: 9:00 am

This magazine is proudly printed locally.

Beloved Disciples of Christ the Lord Family of Parishes

Moderator:
Msgr. Richard Siepka

In Solidum:
Rev. Lukasz Kopala
Rev. Bart Lipiec

In Residence:
Rev. Paul Steller

*Would you like to join our writing staff?
Do you have a story to share?*

Send an email to:
magazine@bdclfamily.org



Upcoming Family Events

Summer Weekends - Outdoor Mass

Sacred Heart of Jesus

Join us for outdoor Mass every Sunday at 8:30 am & 11:00 am, Now - Oct. 1st. Weather permitting.

St. Mary of the Assumption

Join us for outdoor Mass every Saturday at 7:00 pm. Please bring a chair. Weather permitting.

13th of the Month - Our Lady of Fatima Mass

Sacred Heart of Jesus

Monthly Holy Mass & Rosary Procession
Aug. 13 at 11:00 am,
Sept. 13 & Oct. 13 at 6:30 pm.

Fridays - Bingo

St. Philip the Apostle

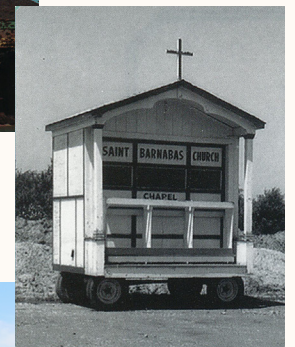
First Call is at 7 pm. Doors open around 5:30 pm. Open to players 18 years and older.



In the 1950s and 1960s, the areas of Cheektowaga, Lancaster, and Depew were greatly expanding and the need for new Catholic Churches and schools arose. The new residents and now Parishioners of newly formed Parishes began to build up these new places of worship.

St. Barnabas Parish was established on June 13, 1960 at the corner of Dick Rd. and George Urban Blvd. The Parishioners spent their first year moving around between the Aero Drive-In Theatre, a “Chapel-on-Wheels,” and even an airport hangar. The first Mass that was celebrated on campus in the new large hall was on November 12th of 1961. It was not until 1967 that the new Church and school buildings were open and in use.

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament (OLBS) Parish was established on July 15, 1965 under Pastor Msgr. Joseph Coughlin just down the road from St. Barnabas at George Urban Blvd. and French Rd. The first Parish Mass was held at St. Mary’s High School on August 1, 1965. From 1983-1990, the Parish expanded and a new gym was added, along with some Church remodeling. In 1989, the original convent was converted into the present-day Rectory. Assisted by the Felician Sisters, OLBS was able to open a school for grades 1-3 shortly after beginning as a Parish. In 1977, a kindergarten was added. OLBS School is still a lively and growing school today. Look to the next page for an update on their progress and preparations for the next school year.



Both Parishes continued to thrive through the 1990s, but as times changed, job opportunities moved people from the area and families grew smaller, so the need for two Parishes this close together dwindled. In 2005, during the Diocesan “Journey of Faith & Grace,” Parishes evaluated themselves and made recommendations as to what the future directions should be. As a result, it was decided that St. Barnabas and OLBS would merge. Though the process was difficult and took hard work, collaboration, and a lot of prayer, the newly merged St. Martha Parish began their work on June 12, 2011 at the OLBS site. A shining example of how working together can help the Parish community grow, this Parish continues to head towards a bright future, while continually honoring both pasts.



20 French Rd.
Depew, NY 14043
716-685-2544

school.olbsdepew.org

Facebook: @OLBSdepew
Instagram: @OLBSdepew

CATHOLIC SCHOOL... A GREAT PLACE TO START!

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament School is busy preparing for an exciting start to the 2023-2023 school year!

Did you know a small Catholic school can prove to be a great alternative for families looking for a specialized learning environment for their children?

- More 1:1 - Small schools are all about relationships and connections. There is a shared concern for student learning and well-being.
- Individualized Curriculum- Tailored, custom instruction to meet student learning styles.
- Flexible learning programs and supports - Freedom for collaborative student work and fun, engaging activities that bring learning to life. Academic support and enrichment opportunities.
- Proven Foundational Programming - A unique, intimate learning environment allows students to flourish and develop foundational skills and talents for success later in life.
- Extra Curricular - Performing Arts, STREAM, 1:1 technology, Suzuki Strings, Sports, Foreign Language instruction and much more. All students participate!
- Affordable Tuition - Our full day pre-kindergarten 3yr and 4yr old programs are more affordable than daycare.
- Parents as partners - Strong communication between school and home. Parents are engaged and that engagement leads to great learning.

Schools aren't just about academics.

They are about the development of the whole child. Families looking for an education that fosters creativity, problem-solving, communication, faith formation and good character need not look any further.

Openings still exist for students in PK 3 - Grade 2!

Contact us today at 716.685.2544 to discover how your child will benefit from attending Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament School where we are building a brighter world one child at a time!



*Why OLBS?
Your Child is
Worth It!*

Mrs. Nancy Kindred
Principal

Carefree living is calling.

Experience affordable, high-quality independent living in a faith-based, Christian environment.

To learn more, call **716.684.8400** or visit **THEGREENFIELDS.ORG**.
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**5202 Transit Rd.
Depew, NY 14043**

716-685-2800

Music Scholarship Winner



Melanie Bebak, Parishioner at St. Philip the Apostle Parish, has been awarded the Leokadja Dombroska/ Polish Singers Alliance of America Scholarship for 2022-2023. Melanie is a pianist and vocalist studying Music Education in her Senior year at SUNY Buffalo State University and is hoping to continue on to their Masters Degree program after her graduation.

A graduate of Mount Mercy Academy, she was a very active part of their music program and often provided accompaniment for Mass and concerts. With her background in playing for Mass and connection to the Parish Music Ministry as pianist and cantor, it was natural to have Melanie assist at St. Philip's during last Summer after the sudden loss of their Music Director and a joy to have her share her talents with everyone.

At Buffalo State, she is a member of their Chamber Choir and has participated in other solo and collaborative projects. Melanie is also a member of the National Association for Music Education and the Chopin Singing Society. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends and playing video games or drawing.

We are glad to congratulate Melanie on her scholarship and wish her blessings as she continues her work!

Prayer from St. Thomas Aquinas for Before Mass

Almighty and ever-living God, I approach the sacrament of Your only-begotten Son Our Lord Jesus Christ, I come sick to the doctor of life, unclean to the fountain of mercy, blind to the radiance of eternal light, and poor and needy to the Lord of heaven and earth. Lord, in your great generosity, heal my sickness, wash away my defilement, enlighten my blindness, enrich my poverty, and clothe my nakedness. May I receive the bread of angels, the King of kings and Lord of lords, with humble reverence, with the purity and faith, the repentance and love, and the determined purpose that will help to bring me to salvation. May I receive the sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood, and its reality and power.

Kind God, may I receive the Body of Your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, born from the womb of the Virgin Mary, and so be received into His mystical body and numbered among His members.

Loving Father, as on my earthly pilgrimage I now receive Your beloved Son under the veil of a sacrament, may I one day see him face to face in glory, who lives and reigns with You for ever.
Amen.



Beloved Disciples of Christ the Lord

Roman Catholic Family of Parishes

2023-2024

Faith Formation Classes

**Class Descriptions,
Times,
and Signup Form**

*Scan the QR Code to see our classes
for next year and signup!*



On Thursday, June 8th, the Ladies Club of St. Philip the Apostle Parish invited the Officers of the Ladies Clubs from the other Parishes in our Family to meet and share ideas about the way their organizations operate and support their Parishes.

Light refreshments were served and new friendships were formed. Great ideas were shared and will hopefully benefit all of our organizations and separate Parish communities.



My Confirmation

By: Maria Lista
Parishioner at St. Mary of the Assumption



Hello! My name is Maria Lista and I am going into my Senior year at Lancaster High School. I made my Confirmation in the Fall of 2022 and wanted to share my experience with those who are starting to prepare.

Being Confirmed is an endorsement of your Faith. It is one of the seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church and a chance to further your belief in God. As my small group leader said at one of our meetings last year, Baptism was our parents' choice to commence our journey with God, now it is our own choice to continue that journey and deepen our Faith. This statement really opened my eyes to why I was making my Confirmation. It helped me to realize that I don't go to Church every Sunday because my dad wants me to, but because I love being able to go to Mass, gather around with people who share the same Faith as me, and receive Jesus with the gift of Holy Communion.

In our Confirmation process, a 7-hour retreat is held with a Mass after. You may be thinking, "Wow, that's a long time!" It was life changing and I truly enjoyed the time to reflect about my relationship with God. Along with the rest of my Confirmation class, we played a bunch of games related to the Gospel to get to know each other, we listened to a student from Immaculate Conception Church talk about her experiences with youth Faith Formation, and we spent 30 minutes meditating and feeling God's presence. This retreat had deepened my understanding of what it means to follow Jesus, and what it means to live the Christian life by realizing that "For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves shall be exalted" (Matthew 23:12).

I am so grateful that I am Confirmed and am excited for those who are starting this journey.

A journey with a saint to watch over them and guide them through their life. A journey with a sponsor who is loving and leads by example, to additionally direct and mentor them here on Earth. Through my own journey of Confirmation, I have grown my ability to practice my Catholic Faith in every aspect of my life, and to witness Christ in every situation. I wish the best to the Confirmation candidates of 2023.

Does your marriage need help?

Retrouvaille offers HOPE to couples who live in the disappointment and pain of a marriage in trouble.

There is a Better Way to Communicate to
Put Your Marriage Back on Track

When the old way is simply not working.



Visit [HelpOurMarriage.org](https://www.HelpOurMarriage.org) or call **716-474-9371** for more details.
The next weekend is **September 22-24, 2023.**

All calls are confidential and pre-registration is required.



Faith in Action

By: Lauren Binder

When asking Fr. Bart for a Parishioner to interview, it seemed too easy for him to come up with a name and after meeting her, there is no doubt why. On a rainy evening in June, Mary Bauer and her family gathered for some portraits. After sharing some stories, it was simple to see the love and Faith that is shared.

Mary is the youngest of three children and the only girl. Both she and her husband, Don, attended St. Ann's Elementary School where they met in kindergarten and especially enjoyed roller skating at the school super rink. As the years passed, they grew together and eventually married in 1965. They were blessed with two children, Michael and Jill and three grandchildren, Shawn, Luke, and Allison.

Mary graduated from Erie Community College and became a Dental Hygienist, a profession she practiced for 35 years and truly loved. Some may know her from a Dentist's office at Delaware and West Utica or her part-time work when she moved to a Lancaster office. Don graduated as a Mechanical Engineer and worked for both Buffalo Tool & Die for many years, as well as Houdaille Hydraulics, later named Vibratex, where he retired from in 2001. After retirement especially, Don took an active interest in photography. A love he shared with all his family.

Mary and Don have been active members of St. Martha Parish for 56 years. Mary has been a part of many ministries and organizations over the years. These include the Altar & Rosary Guild, as a Eucharistic Minister to the homebound, working in the Food Pantry, and as a weekly collection counter. Parishioners around St. Martha's know her most from her work on the Worship Committee, specifically because she is responsible for the decorating of the altar and Church for special Masses and liturgical seasons.

"I am so fortunate to have a co-worker and friend, Linda, to help me. Together we do an exceptional amount of decorating. Our work is very involved, but it is so gratifying to beautify our altar."

Don was also very involved in service to the Parish as an Altar Server for Funerals, Eucharistic Minister, member of the Holy Name Society, and a frequent Eucharistic Adorer. Most notably, he was a member of the Sanctuary Renovation Committee for St. Martha's, but unfortunately never saw the completion of the project. In 2012, Don was diagnosed with cancer and after a two-and-a-half-year battle, passed away.

"Becoming a widow at 70 years of age, I had to face many unknown challenges. My faith and trust in God helped me to accept the challenges and continue to move forward, knowing God is at my side."

Another test of her faith came in 2017 when she herself was diagnosed with cancer. Through her surgery and treatments, she prayed the rosary and special prayers for healing. After six months, she was blessed, fortunate, and healthy enough to join her fellow Parishioners on a pilgrimage trip to Rome. After all her challenges, she has developed a strong devotion to the Blessed Mother, still praying the rosary daily, which she credits as giving her a level of comfort and strength to face each new day.

As our time together drew to a close, she was asked if there was a parting message she had for her fellow BDCL Family Members. Her immediate reply?

"Be kind and care for one another and pray for world peace!"



Roles at Mass

We are all familiar with seeing and understanding who a Priest and Deacon are when it comes to the Mass, but sometimes it can be difficult to understand how those not ordained can take a special role in assisting with the Mass.

Altar Servers

Someone who has made their First Holy Communion that assists with tasks during Mass like carrying the cross or candles, helping set the altar, or even holding books for the celebrant.



Eucharistic Ministers

A trained person who assists in the distribution of the Eucharist during Communion. The official title is Extra Ordinary Minister of Holy Communion. This person must be Confirmed.



Lector

This is the person who reads the first and second readings during Mass and the Prayers of the Faithful when there is no Deacon. Anyone who enjoys reading in front of others is welcomed to this Ministry.



Presentation of the Gifts

Frequently those who have requested the Mass Intention, but anyone is welcomed to present the gifts to the altar during Mass. If you would like to participate, talk to either an Usher or the priest for that Mass.



Ushers

A special group of Parishioners who volunteer as greeters, guides, and assist with the collection during Mass. Sometimes there is a separate Ministry of just Greeters.



Music Ministers

Comprised of cantors, singers, and other musicians, this Ministry assists by leading the congregation in song during Mass to help give added beauty to our celebration.



Other lesser known or seen roles that assist in making a Mass special include:

Sacristan: Someone who assists in preparing the altar for Mass or cleaning the altar and vessels used during Mass afterwards.

Altar Linens: Some of the linen used during Mass needs to be laundered in a specific way to respect that Jesus is still present. There are volunteers who are aware of these special rules that help clean the linens.

Decorations & Liturgy Committee: A group of people who help make sure special Masses and liturgical seasons stand out and reflect the special times of the year.

Cleaning: Often there are groups of volunteers that assist in keeping the Sanctuary or even whole Church clean.

Lector	Deacon	Eucharistic Minister
Presentation of the Gifts	Usher	Music Minister
Priest	Altar Server	Sacristan

Mass Roles Bingo

Can you spot these different roles at Mass?

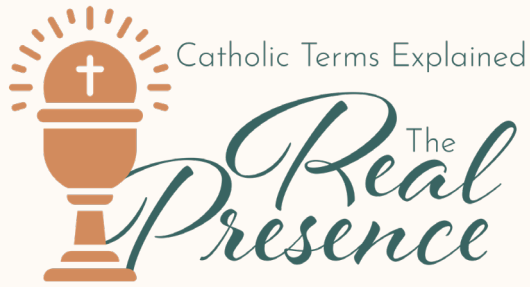
Want a different card or would you like to play along on your phone?

Scan the QR code to either download and print a card off or play on your phone.



Would you be interested in joining one of these very special Ministries at your Parish to help increase your worship and the worship of your fellow Parishioners?

We invite you to reach out to your Parish Rectory to find out more!



Jesus realizes his promise to be with the Church in many ways, but most of all through the celebration of the Mass as a memorial of the death and resurrection of the Lord, and more specifically in the celebration of the Eucharist.

According to the Synod of Bishops in Rome in October of 2005, the Eucharist is the “source and summit” of the life and mission of the Church. It lies at the heart of the whole life of the Church.

As Catholics, we recognize the “Real Presence” of the Lord in the Eucharist, but what does that mean?

A term coined by Pope Paul VI in his encyclical, *Mysterium Fidei* (1965) he explained it as, “the substantial presence by which Christ is made present without doubt, whole and entire, God and man (no. 39).”

Through this transformation, brought forth by the Holy Spirit during consecration, “Christ’s body and blood become really present and are really given”, so that we may be united with Christ himself. (Catholic Bishop’s Conferences of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, *One Bread One Body*, 1998; nos. 50 & 51) The transformation is a mysterious one, and we know little about it except that it cannot be grasped with our senses. The closest description that we can produce is the use of the term transubstantiation. Though far from a precise explanation of what happens during the consecration, it is our way of describing the mysterious transformation of the inner reality of bread and wine into the Great Mystery of the inner reality of the body and blood of the risen Lord.

For many today, reality is related to the physical - what can be grasped and tested and proved by our senses. As Christians, we understand that there is more to reality than the physical.

There is something beyond our senses that can only be understood through as Pope Paul VI called it, “the mystery of faith” (*Mysterium Fidei*, no. 51). We look at the substance of the bread and wine not in the material sense, but in referring to the inner reality which reaches beyond what we can see and touch.

Through the Sacraments, Jesus takes our visible actions and items and uses them as symbols of his saving action and grace. They are not meant to be between us, but to act as direct points of contact for us to him. In the Eucharist, Christ himself is directly present and available to us through the physical elements of bread and wine. These are our direct points of contact with the inner reality of the crucified, risen, and glorified Jesus Christ, immediately present to us under the sacramental symbols of the totally transformed bread and wine.

This connection is there as an invitation to share our lives with him. We are called to welcome and accept him with an open heart and living faith so that his presence can flourish in us. It brings us together as one with him and with each other. We receive the Body of Christ at Mass so that we can more faithfully be the sacrament of Christ for the world around us. To bring Jesus out to the world and be Jesus for others through our acts of charity, love, and service.

Adapted Excerpts From:

Is Jesus Really Present in the Eucharist?

Bishop Michael Evans.

Catholic Truth Society & Augustine Institute, 2004.

A wonderful way to experience the closeness of Christ in the Eucharist is through Adoration.

Family Adoration Opportunities

St. Mary of the Assumption

First Fridays After
the Noon Mass - 2:30 pm

Our Lady of Pompeii

First Fridays: 12 Noon - 6:00 pm

Sacred Heart of Jesus

Fridays from 8:30 am - 6 pm

St. Martha

Monday - Friday: 9 am - 3 pm in the Chapel

First Fridays: 9 pm - Midnight in Church

St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Every Tuesday from 7:00 to 8:00 pm



Community Outreach

By: Jennifer Gaglione

Ablaze
Young Adult Ministry



The persecution of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar dates back to the 1970s. The first was a military crackdown from October 2016 to January 2017. The second has been happening since August 2017. There are now three generations of displaced Rohingya people in this world.

The Rohingya people are described as “amongst the world’s least wanted,” and “one of the world’s most persecuted minorities” by the United Nations. They have been deprived of basic human rights, such as the right to receive higher education.

Journey’s End Refugee Service is dedicated to helping many refugee families, such as the Rohingya people. The Home Again Project is a unique opportunity for volunteer groups to work with Journey’s End to make a house a warm, welcoming home for a newly-arriving refugee family. Refugee families arrive with little to no resources for establishing households during their first few months of resettlement. Journey’s End relies heavily on donations from the community to provide these families with essential home furnishings and other household items like toiletries and cleaning supplies.

The Ablaze Adult Ministry was happy to help such an important cause. Jesus accepted everyone, no matter their background, status, and physical ailments. To think of God’s people being treated lesser than is what motivated this act of love. We are put on this earth to live as a Disciple of Christ and be an example for others.

Empathy is defined as the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. In this world with social media and affluence in most countries, people have become numb to the feeling of empathy. They are too busy worrying about themselves, their follower count, their next big scheme to get rich.



The desire to help someone who is poor and in need goes unrecognized. Empathy is what this world needs. Put yourself in the shoes of the homeless person on the street. Put yourself in the shoes of the refugee family who packed a bag and left their home because they felt threatened or could not provide for their families.

It does not matter what the politicians say, it does not matter what other people think or society; what matters is what Jesus would do. He would heal the blind man, befriend the poor and lowly whom no one else respected. He would love the rich and the poor. Jesus would love you no matter your story. Ablaze will continue to volunteer and help those in need.

If you are interested in the Home Again project or other future service opportunities, follow Ablaze on Instagram and Facebook @ablazebuffalony or visit their website ablazeministry.church.

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ORCHARD PARK

(716) 662-7060 | 6590 E Quaker Street

DUNKIRK

(716) 366-0600 | 415 Main Street

EAST AURORA

(716) 652-1411 | 221 Main
Street

NIAGRA FALLS

(716) 731-3031 | 2103 Sawyer Drive



2 St. Mary's Hill
Lancaster, NY 14086

716-683-2112
www.smeschool.com

Facebook:
@StMarysElementarySchool
Instagram:
@st.maryselementaryschool

Greetings, BDCL Family,

Our summer here at SME has been extremely busy! From renovating classrooms to meet our increased enrollment needs to putting the finishing touches on our summer advancement project, to evolving our curriculum, all of us at St. Mary's have worked to ensure that our school continues to flourish.

Our preschool program is at capacity and now occupies an entire wing of our school! We have purchased new furniture, learning materials, and toys for our classrooms, and are excited to be able to work with an even larger number of our youngest students! So much of our mission is to build the social and emotional skills of our students, as we also strive to create and broaden our community at large. It has been heartwarming to welcome so many new faces to the SME family, and we excitedly await the opportunity to serve families new to St. Mary's. If you, a family member, or a friend is interested in our 3-4 year old program for the 2024-2025 academic year, please contact Mrs. Jayne O'Grady @ ogradyj@smeschool.com for additional information.

Never complacent, we are always looking for ways to improve. This year, we are focusing on strongly unifying all of our grades, growing our students closer to one another. This past summer, we have taken steps to help all who populate or visit our school to visualize our shared goal. I encourage you to follow St. Mary's Elementary School on our social media pages for updates on the progress we have made. Or, if you are interested in a tour of our school, it would be wonderful to show you around our building. Feel free to send me an email!

Finally, our teachers have spent a great deal of time this summer to evolve their curricula, focusing specifically on ELA and Math. Our academic goal was to ensure cohesiveness and continuity throughout our entire building, so that our students will graduate from us prepared and ready for continued success in high school, free of gaps in their education. I am honored to serve with our staff, proud of all of their efforts - this summer and all year long - and am quite confident that we provide our students with an educational experience that is second to none.

Thank you so much for reading about our School! I hope to hear from you soon.
Mr. Glenn Olejniczak
olejniczak@smeschool.com

Our Lady of Fatima

Monthly Holy Mass & Rosary Processions

August 13th @ 11:00 AM
September 13th @ 6:30 PM
October 13th @ 6:30 PM

"Ask of you..."



Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish & Diocesan Shrine

5337 Genesee Street
Bowmansville NY 14026
716-683-2375



Are you an adult (18+) who is baptized & received First Eucharist in the Catholic Church but never received the Sacrament of Confirmation?

We are offering an opportunity for anyone in our Family of Parishes to complete this sacramental process for Confirmation and full membership in the Church.

Classes will take place on Sundays - 9/10, 9/17, 9/24, 10/1, & 10/8 at 11 am-12 pm.

Our Confirmation liturgy will take place in October - date TBD.
To register for these classes, or for more information, please contact St. Mary's Parish Office at (716) 683-6445.

This Confirmation class is for adults (over 18 & out of High School) who have received the Sacraments of Baptism & Holy Eucharist but have not been Confirmed. These sacramental preparation classes will review the fundamentals of our Catholic faith to better form our understanding of what it means to live as emboldened witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The process will also assist candidates for Confirmation in being active and faithful Catholics with the firm practice of attending Mass every weekend and Holy Days of Obligation.



We want to hear your thoughts

Please take a couple of minutes and fill out our online survey to give us your suggestions and input on how our magazine is thus far.

Just open your camera app on your phone and begin to take a picture of the QR code. A link should appear for you that once you click it will take you to our survey.

We thank you in advance for helping us improve this magazine to serve you better!



Music Meditation

By: Sue Loniewski

This hymn is another favorite of Parishioners. Dan Schutte wrote this when he was a 31 year old theology student at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley. The song was a short notice request from a friend who was being ordained a Deacon. His friend wanted him to include the images of the word of God, the light of Christ and the bread and wine. His friend asked him on a Wednesday and the ordination was that Saturday. Add to that, Dan had been suffering from the flu for several days!

He was overwhelmed by the request. What does he do? He goes to God in prayer and says that if God wants him to do this, he's going to have to help.

*I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin,
My hand will save.
I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send?*

The verses are all about God's words to us. He has all these gifts to give and the people are hard-hearted. God has frustrations, too."

HERE I AM, Lord

Written By: Dan Schutte

Dan ends each verse with, "Whom shall I send? The answer to each verse says it all.

*Here I am, Lord.
Is it I, Lord
I have heard you
calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people
in my heart.*

It also alludes to the question each one of us holds in our hearts.

Can I do this?

This is challenging.
I'm not sure...

Yes, we have doubts and a little bit of fear. But if we do like the prophets did and ask God for help, he will most certainly give us the direction and the help that we need.

We aren't in it alone.
Thank you, Lord.



A 12 day pilgrimage to Lourdes, Nevers, Tours, Loire Valley, Chartres, Mont St. Michel, Bayeux, Normandy, Caen, Lisieux, & Paris.

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See Fr. Rich or the St. Philip the Apostle Rectory for more information and to sign up. Or, scan the QR code to see the trip information and reservation form.



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St. Mary's High School Lancaster, NY



Open House

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Fri. Sept. 29th • 5-7 pm

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The Academies at St. Mary's High School Gears Up for Year Two

In an ongoing effort to innovate and advance St. Mary's college-preparatory curriculum, The Academies at St. Mary's High School began last year, and after some tweaking, will hit the ground running in the Fall.

This pioneering initiative allows students to participate in focused areas of study with the end goal of them achieving a deeper understanding of the potential career paths and majors that colleges and universities offer. Freshmen and seniors will automatically be enrolled in The Academy of The First Year and College 101 respectively for half a term, giving them the tools to succeed in each of their new chapters.

The Academies at St. Mary's High School will include:

*Law, Criminal Justice, Event Planning, Finance, Entrepreneurship,
Health Science Professionals, Engineering, Content Creation, Global Citizenship, Education*

The Academies will be taught by the St. Mary's faculty, under the guidance of the Dean of Academic Affairs, Mr. Keith Junik, and enhanced by adjunct professors and guest lecturers, including professionals from the school's passionate alumni base, parents, and local and national experts in their fields. The Academies will meet twice weekly for 40 minutes and co-exist with the gold-standard New York State Regents Curriculum and Lancer Life Curriculum currently offered at St. Mary's. St. Mary's High School currently ranks seventh in Buffalo Business First's rankings of 131 high schools in Western New York.

"We are always trying to be innovative and creative when it comes to our curriculum," said Dean of Academic Affairs, Keith Junik. "A few years ago, we instituted the Lancer Life Curriculum, which mandates students take courses that teach important life skills, like public speaking, leadership, personal finance, and our award-winning senior portfolio capstone project. The Academies at St. Mary's High School takes that initiative even further, giving our students a real advantage as they head off to college, already having a background in majors they may want to pursue or crossing things off the list they're no longer interested in," Junik concluded.

"It is the overall student experience and the desire to make it a rewarding, positive, and practical one that motivates the Administration at St. Mary's High School," said Head of School, Kevin Kelleher. We're looking forward to continuing to develop The Academies Program at St. Mary's High School into an academic tradition of unparalleled excellence," Kelleher said.

The purpose of the Family Council is to promote the spiritual growth of the Family of Parishes community, and to plan ways for the Family of Parishes to carry out the mission of the Church.

The mission of the Church is a shared responsibility. The clergy and lay members of the Christian faithful have respective roles and support each other in a spirit of co-responsibility. Our Family Council is comprised of two representatives from each Parish in our Family and all of the priests in our Family.

The Council is working together to find the best course of action to keep all of our Parishes thriving like they are and on how best to grow. They are focusing on both the Spiritual and Temporal aspects of our Parish lives.

Temporal means they are looking at how our Rectory and Faith Formation offices run, and even how our Schools run too, and seeing if there are ways to better improve our services across the Family at each Parish.

Spiritually, they are also deciding if there are better ways to serve our communities while keeping our unique identities and offering new services to all.



*Beloved Disciples
of Christ the Lord*

Roman Catholic Family of Parishes

*Family
Council*

St. Philip the Apostle Ushers
Thanksgiving Raffle *Don't miss your chance for our \$10,000 Raffle!*


\$10,000 - Grand Prize	\$1,000 - 3rd to 6th Prize
\$3,000 - 2nd Prize	\$500 - 8th & 9th Prize
\$750 - 7th Prize	\$125 - 21st to 26th Prize
\$250 - 10th to 20th Prize	

Early Bird Drawing - 9/25
\$200 - 1st Prize
\$100 - 2nd to 4th Prize
Only fully paid tickets entered before this date are eligible for this raffle.

Drawing Party
Sunday, November 19
The ticket holder and one guest are invited for free pizza and beer from 1-4 pm the day of the drawing in our Parish Center.

Donation \$100 per ticket.

Only 350 tickets are sold for this very special drawing. All tickets must be returned by Nov. 17th. All unsold tickets are property of the St. Philip's Ushers.

Presented By:  950 Lesson Rd, Cheektowaga 716-668-8370 spaparish.org

See an Usher at Mass or talk to someone in the Rectory to get your ticket!

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Be sure to check out our Family Website too at: www.bdclfamily.org

*Has it been a while
since you last came to Mass?*

*We get it!
Life gets busy, times get hard,
just remember that God is always here for you,
waiting with open arms to welcome you back
and so are WE!*

*We look forward to seeing you on Sundays and every day of the week
and hope to see you again soon!*

*If you need a little reminder of
when Masses at your favorite Church are,
check out the first page of this magazine,
or scan this QR code.*

