



Liturgy Schedule

Saturday Vigil:

5:00 p.m.,

7:00 p.m. (Spanish)

Sunday:

7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m.,

11:30 a.m.,

4:00 p.m. (Lifeteen)

Daily Mass:

Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, 7:30 a.m.;

Wed, 12 p.m. (noon)

Adoration:

Mon, Tue, 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.;

Wed, 8:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.;

Fri, 8:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Confessions:

Sat, 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Adoration: The Best Time You Will Spend on Earth

When Heidi Placke's mother died about three years ago, she turned to her best friend for help. She needed someone who really cared about her to listen, to grieve alongside her, to hold her heart and fill it with peace. All of these things her best friend did for her, and more. She is forever grateful for His presence in her life.

"It was God's providence that I started coming to adoration at the same time my Mom died," Heidi says. "It gave me a way to grieve and be able to go on with my life, and still find joy. It put everything into perspective. I learned I can just leave my stress and my struggles with Jesus in adoration."

Heidi now comes to adoration every Wednesday morning. Over the years, she has found that her best friend, Jesus Christ in the sacred Eucharist, has helped her become closer to the "best version of herself."

"Going to adoration regularly gradually changes who you are," she says. "When you think back over time, you see small sins that you struggled with, you don't seem to struggle with any



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Adoration *continued from front cover*

more since you have started going to adoration. It has helped me be kinder to others and have more mercy for them. I believe this is all an effect of adoration.”

Most importantly, regular adorers like Heidi also find that it gives them a serenity of heart and soul.

“It is so helpful to have a whole hour of uninterrupted prayer time with Jesus,” Heidi says. “I find that after I go, I am not nearly as worried about everything or stressed out. In adoration, I can just give everything to the Lord and receive His peace. It is so worth it to commit to a Holy Hour!”

Colleen Hagen, also a regular adorer, is emphatic about how adoration has truly been a gift to St. Mark’s.

“The saints knew that Jesus is the source of all grace,” Colleen says. “Many people from our parish spend time with the Lord in adoration, and because of this, our whole parish family receives graces and blessings. It is helping us become instruments of His love, peace and joy. It is in front of the Blessed Sacrament that our parish community is being filled with His strength and His power. St. John Paul II once said, ‘The Church and the world have a great need of Eucharistic Adoration.’”

Recently, Colleen received a special insight from the Lord about how meaningful Eucharistic Adoration really is.

“One night, I saw a glorious sunset, and I reflected on how the sun is the light of the world and Jesus, the Son, is the Light of the World,” she says. “He is there, truly present in the Blessed Sacrament, waiting for me! He loves, He hopes, He waits – all aglow with love for me. When I come to adoration, I receive the divine rays of His grace, love and peace. I thank Jesus and adore Him. I want to satiate His thirst for souls and console His Sacred Heart.”

Most importantly, fervent adorers find that the devotion brings their heart to commune with God in utter silence.

“There is noise everywhere in today’s world, and it is really important for each of us to make some quiet time to just be with the Lord,” Heidi says. “I like having time to get away and refocus, and let my personal relationship with Christ grow. It is wonderful to know you are not alone.”

In the Eucharist He rests, radiantly alive with mercy and brimming with grace. The question is – will we answer His cry of thirst for love? Will we come and spend time with Him, who calls us by name, and waits for our response?

“With Our Lady, we can pray that everyone will come to Jesus, who is present on the altar, in the Adoration Chapel, waiting for each one of us!” Colleen says.



Adoration is held at our parish on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and on Fridays from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Those who would like to sign up for an hour may contact the parish office at 940-387-6223 or visit www.stmarkdenton.org/eucharistic-adoration.

Save Room on Your Busy Schedules for Stewardship

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I don't know about you, but I still get a surge of adrenalin as the beginning of September approaches. Even though I'm no longer in school, I feel a sense of anticipation when I see the shelves filled with brand-new notebooks, composition books, and all the assorted items students use. I'm aware once again of the great hopes, exciting dreams, and good intentions that a new school year holds.

Even for those parishioners not directly involved in school, September marks new beginnings. Labor Day traditionally marks the unofficial end of the summer vacation season, and our calendars may reflect that. Many of you have calendars a lot like mine — they're full year-round with appointments and obligations. But even for us, things get busier in September as various organizations that took a break during summer begin their regular round of meetings again.

Nevertheless, I have a request for you as you fill up your fall schedules. First thing, please put in some time to share the talents God has given you. As you are aware, as Christian disciples — as stewards — we are called to return to God a portion of the Time, Talent, and Treasure He has entrusted to us. We should make our commitments to God when we begin our planning, so that we don't offer Him just the scraps of time and energy left over after everything else.



Make this September the month you make a commitment to sing in the choir, including attending rehearsals. Or begin working with our parish religious education in one way or another. Or decide to launder altar linens once a month. Or volunteer to help in the parish office one morning a week. Or help care for the parish grounds. Or join the Knights of Columbus. Or join a social service ministry. Or... well, you get the idea.

There are many ministries and groups within the parish where you can serve, and you'll find that you receive even as you give. Hardly anyone in the parish can't find at least one activity in which they can participate and which fits

their schedule. If **you** aren't involved, make this September the month to change that.

Thinking about commitments, some people say they don't have Time for prayer. Again, it's a matter of priorities, and I challenge any one of you to demonstrate to me that you can't pray at least one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and one Glory Be during the course of the day. That's at least a beginning.

In Christ,

Fr. George
Pastor

A Look Back on Our Summer F

*Summer 2017 was a wonderful time of faith,
from our Youth Ministry's summer*



Parish Programs for Our Youth

fellowship and fun for our St. Mark youth – activities, to Vacation Bible School.



Setting an Example of Stewardship for Our Children

As we strive to live as grateful stewards, we must remember that each of us has a responsibility to help our youngest parishioners learn what it means to live as a disciple of Christ. Jesus Himself told the disciples, “Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (Mt 19:14). Christ wants children to grow closer to Him and to become His disciples, and parents are responsible for helping to lead their children to this end. The Rite of Baptism reminds us that parents are “the first teachers of their child in the ways of faith.”

An important part of faith involves living a life of stewardship, as the proper response of a Christian disciple. So, it follows that parents bear a great responsibility that comes from Christ Himself to raise their children as grateful stewards. However, it may already be difficult for adults to grasp the concept of stewardship and put it into practice in their own lives. How can parents teach their children to do the same?

First and foremost, parents can teach stewardship by setting a good example. Indeed, the example of our lives is so powerful that it can and should be a witness to the Gospel. As parents live the life of stewardship, their children will see the beauty in the stewardship way of life, and they are bound to follow suit. If parents live in thanksgiving to God for all He has given them, their children will grow to see that all we have is a gift from God. And when parents offer gratitude to God, it will surely impact their children.

Eight-year-old Suzie has watched her dad serve Communion at Sunday Masses throughout her young life. When

asked why she thinks he does this, she responds, “We need to help the priest.”

Meanwhile, her older sister, Jane, responds to the same question by explaining, “We need to serve God. He does so much for us. We should appreciate it and give back to Him.”

It is clear that by witnessing their dad’s example, the girls are beginning to understand – each in her own way – that the life of a Christian disciple involves selfless service in gratitude to God. However, it is not just their father’s example that has helped them develop this understanding. Both their father and their mother emphasize stewardship as a family practice. They spend time in family prayer, serve at the soup kitchen together, bring up the offertory as a family, and participate in other acts of service. Such involved participation in the faithful life allows the girls to bear witness to the power of serving others in thanksgiving, even at their young ages.

“We need to help other people,” Suzie says. “Jesus wants us to put other people first, and if we want to listen to Him, we need to serve others.”

As Suzie’s statement demonstrates, the stewardship way of life is not only understood or lived out by adults – Jesus wants children to be His disciples, as well. So, it is essential that parents help their children develop a true understanding of stewardship, and encourage its practice through the example of an active faith life.

May all Christian parents be not only the first, but also the best teachers of faith to their children, in what they say *and* in what they do.



Funeral Meals Ministry Brings Solace to Grieving Parishioners

Mealtimes have always been a central part of communal life. Whether at a large gathering or simply around the family dinner table, it's a time for coming together and creating a warm atmosphere for sharing and fostering friendships.

Even during times of sorrow, a shared meal can provide comfort, reminding parishioners that they are not alone in a tangible way. As Funeral Meals Ministry team leader Pete Kelly would attest, this is exactly what St. Mark's does for the families of our deceased members, offering those who grieve the loss of a loved one a "great big hug" from the parish family.

"Our ministry helps people who are dealing with the worst day of their lives – the death of someone in their family," Pete says. "With everything that is going on, after the Mass and burial, there is usually a whole group of people who need to be fed. It's our ministry to provide that meal for the family, their friends, and their guests."

Following the burial of any parishioner or family member, the Funeral Meals Ministry provides a complimentary meal as an offering of love. This typically includes sandwiches, salad, various side dishes and desserts. Beyond the meal itself, ministry volunteers also set up, serve, and clean up the funeral meal as a way of further supporting bereaving family members.

"I remember when my own mother passed away, that it was such a relief that I didn't have to think about it or prepare it," Pete says. "Instead, I could just relax. And usually this is the first time since the loved one has passed where the grieving family member can just sit and visit with their other family members."

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"I think this is one way that you can help comfort people without being intrusive – without any strings attached. To see their faces when they come in and see this beautiful spread of food that they didn't have to prepare just fills your heart with joy and touches your heart. It's such a gift to be able to uplift these family members, many of whom I don't know at all, but by the time they've left, I've got a whole other family in my heart." — Pete Kelly



Marlene Lence, Funeral Meals volunteer



Clemence Rawley, Funeral Meals volunteer



Cindy Carosone, Funeral Meals volunteer



Mary Balabuch, Funeral Meals volunteer



Pete Kelly, Funeral Meals volunteer



Helen Fairchild, Funeral Meals volunteer



Inga Hunt, Funeral Meals volunteer

Saint Mark

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Funeral Meals Ministry Brings Solace to Grieving Parishioners *continued from page 7*

Because funerals by nature are unpredictable, the Funeral Meals ministry is divided into several meal teams, ensuring that the load is evenly dispersed. Teams are called upon anywhere from once to several times a month depending on the need.

Pete says that, no matter the frequency, it remains a ministry of nearly 100 percent participation as team members happily give of their time, talent, and treasure to help fellow parishioners in need. Ministry members say their gifts are returned through the heartfelt gratitude and love they receive from grieving family members.

“I’ve always felt a calling to comfort people,” Pete says. “I think this is one way that you can help comfort people without being intrusive – without any strings attached. To see their faces when they come in and see this beautiful spread of food that they didn’t have to prepare just fills your heart with joy and touches your heart. It’s such a gift to be able to uplift these family members, many of whom I don’t know at all, but by the time they’ve left, I’ve got a whole other family in my heart.”

New members are always welcome in the Funeral Meals Ministry, continuing to spread that spirit of love to our grieving members. To learn more about the ministry or to begin serving, please contact Elsa Vasquez at evasquez@stmarkdenton.org or the parish office at 940-387-6223.

Saint Mark