

In Today's Gospel

Happy Easter! Today we celebrate the second Sunday in the Octave of Easter, that is, the eight days of Easter. In today's gospel, Jesus' disciples are frightened and confused. They are hiding in the upper room, not knowing what is going to happen to them next. Despite the locked door, Jesus enters into that room and says to them, "Peace be with you." A week later, Jesus again appears to the disciples in that locked upper room. Again, he greets them with "Peace be with you." Amid chaos and uncertainty, Jesus comes to bring us peace. Amid the chaos and uncertainty of today, let us allow Christ into our hearts as he greets us with "Peace be with you."

Families of Parishes

The reorganization of the Archdiocese into Families of Parishes will mark a significant change for all parishes. For this process to work smoothly, we must all have the opportunity to learn about and participate in this process. As part of the process, we will have three Family Gatherings so that the members of our family can get to know each other and begin to grow together.

The first of these gatherings is scheduled for April 28th, from 6 to 8 PM. At this time, due to COVID-19 limitations, this gathering is expected to be a virtual gathering. I do not, at this time, have the details about how to sign on to the gathering, but I will let you know as soon as I have them. Hopefully, future gatherings will be in-person gatherings. The remaining gatherings will be on May 26th and June 23rd.

The AOD will facilitate these gatherings; however, the participants will only be the members of our family, which includes St. Mary and St. Richard, along with Ss. Simon and Jude, St. Thomas the Apostle, and St. Mary Cause of our Joy.

Parish Council

As we move toward Families of Parishes, each of our parishes must have a voice in the new family. The voice of the parish is most effectively spoken through the parish council. Unfortunately, it has been several years since either of our parishes had properly functioning parish councils. In the last several months, our Parish Councils have begun to meet again to discuss the current life of our parishes and our futures. The current councils are made up of those parishioners who were members of the Council when Fr. Jerry was still our pastor.

I wanted to get our Parish Councils reestablished, and I figured asking these men and women who already committed to serving our parishes would be a good place to start. Now, however, it is time for us to choose new members for our Parish Councils. The traditional time for selecting members to be in the parish council is Pentecost. At this time, we are seeking nominations for people to serve on our Parish Councils. Each parish will have its own council, which will meet separately.

It is essential that we have a Council that represents the diversity of our parishes. If you are interested in serving on the parish council, or if you know someone that you think would be a good fit to the parish council, please contact me either directly or at frsean-smsrhf@usa.net to nominate yourself or someone else.

State of the Parish

We have all been affected by COVID-19. Even those who have been blessed not to have someone in our families suffer through the disease have been affected emotionally, spiritually, and financially.

COVID-19 has also greatly impacted the life of our parishes as well. Our Mass attendance is still greatly reduced, and many parish activities have been canceled. It is difficult to build a community if you cannot gather together. The financial impact of COVID-19 has hit St. Mary Parish particularly hard. Both our parishes have reduced their expenses in order to compensate for the loss in income. Due to its larger size, and older buildings, St. Mary has been more greatly affected.

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As we begin to work on our budget for the next fiscal year, the St. Mary Finance Council and I believe that it is important to address the financial health of the parish with all parishioners. On April 20th, in lieu of our regular Finance Council meeting, we will have an open meeting for all parishioners to attend. At this meeting, we will address the state of our parish and seek to have an open discussion on how we can meet the challenges in our future.

This meeting will be held in the Activity Center at St. Mary and will also be available on Zoom. If you would like to participate in this meeting, please go to stmarywayne.org. I hope to see many of you, either in person or online, as we begin to chart our future.

View this full bulletin under the *(Bulletin)* tab on our webpage stmarywayne.org.