

St. Mary's Messenger

Back by popular demand on Sunday, September 27: Chiavetta's Chicken Barbecue! See Page 3!

St. Mary of the Assumption
Roman Catholic Church

Fall 2020
Volume 11 No. 3

Pope Francis' Prayer for Protection from Coronavirus



O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope.
We entrust ourselves to you,
Health of the Sick.
At the foot of the Cross
you participated in Jesus' pain,
with steadfast faith.
You, Salvation of the Roman People,
know what we need.
We are certain that you will
provide, so that, as you did
at Cana of Galilee,
joy and feasting might return after
this moment of trial.
Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform ourselves to
the Father's will
and to do what Jesus tells us:
He who took our sufferings upon
Himself, and bore our sorrows
to bring us, through the Cross,
to the joy of the Resurrection.
We seek refuge under your
protection, O Holy Mother of God.
Do not despise our pleas – we who
are put to the test
– and deliver us from every danger,
O glorious and blessed Virgin.
Amen.

St. Mary's Reopens as Parish Stays Strong Through Covid-19 Crisis

The support and prayers of dedicated parishioners have sustained St. Mary's throughout its 170-year history – and the first six months of the global Covid-19 pandemic were no exception.

Once permitted by New York State law in June, the Church was reopened for Masses, which had been celebrated via online streaming since mid-March. Social distancing and other mandates are in place; this included this summer's outdoor liturgies on Saturday evenings in the Pavilion.

First Communion celebrations, postponed from their original May dates, were held in July and August. Also in July, five RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) candidates received the Sacraments of Initiation – Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation – as they joined the St. Mary's parish family. Candidates in the 2020 Confirmation class spent the summer preparing to receive this Sacrament this fall. (A date for Confirmation at St. Mary's had not been announced, as of *Messenger* deadline.)

The annual St. Mary's Golf Tournament, along with numerous other activities, was cancelled due to the pandemic. Mega Raffle 2020 was held

as scheduled on June 12, without a Live Drawing Event. And, the annual Feast Day Raffle on August 15 was extremely successful in the absence of an event to accompany it.

To offset cancelled fundraisers, a Chiavetta's Chicken Barbecue was held on Saturday, July 4. It was an immediate sellout – and a second barbecue has been set for Sunday, September 27. (See page 3.) On Saturday, July 18, a food drive was held to restock needed items for St. Mary's parish food pantry, and on Saturday, August 29, a disposable diaper drive took place, to benefit the St. Gianna Molla Pregnancy Outreach Center, Buffalo.

St. Mary's Elementary, like schools across the nation, closed abruptly in March. The newly instituted summer day care program went on as scheduled, and school reopened September 9 with classes on site five days a week.

Missing were so many aspects of parish life: graduations, end-of-year field trips, hot dog roasts and ice cream socials, Coffee Hours in the Pavilion, bake sales, the ability to fill the Church with worshippers and song, and more. But the heart and soul of St. Mary of the Assumption remained intact and its strength and spirit held true. See page 6 for more.



Offer a Mass For a Loved One

As a way to remember a deceased loved one, or for the intentions of someone living, please consider offering a Mass for them at St. Mary's. The usual donation for such Masses is \$15.

You may select Mass dates and times, based on availability. To do so, please contact the Rectory or mail the name of the person for whom a Mass is being requested to: St. Mary of the Assumption, 1 St. Mary's Hill, Lancaster, NY, 14086. Checks should be made payable to "St. Mary of the Assumption." Please include your name and phone number.

Seven-Day Candle Fees Change

Due to an increase in supplier cost, the donation for seven-day candles in Church has been raised from \$3 per candle to \$5 per candle. Donations for small votive candles remain at 50 cents each. Thank you for your continued prayers and support!

Live Streaming Continues

St. Mary's continues to live stream Masses from the Church on Saturdays at 4:30 p.m., Sundays at 10 a.m. and weekdays at 12 noon. This service will continue, regardless of circumstances surrounding any Covid-19 mandates or restrictions, for those unable to attend Masses in person. Live streaming can be accessed via Facebook, YouTube, or at <http://stmarysonthehill.org/live-streams/>.



From the Pastor: Sharing Our Faith Mission Today

Our world is significantly changing in our time. Some believers hold this as unfortunate and a reason to fear for religion, while others view it as offering creative possibilities and opportunities for the future. Catholicism and the practice of our faith tradition, especially among our younger generations, is different and of concern.

In a recent book, *Faith for Exiles*, authors David Kinnaman and Mark Matlock study young adults ages 18 through 29, considering where they stand on their practice of and participation in religion. They term this generation as being in "Digital Babylon." This refers to the biblical story of the Israelites who, when they were



forced to leave their homeland, learned how to live in exile. Using this imagery, they consider "digital" Babylon not as a place, but as the pagan-but-spiritual, hyperstimulated, multicultural, imperial crossroads that is the virtual home of every person with Wi-Fi, a data plan, or – for most of us – both.

They list four kinds of Exiles: Ex-Christians (22%), Unchurched-Christians (those not involved with Church 30%), Habitual Churchgoers (38%) and Resilient-Disciples (10%). The largest growing group seems to be the "Nones" – the Unchurched. They offer analysis of each of these groups with interesting insights.

The authors offer five ways for a new generation to follow Jesus, which might be employed as we move forward:

1. Form a resilient identity, and experience intimacy with Jesus.
2. In a complex and anxious age, develop the muscles of cultural discernment.
3. When isolation and mistrust are the norms, forge meaningful, intergenerational relationships.
4. Ground and motivate an ambitious generation, training them for vocational discipleship.
5. Curb entitlement and self-centered tendencies by engaging in countercultural mission.

The book does not give all the answers and there may be points of disagreement as to some of its conclusions, but it offers promising and hopeful reflections on sharing our faith story with this generation.

We are all invited to know, live and love our faith lives remembering that the heart of who we are always rests in how we are Jesus centered. This fall, read something about our faith, learn something about Catholicism that you thought you knew but perhaps didn't, and be amazed at the gift that is our Christian calling.

- Fr. Paul



CHIAVETTA'S
BAR - B - QUE CHICKEN

Chiavetta's Chicken BBQ

@

St Mary of the Assumption
(1 St Mary's Hill / Lancaster NY 14086)

Sunday

September 27th, 2020

12pm - 4pm*


*End time could be earlier if meals are all sold before 4pm



Take-Out
ONLY



Curbside Pick-up



Only **800** meals
will be sold!
Pre-order today

Meal (1/2 Chicken and two sides) Pre-Sale: \$10 / Day of: \$12

Must pay for pre-sale tickets by 9/26/2020

Pre-Order Options:

- **Mail Check (payable to St Mary of the Assumption) with the amount for the total number of pre-ordered meals. Your returned receipt will be your pick-up 'ticket'**
 - o **Address: 1 St Mary's Hill / Lancaster, NY 14086**
 - o **We will use the name/info from your check to designate the pre-ordered name**

- **For other pre-payment options (Venmo, PayPal, etc) or for any questions, please call (716) 253-7880**

Have You Downloaded the St. Mary's Parish App?



St. Mary's has had a parish app for quite some time. Have you downloaded it onto your Apple or Android smartphone yet? It's an easy way to access our parish website and other important updates, right at your fingertips. And, it's free.

To download the app, search for "St. Mary of the Assumption" in the Apple or Android stores on your phone. Or, visit the parish website at <http://stmarysonthehill.org/parish-app/> for easy instructions.

In addition to connecting you to the parish website, the app gives you immediate access to numerous offerings including morning, daytime, evening and nighttime prayers, the Rosary, the Bible, Stations of the Cross, hymns, other Catholic resources, and more.

Once you have downloaded the app, please be sure to accept Push Notifications. This will enable you to receive timely updates from St. Mary's as they occur. Explore the app fully for all the informational resources available to you!

An Update on Giving Options To Support St. Mary's

"For it is in giving that we receive ..."

These familiar words come from the Peace Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi. St. Mary's deeply appreciates every gift made by parishioners to help keep our parish strong. Here's a closer look at two increasingly popular giving options:

Commitment to Parish Life (CPL)

Over recent years, an increasing number of parishioners have opted to switch from using traditional weekly envelopes to St. Mary's Commitment to Parish Life (CPL) giving option.

- CPL benefits both the giver and the parish when it comes to budgeting. The giver commits to donate a set amount to the parish and can honor that commitment either through traditional gifts (checks or cash sent to the Rectory or deposited in the weekly collection basket) or opt for an electronic fund transfer (EFT). If you opt for an EFT, this can be done through either your bank or St. Mary's.

- With CPL, you know exactly how much your gift will be and if you prefer, you can use the EFT option and not even have to remember to write a check or send it in. Having this revenue projection also enables the parish to budget more accurately each year. Envelopes to deposit in the weekly collection basket are available wheth-

er or not you choose CPL. However, the fewer envelopes the parish needs to print and distribute, the more economical. And, less paper used means taking another step to be ecologically responsible and save the environment.

Online Giving through Vanco

Especially if you would like to contribute to St. Mary's via credit card, our newly instituted online giving program through Vanco is available on our parish website, stmarysonthehill.com. You can use Vanco to set up a one-time or a recurring donation. The set-up process is simple.

Vanco is used by thousands of parishes nationwide, including many throughout Western New York. As a PC Level 1 compliant service provider, Vanco is dedicated to protecting the security and privacy of all donors.

Additional updates on giving options will be provided through future issues of *Messenger*, as well as our parish website and other communications.

If you have additional questions, please contact St. Mary's Business Manager Bob Over at bob@stmarysonthehill.org or Bookkeeper Heather Pierce at heather@stmarysonthehill.org.

Thank you again for your continued support and generosity.



Shop SCRIP and Amazon Smile This Fall

You probably buy gift cards and shop Amazon regularly anyway, right?

When you do so, please consider supporting St. Mary's at the same time. Our SCRIP program enables you to purchase gift cards from well over 100 different stores, restaurants and other local and national vendors. A percentage of every purchase - anywhere from 1.25 to 50 percent of profits - comes back to our parish. And, there are no added fees.

Just a few examples of local SCRIP vendors and percentages of purchases that benefit St. Mary's are:

- Tops: 5%
- Bloomsbury Lane Toy Shoppe: 10%
- Federal Meats: 5%
- Frank's Grille: 20%
- Fowler's Chocolates: 40%

And among national SCRIP participating vendors are:

- Applebees: 8%

- Pizza Hut: 8%
- Shutterfly: 9%
- Talbots: 13%
- Kohl's: 5%
- Macy's: 10%

You can order SCRIP and track your rebates online, as well as take advantage of the following benefits:

- Check your account activity.
- Create a personalized favorites list.
- Reload your SCRIP cards.

Purchase SCRIP at shopwithscrip.com or by emailing SCRIP@smeschool.com. SCRIP cards also may be purchased following Masses and at the Rectory, once the parish reopens.

Additional volunteers are needed to assist with selling Scrip after Mass. This requires only a five to 10-minute time commitment. Please email the SCRIP address if you can help.

A locked box for dropping off com-



pleted orders is located in the back of Church.

If you shop through Amazon Smile at <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/16-0764775>, Amazon donates 0.5 percent of eligible purchases to St. Mary's. Amazon Smile is the same Amazon or Amazon Prime you already know: the same products, prices and services.

More information is available on SCRIP and Amazon Smile is available on our parish and school websites. Or, contact SCRIP Coordinator Mary Kate DeMarzio at scrip@smeschool.com.

Prayer for the Selection of a New Bishop

Merciful Father, You gave us shepherds as successors of the apostles to guide and govern Your Church.

We implore Your Holy Spirit to guide the selection process as a new bishop is chosen to lead our diocese.

May he be a pastor filled with holiness and compassion who will foster healing and a greater love of Your name.

Allow our hearts to be open to the candidate of Your choosing so that, together as disciples of Jesus, we may continue to build Your kingdom.
Amen.

Is Halloween a Pagan Holiday or a Catholic One?

Nowadays, a little bit of both. But it wasn't always that way. Halloween and All Saints' Day are closely connected. In the 800s, the Catholic Church began celebrating All Saints' Day. It was originally called All Hallows' Day or Hallowmas. The celebration began early on All Hallows' Eve. But if Halloween is really about the saints in all their victorious glory, where do we get haunted houses, costumes, and pranks?

All Saints' Day became associated with the other deceased rather quickly. November 2 is All Souls Day, where we pray for the souls in purgatory. Throughout the European world, the dead were honored in the autumn months. The Celtic pagan celebration of Samhain had its own folk rituals and occurred around the same time as these Catholic feast days.

Within the last few hundred years, this included dressing in disguise and going door to door, asking for food in exchange for a rhyme or poem. Some people masqueraded as "dark" spirits and pulled pranks on others. Today's celebration of Halloween tends to take on these later practices, rather than the original meaning of celebrating the saints. But remember ... this feast was Catholic first!

From the St. Mary's Photo Album: 2020: A Year Like None Other



May is the traditional month for First Communion celebrations at St. Mary's. But in 2020, July and August were the new May, with this Sacrament celebrated at five different Masses – each one simple, yet unique and beautiful.

Jesus has always held a special place for the children ...



Covid 19: a real balancing act! Confirmation will be celebrated at St. Mary's this Fall. (The date had not been announced by the Diocese of Buffalo, as of Messenger deadline.) For eight consecutive weeks this summer, candidates were sent taped sessions and handouts, as they prepared for Confirmation. They worked at home, and met twice in socially-distanced conditions under the Pavilion outside Church to review what they were learning. They also participated in two separate retreat sessions to allow for social distancing. Blessings to our Confirmation Class of 2020!



Five RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) candidates were welcomed into the St. Mary's parish family on July 26.



St. Mary's Feast Day and Mega Raffle drawings went on as scheduled this year, without events to accompany them. Rain on August 15 brought this year's Feast Day Mass and Raffle into Church from the Pavilion. Both raffles were very successful, thanks to the ongoing generosity of supporters, even through the challenging days of the coronavirus pandemic.



A Food Drive on July 18 helped replenish supplies at St. Mary's food pantry, which had been depleted during the course of the coronavirus pandemic. Pantry items are available for those in need, by contacting the Rectory.

St. Isaac Jogues: North American Martyr

by Barbara Owczarczak, Pastoral Minister



Isaac Jogues was born in Orléans, France on January 10, 1607. He was the fifth of nine children in a middle class, property-owning family.

Isaac was taught at home until the age of 10, when he began a Jesuit education. At 17, he entered a Jesuit novitiate, and was ordained in 1636. During that time, he began to read letters from previous Jesuit missionaries who served in Ethiopia and the Indies. He was most moved by the martyrdom of Carlo Spinola, SJ, in Japan in 1622. Isaac continued to carry a picture of Spinola with him, as his story inspired Jogues to serve as a missionary. After his ordination, he was assigned a mission to the native peoples of Canada.

Upon arriving in Quebec, Jogues was assigned to the Huron and Algonquian peoples, as both tribes were allies of the French. He joined Jean de Brébeuf, the Jesuit Superior, at St Joseph (Itonatiria) on Lake Huron. He spent six-years there, learning the language and culture of the Hurons. In August 1642, during a trip from Quebec to restock the mission, Jogues, René Goupil, and other Jesuits and converts were captured by a Mohawk raiding party, who were part of the Iroquois Confederacy. The group was taken down into Mohawk territory, where they were beat-

en to the ground with knotted sticks and fists. Goupil and Jogues had their beards, hair and nails pulled out, and their forefingers bitten through. But they were more upset with how their converts were treated.

Goupil was tomahawked to death on September 29. Jogues was held captive and tortured for 13 more months, enduring the loss of his thumb and other fingers. During his captivity, he continued to comfort his fellow captives and to baptize, hear confessions, and absolve other prisoners.

Isaac's escape was aided by Arent van Curler, a Dutchman of Rensselaerswyck, who hid him in his barn until he could be transported down the Hudson River. Jogues was the first priest to visit New Amsterdam (now New York City). He returned to France in December 1643.

During his recovery, Jogues was given a papal dispensation to say Mass with his mutilated hands. Despite all his suffering, he was anxious to return to his mission. In late 1645, he was sent by the French government to try to establish peace between the Mohawks and the French. Suffering from another outbreak of deadly European diseases, the Mohawk accused Jogues of witchcraft, and killed him and his companions. Isaac Jogues, and several other North American martyrs were canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1930. His feast day is celebrated on October 19.

The North American Martyrs are all French born Jesuits: Jean de Brébeuf, Isaac Jogues, Antony Daniel, Gabriel Lalemant, Charles Garnier and Noel Chabanel, priests; and John Lalonde and René Goupil, lay-brothers. They were among the earliest North American saints.

Reach Out to Us Anytime!

You can reach members of our parish staff via email:

Fr. Paul Steller, Pastor:
paul@stmarysonthehill.org

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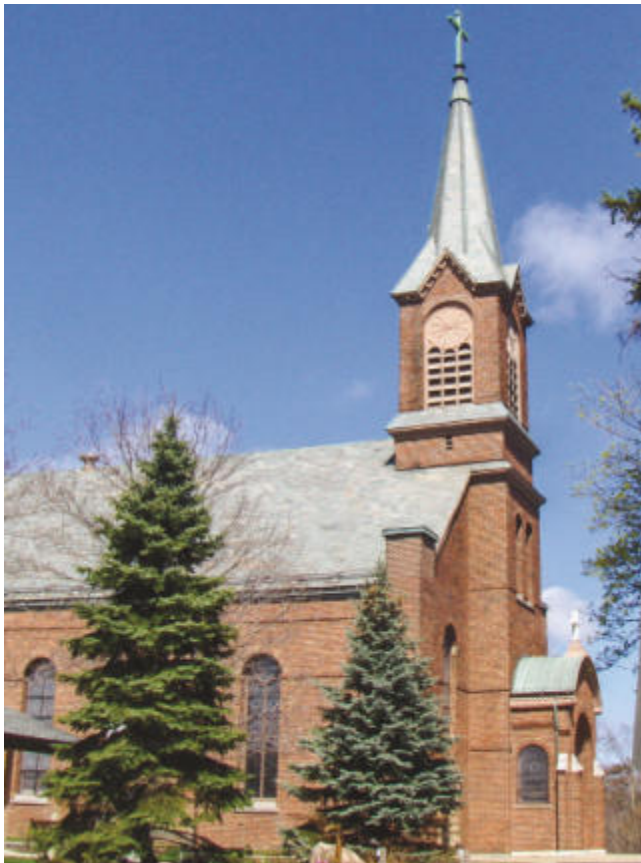
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Rev. Mario G. Racho, Parochial Vicar
Rev. Msgr. W. Jerome Sullivan, Weekend Associate
Dr. David Jerome, Permanent Deacon
John Owczarczak, Permanent Deacon
Diane Zwirecki, APR, Editor
Ray Milkowski, Sr., Photographer



Visit us on Twitter @stmarys716



Like us on Facebook



Masses

Monday – Friday: 12 Noon

Saturday: 4:30 & 7 PM

Sunday: 8 AM, 10 AM & 12 Noon

Weekday, Saturday 4:30 PM and Sunday 10 AM Masses
are livestreamed.

Visit <http://stmarysonthehill.org/live-streams/>.

Livestreamed Masses are also available on Facebook and
You Tube @St Mary's on the Hill.

*Please call the St. Mary's Rectory at (716) 683-6445
for Holy Day Mass schedules.*

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession)

By Appointment Only at This Time

*Appointments may also be made by calling
the St. Mary's Rectory at (716) 683-6445.*