



Spring 2021

# GATHERINGS

▲ Check out the schedule for Lent, Holy Week, and Easter, as well as opportunities for prayer and almsgiving. See back cover for more info

## PLACE EVERYTHING IN THE HANDS OF JESUS

By Nohora Lopez, Adoration Coordinator

During Eucharistic Adoration, we spend time adoring the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The experience of the real presence of the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ in silence, prayer, and humility can transform our hearts, both individually and as a Church.

At St. Maria Goretti, we offer Eucharistic Adoration in the church on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:45 a.m. to 8 p.m. We are blessed to have so many people stop by to take advantage of this special devotion. Here's what a few regular adorers shared about their time in Adoration:

*"Adoration has impacted me in several positive ways. In particular, it has helped me increase my concentration while praying in church. I usually get distracted. But the profound silence and feeling the presence of the Lord in front of me during Adoration has greatly helped me to keep concentrated while having my spirit elevated to God."*

- SMG Weekly Adorer



▲ The Monstrance, containing the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist, is placed on the altar during Adoration.

*"Over the years, I came to Adoration most weeks for about 15-20 minutes. I would see people who would commit to a weekly hour and I wondered how they filled the time. This year, my life, like most everyone else's, has been rearranged. As commitments dwindled, I started coming to Adoration regularly and staying longer. When I was asked to be a weekly adorer, it was the time to say yes. Entering the church for Adoration, my mind and heart is full of worldly concerns and worries. During the hour before our Lord, I feel so drawn to the Blessed Sacrament. It opens my heart and soul to incredible calmness which refreshes and renews me. Adoration has made me*

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Learn more about receiving ashes on page 4



Read about this year's Frassati Fest on page 9



Have you heard the bells? Find out more on page 10

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▲ Thanks to this group of SMG freshman and young adults who volunteered at the March for Life Rally in Madison on January 2.



▲ In December and January, we had a number of days that our parish landscape and grounds were covered with beautiful frost.



▲ Thanks to all the volunteers who worked diligently to decorate and prepare our church for the Christmas season.

**PHOTO REEL**

Do you have a great photo you took at St. Maria Goretti? We are always looking for more images to post on social media, in the bulletin, or in *Gatherings*. Please Email your photos to Kristin at [kristin.vanevenhoven@stmariagoretti.org](mailto:kristin.vanevenhoven@stmariagoretti.org), for the chance for your photo to appear online or in our print materials.



**DEAR FAMILY OF FAITH**

*By Fr. Scott Emerson, Pastor*

As you look through this issue of *Gatherings*, you will see the many ways our parish has continued to modify our ministries to meet the spiritual and personal needs of our parish family.

Our High School Youth Ministry group has been meeting weekly to pray together, study scripture, and learn more about our Catholic faith. The annual retreat, Frassati Fest, took place at individual parishes this year. St. Maria Goretti hosted 31 students for a day-long retreat, which was planned entirely by our student leaders.

Our young adults and young families have been able to gather for Cor ad Cor each month, which is an hour of Adoration and Confession, followed by a socially-distanced fellowship event.

We have made some modifications to our marriage preparation program. But, fortunately, due to a new marriage prep initiative called Witness to Love, we were able to provide our engaged couples with support during this time.

Our school has done an incredible job to continue to offer in-person instruction for our students. As the school celebrated Catholic Schools Week, we were able to continue many of the same traditions, as well as add some new activities that the students enjoyed.

Through all of this, the liturgical year has offered many opportunities to delve into our faith as a stronghold despite the changes in the last year. We now turn our attention towards the season of Lent. During this season, we spiritually accompany the Lord Jesus as he prepares to offer His life on the cross for the redemption of our souls. Each Friday, we will pray the Stations of the Cross at 7 p.m. in the Church. This beautiful devotion is a manifestation of our union with Jesus as he suffers and dies on our behalf.

Lent should be a time of renewed and deepened prayer. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will continue to be available Tuesdays and Thursdays, following the 8 a.m. Mass until 8 p.m. Adoring the Lord present in the Eucharist is the perfect way to deepen our union with Him, be transformed by the power of His grace, and be filled with the joy of His Resurrection at Easter.

We pray that this season of Lent will be a time of renewed repentance and commitment to faith in the Gospel for all. In a few short weeks, we will proclaim, "He is risen!" Utter defeat will be transformed into irreversible victory. Evil will have done all it could to break down the courage and fidelity of God's anointed Savior, the Messiah.

The resurrection is the stamp that validates everything Jesus did and said. His claim to be God's Son, to have authority to forgive sin, and to reestablish communion between God and man. His universal call to abandon self-centeredness for love of God and neighbor is the path to true happiness. His promise to give grace through the sacraments, entrusted to the Church, will endure forever.

Through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, may our hearts be transformed by the grace of God and joy of Jesus Christ risen from the dead. In complete confidence, the truth of the coming resurrection fortifies all our Lenten observances. Our uncompromised Lenten journey is worth it because Jesus Christ is worth it.

God bless,

Fr. Scott Emerson  
Pastor

## TOGETHER IN CHRIST

By Dianne Metz, Assistant Principal

### LEARNING DURING A PANDEMIC

While a lot is different this year during the pandemic, we have worked hard to create normalcy for our students. We continue to offer in-person learning, but also the option of extension learning for those families who choose that option. We are remaining true to our curriculum goals, while considering the needs of our students' mental health as well. As a school community we are grateful for the work that our teachers do to provide an excellent learning environment. We look forward to the days where we can gather again as a whole community both in prayer and in community events.

### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

The celebration of Catholic Schools week January 31 through February 5 was a welcome distraction to the impact the pandemic has had on our lives. Although we had to modify some of our traditional activities, we were able to add some new activities that the students enjoyed. As in past years we started our week with a prayer service. We also continued our tradition of participating in service projects by collecting food for the St. Vincent de Paul food pantry. Each class was given an item that is in great need such as spaghetti sauce, flour and cereal. In total, we brought in 1305 pounds

of food to benefit our neighbors in need. We also worked to create hearts to thank the health care workers at the three major hospitals in Madison.

Since we couldn't meet in-person with our buddy classes, some classes met virtually. Our 7th grade classes made a virtual puppet show for their little buddies. Our kindergarten through 2nd grade students had a plethora of "mystery readers" who read virtually to their classes. Teachers, secretaries, our maintenance director, and even UW Football players read virtually to our students. A new addition to our regular activities was a trivia contest for our 5th through 8th graders. Congratulations to Mrs. Fallon's 8th grade class that won! Our younger grades had popcorn and watched a movie. Each class also wrote or drew a reflection about going to our school. The reflections expressed how grateful our students are to attend SMG. Here are some comments from a few of our students:

*"I am thankful for my Catholic School Community because we have nice teachers, nice classrooms and we learn a lot."*

- Ava, Grade 4

*"I am thankful for my Catholic School Community because we get to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation"*

- Nolan, Grade 2



*"I am thankful for my Catholic School Community because I get to pray."*

- Kai, Kindergarten

*I am thankful for my Catholic School Community because we have a strong Catholic education, with a very safe learning environment. We learn about our faith in a positive way."*

- Cece Grade 8

### ENROLLMENT

We are currently in the enrollment process for the next school year. We have some openings and would love to share more information with you about our amazing school. Please call the office at 608-271-7551 to set up a tour. For more information, visit our website and Facebook page.

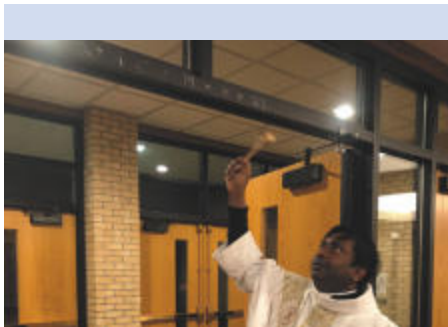


### LOVE BEGINS HERE - SUMMER 2021

Love Begins Here (LBH) is coming back to St. Maria Goretti in July 2021. LBH is a diocesan program in which middle and high schoolers gather to serve our local community.

If you have a project in which you could use assistance, we would love to help you in July. Just fill out a project request form on our website at [www.stmariagoretti.org](http://www.stmariagoretti.org).

If you have a middle school or high school student and want to know more, check out the website or contact Melissa at [melissa.coleman@stmariagoretti.org](mailto:melissa.coleman@stmariagoretti.org).



On January 3, the Epiphany of the Lord, Fr. Tony blessed our church by marking the entrance with the Epiphany inscription.



## DISTRIBUTION OF ASHES DURING THE PANDEMIC

By Sr. Denise Herrmann, CSA, Pastoral Associate & Director of Liturgy and RCIA

Ash Wednesday is one of those notable days on the Church calendar that gets the attention of both Catholics and non-Catholics. The concept of ashes strikes a chord with people even if they don't speak of such out loud. Ashes, of course, are related to fire, finality, morbidity, and an encounter with one's own mortality. Such an encounter leads the healthy conscience to the need for repentance.

Examples of repenting with ashes are plentiful in the Old Testament:

- Job repents in dust and ashes. (Job 42:6)
- Mordecai puts on sackcloth and ashes as the people went into great mourning, with fasting and weeping. Many people were lying in ashes. (Esther 4:3)
- Daniel pleads in prayer with fasting, sackcloth and ashes, confessing the sins of his people. (Daniel 9:3)
- As Jonah urged the city of Nineveh to repent and change their ways, the king in Nineveh, proclaimed a fast, put on sackcloth and sat down in ashes. (Jonah 3:6)

It is interesting to note the location of the ashes in the above accounts. Putting on ashes, sitting in ashes, lying in ashes are various ways the outward sign of ashes points to the work of repenting, changing one's ways, and turning back to God.

Due to the pandemic this year, instead of the customary (that is, customary in the United States) marking the forehead with ashes in the sign of the cross, ashes were sprinkled on top of the head for those parishioners who desired this outward sign of penance. Many other countries have had the custom of sprinkling ashes on the head as their normal way on Ash Wednesday. In the Roman Missal, the directions simply say, "...the Priest places ashes on the head of all those present who come to him..."

Whether it is sprinkling the head with ashes or marking a cross with ashes on the forehead, the focus of ashes is on doing penance, changing, repenting, and starting Lenten observances so that the heart and soul receive the graces of God to grow closer to Christ and reach out in charity to others. It is the ashes, the reminder of one's mortality, that point the mind, heart, and soul to God, rather than the location of where the ashes are imposed.

*"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."*

## Rest in Peace

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**Cecilia Vrabec**

November 11, 2020

**Norma Gallo-Abud**

November 15, 2020

**Dolores Ward**

November 16, 2020

**Mary Clerkin**

November 18, 2020

**Kathleen Renkowski**

November 18, 2020

**Violet Konkol**

December 2, 2020

**Gailute Palionis**

December 22, 2020

**Philip Michael Schumacher**

December 27, 2020

**Lu (Lois) LaPlant**

December 31, 2020

**Janet Marlin**

January 23, 2021

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*Eternal rest grant unto them,  
O Lord; and let perpetual light  
shine upon them.*

*May these souls, and the souls  
of all the faithful departed,  
through the mercy of God,  
rest in peace.*

## THE PREGNANCY HELPLINE

By Deacon Dick Martin, Outreach Coordinator

St. Maria Goretti and The Pregnancy Helpline (PH) have been community partners for many years, but few of our parishioners know of all the many wonderful free services PH has to offer and all the different opportunities there are to help them serve our community. Following is brief description of their services:

### Helpline

Pregnancy and post-pregnancy help is available 24 hours a day on their Helpline. While the Helpline is live only a couple of hours a day, voice messages are returned within 24 hours. The volunteers provide a compassionate, listening ear as well as great resources to help with a pregnancy and after the birth. They will also provide referrals to medical and social services resources in the community.

### Sharing Center

The Sharing Center, 1974 S. Stoughton Road, provides clothes for babies and children up to size 5T as well as diapers, formula, books and toys, strollers, and other equipment free of charge.

*Adoration continued from page 1*

*aware that there is no life more real than the interior life of my soul. When my soul is focused toward God, my whole life and those I encounter reap the rewards."*

- SMG Weekly Adorer

*"Since I made my commitment to be a weekly adorer of the Blessed Sacrament for a Holy Hour, I have become more aware of the presence of the Holy Eucharist in the tabernacle. Having the Blessed Sacrament exposed in the beautiful monstrance while I'm praying, adoring, and giving thanks helps me to focus more fully on the Lord's real presence. It's quiet in church, and I feel the one-to-one connection with the Lord. Then, at Mass, when I look at the tabernacle, I reflect on that, become less distracted, and engage more fully in the Mass. A few of my friends have been*

### Diaper Bank

The Diaper Bank, located inside the Sharing Center, provides free diapers and other baby supplies. The Diaper Bank also partners with other agencies to expand the availability of diapers to those who need them. It is a member of the National Diaper Bank Network, which allows them to make bulk diaper purchases and be eligible for some national donations.

### Baby Care Packages

Baby Care Packages are large tote bags filled with gender-specific and seasonal baby items such as onesies, sleepers, outfits, bibs, bottles, wipes, and much more. It is delivered to the mother and baby in the hospital. "It is like a baby shower in a bag!"

### Safe Sleep Madison Program

The Safe Sleep Madison Program delivers a new Graco Pack 'n Play and Halo SleepSack wearable blanket free of charge to homes in the Madison area. The program ensures that every newborn has a safe place to sleep.



Pregnancy Helpline is grateful for all the support they receive from SMG but can always use more help.

Volunteers are needed to staff the Helpline, to work in the Sharing Center, and to deliver Safe Sleep and Baby Care Packages. Donations of diapers (especially sizes 4-6), wipes, formula, new and gently used baby clothes (up to size 5T), maternity clothes, and new and gently used toys and equipment are always needed. Donated items can be placed in the Pack 'n Play in the church corridor or dropped off at the Sharing Center. And, of course, financial donations make everything run more smoothly, by covering the cost of the phones, rent, diapers, items for the packages, and so much more.

For more information about volunteer and donation opportunities, visit the Pregnancy Helpline website at [www.pregnancyhelpline.net](http://www.pregnancyhelpline.net)

*weekly adorers for many years. One of them invited me to sign up for one hour of adoration every week and I have been blessed ever since."*

- SMG Weekly Adorer

*"Over the last few years, Adoration has become an essential devotion for my faith. When I come to Adoration, I bring all my joys, fears, failures, doubts, questions, petitions, prayers, hopes, and thanksgivings. Through all these different thoughts, I always end up with a sudden feeling of love and peace that comes when I just say "I surrender" and place everything in the hands of Jesus. The weight of all I bring with me is transformed to just that, a feeling of love and peace needed to start anew, knowing that I need to do my best and let God do the rest."*

- SMG Weekly Adorer

Whether you are new to Adoration or have been an adorer in the past, consider this invitation to spend more time in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. With the grace of God in the silence of the church, Adoration gives us the opportunity to put our priorities in order, giving us the sense of what matters the most and what we need to let go of. One hour a week in Adoration can transform your life.

If you have any questions about Adoration or if you are interested in becoming a weekly adorer, please reach out to us at [adoration@st.mariagoretti.org](mailto:adoration@st.mariagoretti.org).



## WALK WITH JESUS DURING LENT

By Fr. Tony Thirumalareddy, Parochial Vicar

Lent is a time of repentance. It is a 40-day period of fasting and penitential preparation for Easter, which imitates Jesus Christ's fast in the wilderness. The importance of the season of Lent in the Church is to observe and commemorate the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Savior and Redeemer. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, a day in which we go to Mass and receive ashes to signify "we are dust and to dust we return." Especially during Lent, the Church teaches us to observe a period of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

Fasting is often seen as changes to eating habits. Another way to look at fasting is curbing our bad habits. Seen this way, fasting is a way of examining our conscience, looking into one's soul, and giving up what is not pleasing to God. The prophet Isaiah insisted that fasting without changing our behavior is not pleasing to God. Almsgiving is an act of justice that pleases the heart of God. Show an act of kindness to

someone who is in need, live simply by choosing not to buy things you don't need, and strive to be more generous and dependent on God who provides. Lastly, set aside quiet times for prayer when you can be alone with God. Attending Mass, praying the Stations of the Cross, praying the Rosary, reading the Bible, and meditating on Passion narratives are all ways that we can develop habits of prayer.

Around the world, Christians observe Lent in many of these same ways. Although, some traditions can look different in other countries. In India, many Catholics begin Lent by attending Mass, receiving ashes, and participating in Stations of the Cross that evening. They typically fast from food during the day and eat an evening meal. Often, they will fast from meat during the entire Lenten season but will have fish on Sundays. Others will only have one meal in the evening throughout Lent.

Catholics in India typically participate in the Stations of the Cross on every Wednesday and Friday. Some might

pray the whole day, even sleeping in the church at night. During Holy Week, many will attend a Lenten retreat or go on a pilgrimage visiting 14 churches, using each stop as part of the Stations of the Cross. On Good Friday, the people will reenact the Stations of the Cross in the streets. On this day, not only Catholics, but people of all faiths, like to watch the Passion scenes. Easter celebrations begin with the Easter Vigil Mass on Saturday evening at Midnight and afterwards everyone partakes in festivities with food and drinks.

Whatever Lenten traditions you may have or may have done in the past, I encourage you to make Lent a fruitful season by practicing prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Whether it be attending daily Mass, staying away from mass media, receiving the sacrament of reconciliation more frequently, or any of the other practices mentioned, Lent allows us the time to walk with Jesus and observe how completely He loves us. Through the changes we make in our daily lives, we make room for Him.

## DOES YOUR ESTATE PLAN INCLUDE SMG?

By Mark Shapleigh, Director of Business and Administration

Have you considered including St. Maria Goretti Parish and School in your estate planning? It's a common misconception that only wealthy people leave money or property to churches and charities when they pass. But, this is not just for the rich and famous. The reality is that most such gifts are made by ordinary, hardworking people who want to make a positive difference in their parish community after they're gone.

Including SMG in your will can bring additional meaning and purpose to a life well lived. It's an opportunity to continue to support SMG as you have supported it in your lifetime.

Or, perhaps it's a chance to contribute what you wish you could, but are unable to do so while living. Such a gift, called a bequest, can leave a lasting legacy in our parish community. And, a significant benefit of making a gift by bequest is that it allows you to continue to use during your life the property that you will one day leave to SMG.

A bequest is generally a revocable gift, which means it can be changed or modified at any time. You can choose to designate that it be used for a general or a specific purpose. This can provide you the peace of mind in knowing that your gift will be used as intended.

Bequests are exempt from federal estate taxes. Therefore, if you have a taxable estate, the estate tax charitable deduction may offset or eliminate estate taxes, leaving your estate more intact for your heirs. The good news is that including SMG in your will is just as easy as providing for your loved ones. And it can be as much or as little as you want.

We can provide pro bono (free) services through a local law firm to assist you, whether you are starting to plan or are looking to modify your existing plans. For more information, please contact the parish office at 608-271-7421.

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

### GRACE GILLES

#### Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I'm a software developer at Epic. I love cooking, especially baking, and I'm a huge dog lover (you might see me walking a foster dog near SMG when the weather is nice!)



#### What is your favorite part about the SMG community?

My favorite thing is that we have such amazing access to the sacraments here. I also love that the community is so active, and especially seeing so much participation from families and all different ages.

#### What is the most rewarding thing about volunteering?

I love being able to give back to a community that's given so much to me. In youth ministry, it's especially rewarding to see the growth in the students over the course of a year. Also, it's a great way to get to know more people in the parish and to be able to use your talents for God's glory.

#### How has SMG impacted your life?

I've met so many wonderful, faith-filled friends here. The many opportunities for prayer and sacraments have also really helped me grow in my faith.

#### What is your favorite memory from your volunteer experience?

Our recent bonfires at Cor ad Cor have been very cold, but it's great to see young adults and families braving the elements to be together.

#### What are your hopes for the future of SMG?

My biggest hope is that we continue to recover from the effects of the pandemic. I can't wait to see full pews, fish fries, and in-person events again!

## LOVE IS PATIENT - PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE DURING A PANDEMIC

By Denise Gorman, Marriage Prep Coordinator

As has been the case with pretty much everything during the past year, preparing for marriage during a pandemic has required flexibility, determination, and lots of patience. During the past year, we had the joy of helping nine couples prepare for the Sacrament of Matrimony. As the events of 2020 unfolded, we navigated through difficult decisions with our engaged couples. Would conditions improve enough to include large groups of family and friends? Should they plan a small, distanced gathering with just a few people now, and then a larger reception later? How would waiting to be married affect their relationship as a couple?

As it became clear that large gatherings would be unsafe, each couple was forced, in some way, to change plans for their wedding day. And, in many cases, change plans again.

Fortunately, we were able to provide our

engaged couples with support during this time through a new marriage preparation program that had been initiated earlier in the year. At the beginning of 2020, the Diocese of Madison launched a new marriage prep initiative called Witness to Love. This program is a parish-based program which pairs each engaged couple with a mentor couple of their choice. This relationship is patterned on the RCIA sponsor/catechumen model. The mentor couple walks through the engaged couple's preparation journey with them and provides support and modeling of a Catholic marriage.

This engaged couple/mentor couple relationship proved enormously valuable during a time when in-person gatherings were unsafe. Many of our couples took to Zoom and met for their marriage prep sessions that way. They attended virtual Mass together and grew their relationship through the gift of technology.



▲ Meghan and Patrick O'Connell's wedding at St. Maria Goretti in August of 2020.

In the end, some of the weddings scheduled for 2020 were postponed until 2021 or 2022. Other couples kept their original dates and celebrated with fewer family and friends in attendance – complete with a livestream for remote guests. Whatever choice each couple made, we worked hard to prepare them not only for their wedding, but for a lifetime of new life together in Christ!



## GO MAKE DISCIPLES

By Fr. Bill Van Wagner, Parochial Vicar

The Diocese of Madison, at the behest of Bishop Hying, is in the formative period of a diocese-wide initiative of Evangelization. Through “Go Make Disciples”, the Bishop is encouraging all of the faithful of the Diocese of Madison to recommit to the task assigned to us by Our Lord Himself, that is to “go and make disciples of all nations”.

The first stage of “Go Make Disciples” is focused on the formation and empowerment of parish staff and leadership. Over the past number of months here at St. Maria Goretti, we have had the opportunity to gather our whole staff, parish and school alike, for a bi-weekly hour of prayer in Adoration.

Prayer is the essential first task of any disciple of Jesus Christ. In order for us to be His messengers in the world, we must first go to the source.

The word “disciple” means student or one who learns. In prayer before Our Lord, present in the Holy Eucharist, we allow our hearts and minds to be formed by his generous and infinite love. Furthermore, to “evangelize” means to spread the Gospel or Good News. In order to do so, we must be in relationship with Him who is the Good News incarnate.

Gathering the whole St. Maria Goretti staff in prayer serves as a reminder of our primary mission as a parish and school: to make the love of Jesus Christ known to the world. All that we do as a parish, from the celebration of the Holy Mass, to fish fries and math class, and everything in between, is aimed at this same goal. To come before the Lord together in prayer grounds us in this task and empowers us by God’s grace to do so with joy.

During these staff Holy Hours, we have reflected on a variety of

topics Bishop Hying has marked as the essential pillars of discipleship and evangelization. As our leader, Bishop Hying is the chief shepherd and teacher of the whole Diocese of Madison. We, then, as the staff of St. Maria Goretti, are to proceed according to his vision and desires for the faithful of the Diocese.

Above all, these Holy Hours have been a time for our staff to take a break from the busyness of our work running a large parish and school, and rest in the peace of Christ. Amidst the unique challenges that we have faced throughout this year, the staff Holy Hours have been an opportunity to fix our eyes on Jesus and be filled with his grace and love.

*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...*

- Matthew 28:19



▲ Youth completed a service project making packages to give out to the homeless people they encounter.

## HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

By Melinda Paszkiewicz, Youth Ministry Volunteer

I am pleased to report that High School Youth Ministry at St. Maria Goretti is alive and well. The students have dedicated themselves to gathering weekly to dive into scripture, pray together, and learn more about our Catholic faith. One highlight from the regular meetings was completing a service project. The youth volunteered to bring in supplies and make packages to give out to the homeless people they encounter. The group bundled up assorted items such as hand warmers, toiletries, and food, as well as handwritten notes of well wishes and prayers. The love and generosity of Christ surely shines through these young people.

The annual diocesan-wide retreat, Frassati Fest, usually held in Wisconsin Dells, took place at individual parishes this year. Our student leaders took it upon themselves to take the content provided by the diocese and organize the entire day-long retreat at SMG. The effort put in by our leaders brought both the depth and liveliness we are used to experiencing in the Dells to our own parish. What a beautiful thing it was to witness the high schoolers hand over their Saturday to Christ.

Living as a Christian in the world is a challenge, particularly as a teen, but our students are striving to build a firm foundation to stand on. We ask for your continued prayers for our youth, that the desire to know and love our Lord may continue to burn in their hearts.





## FRASSATI FEST - FUN WITH A TWIST

By Carolyn Bohm, Frassati Fest Planning Team Member

Typically at this time of year, around 350 high schoolers and chaperones from all across the Diocese of Madison come together at the Kalahari Resort in the Wisconsin Dells for a weekend retreat called Frassati Fest. There's normally live keynote speakers, teen testimonies, opportunities for Adoration and Confession, parish time, and of course, there's tons of fun at the water park. However, this year, the twist was to split up to reduce the size of one large group and instead meet as individual parishes. The St. Maria Goretti session included 31 students and was hosted on Saturday, February 6, in the Parish Hall.

The patron of this event is Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, who was from Italy and died at the young age of 26. He was an avid mountain climber and used his love for the outdoors to reach people who could not otherwise receive help. One of his most famous quotes is "The higher we go the better we shall hear the voice of Christ." He is named the "Man of the Beatitudes." The diocese started holding Frassati Fest 22 years ago to get high schoolers to meet each other and grow in their faith while "going to the heights" to encounter Christ with one another. This year, fun activities such as large group games were revamped with social distancing in mind. Activities throughout the day centered around the theme "Rebuild" and high schoolers were encouraged to rebuild their life on

the firm foundation of Christ. Group leader Kate Ringeisen said "At the end of the day, high schoolers wrote down something they would like to intentionally do more often to grow closer to God and rebuild on Him."

Due to the change in location, the keynote talk, as well as all the teen testimonies, were pre-recorded. Keynote speaker Sara Schiedermayer made points about how disorienting this past year has been. However, if we reflect on how our lives are built on the firm foundation of Christ, we will notice that nothing can separate us from Him, not even a pandemic. Teen testimonies were given by Lily Rozeski, Carolyn Bohm, and Sophia Monforte. Each shared their personal faith journey and small groups discussed afterwards. We were lucky enough to have Lily and Carolyn at our parish to present in-person.

One of the best things about Frassati Fest is that it is an event for high schoolers that is planned by high schoolers. The Frassati Fest Planning Team met monthly with Diocesan staff. They started in August to prepare for the event and even met a few times afterwards to reflect on and celebrate the awesome event. Through the Planning Team, high schoolers have made lifelong friendships and had an absolute blast. Each month, they spend time intentionally getting to know each other better, growing closer to God,



▲ Following talks and activities, the youth attended Mass together.

and being prepared with the right tools to spread God's message with those they encounter, all while having tons of fun. Senior Carolyn Bohm said, "Going to Frassati Fest and then deciding to join the Planning Team has definitely changed my life. I've met some of my new best friends and deepened existing friendships. It is so much more than simply a planning committee; it's an authentic Catholic community."

Any high school student who has attended Frassati Fest previously and would like to get involved in the Planning Team can contact Meghan Bonham at [meghan.bonham@madisondiocese.org](mailto:meghan.bonham@madisondiocese.org).

*The higher we go the better we shall hear the voice of Christ.*

- Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati

## WHAT IS A MASS INTENTION?

By Trish Schaefer, Parish Secretary

Here at St. Maria Goretti, we offer multiple Masses every day. During these Masses, the priest offers one intention that is on his mind and heart during the Mass. We call this the Mass Intention.

When a priest offers Holy Mass, he has three intentions: First, to offer the Mass reverently and validly in accordance with the norms of the Church. Second, to offer the Mass in union with the whole Church and for the good of the whole Church. Third, to offer the Mass for a particular intention, such as the repose of the soul of someone who has died or for someone living.

Often this Mass Intention is requested for the repose of the soul of a loved one who is deceased. The practice of a priest offering the Holy Mass for the repose of the soul of the deceased goes back to the early tradition of the Church. The Catechism states, "From the beginning the church has honored the memory of the dead and offered prayers in suffrage for them, above all the Eucharistic sacrifice, so that, thus purified, they may attain the beatific vision of God" (No. 1032).

The Mass Intention can also be requested what is termed a "Personal Intention."

The Intention may be the health and recovery of someone in ill health or undergoing surgery. It could be remembering the anniversary of the baptism of a godchild. The person may choose to share this intention when they are requesting the Mass, even though it will be listed as a Personal Intention.

Sometimes a Mass is requested on a specific date or time so the person requesting can also be there to share in praying for the intention during the Mass. It is also possible to request a Mass with no specific date or time, knowing that the faithful priests here at St. Maria Goretti will offer the Mass for the requested intention and God will hear that prayer. If we receive more Mass intentions than our priests would be able to fulfill, we will send them to the missions.

If you wish to request a Mass for the repose of the soul of a loved one or for a personal intention related to someone living, you can do so in several ways. By the brochure rack in the corridor there are envelopes that can be completed,



then placed in the collection at Mass. You can stop by the Parish Office or call us at 608-271-7421 to discuss scheduling your Mass. You can visit our website and find the Mass Intention page, under the Worship tab, to complete your request online. There is also a calendar online identifying the Intention of the Mass or if the Mass is available for you to request. Please be sure to indicate when making your request if this is for the repose of the soul of a loved one or a Personal Intention.

The customary stipend for the priest who offers the Mass is \$10 and can be paid in-person, using the envelopes, by sending a check in the mail, or online.

So next time you can't think of what to get that person who has everything, needs nothing or is just hard to buy for, consider requesting a Mass for them. Having a Mass said for someone, whether living or deceased, brings the spiritual graces to them and thus is a fabulous gift.



"Angelus," by Jean François Millet

## DID YOU KNOW?

By Dave Ross, Pastoral Assistant

### HAVE YOU HEARD?

We have the bells in our church tower working again and they ring on the hour during the day. Also, there are special bells that ring at 9 a.m, noon, and 6 p.m., which are called the Angelus bells.

These bells ring to remind people to pray the special prayer called the Angelus, which comes from the Archangel Gabriel's announcement to the Virgin Mary that she would become the mother of Christ. The prayer begins with "The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary," and includes three Hail Marys.

You might recognize the famous picture of the farmer and his wife out in their fields with heads bowed, praying the Angelus as the bells ring in the tower of a distant church.

## YOUNG ADULTS - BUILDING CHRIST-CENTERED FRIENDSHIPS

By Ben Rouleau, Young Adult Coordinator

The St. Maria Goretti Young Adults group, made up of parish members in their 20s and 30s, has had a busy past few months! We hosted a virtual Advent Party with a gift raffle and trivia, organized a social in the snow with bonfires and smores, and participated in the SEEK21 Conference remotely. We also held Cor ad Cor each month – an hour of Adoration and Confession on the first Friday of the month starting at 6 p.m. and followed by a socially-distanced get-together. Warmer weather in the months to come will bring fresh opportunities to interact safely and grow in faith together – hikes, pilgrimages, and more.

I want to focus a bit on the SEEK21 Conference, hosted by the Fellowship of Catholic University Students and packed with inspiring and educational Catholic

speakers and entertainment. I attended SEEK13 in college, and found it to be a transformative experience that drew me closer to Christ. I learned so much, and went back to campus fully on fire with my faith. My biggest takeaway was that I couldn't put God in a box, pulling Him out on Sundays and stowing Him away the rest of the week – He had to permeate my life. I also realized that, for that to happen, I needed a strong support network – friends by my side with the same determination to seek the Lord during our pilgrimage on Earth.

My SEEK21 takeaway has been thanksgiving – gratitude for an engaging recharge of my faith with talks from priests, religious, and laypeople, as well as for having the SMG Young Adults group members by my side lifting our eyes to Heaven together.



▲ Young adults enjoy fellowship at the monthly Cor ad Cor event.

If you're looking for Christ-centered friendships, for fellow young adults with whom you can pray, hang out, and share life's journey, we can't wait to meet you. Email [stmariagorettiyoungadults@gmail.com](mailto:stmariagorettiyoungadults@gmail.com), and we'll get you on the list for our weekly email. Look for upcoming events on our Facebook page, too: St. Maria Goretti Young Adults. See you soon!



### BRIGHTENING THE DAY AT ALL SAINTS

Our pastoral care team prepared a virtual Lighting the Way event on December 11 at All Saints Assisted Living. The residents enjoyed a beautiful program with volunteers from SMG parish. The opening prayer was led by Terri Kysely and Father Tony Thirumalareddy, readings were done by Kathy Swanson and Jen Bartell and music was done by Katie Bergs. It was a lovely program. The residents were able to sing along and really enjoyed the event!



### THANK YOU BLOOD DRIVE DONORS

Our parish hosts Red Cross Blood Drives a few times every year. The events are coordinated by Bill Bremer, a parishioner at SMG. The

Blood Drive held in November was a great success and we scheduled our next event in June.

However, the Red Cross had a cancellation of one of their other events, which was scheduled for February 6. So they reached out to our parish and asked if we would host another Blood Drive on that day. We accepted their request and started advertising to our parish. It was another great Blood Drive. We had 37 donors and collected 38 units of blood.

In partnership with the Red Cross, we continue to provide safe and essential Blood Drives. Thanks to all the donors for making this possible. Thanks, also, to all the volunteers who helped the Red Cross staff by taking donor's temperatures at the door, getting donors registered, and offering refreshments to the donors.

Our next Blood Drive is scheduled for Saturday June 19. For more information, visit our website.



# St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church

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### CONTACT

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parish@stmariagoretti.org

### WEBSITE

www.stmariagoretti.org

### FOLLOW US



*Gatherings* is a quarterly publication for St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church. Read *Gatherings* online at [www.stmariagoretti.org](http://www.stmariagoretti.org).

For more information or to submit an article, please contact Kristin Vanevenhoven at 608-268-2957 or [kristin.vanevenhoven@stmariagoretti.org](mailto:kristin.vanevenhoven@stmariagoretti.org).

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENTS	DATE	TIME
Stations of the Cross	Fri, Feb 19 - Apr 2	7 p.m.
Men's Lenten Retreat	Feb 26 -27	7 p.m., 8 a.m.
Women's Lenten Retreat	Mar 5-6	7 p.m., 8 a.m.
Cor ad Cor	Fri, Mar 5	6 p.m.
Fireside Chats at SMG	Wed, Mar 17	6:30 -7:30 p.m.
Reconciliation Service	Thur, Mar 18	7 p.m.

Please visit our website at [www.stmariagoretti.org](http://www.stmariagoretti.org) for more event details and the most up-to-date information about future events, as well as our current liturgical schedule.



St. Maria Goretti  
Catholic Church

## HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE



### Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Saturday, March 27 at 5:15 p.m.\*  
Sunday, March 28 at 7, 9\*, and 11 a.m.; 5:15 p.m.

### Holy Thursday - April 1

Morning Prayer at 8 a.m. (*No Morning Masses; No Adoration or Confessions during the day*)  
Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7:30 p.m.\*  
Adoration following Mass until Midnight  
Night Prayer (Compline) at 11:45 p.m.

### Good Friday - April 2

Morning Prayer at 8 a.m. (*No Morning Masses*)  
Liturgy of the Passion of the Lord at 1 p.m.\*  
Stations of the Cross at 7 p.m.\*

### Holy Saturday - April 3

Morning Prayer at 8 a.m. (*No Morning Masses*)  
Rosary of the Sorrowful Mysteries at 10 a.m.\*  
Blessing of Easter Baskets at 1 p.m.  
Easter Vigil at 8 p.m.\* (*No 5:15 p.m. Mass*)

### Easter Sunday - April 4

Mass - 7, 9\*, and 11 a.m.\*; 5:15 p.m. (*No Solemn Evening Prayer*)

\*Masses will also be live streamed on YouTube.

To see the full schedule visit our website at [www.stmariagoretti.org](http://www.stmariagoretti.org).