



## Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church

Mailing Address: P. O. Box 100 \* New Melle, MO 63365

Website: [www.ihm-newmelle.org](http://www.ihm-newmelle.org)

Office Phone: 636-398-5270

Deliveries only address: 8 West Highway D, New Melle, MO 63365

*May 3, 2020*

All public Masses and other devotions have been suspended until at least May 8, per the Archbishop.

St. Joseph Chapel will remain available for Eucharistic Adoration (code 145)

Our livestream daily Masses can be found on the parish website or on YouTube

Jesus, our Good Shepherd have mercy on us.

### Sacraments

- Reconciliation:** Wednesday in church, 7pm  
Saturday following 8am Mass
- Marriage:** Contact the parish office at least six months prior to the wedding
- Baptism:** Contact the parish office to register for class and to arrange date
- Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults:** Contact Shawn Mueller in the parish office



## Deeper Understanding of Scripture

With whom do we converse and listen to the most? Believe it or not, the answer is ourselves. We are constantly having conversations with ourselves, and sometimes we even get caught! Our inner conversations reveal the truth about ourselves. We really cannot hide from ourselves, although we often pretend we can. By conversing with ourselves, we find solutions to our challenges, solve problems, work through our relationships, formulate opinions, run through dress rehearsals of possible conversations, and wrestle with and determine our system of priorities and values. What other voices affect the conversations we have with ourselves?

Often, voices from our past continue to haunt us. These voices cause us to mistrust our judgment, harbor anger, and cling to our fears of rejection, failure,

being wrong, and the like. It is in these inner conversations that we face what holds us captive — our limitations, weaknesses, sinfulness, and stubborn ego preoccupations. We often go about our lives putting out one fire or another, keeping ourselves preoccupied and busy, and trying to stay on top of things. Intentionally or unintentionally, we find ourselves wandering off. We turn around and can no longer see our home. We look down at our feet and realize we have lost our anchor. Feeling scared, out of place, desolate, unsettled, and lonely, we realize that we are lost.

We listened to the wrong voices! In the midst of everything competing for our attention, the voice of the One who could truly call us home got muffled. We didn't hear it. As our inner dialogues continue to play out, the one voice we need

to consult — even before our own — is God's. He is the Good Shepherd who can keep us safely where we need to be. As we graze through the stuff of our lives, we must constantly remember to look up, be attentive, and stay focused. Our habits of prayer are the only thing that can properly root us and keep us grounded. Contemplating God's presence and developing an inner awareness of love incarnate, we will then find ourselves praying unceasingly as the days and nights and the ebbs and flows of our lives unfold. Suddenly, the inner conversations we are constantly having are no longer just with ourselves or with voices that can lead us astray but with the Trinity, who desperately wants us to stay home.

## Welcome to Immaculate Heart of Mary: *Informed—Hospitable—Missionary*

### Parish Staff

Parish Office: 636-398-5270

Fr. Tom Miller, Pastor *askpadre@aol.com*  
(for emergencies only: 314-303-2428)

Deacon Chris Ast *chrisast@archstl.org*  
Deacon Tony Falbo *tony.2011@centurylink.net*  
Laura Orf, Business Manager *lorf@ihm-newmelle.org*  
Peggy Dupree, Secretary *secretary@ihm-newmelle.org*  
Bryan Beams, Director of Music and Liturgy  
*bryanbeams@ihm-newmelle.org*  
Janet Hespen, Youth Leader *janethspn@outlook.com*  
Karen Wappelhorst, Child Safety Coordinator  
*childsafety@ihm-newmelle.org*

### Religious Education

Shawn Mueller, Director

636-398-5270, *smueller@ihm-newmelle.org*

Parish School of Religion  
Grades 1 thru 8, September thru May, 6-7:30pm, Wednesdays  
Confirmation Preparation  
8th Grade—September thru May, 6-7:30pm, Wednesdays  
Children's Liturgy of the Word  
September thru May, during the 9:30am Sunday Mass  
Adult Education  
Wednesdays at 8:45am and 6:10pm, September thru May  
Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults—contact Shawn for schedule

### Quick Contacts Directory

#### Weddings, Receptions, Events

Pat Gentry, Hall Rental 636-398-5270  
Kelly Meyer, Wedding Coordinator 636-828-4994  
Jean Hitt, Wedding Coordinator 636-987-2131  
Joan Marren-Slaughter, Event Coordinator 636-398-5270  
Mary Keune, Event Coordinator 636-398-5270

#### Prayer and Devotion

Eucharistic Adoration  
Shawn Mueller 636-398-5270  
Legion of Mary  
Maria Romine-Kantor 314-614-0857  
Prayer Chain  
Brenda Hutchcraft 636-248-8493  
Prayer Intercession/Jonah Team  
Debbie Gillespie 636-398-4971  
Prayer Shawl Ministry  
Julia Kettler 314-616-0096

#### Liturgical Ministries

Extraordinary Ministers  
Irene Caldwell 636-398-4311  
Lectors  
Ed Taylor 636-561-7099  
Gift Bearers  
Peggy Dupree 636-398-5270  
Ushers  
Gary Struckhoff 636-828-6067  
Altar Servers  
Deacon Tony Falbo *tony.2011@centurylink.net*  
Altar Society  
Pam DeBold 636-482-4765  
Art & Environment  
Mary Karll 636-433-5049  
Music Ministry  
Bryan Beams 636-398-5270  
Adult Choir  
Mary Sweeten 314-324-3249  
Children's Choir  
Elizabeth Jaeckle 636-828-4811  
Contemporary Music Group  
Debbie Gillespie 636-398-4971  
Praise & Worship Band  
Steve Farber 636-751-3567

#### Parish Organizations

Budget & Finance  
Larry Graves 314-799-9804  
Cemetery Committee  
Mark Keune 314-220-7075  
Dinner Committee  
Jeff Comotto 314-570-6972  
Funeral Lunches  
Carol Grady 314-662-2281  
Ruth Neske 636-398-5699  
Vicki Grunz 636-497-5230  
Helping Hearts  
John Grady 314-662-2138  
Mary Fischer 636-561-7747  
Bob Hutchcraft 636-346-3471  
Maria Romine-Kantor 314-614-0857  
Knights of Columbus  
Bob Hutchcraft 636-346-3471  
Marian Council  
Barb Pope 773-383-8602  
Meal Train  
Kelly Meyer *meyer5853@qmcinc.org*, 636-828-4994  
Meals on Wheels  
Jean Bammann 636-798-2718  
Pro Life  
Bill Winters 636-828-4133  
Quilters  
Mary Ann Brakensiek 636-828-5776  
Ruth Willis 636-398-4597  
Scouting  
Chuck Hinkle 636-544-6639  
Cub Scouts: Adam McCarthy 636-634-7622  
Boy Scouts: Chad Peters 314-807-7177  
St. Vincent de Paul  
Joe Willis 636-398-2106  
Welcoming Committee  
Teresa Berfanger 636-398-5565

#### Youth and Young Adults

High School Youth Leader  
Janet Hespen 314-369-6521  
Young Adults  
Julie Lassiter 636-357-0121

## *The Lord is My Shepherd*

Jesus offers His unwavering love and support to us as our Shepherd, but He also wants us to return this gift to Him by offering this same unwavering commitment to one another.

Reflect, today, how well you imitate the Good Shepherd. Where you are lacking, let Him shepherd you so that you may shepherd others. Run to the Good Shepherd and trust in His perfect love for you.



## *Prayer to the Good Shepherd*

Lord of the 23rd Psalm,

I have known death, and you have refreshed my soul.

I have known fear, and you have comforted me.

I have known hunger, and you have set a feast before me.

In the darkest valley no calamity of humankind or nature has separated us.

Teach me to walk as you walk  
beside those in mourning so that they will know joy,  
beside those in fear that they will know comfort,  
beside those in hunger that they will feast until their cup overflows.

As your goodness and love follow me,  
may mine follow my neighbor that the threat of the worst terrors  
may turn to the knowledge of the comforts of the house of the Lord,  
where you have invited us to dwell forever.

And so let me strive to help build on earth what you have promised us in heaven.

In the face of all calamity, present and yet to come,  
let me lead my neighbor beside quiet waters, the quiet waters of the Good Shepherd.

Amen.

*Suspension of public Masses extended through May 8.  
We will share more information with you as we receive it.*

## *4th Sunday of Easter—Year A*

[Jesus said] "I am the good shepherd. As the Father knows me.. in the same way I know my sheep and they know me. And I am willing to die for them." JOHN 10:14-15

A young shepherd was grazing his flock near Mount Tabor. Suddenly three Bedouin outlaws appeared. The shepherd knew the danger he was in, but he stood his ground and fought to keep his flock. The episode ended with the shepherd being knifed to death as he attempted to protect his flock. Jesus had an image like this in mind when he said, "I am the good shepherd. And I am willing to die for [the sheep)".

The story of the young shepherd invites me to ask: What is one heroic thing I was called upon to do in my life? What motivated me to do it? How do I look back upon it now?

*Plunge into the deep without fear, with the gladness of April in your heart.*

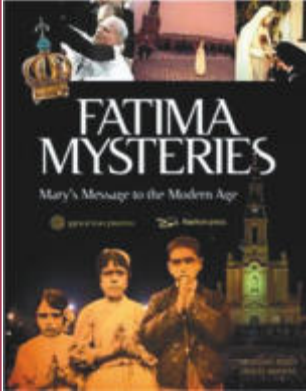
RABINDRANATH TAGORE

*Fr. Mark Link S.J. (Action 2000)*

## St. Paul Library / Lighthouse CD Resources

(Note: With close to 4000 items, the Parish Library is located in the **Grand Hall** past the restrooms. It is open during the week-normal business hours-and works on an honor system. Items from the Lighthouse CD rack are located and available in the **Narthex**

### From the Parish Library (Grand Hall)

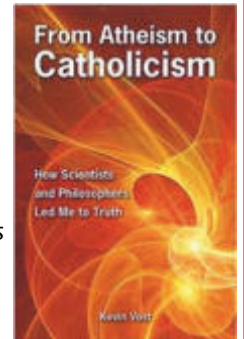


"The tragedies foretold in Fatima did not come to an end with the demise of Communism. The crisis has not been resolved. From a certain point of view it is still as serious as it ever was, as it is primarily a crisis of faith, hence a moral and social crisis." — Pope Benedict XVI

The apparitions in 1917 of the Blessed Virgin Mary to three peasant children in Fatima, Portugal, are perhaps the most important private revelations in the history of the Church. At the height of World War I and on the eve of the Russian Revolution, Our Lady appeared in Fatima to warn us of another even greater world war, the spread of Communism, and a terrible persecution of the Church unless people returned to God. She asked for us to offer daily prayer and sacrifice for conversion of the world and salvation of souls.

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of these important apparitions and messages for the modern world, renowned author-photographer team Grzegorz Górny and Janusz Rosikon traveled throughout Europe to tell the story of Fatima and its impact on the destiny of both individuals and nations. With stunningly beautiful four-color photographs on every page, and in-depth detail and insights on all aspects of the story and message of Fatima, they probe the mysteries of Fatima and their continued relevance for our modern age. Lavishly Illustrated.

God was dead to Kevin Vost for most of his adult life. Baptized, confirmed, and raised Catholic, at age 17 Vost left it all behind as he immersed himself in atheism for a period that lasted over two decades. Paralleling a successful career as a psychologist and professor, Vost allowed his clinical perspective to drive his faith perspective as well, falling into a common trap for many Catholics. This timely book's unique approach gives credit where credit is due, as Vost describes the good elements in the thinking of several famous atheists. But then, from experience and logic, he shows how each of these thinkers falls short. From there, Vost opens the doors to the philosophers and psychologists whose work, implicitly or explicitly, has paved the way toward belief in God, and even in Jesus Christ. And finally, from the perspective of a clinical psychologist, Vost unveils how theologians, popes, and Catholic philosophers persuaded him to abandon this atheism and embrace faith in Christ and the Church.



### *Please pray for all the sick and suffering:*

Mark Hanna, Phyllis Zerr, Vickie Brink, Sandy Knott, Mike & Pat Ryan, Carol Rabbitt, Fran Bussen, Karla Sitzes, Vicky Monroe, Nancy Hollenstein, Walt Reel, Jean Bamert, Amy Robbins, Don Schmidt, Loretta Bruns, Betty Heppermann, Kathy Feldewerth, Frank Marquart, Dan Brothers, Cindy White, Janie Roth,

David & Lisa Debold (Dave & Pam DeBold's children), Dave Asinger (brother-in-law of Larry & Rita Bendel), Bob Holland (friend of Shirley Augustine), Fred Brown (son-in-law of Bill & Bernie Pollihan), Leon Burkemper (son of Carol Rabbitt), Doris Eisenbath (mother of Judy Molitor), Loretta Nolan (sister of Kathy Lalonde), Janet Piel (sister of Joni Marren-Slaughter), Loren & Evelyn Brandon (parents of Marty & Peggy Dupree), Audrey Molitor (sister of Flo Joerling), Pat Finan (daughter of Fran Bussen), Jim Raymond (brother of Alan & Marsha Raymond)

**Hospitalization:** If you are hospitalized, please let us know. Please call the office or ask a friend to call for you if necessary.

**Communion Calls:** If you would like to receive Communion but are unable to get to Mass because of illness or disability, please contact the parish office: 636-398-5270.

**Prayer Requests:** Brenda Hutchcraft at 636-248-8493 or email [brhutchcraft@centurytel.net](mailto:brhutchcraft@centurytel.net)

One of our parishioners is making face masks out of old flannel sheets. If you have a set you are no longer using and would like to donate them for this purpose, please bring them to the office. Thanks!



## PSR Corner

### FORMED.ORG

We are fortunate that for years now we have already have a system in place for “home-schooling” as part of our regular PSR program. The Faith and Life textbooks that are used have an online counterpart at [www.MyCatholicFaithDelivered.com](http://www.MyCatholicFaithDelivered.com). Along with all the prayers and works of home/spiritual life/climate that parents strive to set for their children, they also have a user-friendly, easily accessible tool in their homes to exercise their role as “first teachers” of their children in the way of faith. PSR catechists and the program at the parish is that “vitamin supplement” to the “meal” that is home life. With this “imposed monasticism” via the coronavirus, we hope all parents will have their sons and daughters finish out the year via the online program. The Sacrament of Confirmation is tentatively scheduled to take place on Pentecost, Sunday May 31 at 11:30 am. First Communion is tentatively scheduled to take place on Corpus Christ, Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am. As soon as we know for sure, we will let everyone know.



## Contributions, April 26

General Offertory:	\$6,187.00
Online – General Offertory:	\$3,132.17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$9,319.17</b>

*“And Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ...’”  
(Acts 2: 38)*

The word “repent” means to turn from sin, to change our actions. Change that is permanent comes from within. It requires prayer, discipline, and perseverance. Change is also hard. We have to recognize that we are broken and need help. The good news—we are not alone in our journey. Ask Jesus daily for guidance and patiently listen for his response.

*We pray ... that as we struggle to live a faith-filled life, we recognize we are not alone. Jesus is there to help guide us.*

## Needed at the Pantry

sugar, jelly, fruit juices, canned fruit, peaches, fruit cocktail, pineapple, pears, chicken broth, laundry detergent, dish soap, shaving lotion, saltines, cake mixes, icing, bar soap, toothpaste and paper products



Car donations to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul help Neighbors in Need break the cycle of poverty by giving them reliable transportation that allows them to be self-sustainable.

Your old car taking up space in your garage could be the one thing your Neighbor needs to get back on their feet. Pickup is free and donations are tax-deductible. To learn more call 800-322-8284 or visit [svdpusacars.org](http://svdpusacars.org).

## Friendly Reminders

We truly appreciate all who are supporting our SVDP Food Pantry. Occasionally, however, we have to throw some things away. Please remember:

When donating items to the SVDP food pantry, **please watch the expiration dates**. If you won't eat it, please don't drop it off in the donations box.

We can only accept items that are in their **original, unopened packaging**. We cannot give partly used goods to our neighbors in need. Thank you!

## ✠ Rest in Peace ✠

We offer our prayerful sympathy on the passing of  
**Chuck Nour**

brother of Maureen Blondin

**Jerry Molitor**

brother of Richard & Bill Molitor, Flo Joerling & Loretta Bruns

**Retha Beymer**

mother of Pam & David Debold,  
grandmother of Lisa DeBolt and Amanda Nobel,  
great-grandmother of Ian, Tyler & Riley Nobel

**Agnes Benne**

mother of Elaine Sweeten and Roger Benne

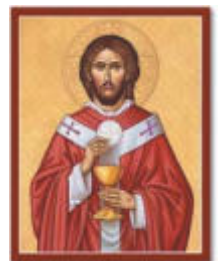
**Edward Langhammer**

uncle of Kathleen Bellm

May they and all the faithful departed  
rest in the eternal peace of Christ.

## World Day of Prayer for Vocations, Sunday, May 3

Pope Francis issued this statement: “Dear Friends, on this day in particular, but also in the ordinary pastoral life of our communities, I ask the Church to continue to promote vocations. May she touch the hearts of the faithful and enable each of them to discover with gratitude God’s call in their lives, to find courage to say “yes” to God, to overcome all weariness through faith in Christ, and to make of their lives a song of praise for God, for their brothers and sisters, and for the whole world. May the Virgin Mary accompany us and intercede for us.”



## What's Your Catholic Catechism IQ?

- There he is alone with God whose \_\_\_\_\_ echoes in his depths.
  - conscience
  - commands
  - voice
  - proverbs
- When he listens to his conscience, the prudent man can hear God \_\_\_\_\_.
  - moving
  - shouting
  - speaking
  - calling
- Conscience judges particular choices, approving those that are good and denouncing those that are \_\_\_\_\_.
  - right
  - lawful
  - from the state
  - evil
- In all he says and does, man is obliged to follow faithfully what he knows to be just and \_\_\_\_\_.
  - justice
  - peaceful
  - safe
  - right
- It is important for every person to be sufficiently present to himself in order to \_\_\_\_\_ and follow the voice of his conscience.
  - avoid
  - hear
  - stir
  - sing
- Man must not be forced to act contrary to his conscience nor must he be prevented from acting according to his conscience, especially in \_\_\_\_\_ matters.
  - state
  - religious
  - public
  - private
- Conscience must be \_\_\_\_\_ and moral judgment enlightened.
  - perfect
  - informed
  - strengthened
  - approved
- The education of conscience is indispensable for human beings who are tempted by sin to prefer their own judgment and to reject \_\_\_\_\_ teachings.
  - natural
  - Vatican
  - authoritative
  - council
- The education of the conscience is a lifelong task...prudent education teaches \_\_\_\_\_.
  - prudence
  - justice
  - virtue
  - temperance
- The education of the conscience guarantees freedom and engenders peace of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - state
  - country
  - heart
  - family



Janet Hespen, Youth Minister, 314-369-6521

## Steubenville Youth Conference

When: July 17-19

Where: MO State Campus, Springfield

Who: 9th thru 12 grade

For info: <https://steubystl.com>  
or call Janet

## Readings of the Week

Sun: Acts 2:14a, 36-41/Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 [1]/1 Pt 2:20b-25  
Jn 10:1-10  
Mon: Acts 11:1-18/Ps 42:2-3; 43:3, 4 [cf. 3a]/Jn 10:11-18  
Tue: Acts 11:19-26/Ps 87:1b-3, 4-5, 6-7 [Ps 117:1a]/Jn 10:22-30  
Wed: Acts 12:24—13:5a/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6 and 8 [4]/Jn 12:44-50  
Thu: Acts 13:13-25/Ps 89:2-3, 21-22, 25 and 27 [2]/Jn 13:16-20  
Fri: Acts 13:26-33/Ps 2:6-7, 8-9, 10-11ab [7bc]/Jn 14:1-6  
Sat: Acts 13:44-52/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4 [3cd]/Jn 14:7-14



## Pope's Intentions for May: For Deacons

We pray that deacons, faithful in their service to the Word and the poor, may be an invigorating symbol for the entire Church.

- voice 1776
- speaking 1777
- evil 1777
- right 1778
- hear 1779
- religious 1782
- informed 1783
- authoritative 1783
- virtue 1784
- heart 1784

## Catholic IQ Answers



A great way to organize emergency meals for the people of our parish!

Arrival of a new baby      Injuries/Surgeries  
Military deployment      Extended illnesses  
Condolences      Group events

Please contact Kelly Meyer at [meyer5853@qmcinc.org](mailto:meyer5853@qmcinc.org) if you have any questions or would like to become a part of this ministry.

## Today's Wisdom

- Respect your elders. They graduated from school without the internet.
- Some things are just better left unsaid—and I usually realize it right after I say them.
- Camping: where you spend a small fortune to live like a homeless person.
- I always thought that getting old would take longer.

**The Fourth Sunday of Easter is “Good Shepherd Sunday.”  
This is a fitting opportunity to ponder one’s vocation in life,  
and in particular to encourage discernment in our young people.**

We have put together a “Vocation Traveling Case” in which current PSR parents are scheduled to have in their homes for a week. The intent is for families to renew their commitment to their vocation and to pray for all vocation discernment in their children and beyond (single, married, consecrated, priesthood). Apart from the concrete visuals and pamphlets in the case, here are some items that are suggested that all people in the parish can access.



First, we will be placing some vocation prayer “table tents” out in the narthex for families to pick up. These are great additions for family meal time.

Second, a real good short video on Vocations is by Fr. Mike Schmitz. This can be found online: Just google “Fr. Mike Schmitz on Vocations”



Third, a beautiful video about one young woman’s journey in the consecrated life -- google “Sr. Clare Crockett” and watch the video “All or Nothing”



Lastly, in terms of a witness to married life, we recommend any video clips on the life of St. Gianna (Feast Day- April 28<sup>th</sup>). There is a beautiful video in our parish library called, “Love is a Choice”. There are also many clips online.



Come Holy Spirit – Show us how to live a life of love, true love for you and others that extends throughout time, into eternity.

### *Attention Employees & Volunteers*

The Archdiocese of St. Louis has developed a new system for safe environment compliance called Prevent and Protect STL. Everyone ministering to minors and vulnerable adults (clergy, employees and volunteers) in the Archdiocese are required and asked to register in the new system before December 31, 2020. This includes those new to service and those who are currently in service. For those who have already attended a Protecting God’s Children workshop, your previous training date will transfer to this new system. In addition to attending a live Protecting God’s Children workshop, all clergy, volunteers and employees will register for an updated background screening, view two new online training modules on abuse reporting and the Code of Ethical Conduct, and agree to the updated Code of Ethical Conduct. Please go to:

[www.preventandprotectstl.org](http://www.preventandprotectstl.org)

to register, and contact our parish Child Safety Coordinator Karen Wappelhorst with any questions or for further assistance. Karen’s email: [childsafety@ihm-newmelle.org](mailto:childsafety@ihm-newmelle.org), or call her at 636-398-5270.

### *Heavenly Quater Schedule*

Week of May 3:	Cathy Thompson
Week of May 10:	Mary Ann Boenker
Week of May 17:	Patrice Riley
Week of May 24:	Teresa Berfanger
Week of May 31:	Legion of Mary

### **INTERESTED IN MEMORIALIZING A FRIEND OR LOVED ONE?**

To learn more, contact the planned giving experts at the Roman Catholic Foundation. 314-918-2890 | [giftplanning@rcfstl.org](mailto:giftplanning@rcfstl.org)



## LITURGICAL LIFE

# RESPONDING *to the Call*

### EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP

#### Recognize God In Your Ordinary Moments

##### *Recognizing the Voice of Jesus*

When my wireless provider introduced HD Voice, the voice I heard on my phone was unbelievably clear, and it felt at times like both the caller and I were in the same room. The best aspect of this feature is that it didn't cost the customer any additional fees, and it didn't require any changes to the phone. I could say it was free, but I suspect I was already paying for it in my monthly bill anyway. At least it felt free.

The clearer the voice calling you, the easier it is to recognize who it is on the other end of the line. In John's Gospel, Jesus speaks of the gatekeeper who opens the gate and calls for his sheep. They respond because they know his voice. Others try to lure the sheep when the gatekeeper is not there, but the sheep find their voices unclear or unfamiliar.

Jesus is our gatekeeper. But unlike receiving something for free from a wireless company, to be able to hear his voice we need to pay attention and practice listening. By developing a stewardship way of life that is mindful and prayerful, we become attuned to his voice and are able to discern when the call is from our Lord and when it is from an imposter. It is great to talk about all the things we can do and all the gifts we can share, but if we are not listening for his call to hear where our offerings are needed, we can end up like a lost sheep searching for the gatekeeper.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

### PLEASE CONSIDER ONLINE GIVING

Our parish is grateful for your continued support. Thank you!



### WHY DO WE DO THAT?

#### Catholic Life Explained:

##### *Daily Prayer Versus Mass?*

#### Question:

I have a friend who says she doesn't need to attend Mass because she prays to God every day. What are your thoughts on this justification?

#### Answer:

If the only reason for going to church were to talk to God, your friend might be right. Prayer is not something limited to a physical place or even a holy place. If the sole purpose of the Church were prayer, it would be a narrow purpose indeed. The Church is a community of believers, formed by "one Lord, one faith, one Baptism." It is an outward sign of our faith in God instituted by Christ, and the purpose of the Church is to give us grace, that is, a share in God's life.

Coming to Mass is not really for God's sake, but for ours. If we believe that Jesus is truly present in the holy Eucharist, then we will want to be in his presence. We will want to be fed by him. Our daily prayer and good works are strengthened by our authentic encounter with our Lord. For Catholics, it is at Mass that we celebrate the source and summit of our faith. If this is true, why would we ever stay away?



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