



## FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE

Today we celebrate Palm Sunday and the beginning of the holiest week of our year. God's grace has been guiding us since Ash Wednesday. God's grace will continue to guide us this Holy Week, in the Holy Triduum and into joy of Easter morning. Let's pray for one another to trust the Holy Spirit to grace all believers in our prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Ask the Holy Spirit to perhaps even deepen your prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in the remaining days of our Lenten journey.

If you are traveling with loved ones out of town for Easter, please plan ahead, learn of the Mass times at the local church near where you are traveling. We will be welcoming many guests and family members to St. Mary's for the Holy Week Masses and prayer services. May we intentionally and devotedly make Holy Week holy! Please note the schedule of Holy Week services in the bulletin, parish website, and Easter mailing sent to parishioners.

You will notice that we are offering an additional opportunity to come together in prayer on Good Friday. A prayer service focusing on the "*Seven Last Words of Christ*" is being offered on Friday, March 29 at 7:00pm. For many this will be a new prayer experience. I hope that you will be able to attend the Seven Last Words of Jesus at St. Mary's later this week as we pray with one another this Holy Week.

You may distantly remember that it was nine years ago Pope Francis issued "Laudato Si'", "Care for our Common Home". The encyclical caught the world's and maybe your attention. Does it still have your attention? Do you want to learn more about how you can integrate "Laudato Si'" into your life and into our parish's life?

You are invited to discern and dialogue on our Church's calling to care for our common home. Join others on this journey on Sunday, April 7 from 1:00 – 4:30pm at Holy Cross Catholic Church, 724 Elder Lane, Deerfield, IL 60015. The meeting on April 7 is the first of a series of meetings, conversations, and prayer services being held in the Archdiocese in April and May. The final event is a Mass at St. Mary's on Pentecost Sunday, May 19 at 12:00 Noon. Bishop Jeffrey Grob will be the main celebrant of the Mass. For more information on Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP) Synodal Journey: Evangelize Encounters with Christ in All Creation visit [bit.ly/49eJVxi](https://bit.ly/49eJVxi) to learn more and register for the April 7 meeting.

Do you know that your parish was founded in 1875? Nearing the end of the nineteenth century, thirty families approached Bishop Foley of Chicago, asking if they could open a Catholic Church in east Lake Forest. Bishop Foley listened to their request and St. Mary's was founded in 1875. We are now in our 149th year of following Jesus, being shaped by God's Word, nourished in the sacraments and parishioners continue to live and share their faith to this very day. One hundred fifty years is a significant milestone for St. Mary's. Do you want to be part of a team of parishioners planning how we can give thanks to God for His grace present and active in our parish? You are invited to mark your calendars for Wednesday, April 10 for an initial planning meeting at 7:00pm in the Upper Grade Center Multi-Purpose room. Please enter through the Green Bay Road school entrance. Come together and join other parishioners in sharing ideas of how we can give thanks to God as St. Mary's celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2025.

The following quote is taken from the *SOURCEBOOK for Sundays, Seasons and Weekdays* published by Liturgical Training Publications: "One of the heartbreaking aspects of Jesus' last hours on earth is the complete abandonment by his friends. They fall asleep in the garden when asked to pray. Peter denies knowing Jesus. Judas – the ultimate betrayal. And still, Jesus dines with them. Forgives them, loves them. Peter becomes the rock on which Christ builds the Church. Each of us imperfect beings is still invited into something greater than our worst parts. While we may each be discerning our role in God's world in the days to come, let us also remember to hold one another accountable for the times when we know better, and do better."

May God bless us with prayerful, compassionate, and generous hearts throughout Holy Week,

*Fr. Mike Naciri*