



## FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE

Our faith is enriched by our celebration of the sacraments. Each time we gather to share in the Eucharist, we are nourished in Word and in Eucharist. This current liturgical year, ends next November 19 as we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King. For the past year we have prayed with the parables, stories, and teachings of Jesus found in the Gospel of Luke. Luke also wrote the Acts of the Apostles in which we learn the development of the early Church, the first believers to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. By participating in the Mass, praying, singing, and sharing in the Eucharist we grow as a community.

There are many opportunities for us to spend time in personal prayer and to participate in devotions of the Church at our parish. The doors of the church are open every day for more than twelve hours for private prayer. Every day, following the 7:30am Mass you are invited to participate in the recitation of the rosary. On Wednesday, faithful come together and spend time in Eucharistic Adoration from 5:00pm to 7:00pm. The clergy and staff are hoping that we can extend the hours of adoration beginning in 2023. Please let me or one of the Parish Staff members know if you would find extended hours for Eucharistic Adoration something you would participate in. We would need to make sure that the faithful are willing and able to come pray during the time period of Eucharistic Adoration. If you would be willing to take a leadership role, coordinating people for adoration, as well as attending Eucharistic Adoration yourself, please let me know.

Every week, God gives us the gift of 168 hours in which we can be stewards of the blessings from God. Keeping holy the sabbath, sharing in the celebration of the Eucharist, is to strengthen us for living out our faith the other 167 hours of the week. You are invited to begin your Advent season with a presentation on either Sunday, November 27 at 3:00pm or Monday, November 28 at 7:00pm. Learn how the two facts that (1) God became man and that (2) He continues to become materially present in the Eucharist radically forming how Catholics view the people and things of this world. And then select from a rich series of ideas and reflection questions to create a personalized Advent journey that will take the one hour you spend at Mass and carry its power through the rest of your week.

We will be welcoming our speaker, Greg Kozak, back to St. Mary's. He has been recognized for his ability to engagingly explain complex theological concepts and for exploring works of art to make the esoteric ideas of our faith more tangible. He is a husband and father of two who has spent the past 30 years leading technology in corporate, public sector, and higher education settings. He also holds advanced degrees in theology and has given retreats, missions, and talks throughout Chicagoland and the world. Parishioners are invited to bring family members and friends to prayerfully begin the Advent season at St. Mary's.

You are also encouraged to mark your calendars for the afternoon of Sunday, December 11 at 3:00pm. Marek Rachelski, St. Mary's Director of Music, will be conducting and directing Handel's Messiah here at our parish church. All are welcome to join in and participate. This will be the first year that this is offered at our parish. It is the 10th annual "Do-it-Yourself Messiah" that Marek has conducted.

This year's celebration will be featuring Desiree Hassler, soprano, Stephanie Schoenhofer, alto, Justin Berkowitz, tenor, Aaron Wardell, bass and Dave Belden, concertmaster. Tickets are:

\$20.00 online at [www.Eventbrite.com](http://www.Eventbrite.com) (search for Niles Metropolitan Chorus)

\$25.00 at the door

\$20 per Parent at the door with Teens 13-18

Children 12 and under free admission

If you have questions about this event you may reach out to Marek at [mrachelski@churchofstmary.org](mailto:mrachelski@churchofstmary.org). I look forward to this wonderful celebration and hope that many in our community will come and attend, being enriched in faith in the season of Advent.

May God bless us with hope filled hearts as we remember all of the faithful departed,