

FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE



Blessed and joyous Easter season to you.

As we gather to share in the Eucharist throughout the Easter season we learn from the Scriptures and are nourished by the Sacrament. What we continue to celebrate in “Word and Sacrament” sustains us in our faith. When we come together to share in the Eucharist, when we come together in service, when we come together to share our faith, the Risen Lord is with us. May we always give thanks, knowing and sharing our blessings in the Risen Lord.

I invite and encourage you to come to St. Mary’s either Sunday, April 23 at 3:00pm or Monday, April 24 at 7:00pm to grow and share our faith during the Easter season. Greg Kozak will be back for the third of his presentations on *Living the Liturgy, The Other 167 Hours of the Week*. Greg shared with us ideas and a focus in which to live Advent and Lent. He concludes his trinity of presentations on how we are to live the joy, the hope, and the promise of resurrection with our family, co-workers, parishioners, and friends. The presentations take place in the church and last for 75 minutes. You are invited to bring a family member or a friend with you to grow from this Adult Education opportunity this Easter Season. It is not necessary that you attended both or either of the previous presentations. Each presentation stands on its own focus and inspiration to live “Eucharistic lives” as followers of our Risen Lord. I encourage you in this Easter season to come to the presentation, as it will enhance and deepen your faith in our Savior.

Thanks to those who have donated to the Gun Buyback Program taking place next Saturday in Waukegan. As you may recall, a parishioner made an initial donation of \$5,000 to encourage the parish to come together to match that amount with contributions. As of the writing of my article earlier this week, over \$17,000 has been received in support of this peace-making effort. Additional donations can still be made to the parish as soon as possible. Fr. Tim O’Malley, the pastor of our sharing parish, is grateful and excited about the Gun Buyback program bringing more peace and safety to the streets and neighborhoods of his parishioners.

This Saturday, April 22, we celebrate the First Holy Communion of our children in second grade. You may see them on Sunday wearing their First Communion dresses and suits. The students have been looking forward to their special day. With the help of parents and family, godparents, grandparents, teachers, catechists, and priests, they have been instructed on the gift of the Eucharist and the ongoing spiritual growth that comes from gathering around the table with family and parishioners weekly. Pray that their families continue to bring them around the altar so that they can continually be fed by Word and Sacrament as followers and believers in our Risen Lord. We hear the Gospel this weekend of how they recognized Jesus in the “breaking of the bread.” May this Gospel truth be our frequent experience, coming together in Jesus to celebrate and participate in the Eucharist.

Parents of children with special needs are invited this Tuesday to meet other parents to pray and also share experiences and resources as a faith community walking a similar road in this life. The meeting will take place at the O’Gara Center of St. Patrick’s Church on Tuesday, April 25, from 7:00pm to 8:30pm. Due to the nature of this event, we ask that only parents or guardians attend. Please RSVP on St. Patrick’s website at: www.stpatrick-lakeforest.org/special-needs. If you have questions, please contact: Marilyn_Merrifield@comcast.net.

The final sessions of the Religious Education (RE) program conclude April 23, for the Sunday program and Tuesday, April 25 for the Tuesday program. Thanks to all of our RE families and participants in the program this past year. Our catechists have prayed and worked with the students reinforcing truths shared in the homes of our families. Thanks to Joy Pacheco, Rosa Osuna, and all participants and benefactors of Religious Education at St. Mary’s.

God bless you in living Easter joy in our Risen Lord and Savior,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Mike". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.