

FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE



May is a wonderful time in the parish with sacramental celebrations, devotions, end of year school events, and times to come together to share in the Eucharist. The flowers are blooming, the trees are budding, the temperature is improving - most days, and God's handiwork is evident in creation.

May is also the time to remember and celebrate the anniversaries of the ordination to the permanent diaconate and the priesthood. We are blessed to have two active and faith filled permanent deacons assigned to the Church of St. Mary. Deacon Jack Herrmann was ordained in 2012 and Deacon Bob Thomas was ordained in 2015.

We are very fortunate to have Fr. Radley serving the parish as our associate pastor. Fr. Radley and I shared together that people have approached both of us saying, in a somewhat authoritative manner, "So, Fr. Radley is leaving St. Mary's!" Fr. Radley and I commented: "that statement is news to us." Fr. Radley has no immediate plans to move, his immediate plans are to continue to work with parishioners and staff members at the parish. This weekend is Fr. Radley's sixth anniversary of priesthood and my thirty fourth anniversary. The prayers and support offered to both of us is very much appreciated.

As parishioners have been entering the Illinois Road doors to the church they have congratulated me for our church being recognized by the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation. You may have seen the lawn sign recognizing our past designation by the Foundation. It was a few years ago, that St. Mary's was recognized. As part of the outreach to the city, the Foundation places the lawn sign up each spring for past recipients.

The Lake Forest Preservation Foundation website describes their goals. Any structure or landscape constructed over fifty years ago is eligible to be nominated. Nominations may be made by any interested person - the owner, a neighbor or friend, an admiring passerby. The Foundation will obtain the owner's approval if the property was nominated by someone other than the owner.

Handsome bronze plaques are presented to each year's award winners at the Preservation Foundation's Annual Meeting. After the meeting, members will be invited to a reception at a historic Lake Forest property that exemplifies efforts to preserve Lake Forest's historic visual character.

There are five categories of awards, the first four are based on the U. S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, with an additional category for new construction or infill. Judging is based on the ten standards from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. I am grateful that the foundation has recognized St. Mary's.

Recently a new Circle has been formed as part of the Guild of St. Mary. These young moms and their families are new to the parish and want to get to know other families who are raising their children in the faith. I find it delightful that we have young families, bringing their children to Church, before they are even able to fully participate in the responses of the Mass. Sometimes the children respond with their own response to the Alleluia, Amen, or with some other comment. These parents are inspired to bring their children up in the faith knowing that the Church is their Church, where they belong.

I ask those who are praying around these families to be welcoming and supportive of the efforts of these young parents. Is the sound of a young child's voice or cry a distraction or a part of our communal prayer? I pray it is a part of the communal prayer. I appreciate it when everyone in the church who is old enough to use a missalette in hand does use them, joining in the spoken or sung prayers at Mass. Babies, young children, families belong in the Church of St. Mary. They are welcome in the main body of the church, they are welcome in the Community Room, they are welcome in the vestibule. May they be a witness to all of us of the importance of sharing our faith and praying as we can, together at St. Mary's.

You are welcome to come to our first meeting on Tuesday, May 30, at 8:00pm of the COSM Parish Life Social Committee. If you are thinking you haven't heard of this, you are correct. This is a new committee that I am hoping will be formed by interested members of St. Mary's. At our first gathering we will meet to discuss how we can offer, host, present, and provide times for parishioners to come together. I am excited about the possibilities that interested parishioners will come up with. A possible first event is an outdoor celebration following the Gazebo Mass in Lake Bluff on Saturday, August 5. Maybe there will be another event or two this summer. Come share your ideas and interests. You may reach out to me with your interest to be part of this new parish group.

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

Fr. Mike Nacur