



## FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE

One of the nice summer traditions at the Church of St. Mary is to celebrate a Mass outdoors at the Lake Bluff gazebo and the Lake Forest beach. Six years ago, just after arriving at St. Mary's, I celebrated the summer Mass at the gazebo. The lector for that Mass was Cal Stroh. Over the next six years I would get to know her better in the parish, in the church, and around the community.

Cal and her husband registered in the parish in 1976. By vocation she was a retired language teacher. By passion and affinity, she would take delight in proofing the bulletin, informing me of typos and even occasionally proofing my article and communications to parishioners. Cal was very involved with Catholic Charities, even working at their Summer Golf Classic at Shore Acres.

The collage of pictures below includes her reading at the Gazebo Mass in 2016 and her reading the Scriptures on the recent Footsteps of St. Paul pilgrimage in Corinth, Greece. She traveled on the Footsteps of St. Paul with her son, Mark, and her grandson, Mark Nate. She enjoyed the pilgrimage, even going out on a nighttime excursion following in the "Footsteps of her pastor", to find and enjoy gelato with her fellow pilgrims. (the picture shows 18 of the 20 pilgrims enjoying some gelato.) She is also seen with the façade of the library in Ephesus, Turkey.



She shared with me that at 90, she had earned her driver's license renewal, again. It was very important to her that I knew that. She had a bucket list, one item being going to Ephesus, Turkey. She took delight in the trip, and being able to share in the celebration of the Eucharist at the House of the Blessed Mother in Ephesus.



The pilgrims had a delightful pilgrimage, Cal was known to celebrate, smile, and laugh along the way, traveling with her son, grandson, and fellow parishioners. On day eight the schedule and demands of the pilgrimage caught up with her. Her body had a medical episode that warranted her being hospitalized, cared for, and kept an eye on by her son and grandson. After an eight day stay in the hospital, Cal Stroh breathed her last breath on Earth.



While on pilgrimage in May 2022, she shared with me that she would love to get to the Holy Land, spending time in Jerusalem. She also shared that she did not think it was a realistic goal. Cal was always praying, streaming the Masses during COVID, letting me know just how much she could see on the screen of her computer. An avid reader of the Bible, she longed to be strong enough to return to the ministry of lector. She was planning

on being the lector at the Gazebo Mass in early August.

Recorded in the Bible different books of the Bible refer to the "New Jerusalem". The "New Jerusalem" will be a place of unimagined blessing. The "New Jerusalem" will be shared by God with all the redeemed who followed his Son Jesus in their life of faith on Earth.

The song "Jerusalem my Destiny", written by Rory Cooney has the following refrain: *I have fixed my eyes on your hills, Jerusalem, my destiny! Though I cannot see the end for me, I cannot turn away, We have set our hearts for the way; this journey is our destiny. Let no one walk alone. The journey makes us one.*

The Church of St. Mary, Cal's parish for over 48 years, will celebrate her Memorial Mass on Friday, July 1 at 11:00am. Many of those who traveled with Cal in the Footsteps of St. Paul will be remembering her, supporting her children, and grandchildren from across the nation who will be in attendance. I trust that Cal has reached the "New Jerusalem", reunited with her husband, family members and our Lord, Jesus. Cal Stroh has finished the items she had on her earthly bucket list resting in peace for all eternity.

God bless you these summer days,

*Fr. Mike Nacari*