



FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE

There is a great deal of energy and emotion in the Upper Grade and Primary Grade Centers of the School of St. Mary as the final weeks of school are upon us. The Saints and Scholars Middle School Honors Night will be on Tuesday, May 30 at 6:30pm in the Church of St. Mary. We plan to celebrate our graduating 8th graders while acknowledging and inspiring our sixth and seventh graders. Please review several of the new awards we will present. Some of the awards being presented include the following:

Spirit of a Crusader: This new award will recognize an 8th-grade student who exemplifies the Crusader Creed and the school motto, *To Learn. To Serve. To Lead.* The student has an excellent academic and behavior record, demonstrates service to the school and community, and actively lives out their Catholic Faith.

Citizenship Award: The citizenship award recognizes students who have demonstrated exemplary behavior, good character, and a commitment to the values of respect, responsibility, and kindness. This award will be presented to a student in 6th, 7th and 8th grade.

Departmental Awards: Each department may present at least one award per grade including subjects such as English Language Arts/Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies, Religion as well as Spanish, STEAM, and Physical Education. The Department Awards represent and reflect hard work, determination, mastery of coursework, or growth.

We celebrate the Class of 2023 of the School of St. Mary with their Graduation Mass this coming Thursday evening, June 1. Let us remember all in our families and community that are reaching important milestones in their lives. With hearts of faith may they follow the lead of Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd at all times in their lives.

For the better part of three years, humanity was not able to come together - to socialize, to celebrate, to gather for community and fraternity. Joining you and so many other people of faith, we pray that the devastation of COVID on body, mind, and spirit is now behind us. We are able to safely and joyously come together for family celebrations, for parish events, for loved one's accomplishments. As we go forward into the summer, may our gatherings bring joy and peace to our bodies, minds, and spirits.

Over the past several months the Parish Council, as well as Parish Staff, have been discussing opportunities for parishioners to come together, not only for prayer and service opportunities but for renewing and fostering new friendships in social gatherings. With that in mind, we are now forming a **COSM Parish Life Social Committee**. It feels right to be bringing people together who want to help and offer opportunities for people to come together.

That being said, if you fit the above description of a fun loving, social, community building parishioner of the Church of St. Mary please come to a meeting this Tuesday, May 30 at 8:00pm in the Parish Center. This is a new committee that I am hoping will be formed by interested members of St. Mary's. On Tuesday we will meet to brainstorm and to discuss how we can offer, host, present and provide times for parishioners to come together. I am excited about the possibilities 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. Please reach out to me to let me know your interest to be part of this new parish group.

We conclude the Easter season with the celebration of the Feast of Pentecost, sometimes referred to as the birthday of the Church. Pray that the Holy Spirit will empower you in your faith life. Pray also that fellow parishioners will respond to the Holy Spirit empowering them in sharing their faith.

God bless you in living Holy Spirit filled lives,