



St. Mark Parish

St. Mark is a Catholic parish committed to fostering discipleship through the Word of God and the Sacraments. We are dedicated to providing Catholic education to our youth, to bringing a deeper relationship with Christ to our adults, and to supporting those in need through the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. We encourage all of our parishioners to participate in the shared responsibility of worship, prayer, study and service.

December 15, 2024

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

John answered them all, saying, "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming."
- Lk 3:16a



Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD. ©LPi

PASTORAL STAFF

- Rev. Adam Zajac**
Pastor
- Mrs. Karen Cocita**
Principal
- Mrs. Meaghan McCarthy-Silver**
Pastoral Minister
- Mrs. Julia Wallace**
Music Ministry Director
- Mr. Michael Kay**
Youth Ministry Director
- Mrs. Jeannette Puckett**
Parish School of Religion (PSR) Director

COMMUNITY & SACRAMENTS

- New Parishioners:** All are welcome to join the parish! Visit the website or call the parish office to arrange to meet a pastoral staff member.
- Become Catholic:** Interested in becoming Catholic? Call the parish office for an appointment with a pastoral staff member to learn more.
- Infant Baptism:** As you celebrate a new birth, make sure to arrange for the child's baptism. The third Sunday of the month is our regular schedule.
- Reconciliation:** Mercy and peace are here for you. Confession is available on Saturdays from 3:00pm to 3:45pm, or by appointment.
- Marriage:** Over six months we will prepare you to exchange vows before the altar. Whether engaged or civilly married, contact us to get started.
- Anointing of the Sick:** If you or a loved one is seriously sick, please call the parish office to arrange for a priest to visit and anoint.
- Homebound:** We are happy to bring Communion to you if you are unable to participate in the celebration of Mass.

LITURGY AND PRAYER INTENTIONS

Papal Intention

December: For pilgrims of hope. We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthen our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in our daily lives, and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

Liturgy Schedule

Scripture readings can be found online at:
bible.usccb.org

Monday, December 16

8:30am Mass.....Loren McKeon

Tuesday, December 17

6:45am Mass @ St. Mel

8:30am Mass.....Dave Adams

Wednesday, December 18

Thursday, December 19

8:30am Mass..... Giuseppe Coreno

Friday, December 20

6:45am Mass @ St. Mel

Saturday, December 21

3:00pm Confessions

3:00pm Confessions @ St. Mel

4:00pm MassDave Adams

4:30pm Mass @ St. Mel

Sunday, December 22-Fourth Sunday of Advent

7:00am Mass @ St. Mel

8:30am Mass..... Luke McGraw

10:00am Mass @ St. Mel

11:30am Mass Dolly Tinnirello

Pray for the Sick

We commend to your personal prayers parishioners who have asked to be prayed for:


William Adams	Irene Gurchensky	Nora Sudetic
Gianna Andolina	David Kurth	Lena Sunyak
Carol Behnke	Pat McAndrew	George Surovec
Jack Behnke	Gerald McArthur	Herb Tippie
Katy Brent	Jim McIlwee	Georgieann Treible
Henry Buehner	Mary Miller	Shirlee Toth
James Coyne	Maisie Nowlin	Joe Wantz
Matthew Craven	Bill Retzer	Charlotte Whiting
Nicole Foerstner	Mary Stark	Lillian Zahara
Mary Frantz	Sr. Josette Obodzinski	Lew Zahara Jr.
Theresa Fridrich		Joseph Zavatchen Jr.

Other Intentions

Weekly Luke McGraw Memorial Candles Intention

Joseph Spicuzza

Liturgical Ministers	emHCs	Lectors	Servers
Saturday, December 21 @ 4:00pm	Bridget Blayney John Levis Shirlee Toth	Lisa Braun	Kerri Gompf Aidan Gompf Dominic Sutcliff
Sunday, December 22 @ 8:30am	Mary Stamper Laura Skonce Karen Cocita	Agnes Butler Monica Svetz	Fiona Stock Clare Stock Joe Svetz
Sunday, December 22 @ 11:30am	Cari Foster Rosanne Kelley Michelle Biggins	Eileen Andrews Eliza Kratt	Andrew Koch Jack Koch Emily Koch



Join us in prayer and worship during

The Christmas Season

Wednesday December 25

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

Tue Dec 24	4:00pm	St. Mark
Tue Dec 24	6:00pm	St. Mel
Tue Dec 24	10:00pm	St. Mel
Wed Dec 25	8:30am	St. Mark
Wed Dec 25	10:00am	St. Mel

Sunday December 29

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Regular Sunday mass schedule

Wednesday January 1

The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Tue Dec 31	7:00pm	St. Mark
Wed Jan 1	6:45am	St. Mel
Wed Jan 1	8:30am	St. Mark
Wed Jan 1	12:00pm	St. Mel

Sunday January 5

The Epiphany of the Lord

Regular Sunday mass schedule

Sunday January 12

The Baptism of the Lord

Regular Sunday mass schedule

Christmas is a ray of light for all, because it reveals to us God's love and makes us feel the presence of Jesus with everyone, especially with those who are suffering. Just for this reason Jesus willed to be born in poverty and in the abandonment of a cave and to be laid in a manger.

Saint Pope John Paul II, *Address to Young People*, 1978

Background: Peter Paul Rubens, *Adoration of the Magi*, 1633

NEWS AND EVENTS

Offertory Collections

In-Pew Collection (see next bulletin)
Faith Direct (past month total) \$ 5,300.00
Thank you for your generosity!

Parish News

Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, Altar Servers

Please see sign-up sheets in the Sacristy for Christmas masses and The Solemnity of Mary.

St. Mark Giving Tree

Thank you to everyone who has donated or has taken a tag from the Giving Tree to purchase a gift. All gifts are due back this weekend. Please place your wrapped gift with the tag from the Giving Tree to purchase a gift. All gifts are due back this weekend. Please place your wrapped gift with the tag attached under the Giving Tree no later than noon on Sunday, December 15. At that time all the gifts are sorted and prepared for delivery to the organizations. Thank you for the overwhelming support of this ministry and making Christmas wishes come true for so many in our community!

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

Wednesday, December 25th, Holy Day of Obligation

Please see Page 3 for the Holy Day mass schedule.

Music Ministry

JWallace@stmarkcleveland.com

There is much to celebrate about the music ministry at Marks and Mels!

There are over thirty students participating in Saint Mark Singers Youth & Children Choir this year. Enjoy their lovely singing every other week at the 11:30 mass (11/24, 12/8, 12/24).

Mark your calendars: Sunday, December 15th, 3PM the SMS Youth and Children Choir will be performing at the Lakewood Cluster Annual Advent Concert, at St. Luke Church. They'll sing with a chamber orchestra & neighbors from LCA. Bring your kids for cocoa & gingerbread house-building after the concert. The music is arranged by former Marks music director, Lawrence Wallace, and conducted by Julia Wallace. It is a truly lovely event.

Christmas Choir: Call for singers! Consider joining us as a chorister or cantor for this year's Christmas masses. Drop in our **rehearsals 12/3, 12/10 & 12/17; 7PM, St. Mark Choir loft.**

12/24 T Mark 4PM Children's Choir
12/24 T Mel 6PM Adult Choir (Possible)
12/25 W Mark 8:30AM Adult Choir

Encouragement: This fall, Fr. Adam has emphasized the importance of collective singing to the school children. Their response has been great! Consider attending a school mass so that you can witness the joy of congregational singing in action.

Church Altar Linens

Looking for a volunteer to wash and iron the church altar linens on a weekly basis. Please contact Cheryl at the Parish Office.



Faith Build Home Dedication Saturday, December 21

Join Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity Faith Build staff, supporters, and volunteers for the **Faith Build Home Dedication** on **Saturday, December 21, at 11:00 am**. Meet Shernisha, the 2024 Faith Build homebuyer, see the Faith Build house, mingle with other volunteers, and enjoy a few cookies!

The dedication will be held at **10522 Crestwood Avenue** in the Cleveland Buckeye neighborhood

Email Amy Asseff with questions: aasseff@aol.com

Reminders and Regular Events

Holy Name Society Meetings

Fellowship, prayer, and service for all parishioners

All men and women of the parish ages 18 and older are welcome to join the St. Mark Holy Name Society. Meetings are the second Tuesday of the month at 6:00pm in either the Picnic Pavilion or Social Hall. If you would like to know more, contact Jim Cocita at: jimcocita@gmail.com

Thanks to everyone who attended Thanksgiving Mass and "Donuts before Turkey" gathering after. It was nice for all to be together for Mass and socialize before we parted for the day to be with family and friends to celebrate the holiday. Thanks to all who helped out.

Young Family Gatherings

Connect with other young parents

Once a month after the 8:30am mass, young families are welcome to gather in the Social Hall (or Pavilion) for bagels, coffee, and community. Dates vary each month. For questions contact Briana Dave at: bciancibello@gmail.com

Upcoming Dates: December 22, January 12, February 9, March 16 and April 13

Donut & Coffee Social

Once a month after all masses in the Social Hall. Gather with fellow parishioners. For questions contact Michael Kay at mkay@stmarkcleveland.com

Upcoming Date: January 4 & 5

Regional and Diocesan News and Events

Communal Penance Service

Our Lady of Angels Parish

There will be a communal penance service for Advent at Our Lady of Angels on Monday, December 16th at 7:00pm.

General Parish Calendar

Saturday,	December 14	
7:00 am	Breakfast w/Santa	SH
10:00 am	Family Faith Formation	CC
3:00 pm	Giving Tree Wrapping	CR
3:00 pm	Confessions	
4:00 pm	Mass	
5:00 pm	Marker's 50+	SH
Sunday,	December 15	
8:00 am	Giving Tree Wrapping	CR
8:30 am	Mass	
8:30 am	Sunday PreSchool	CR
9:30 am	Rosary	
11:30 am	Mass LS	
6:00 pm	Youth Group	SH
Monday,	December 16	
8:30 am	Mass	
2:00 pm	Youth Choir Prac.	CH
4:00pm-9:00 pm	Basketball Prac.	G
6:30 pm	PSR Class Gr. 1-8	CR
Tuesday,	December 17	
8:30 am	Mass w/All School	
2:30 pm	Children's Choir Prac.	CH
4:00pm-9:00 pm	Basketball Prac.	G
4:30 pm	RCIC	CC
7:00 pm	Parent Club	SH
7:00 pm	Choir Practice	CH
Wednesday,	December 18	
2:45 pm	Rosary Club	CH
4:00 pm	RCIA	CC
5:00 pm	Basketball Tournament	G/FR
Thursday,	December 19	
8:30 am	Mass	
5:00 pm	Basketball Tournament	G/FR
6:00 pm	Scout Pack #268 Den Mtg.	SH
7:00 pm	Troop #293	SH
7:00 pm	Liturgical Minister Evening @ St. Mel	
Friday,	December 20	
5:00 pm	Basketball Tournament	G/FR
Saturday,	December 21	
9:00am-1:00 pm	CYO Basketball	G/FR
3:00 pm	Confession	
4:00 pm	Mass	
5:30 pm	Basketball Tournament	G/FR
Sunday,	December 22	
8:30 am	Mass	
8:30 am	Sunday PreSchool	CR
9:30 am	Rosary	
9:30 am	Young Families	SH
11:30 am	Mass LS	
1:00 pm	Basketball Tournament	G/FR

Note: (LS)=Livestreamed

PARISH GRADE SCHOOL

Our children in PreK- Grade 2 had been working very hard on their Christmas play entitled *When Jesus Was Born* for several weeks before their performance. Dr. Rentz remarked how quickly our Kindergarten classes had picked up on the music. As the day arrived, excitement grew throughout our building. Every year, our productions keep getting better and better, and this one really brought Christmas spirit to all in attendance, reminding all of us about the real meaning behind Christmas. Congratulations to our students as well as their teachers, all of whom had a hand in making this production so successful: Mrs. Melvin-Marko, Mrs. Greuloch, Ms. Maroon, Ms. Gaukin, Mrs. McNeeley, Ms. Dunleavy, Mrs. Schimming, Ms. Rikard, Mrs. Gorman, Ms. Colegrove, and Dr. Rentz. A special thank you to St. Edward High School and Colin Bocan for the use of their lighting, and to our Maintenance Department for all the time put into transforming the gym into a theater.

A few weeks ago, many of our geography scholars competed in our annual Geography Bee. State identification, state capitals, bodies of water, and American symbols were a few topics that challenged our younger scholars in Kindergarten- 4th Grade. Their knowledge was impressive, and their ability to think under pressure was amazing! Later that same day, our 5th-8th Grade scholars competed against one another to determine who the overall winner of the coveted Geography Bee Trophy would be! The questions were harder, but once again, our student scholars demonstrated their knowledge under pressure. Congratulations to these participants:

- Kindergarten: Partick M., Ava N., Colin A., and John D.
- Grade 1: Augustus G., Anya P., Joseph S., and Penelope H
- Grade 2: Christopher K., Cahill R., Sophia D., and Luka P.
- Grade 3: Brendan A., Alex M., Padraig E., and Adrian M.
- Grade 4: Vic P., Samira S., Sebastian K., and William L.
- Grade 5: Colin W., Maeve S., Jackson P., and Lukas H.
- Grade 6: Bridget R., Anna O., Evelina F., and Connor M.
- Grade 7: Emma T., Aine S., Brendan M., and Ellie B.
- Grade 8: Julia S., Dominic S., Tadhg M., and kat M.

Our Entrepreneur Club meets weekly during their lunch/recess periods. Entrepreneur Club is open to students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. Through the AlphaJump! Cleveland program, in partnership with St. Ignatius and St. Joseph Academy, students learn how to create and market their business ideas. Mrs. Henley and Mr. Kincade are the moderators of this club. Two very timely projects they recently created included the creation of stickers and ornaments marking our 75th Anniversary as a school. Using the laser cutter and 3D printers, their ideas were brought to life! As part of the process, they learned some very valuable lessons about production elements and design. We will keep you updated about their production and marketing of these items.

Finally, enjoy these sights of children at play. Hearing laughter and giggles and seeing great smiles are two of my favorite things I experience every day because I have the best job in the world!

Mrs. Cocita



General Audience of Pope Francis, on 4 December 2024

Cycle of Catechesis. The Spirit and the Bride. The Holy Spirit guides the people of God towards Jesus our hope 16. Proclaiming the Gospel in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit and evangelization

After having reflected on the sanctifying and charismatic action of the Spirit, we will dedicate this catechesis to another aspect: the *evangelizing work of the Holy Spirit*, that is, on the role of preaching in the Church.

The First Letter of Peter defines the apostles as “those who preached the good news to you [through] the holy Spirit” (cf. 1:12). In this expression we find the two constitutive elements of Christian preaching: its *content*, which is the Gospel, and its *means*, which is the Holy Spirit. Let’s say something about one and the other.

In the New Testament, the word “Gospel” has two principal meanings. It can indicate any one of the four canonical Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and according to this definition the Gospel means the good news proclaimed by Jesus during His earthly life. After the Pasch, the word “Gospel” assumes its new meaning of good news about Jesus, that is, the Paschal mystery of the death and resurrection of the Lord. This is what the Apostle calls “Gospel” when he writes: “I am not ashamed of the Gospel. It is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes” (Rom 1:16).

The preaching of Jesus and, subsequently, that of the Apostles, also contains all the moral duties that stem from the Gospel, starting from the ten commandments up to the “new” commandment of love. But if we do not want to relapse into the error denounced by the Apostle Paul of putting the law before grace and deeds before faith, it is necessary always to start anew from the proclamation of what Christ has done for us. Therefore, the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* insists a lot on the first of these two things, namely the *kerygma* or “proclamation”, on which every moral application depends.

Indeed, “in catechesis too, we have rediscovered the fundamental role of the first announcement or *kerygma*, which needs to be at the centre of all evangelizing activity and all efforts at Church renewal. ... The first proclamation is called ‘first’ not because it exists at the beginning and can then be forgotten or replaced by other more important things. It is first in a qualitative sense because it is the principal proclamation, the one which we must hear again and again in different ways, the one which we must announce one way or another through the process of catechesis, at every level and moment. ... We must not think that in catechesis the *kerygma* gives way to a supposedly more ‘solid’ formation. Nothing is more solid, profound, secure, meaningful and wisdom-filled than that initial proclamation” (nos. 164-165), namely, the *kerygma*.

So far, we have seen the content of Christian preaching. We must however bear in mind also the *means* by which it is proclaimed. The Gospel must be preached “through the Holy Spirit” (1 Pt 1:12). The Church must do precisely what Jesus says at the beginning of His public ministry: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor” (Lk 4:18). *Preaching with the anointing of the Holy Spirit* means transmitting, together with the ideas and the doctrine, the life and conviction of our faith. It means doing so “not with persuasive (words of) wisdom, but with a demonstration of spirit and power” (1 Cor 2:4), as Saint Paul wrote.

It is easy to say, one might object, but how can it be put into practice if it does not depend on us, but on the coming of the Holy Spirit? In reality, there is one thing that does depend on us, or rather two, and I will briefly mention them. The first is *prayer*. The Holy Spirit comes to those who pray, because the heavenly Father – it is written – “give[s] the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him” (Lk 11:13), especially if we ask Him in order to proclaim the Gospel of His Son! Woe to those who preach without praying! They become those whom the Apostle defines as “a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal” (cf. 1 Cor 13:1).

So, the first thing that depends on us is praying, so that the Holy Spirit may come. The second is *not wanting to preach ourselves, but Jesus the Lord* (cf. 2 Cor 4:5). This relates to preaching. At times there are long sermons, twenty minutes, thirty minutes... But, please, preachers must preach an idea, a feeling and a call to action. Beyond eight minutes the preaching starts to fade, it is not understood. And I say this to preachers [applause] – I can see that you like to hear this! At times we see men who, when the sermon starts, go outside to smoke a cigarette and then come back in. Please, the sermon must be an idea, a feeling and a call to action. And it must never exceed ten minutes. This is very important.

The second thing, I was saying, is not to want to preach ourselves, but the Lord. There is no need to dwell on this, because anyone engaged in evangelization knows what it means in practice not to preach oneself. I will limit myself to a particular application of this requirement. Not wanting to preach oneself also implies not always giving priority to pastoral initiatives promoted by us and linked to our own name, but willingly collaborating, if requested, in community initiatives, or entrusted to us by obedience.

May the Holy Spirit help us, accompany us and teach the Church how to preach the Gospel in this way to the men and women of this time! Thank you.