

# Messenger

*St. Mary of the Assumption R.C. Church*

*February 2012*

*Vol. 3 No. 2*

## From The Pastor...

Although the number of snow days this winter have been fewer than usual, we still experience in these initial months of the new year a certain weariness of heart that yearns for rejuvenation and rekindling.

As the season of Lent approaches, take a look at the Lenten services and studies offered here at St. Mary's that may assist in deepening your faith life. May we together celebrate and grow in our love and service of God and neighbor.

This issue of the *Messenger* includes a brief survey developed by members of our parish, designed to get your input into certain areas of our parish life. Your completion of this survey is greatly appreciated. Please return it by mail, email or collection basket by the asked date. We may not do all that you ask, add or change all that you desire, but your insights will be very helpful in continuing to do what is best for us in growing as a vibrant faith community.

*God bless,  
Fr. Paul*



## Foot Washing A Symbolic Act

On Holy Thursday, Catholics traditionally wash the feet of several parishioners in remembrance of the way that Jesus washed the feet of His disciples. Foot washing was an important part of hospitality in early Christianity, as the act removed the dust and stones from a weary traveller, easing the pain and fatigue of a long journey.

Our journey here on earth can be long and tiresome. Even Lent can cause fatigue as we fast and abstain, and sacrifice things we really love for the sake of our faith. Christ has the power to ease our pain and comfort us after a long journey. In the same way, He calls us to wash the feet of one another, humbling ourselves and caring for each other all year.

### Inside This Issue.....

- Lenten Season Events
- Parish Survey Form
- Patron Saint of Earaches

Ash Wednesday  
February 22, 2012  
Mass Schedule

6:45 a.m.  
8:30 a.m.  
12:00 Noon  
7:00 p.m.

Communal Penance  
Service

Monday, March 26, 2012  
3:00 & 7:00 p.m.  
at  
St. John the Baptist Church,  
2021 Sandridge Rd., Alden

St. Joseph's Table

For decades, families at St. Mary's have come together around the dinner table for the Feast of St. Joseph. This year's St. Joseph's Table will be held on Friday, March 16 at 6:00 p.m.

Traditionally, this feast is marked by a meatless meal. Baked fish fillets will be provided, complimented by potluck meatless side dishes, donated by those who attend. The selection is usually delicious! Please join us for this free event. All are welcome.

Stations of the Cross

Join us for Stations of the Cross in the Church at 7:00 p.m. on Fridays during Lent.

Ash Wednesday  
Clam Chowder Dinner



Wednesday, February 22, 2012  
from 4-7 p.m.  
in the Parish Center

Choice of fish sandwich or grilled cheese, Choice of New England (white) clam chowder or tomato soup, non-alcoholic beverage and dessert

\$7 per person / Take-out or eat-in  
Tickets available at the rectory or at-the-door.

Volunteers are needed for this event, which requires some experienced hands in the kitchen. If you can lend an hour or two to help cook or serve, set up or clean up, email pattim@stmarysonthehill.org or call the rectory at 683-6445 ext. 20.

Lenten Ecumenical Worship Services

Wednesdays at 12:00 Noon  
with a light lunch following  
ALL WELCOME

"Christ in the Strangest Places:  
Foreshadowed, Fulfilled Forever"

February 29	Rev. Kirk Langset	St. John Lutheran 55 Pleasant Ave., Lancaster
March 7	Rev. Christopher Baldwin	Vine Wesleyan 425 Penora St., Depew
March 14	Rev. Kelly Negus	St. Mary of the Assumption 1 St. Mary's Hill, Lancaster
March 21	Bishop Thaddeuss Paplowski	Holy Mother of the Roasary 6298 Broadway, Lancaster
March 28	Rev. Paul Steller	Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta 496 Terrace Blvd., Depew

Offerings of non-perishable foods and cash will be gathered to benefit the Lancaster and Depew Food Pantries.

Please make checks payable to: "Lancaster and Depew Ministerium"  
Memo line: "Food Pantries." THANK YOU!

## Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday  
Sat., March 31 - Mass 4:30  
& 7 p.m.

Sun., April 1 - Mass 8 a.m.,  
10 a.m. & 12 Noon

Mon., April 2  
12 Noon Mass (Chapel)

Tues., April 3  
8:30 a.m. Mass (Chapel)  
7 p.m. Chrism Mass  
(Cathedral)

Wed., April 4  
12 Noon Mass (Chapel)  
7:30 p.m. Tenebrae Service  
(Parish Center)

Holy Thursday, April 5  
9 a.m. Morning Prayer (Chapel)  
7 p.m. Evening Mass of the Lord's  
Supper (Church)

Good Friday, April 6  
9 a.m. Morning Prayer (Chapel)  
3 p.m. Solemn Liturgy (Church)  
7 p.m. Taize Prayer Around the  
Cross (Parish Center)

Holy Saturday, April 7  
9 a.m. Morning Prayer (Chapel)  
12 Noon Blessing of the Easter  
Baskets (Church)  
8 p.m. Celebration of Easter  
Vigil (Church)

Easter Sunday, April 8  
6:30 a.m. Sunrise Mass  
(Westwood Park)  
Mass 8 a.m., 10 a.m.  
& 12 Noon (Church)

## Immigrant Families Receive Holiday Gifts



At left: Elementary School student Emily Bookmiller wraps Christmas presents for immigrant families as part of the parish outreach effort.

St. Mary's "adopted" twenty families in December as a holiday project. The annual effort provides necessary items such as clothing, towels, small appliances and winter hats through the local Catholic Charities office. Thanks to all who helped in this ministry.

## Reservations Accepted For Easter Bunny Brunch

Bring the kids to hunt for treat-filled eggs and share a meal at St. Mary's Easter Bunny Brunch. We will gather in the school building for a light breakfast and an Easter Egg Hunt on

Saturday, April 7  
from 10:30-11:45 a.m.

Then, join us for the blessing of Easter baskets in the Church at 12:00 Noon. Reservations are necessary, as we will need to know how many eggs the Easter Bunny must hide. Fill out the slip below and return it to the rectory by April 1, 2012. Children price is \$3 each. Adults are free. Please notify the rectory if there are special dietary considerations or accommodations needed for your child.

## Welcome, New Parishioners

Please join us in welcoming the following new parishioners, who registered in November and December. May God bless these new members of our St. Mary's family!

Amanda Alterio  
Robert & Patricia Engler  
Andrew & Cassandra Germann  
Tom & Karen Giczkowski  
Marc Graham  
Rita Kotas  
Carin Novick  
Andrew Streit

## Sr. Barbara Retires

Prayers are asked for Sister Barbara Whelan, OSF, who retired from the St. Mary's Pre-K program after 27 yeears of service. A Mass will be offered on Saturday, February 18 at 4:30 p.m. with a reception to follow

Family Name : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ # children ages 0-5

\_\_\_\_\_ # children ages 5-12

\_\_\_\_\_ # children 13-18

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Jr. Ladies of Charity  
St. Mary's Rectory  
1 St. Mary's Hill, Lancaster, NY 14086

## School to Present Play

St. Mary's Elementary School will present "High School Musical, Jr." during the Month of March. A Dinner Theater will be offered for Thursday evening, March 8 at 6:00 p.m. (\$27 per ticket) Tickets for Friday and Saturday evening performances (March 9 & 10) are \$5 and may be purchased at the door. Showtimes are Friday at 7:00 p.m., and Saturday at 1:00 and 6:00 p.m.

For information, call the school office at 683-2112.

## Volunteers Recognized at Annual Brunch



Nearly 300 volunteers gathered to share friendship and successes at our annual parish recognition brunch in January. The event was celebrated at part of Epiphany weekend, the official close of the Christmas season.

Our parish is blessed to have over 500 active volunteers in over 25 ministries.

May God bless them all in their service!

## True Forgiveness

This note was found on a dead child's body in Ravensburg concentration camp: "O Lord, remember not only the men and women of good will, but also those of ill will. Do not remember all the suffering they have inflicted on us; remember the fruits we have brought, thanks to this suffering -- our comradeship, our loyalty, our humility, our courage, our generosity, the greatness of heart which has grown out of all of this. And when they come to judgement, let all the fruits that we have borne be their forgiveness." How do we account for this incredible act of forgiveness by these camp victims? How are we invited to emulate them? How can forgiveness grow stronger in us, our family and friends, our Church this Lent?

## February Gatherings Focus on The Cross

"The cross is both the world's most contemptible instrument of punishment and the symbol of humanity's greatest hope. In turning this tool of torture into His followers' proudest boast, Jesus produced the most dramatic reversal the world has ever experienced. Worn around our necks, hung in our homes, carried in procession, and set on mountaintops, the cross speaks to what we believe about Jesus and about how we understand our lives in relationship to Him."

Join us as we take an in-depth look at the Cross of Christ and how it speaks to us.

## Lenten Retreats at St. Mary's

Monday, February 27, 2012—7:00 p.m.  
Roll Away the Stones

Wednesday, March 28, 2012 - 7:00 p.m.  
Words from the Cross

Two different dates, two different topics given by Sister Louise Alff. Sr. Louise is a popular speaker and retreat leader on the national and international level. She is a Franciscan sister and native of Buffalo. After years of serving and conducting retreats and training Catholics on various topics around the USA, she is back in Buffalo. We are fortunate to have her conduct our Lenten retreats. Plan to attend, bring a friend to these uplifting, enjoyable and well-organized presentations.



Please fill out  
our Parish  
Survey!!!

# Parish Survey

Please fill out and return by mail, email (pattim@stmarysonthehill.org) or in the collection basket.

## **Part 1 – Demographics: Please answer the following questions related to your household.**

1. Please provide your age group:  
 20-29     30-39     40-49     50-59     60-69     70-79     80+
  
2. I attend Mass:  
 Daily                       Weekly                       Occasionally                       Rarely
  
3. I prefer to attend Mass at the following times:  
 4:30pm     7pm     8am     10am     12pm    Suggested  
Saturday    Saturday    Sunday    Sunday    Sunday    time/day  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
4. I attend Mass:  
 At St. Mary's  
 At another parish (if at another parish please use the following space to explain why)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Within the past year (or two) I have attended mass at other parishes' \_\_\_\_\_ times (approximate).
  
6. Two things that other parishes do that I would like to see integrated into the St. Mary's parish community or liturgy would be:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
7. Two things that other parishes do that I do not like and make me prefer St. Mary's are:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
8. What is the most important need for our parish to focus on in the next 1 to 3 years?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Part 2 – Liturgy: How well does each indicator describe the vitality of St. Mary's Parish Community?**

- |   | Strongly Disagree     | Disagree              | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree                 | Strongly Agree        |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 9. Our parish offers a wide variety of opportunities for parishioners of all ages (from children through adults) to grow spiritually and in their Catholic faith. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. I would like to see the music ministry enhanced with some contemporary song choices.  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. Our parish provides opportunities to learn the history of our Catholic faith.   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. The liturgies at our parish are prayerful, reverent and spiritually moving.   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 13. Our parishioners participate fully and consciously in the celebration of the liturgy.   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
14. Our parish provides adequate youth group experiences that today's teens can relate to and assist them in becoming an active member of the church community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. The music ministry offers a variety of vocalists, instrumentalists and songs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Our parish is a welcoming and hospitable community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. Our parish offers a wide variety of opportunities for families and households to grow spiritually and in their Catholic faith.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. The music played and sung during Mass creates an atmosphere of community worship and feeds my spirituality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. The preaching at our parish connects Scripture to daily life and inspires Christian living.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. I would prefer to sing traditional hymns and hear traditional Choral music.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. I am interested in a Family Mass (held in the Parish Center with a separate special liturgy of the Word for children).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. If you agreed with the above suggestion, which time would you prefer for the Family Mass:					
<input type="radio"/> 4:30pm Saturday	<input type="radio"/> 7pm Saturday	<input type="radio"/> 8am Sunday	<input type="radio"/> 10am Sunday	<input type="radio"/> 12pm Sunday	<input type="radio"/> Not Interested
23. We could enhance our Mass/liturgy celebrations by:	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>				

**Part 3 – Spiritual Growth & Fellowship: Please choose those that you would prayerfully consider participating in to deepen your own spiritual growth, as well as to enhance the fellowship of our parish.**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Adult Faith Formation  | <input type="radio"/> Family Gatherings                 |
| <input type="radio"/> Bible Study  | <input type="radio"/> Church Picnics                    |
| <input type="radio"/> Marriage Workshops   | <input type="radio"/> Holiday Gatherings/Events         |
| <input type="radio"/> Family Workshops   | <input type="radio"/> Men's Club                        |
| <input type="radio"/> Small Faith Sharing Groups   | <input type="radio"/> Mom's Corner                      |
| <input type="radio"/> Retreats or evenings of reflections to help deepen my personal prayer life | <input type="radio"/> Empty Nesters                     |
| <input type="radio"/> Online retreats, networking and resources                                  | <input type="radio"/> Seniors                           |
| <input type="radio"/> Other suggestions for Spiritual Growth:                                    | <input type="radio"/> Young Adults/Singles              |
|  | <input type="radio"/> Other suggestions for Fellowship: |

**THANK YOU** for taking the time to complete this survey for St. Mary's. A committee of parishioners will be tabulating the results and reporting them to the parish. If you are interested in being involved in a committee to assist the vitality of our parish please contact Patti Meyer at the Rectory at 683-6445 ext. 20.

"If you seek  
patience, you will  
find no better  
example than the  
cross...He was led  
like a sheep to the  
slaughter."

- St. Thomas Aquinas

## School Registration Underway

Applications are now being accepted for the 2012-2013 school year. Please call the school office at 683-2112 for a tour or registration forms.

## Looking Back, Reaching Forward



St. Mary of the Assumption Parish has a long history on "the hill." Founded in 1850, the parish was one of the earliest in the area. Its rich history is worth sharing and remembering.

Above is a photo from our archives of the lunchroom at St. Mary's Elementary School. How different, and yet the same is the lunchroom today?

## Marriage Preparation Course Scheduled

St. Mary's offers its Before Cana Marriage Preparation program for those planning to be married in the Catholic faith. The program will be held this Spring on Saturday, April 28, 2012, and fulfills diocesan requirements. It will begin at 8:00 a.m. and end at 5:30 p.m.

Team couples will be on hand to speak about their experiences and address topics of concern to engaged couples. A \$75 fee supports the cost of supplies and lunch.

To register, call the rectory at 683-6445. The Before Cana program will only be held once at St. Mary's in 2012, and space will be limited.

## St. Polycarp

Feast Day - February 23

As a convert and disciple of the Apostle and Gospel writer, St. John, Polycarp was able to hear firsthand what it was like to walk with Jesus. Unlike many martyrs, Polycarp lived well into his eighties, surviving through a time of great persecution and heresy in the Church. He defended the faith against the heresies of Marcionism, which rejected the inspired character of the Old Testament, and Gnosticism, which denied the humanity of Jesus and believed that revelation was accessible to only an elite few.

Polycarp was instrumental in establishing the date for the celebration of Easter. According to some, this was not necessary, as the Resurrection is believed to be celebrated at Mass every Sunday.

On one terrible day when Christians were being attacked in persecution, St. Polycarp, then a bishop, had a dream that his pillow had turned to fire. He interpreted this to mean that he would die through fire. He went into hiding but was eventually found by his captors, whom he fed a meal in return for an hour to pray. When asked to declare that Caesar was Lord, he refused to deny Christ, and readily acknowledged that he was a Christian. When he was taken into the arena to be killed, those around Polycarp heard a voice from heaven encouraging him to be brave. When the fire was lit to burn him alive, his body resisted the flame and rose up around him in an arch. He was instead stabbed, then burned.

St. Polycarp is known as the patron saint of earaches.

St. Mary of the Assumption Roman Catholic Church  
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www.stmarysonthehill.com

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Rev. Paul W. Steller, Pastor  
Rev. Gregory Faulhaber, Weekend Associate  
Dr. David Jerome, Permanent Deacon

Patricia Meyer, Editor

## Mass Schedule

### Daily Masses:

8:30 a.m. Tues, Thurs. (school chapel)  
12:00 Noon Mon, Wed, Fri. (school chapel)

During the school year, there is also an 8:30 a.m. on Fridays in the Church.  
Please call the Rectory or visit the website for holy day information.

### Weekend Masses:

Saturday  
4:30 p.m.  
7:00 p.m.

Sunday  
8:00 a.m.  
10:00 a.m.  
12:00 Noon

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession):  
Saturday 3:30-4:00 p.m.  
Appointments can be made for this Sacrament  
by calling the Rectory at 683-6445.

