



# St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church

*“Dedicated to Doing Good in the Service of God and Our Neighbor”*

*Our Knights of Columbus St. Margaret Mary Council #11091*

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We are blessed in our St. Margaret Mary Catholic Community to have Knights of Columbus Council #11091. Our K of C Council is one of more than 15,000 Councils with almost 2 million members located throughout the world. Fraternity and charity are the two key pillars for the Knights, who in the past decade alone have donated \$1.475 billion to charity and given as good stewards almost 700 million hours of volunteer service.

All the good works done by the Knights of Columbus are based upon their four core principles – Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism. Our Council #11091 is an excellent example of what it means to give and to be good stewards.

“Being a member of the Knights of Columbus is a great way to live out our Catholic faith,” says Grand Knight Scott Nejman. “Knights are indeed good stewards, and this is

exemplified by how we give back to our parish, to the Church, to our community, and especially to God in so many ways.”

Thanks to the efforts of Fr. Michael J. McGivney in New Haven, Conn., the Connecticut State Legislature chartered the first Knights of Columbus Council in 1882. From that one Council, the Knights have grown from a few to the 2 million members throughout the United States and 16 other countries.

“Becoming a Knight of Columbus can transform your life,” Scott says. “As a Knight, a man has an opportunity to support our parish, give back to the community, and grow in his faith. We are a band of brothers, a network of men in communities around the world dedicated to doing good in the service of God and our neighbor.”

As Scott notes, this spring has been a busy and exciting time for our own Knights Council.

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## *“Dedicated to Doing Good in the Service of God and Our Neighbor” Our Knights of Columbus St. Margaret Mary Council #11091 continued from front cover*

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“In April, our Council celebrated its 24th anniversary,” he says. “We as a Council have lots of activities. We just completed our annual Fish Frys. They are excellent with great food in our newly renovated kitchen. Everything we do, including the Fish Frys, takes a lot of our members and their families and quite a bit of planning to make them successful.”

Of course, the Knights are involved with many other important activities throughout the year, to help meet needs in the parish and local community.

“In fact, we do too many things to mention them,” Scott says. “We are active in Coats for Kids and Food for Families. We support programs which benefit people with intellectual disabilities. We are always prepared to aid victims of natural disasters and other catastrophic events – not just locally, but throughout the world. Our Council donates wheelchairs



4 Principles  
4 Reasons

CHARITY - UNITY  
FRATERNITY - PATRIOTISM

to people without mobility, and we continue to save lives through the Ultrasound Program promoted by our national K of C.”

Pope Francis has consistently supported and expressed gratitude to the Knights of Columbus. Recently he related to them this message: “Just as faith is shaped by charity and bears fruit in good works, so the fraternal spirit inculcated by Fr. Michael McGivney and the

Knights continues to be fruitful in the numerous charitable activities of local Councils, which in addition to meeting the needs of individuals, also builds up communities in solidarity and concern for the common good. I am confident that the Knights will continue to draw inspiration from the teaching and example of Christ in order to reach out to others, especially the poor and disadvantaged.”

Our Knights Council is trying to expand its membership, and encourages any man 18 years of age or older to consider becoming a member. The Council meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month. For more information, please contact Knights of Columbus via email at [KofC11091@gmail.com](mailto:KofC11091@gmail.com)

A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

## *We Cannot Be Part-Time Christians*

Dear Parishioners,

May is traditionally celebrated in the Church as the month of Mary, our Blessed Mother. As the Mother of the Church, she provides us with an example of what it means to be a servant of God and our fellow humans, as well as how to obediently fulfill the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

As Catholics, we are called to model the life of Jesus. That can be difficult, and there are certainly challenges to living as a disciple of Christ. But living stewardship and discipleship brings intense contentment and joy to those who take that risk. As we hear in St. Paul's letter to the Romans, "All things work for good for those who love God."

After Jesus Himself, we look to our Blessed Mother as an ideal steward and an example of what stewardship means. As the Mother of Christ, she lived her life and her ministry in a total spirit of faithfulness and service. She responded to the call to be a disciple. For us to be disciples, we also need to be good stewards of the gifts we have received. Our Church and our parish are gifts to us from God.

At no point in Holy Scripture does Jesus tell us that following Him is easy. We know it is not always simple and effortless. It requires dedication and commitment. Pope Francis has said on more than one occasion, "We cannot be part-time Christians and Catholics! We should seek to live our faith at every moment of every day."

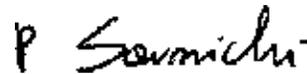
I suspect that is how Mary lived her life from that

moment she turned it over to God and His Will. So, let us vow together during this month of Mary to follow her example, and seek to be the kinds of good stewards that will make our faith community even stronger and more effective.

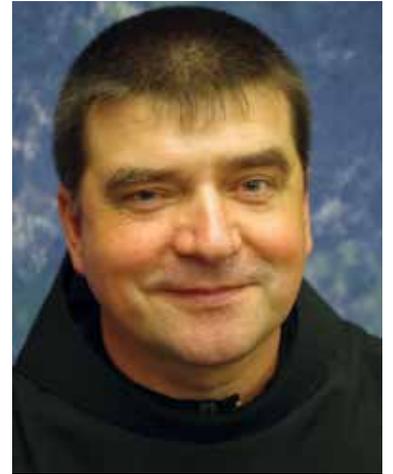
I pray that we all can find the strength to live and practice our faith as we should. This means being faithful to the sacraments and looking for ways to help and serve one another. We have a great parish – let us make it even greater.

As we hear in Holy Scripture, "May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you! May the Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace" (Numbers 6:24-26). Pray for me, as I pray for you.

Peace and Goodness,



Fr. Peter Sarnicki OFM, Conv.



# Welcoming Others Into Our F

This Easter, five people courageously entrusted their souls to Holy Mother the Church and became fully initiated Catholics through the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults process, or RCIA. We have been truly blessed to receive them into our parish family with open arms. Their stories are beautifully unique, and testify to the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the world today.

"I had been baptized as a Catholic, but I never did receive all of my first sacraments," says Victor Varney, an RCIA member. "RCIA has been a very, very good experience for me. It has helped me to learn what Catholicism is all about and discern God's will for my life."

Furthermore, Victor found RCIA to be far more than just a course in Catholicism – instead it was more of a journey of the heart.

"What we have learned about in RCIA has really opened my eyes to a bigger and brighter world in the midst of the darkness," Victor says. "I have seen that God really loves us and He will always help us do the right thing. Going through the RCIA journey has helped me



*The 2017 Easter Vigil with Confirmation candidates Dan Wartsbaugh, Victor Varney, Juan Pineda, Don Bavester, Clarissa Bavester.*

become a better person."

RCIA meets every Sunday in the Ministry Center after the 9 a.m. Mass for about two to two and a half hours, beginning in September and continuing until Pentecost. During their gatherings, they read the Sunday Mass readings and thoughtfully reflect on them as a group. Next, an RCIA team member,

an experienced parishioner, or member of the clergy will offer a presentation on a faith formation topic. The presentations this year have covered a host of topics – the history of the Church, the Old and New Testament Scriptures, the Seven Sacraments (with two sessions on the Holy Eucharist), Marriage and Vocations, Mary and the Saints,

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# Parish Family Through RCIA

Advent and the Incarnation, the Our Father prayer, the Mass, prayer, morality and the Creed, social justice, and the Beatitudes. The presentation is followed by an enriching, interactive class discussion.

At this time, the RCIA team includes – Deacon Don and Connie Miller, Tim Pignatari, Eric Olson, Jackie Pokorny, Adrienne Gibson, Mary Letheby, Helen Jost, and Warren and Regina Coler.

At various points throughout the RCIA process, the catechumens and candidates receive the Rite of Welcoming, the Rite of Sending (at our parish) and the Rite of Election (at the Cathedral of St. Peter in Rockford). On the second Sunday of Lent, candidates receive the Penitential Rite, and on the third, fourth and fifth Sundays of Lent, catechumens undergo the three Scrutinies. Furthermore, each RCIA member receives a copy of the Holy Bible, as well as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Both catechumens and candidates also participate in a day of reflection in order to prepare themselves in a meaningful way for the sacraments they are to receive and develop a deeper relationship with Christ.

“We really try to emphasize that RCIA is not just an academic class,” says Connie Miller, who serves as Coordinator of RCIA along with her husband, Deacon Don. “It is meant to be a time of real spiritual growth. One time, a gentleman who went on the RCIA retreat said he could tell the Lord was truly working in his heart, and he was very touched by it.”

After helping out with the RCIA program for nearly 20 years, Deacon Don and Connie have found that the joy that converts carry in their hearts is quite contagious.

“It is beautiful to see how the catechumens and candidates grow throughout the year, as they share their enthusiasm and excitement,” Deacon Don says. “They are very open in conversation about their spiritual lives.”

The Millers have also found the candidates and



*The 2016 Easter Vigil – Fr. Peter confirming Marvin Basch*

catechumens eager to have fellowship with one another, which is at the heart of their newfound faith experience.

“We value the group experience of RCIA highly,” Connie says. “We all learn from each other – team members, sponsors, catechumens and candidates alike. Going through the RCIA process gives the members a support group to rely on throughout the year and beyond.”

RCIA member Dan Wartsbaugh also agrees that going through the process has been a fantastic way to become further integrated into the family of God.

“I grew up Baptist, and after undergoing a very, very long process of discernment, I saw that God wanted me to become Catholic, so I joined RCIA,” Dan says. “Aside from being a great place to learn more about the faith, the RCIA process has also helped me meet people. I know that I did not come into the Church alone, but alongside people I have established real friendships with.”

A heartfelt welcome is extended to the new members of our parish family!

If you would like to give your time and talent to the RCIA process, or if you are interested in becoming Catholic yourself, please contact Deacon Don Miller at [deacondon@saintmargaretmary.org](mailto:deacondon@saintmargaretmary.org)

## *Time: The Foundation of Stewardship*

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The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has told us that stewardship is part of discipleship and is a way of responding to God's call in every aspect of our lives. We refer to the three facets of stewardship as "Time, Talent and Treasure," and when we consider the importance of these three Ts of stewardship, the "time" component comes first by design.

When we talk about stewardship of time, we are referring to prayer time. Prayer is of the utmost importance in a disciple's life, and it serves as the fertile ground from which the gifts of talent and treasure blossom. Only by spending time in prayer each day and receiving the sacraments are we able to consistently and generously donate our talent and treasure to the Church.

When looking for examples of how to live our lives as disciples of Christ and as stewards of God's gifts, we can always turn to the great saints of our Church to guide us. And when it comes to the Stewardship of Time, the life of St. Damien is just one example of how prayer, or "Time," is the foundation for our lives of stewardship.

Shortly after being ordained a priest, St. Damien volunteered to serve a colony of lepers isolated on the island of Molokai, Hawaii. From May 1873 until his death in 1889 (at the age of 49) St. Damien worked to restore within the lepers a sense of personal worth and dignity.

Although for some time St. Damien took the necessary precautions to ensure that he did not contract leprosy, he knew that physical touch was necessary to communicate his love and concern to those afflicted with the disease. He embraced the lepers, dined with them, cared for them, and anointed them in the sacraments. With great humility and sacrifice, St. Damien offered his own life in order to save the lives of others.

From where did St. Damien draw his strength? What was the source of his inspiration? "Were it not for the constant presence of our divine Master in our humble chapel, I would not have found it possible to persevere in sharing the lot of the lepers in Molokai," St. Damien wrote. "The Eucharist is the bread that gives strength... It is at once the most eloquent proof of His love and the most powerful means of fostering His love in us. He gives Himself every day so that

our hearts as burning coals may set afire the hearts of the faithful."

St. Damien found his strength in the Mass, the greatest prayer of the Church. Prayer was the impetus behind the generosity of this faithful servant of God, and is the fuel that ignites every heart to flame in love. Without prayer, without the grace that flows from the sacraments, we are incapable of leading lives of service and responding to God's call!

How much time do you dedicate to prayer each day? One hour? Fifteen minutes? None at all? Before you consider joining a parish ministry or volunteering your talents in service, and before you discern your gifts of treasure to the Church, be sure that prayer is your foundation. Identify a prayer schedule that is manageable. This may entail arising 20 minutes early each day to offer your work to the Lord, or attending daily Mass once a week. Every prayer commitment is unique and personal. Yet, no matter what, this time offering, this dedication to prayer, is the key to serving the Lord with faithfulness, generosity and joy.

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# “Our School Is Growing”

## St. Margaret Mary Polish School



Every Friday afternoon during the school year, several hundred students gather at St. Margaret Mary's Polish School to keep our Polish community traditions alive for the next generation.

“Polish School is a community of Polish and Polish-American families who would like to teach their children not only another language, but also Polish history and traditions,” says Anna Przybylski, School Secretary.

Our Polish School began in 2004 with 164 students, a number which has increased over the years to 480 students in this academic year. The school is accredited by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Students range from preschool age through high school age. At the end of high school, students receive a diploma for participating in the school.

“Our school is growing,” Anna says. “Last year, we had about 40 new families. Parents are also involved in our school life.”

Students and their families come to the school from as far as McHenry, Crystal Lake, Hampshire, Pingree Grove, Elgin, Bartlett, Streamwood, Schaumburg, Palatine, Fox River Grove, and a few families even come from the state of Wisconsin.

“Our highly educated teachers have their qualifications mostly from Poland,” Anna says. “Currently, we have 26 teachers, six catechists and four administrative members, as well as our Franciscan Friars Fr. Peter Sarnicki, Fr. Witold Adamczyk and Fr. Daniel Zdebik.”

Faith is very important for the Polish School and its families. Preschoolers and kindergartners have 30 minutes of religion class every Friday, and all other students have 45 minutes. Additionally, most students participate in retreats, especially during Advent and Lent.

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If you would like further information about St. Margaret Mary Polish School, you are invited to call the school at 224-436-0320, visit our website at [www.nasza-szkola.com](http://www.nasza-szkola.com) or visit us at our parish Polish-American Summerfest.

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The students are also involved in the school and the community in a variety of ways, including participating in the weekly Polish Masses at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday and at 1 p.m. on Sunday.

“Many of our students are altar servers during our Polish Mass and other liturgical devotions,” Anna says. “We can be proud of our kids’ choir that sings at every first Sunday of the month Mass. Our students are also involved in Polish Youth Group.”

The Polish School continues to grow, with more and more families joining the school and supporting the mission to keep the Polish language and traditions alive in our community. Anna would encourage other

families to find ways to become active with our school and our faith community.

“Getting involved in a parish is like having another family,” Anna says.

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Przybylski, School Secretary

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### LITURGY SCHEDULE

**Monday - Thursday:** 7:00 & 8:30 a.m. | **Friday:** 7:00 & 9:15 a.m. | **First Friday:** 7:30 p.m. in Polish

**Saturday:** 8:30 a.m., 4:30 p.m. (6:30 p.m. in Polish)

**Sunday:** 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 a.m. & 4:30 p.m. (1:00 p.m. in Polish)