

St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church



Volunteers Deliver Food and Nourishment of Christ's Love

INSIDE

- 3 Save Room on Your Busy Schedules for Stewardship
- 4 Creating a More Vibrant and Alive Church: St. Margaret Mary Youth Ministry
- 6 The Importance of Family Prayer
- 7 Sacristans and Marthas Lend a Hand Behind the Scenes

Who could argue that a delivery of a meal, brought by a volunteer with a smiling, caring face, is not Christ working in our neighborhood?

Our volunteers for the Salvation Army Golden Diners program carry not only nourishing food, but also Christ's sustaining love, to the shut-ins and homebound seniors in their care.

Tonia Gonzalez coordinates this effort for our parish, overseeing the notification of the 14 active volunteers from our parish when their shift is due. Our parish volunteers serve for three

months – one quarter of the year, and other churches in our area serve the remaining quarters.

“Volunteers can sign up for one day, and we have some who do a whole week,” Tonia says. “It depends on their schedule. I let people sign up how they want.”

The volunteers pick up the food bags at our church and drive to the Cary Senior Center to pick up the prepared meals. They receive a list of the individuals they will be serving that day, with deliveries made between 10:30 a.m. and



111 South Hubbard St.
Algonquin, IL 60102
847-658-7625
www.saintmargaretmary.org

Volunteers Deliver Food and Nourishment of Christ's Love continued from front cover

noon, Monday through Friday. There are no deliveries on weekends or holidays. Each driver has between eight to 12 stops on his or her route, and the deliveries take from one hour to 90 minutes. Once the deliveries are completed, the volunteers return the bags to our church.

The Salvation Army Golden Diners program is under the auspices of Meals on Wheels.

"We do the Algonquin area," Tonia says. "We deliver a hot and cold meal to home-bound seniors who are 60 and older. These are individuals who can't cook for themselves, or they are cooking for one person, or cannot afford meals. We provide a nutritious meal and a wellness check, and that's an important part."

If the recipient does not answer the door, or appears to be absent, the protocol the driver follows is to notify the head office so that person's well-being can be checked.

"Sometimes, you're the only face they see," Tonia says. "A lot don't get out, and they may not have any family. There are several people on my route when I drive that I'm the only person they see. I spend extra time with them, or I'll go back when I'm finished with my deliveries. We provide a friendly face and someone to talk to."

Tonia has been involved in the meals program for about

eight years, and took over the coordinator post two years ago.

"I'd take the kids along, when they were small," she says. "It was important to show them about giving back to others. And seniors love to see little kids! That's one of the reasons I volunteered, so my kids could give back and get involved."

The volunteers are taking Christ to the recipients just by being a caring person in their lives.

"Just being a person for someone else to talk to – I hear family stories from them, by being that friendly face," Tonia says. "Sure, you're delivering sustenance to some, and that's all they want. But others want more. [It's] just making sure they are okay, helping your fellow human being by making sure they are well. It comes around, too. When I first started to drive, there was one man who had been driving for 20 years, and now I was delivering to him. It was like a full circle. You give time and energy and it comes back around."

And, indeed, the volunteers experience Christ's love for their efforts.

"You're doing God's work, feeding His people," Tonia says. "You're helping those who can't feed themselves. You're watching over them. Hopefully, you can provide some sort of smile for them in their later days."

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– Tonia Gonzalez

Volunteers are always welcome to help fill in when other volunteers can't drive their routes. Tonia Gonzalez will work with you to accommodate your schedule – she can be contacted at 847-477-8170.

A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

Save Room on Your Busy Schedules for Stewardship

Dear Parishioners,

I don't know about you, but I still get a surge of adrenalin as the beginning of September approaches. Even though I'm no longer in school, I feel a sense of anticipation when I see the shelves filled with brand-new notebooks, composition books, and all the assorted items students use. I'm aware once again of the great hopes, exciting dreams, and good intentions that a new school year holds.

Even for those parishioners not directly involved in school, September marks new beginnings. Labor Day traditionally marks the unofficial end of the summer vacation season, and our calendars may reflect that. Many of you have calendars a lot like mine — they're full year-round with appointments and obligations. But even for us, things get busier in September as various organizations that took a break during summer begin their regular round of meetings again.

Nevertheless, I have a request for you as you fill up your fall schedules. First thing, please put in some time to share the talents God has given you. As you are aware, as Christian disciples — as stewards — we are



called to return to God a portion of the Time, Talent, and Treasure He has entrusted to us. We should make our commitments to God when we begin our planning, so that we don't offer Him just the scraps of time and energy left over after everything else.

Make this September the month you make a commitment to sing in the choir, including attending rehearsals. Or begin working with our parish religious education in one way or another. Or decide to launder altar

linens once a month. Or help care for the parish grounds. Or join the Knights of Columbus. Or join a social service ministry. Or... well, you get the idea.

There are many ministries and groups within the parish where you can serve, and you'll find that you receive even as you give. Hardly anyone in the parish can't find at least one activity in which they can participate and which fits their schedule. If you aren't involved, make this September the month to change that.

Thinking about commitments, some people say they don't have time for prayer. Again, it's a matter of priorities, and I challenge any one of you to demonstrate to me that you can't pray at least one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and one Glory Be during the course of the day. That's at least a beginning.

Peace and Goodness,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P Sarnicki".

Fr. Peter Sarnicki OFM, Conv.
Pastor



Creating a More Vibrant and Alive

The young Church is alive and thriving here at St. Margaret Mary. This is apparent at every Sunday liturgy, where young men and women can be seen reverently participating as altar servers, lectors, ushers, greeters, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC). Or on the church calendar, which is continuously filled with a variety of youth and family-related events. Most importantly of all, though, it can be seen in the lives of our youth themselves, as they draw deeper into the life of the Church. And this, explains Director of Young Adult and Youth Ministry Teresa Chiappone, is what youth ministry is really all about.

“I think that youth ministry helps young Catholics fall in love with the faith and make it their own,” Teresa says. “Our whole mission is really about accepting the young men and women of our community and fostering their relationship with Christ in order to foster their gifts into the life and mission of the Church.”

Our parish youth ministry programs begin with BULLFROGS. Designed specifically for middle school students between sixth and eighth grades, this takes place every other Wednesday from 6-8 p.m. BULLFROGS provides

a unique opportunity for middle school parishioners to learn about their faith in a dynamic and fun atmosphere, allowing youth to make new friends, learn about the faith, and have fun all at the same time.

Similarly, high school-aged youth are able to participate in the Target Team, which meets every Monday night from 7-9 p.m. Designed to be both fun and engaging, Target Team evenings include games, faith sharing, opportunities for prayer and discussion, as well as informal opportunities for socialization. In the process, high schoolers have the opportunity to encounter the Catholic faith in a personal way, and to be drawn more fully into the life of the Church.

“Over the years, I’ve seen a lot of young people begin taking ownership of their faith, becoming lifelong learners,” Teresa says. “They want to be invested in their faith and to keep progressing toward the next step. Once they are fully invested, they truly become lifelong Catholics.”

As youth progress in the faith journey, they naturally begin seeking ways to share the faith with others. The Peer Ministry Team – or P.M.T. – is just one way that our youth are able to do this, taking on an active leadership



Our Confirmation Overnight Retreat (COR) provides a faith-filled experience for those preparing for Confirmation.

Church: *St. Margaret Mary Youth Ministry*

role within the Youth Ministry program itself.

“They plan, implement, and work as a group to put on everything within our youth ministry program,” Teresa says. “And through this, they are able to take their faith to the next step, taking a real ownership of the youth group itself.”

The monthly Family Quake Mass is another special opportunity for youth to become further involved in the Church. Occurring the second Sunday of each month at 4:30 p.m., teens are able to assist at the liturgy by serving in every liturgical capacity. And by becoming trained as lectors, ushers and EMHCs, teens are then able to serve at other liturgies as well, becoming even more fully integrated into parish life.

“In preparation for the Quake Mass, teens are fully trained in things like lectoring or becoming an EMHC,” Teresa says. “This allows them to continue serving throughout the year, instead of exclusively at the Youth Mass. In every Mass you see one of our youth serving in some capacity – the choir, ushers, lectors, or EMHCs.”

Though youth ministry can occasionally require a “wait and see” approach, Teresa has been blessed over the years to witness the many fruits that have been born through the St. Margaret Mary Youth Ministry. Not only has it transformed the lives of individual teens, but it also continues to transform our entire church community as it becomes increasingly alive and vibrant. The hope is that this will only continue to grow and blossom over the years, allowing more parishioners to benefit from its graces.

“It’s just a very blessed ministry,” Teresa says. “I wish everyone could see all that the young people do. I think it’s a little hidden gem of our church sometimes.”



Fr. Ervin Caliente leads our campers and counselors in outdoor adoration to close the first night of camp.



Playing a modified version of Steal the Stuff at our middle school STOP retreat.



Taking a break during BULLFROGS, our middle school faith group.

We encourage all parish youth to take advantage of the many opportunities available to them through St. Margaret Mary Youth Ministry and welcome any new adult volunteers. To learn more, please visit the newly renovated website at SMMYM.org or contact Teresa Chiappone at either teresa@saintmargaretmary.org or 847-658-7881.

The Importance of Family Prayer

“The family that prays together stays together.” This famous slogan was coined in 1947 by writer Al Scalpone, and has been frequently referenced ever since. The phrase pinpoints the true power of prayer, and the importance of making family prayer a consistent practice in our lives.

As Christian disciples, we are striving to follow Jesus – to grow in our love of Him and to serve Him through the use of our time, talent, and treasure. If we desire to follow in His footsteps, we must first begin by getting to know Him. Spending time with the Lord in prayer forms a foundation on which we can build our lives as Christian disciples, much in the same way that spending time with a girlfriend or boyfriend forms the foundation of a strong relationship.

The Christian family is the first place where children learn to pray. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* calls the family unit “*Ecclesia domestica*,” or “the Domestic Church” (1656). Thus, parents have a responsibility to set an example by taking time for personal prayer every day, and making family prayer a regular practice. This not only sets an example for the children, but also provides them with a faith-filled foundation and brings them closer to the Lord – forming them as grateful stewards of their time.

There are many ways in which a family can pray together. One of the most important times for prayer is before meals, where we thank God for His blessings, and for the food on our family table. Families may also share in the formal prayers of the Church, or perhaps pray a Rosary together every night. We can also thank the Lord aloud, asking Him to answer our prayers and offering Him our daily petitions. One often-suggested method of family prayer is ACTS, where we offer Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. Families may also go to their church and kneel together before the Blessed Sacrament, offering prayers in Christ’s Presence.

These are just several of the many opportunities for families to pray together. Of course, prayer will be influenced by each family’s dynamics and personalities. But no matter how we pray, it is important that we make the time to do so. This will deepen the family’s relationship with the Lord, our commitment as His disciples will be stronger, and we may continually renew and foster our families’ bonds.



PRAYER OF PARENTS

God, our Father, I thank you for the gift of my children and for the privilege and responsibility of being a parent, for this is my way of holiness. May I regard each of my children as a sacred pledge of Your love and a beautiful sign of Your confidence in me. Help me to pass on to my children our greatest treasures - faith in Your truths, hope in Your goodness, love in Your name for all. I entrust my children to Your loving care. Banish from our home any bitterness or lack of forgiveness. Let us have time, deep concern, and a sense of sacrifice for one another. Teach us never to be ashamed that we are, in name and in fact, a Catholic family striving to live in the way of Jesus, Who is head of our home. Give us Your Holy Spirit to unite us throughout this life and let the circle of our family be unbroken in the Kingdom of Your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Sacristans and Marthas

Lend a Hand Behind the Scenes

As Catholics, we are a community of believers, and that community plays an important role in our celebration of the Mass. St. Margaret Mary's sacristans and Marthas ensure that everything is ready to celebrate Mass on any given day. By preparing beforehand, cleaning and organizing afterwards, and caring for the altar linens and holy vessels, these ministers play a behind-the-scenes role in making the Mass a prayerful and reverent experience.

Our parish's Marthas help keep the church clean, and care for the altar and Communion linens used at each Mass. Each Martha minister serves as often as needed.

"They clean the church, they place the altar cloth, and they clean the linens and purificators each week," says sacristan Maria Alvarez. "It really helps."

"I love the peacefulness inside our church and the chapel when I clean," says Emmylou Franco, who serves as both a Martha and a sacristan. "I also enjoy ironing the church linens while I'm watching my favorite show. The Marthas at St. Margaret Mary handle the liturgical linens with special care when we do the laundry. We also do the best we can to keep the house of Our Lord a clean, peaceful and welcoming place."

Parish sacristans set up the church and altar for weekend Mass, daily Mass, and Holy Days of Obligation. Maria serves as a sacristan for several weekday Masses, and also

continued on back cover

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Parish sacristans like Lynne Guerra set up the church and altar for weekend Mass, daily Mass, and Holy Days of Obligation.



Serving as a sacristan or a Martha also helps build fellowship, allowing our volunteers to grow closer as a community.



Maria Alvarez.

Sacristans and Marthas continued from page 7

helps prepare the altar for Adoration on Wednesdays and First Fridays.

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Serving as a sacristan or a Martha also helps build fellowship among the volunteers, allowing them to grow closer as a community.

“We watch out for each other, and we’ll always fill in when someone needs it,” Maria says. “But we can always use extra people!”



Members of the Olsen family serve as sacristans.

If you would like to get involved as a sacristan or a Martha, or are looking for more information, please contact Terri Dirnberger at terri@saintmargaretmary.org.

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)