

### *In Gratitude*

First, I would like to thank Ally Favre, Jeanne Magee, Mary Anne Potts, and Stacy LoBello for all of their hard work in organizing and executing our four Family Masses this past school year. Each one was a great celebration of faith as our young people led us in prayer and worship. Thank you to all of those who came and participated in these special Masses.

There are so many people to thank regarding the celebrations around Holy Week. I will try to be thorough, but brief in these "thank you's":

- Thank you to our choir under the direction of Ray and Mary Anne Braun for the many hours of practice and the many sacrifices made to lead our congregation in song over the days of Holy Week.

- Thank you to Terri Borowiak and her crew who made our church look so beautiful for the Easter celebration.

- Thank you to our lectors who prepared and read so well at each experience of prayer.

- Thank you to our servers for showing up early with eagerness and a desire to help with the liturgy.

- Thank you to our ushers for helping people feel welcome at our church.

### St. Gabriel Youth Group (SGYG)

SGYG is open to all high school teens. We meet on Wednesday evenings from 7:30-9:00pm (Doors open at 7:15pm) in the Gabriel House Chapel. No signup necessary! High schoolers can attend on a regular basis or drop-in as it fits their schedule!

#### REGISTER NOW!

LUKE 18 | 8th Grade Retreat: May 5 - 7

-Registration is OPEN but limited to 20 Lukers (8th graders)

-Visit the parish website and use the registration link ASAP!

Steubenville STL Mid-America 2023: July 7 - 9

-A limited number of spots remain and are available on a first-come basis! The registration link can be found on the Youth Group page of the parish website.  
-Registration will close on Monday night, April 17.

- Thank you to Shannon Colona, Suzy Ferrenbach, and Katie Meier for carrying up the new oils on Holy Thursday night.

- Thank you to all those who volunteered to have their foot washed on Holy Thursday night.

- Thank you to all of those who came to church for any or all of the special Masses and services to participate or to help in any way. They were truly beautiful celebrations. May the Lord reward you!

### *Congratulations*

On Holy Thursday evening, Shannon Colona and Cortland Mater were received into the Catholic Church and received Confirmation and First Holy Communion. Welcome to our faith!

### *Parish Rosary Program Intention*

For couples preparing for marriage this spring and summer that they have happy, healthy, and holy marriages.

I will see you online or in church! -Fr. John #SRAstrong

### WEDNESDAY MEETING CHANGE FOR APRIL

-April 19 and 26 (and May 3) will be LUKE 18 Retreat planning meetings from 7:00-9:00pm. If your high schoolers are not helping lead the LUKE 18 Retreat, but would still like to attend any of these nights, they are welcome!

-Sunday, April 30, will be a "Mini Retreat" day for our high school teens leading the LUKE 18 Retreat.

### Stay Connected with SGYG

Follow us on Instagram @stgabesyg

Like our Facebook Group: St. Gabriel Youth Group (SGYG)

Join the Flocknote Group: Youth Ministry

Visit the Youth Group page on the parish website

Contact our Youth Minister: Sarah Henderson at hendersons@stgabrielstl.org

## From Fr. John

### *Divine Mercy Sunday*

This Sunday, we join the universal Church in celebrating Divine Mercy Sunday.

Divine Mercy Sunday's origins are from the visions of St. Faustina, a Polish nun who lived before the outbreak of the Second World War. She experienced visions of Our Lord, who asked her to commission the image of Divine Mercy, to spread the devotion of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, and to promote a special feast of the Lord's mercy on the Second Sunday after Easter. The Church fulfilled Our Lord's request in 2000 when Pope John Paul II renamed this Sunday the Sunday of Divine Mercy.

Why do we need a Feast of Mercy?

The Lord deserves rightful praise and honor for so many gifts: creation, His providential guidance for our lives, and the beauty of our Earth. These are just a few of the reasons to praise God. But as Pope St. John Paul II pointed out, mercy is the greatest attribute of God. No matter how many times we sin or how great our sin, the Lord is not only willing, but desires and eagerly awaits to forgive us. This is something we can never take for granted. Instead, we can only be in wonder about this compassion and eager to fulfill this desire of Our Lord.

We also need the Feast of Mercy for ourselves. As we look around our culture, impatience, frustration, anger, and a desire for revenge are all vices we see more prevalent in the media, in our family and friends, in our workplaces, and in ourselves. The only antidote to these is calling on God's merciful love to heal the wounds of sin inside of ourselves, our families, our workplaces, and our wider society. This feast day focuses us on this need in hopes that we will more often appeal to the Lord's mercy so we can fulfill Jesus' command to treat others the way we would want to be treated.

I encourage everyone to consider extending mercy or receiving mercy on this Feast Day of Mercy. This could be done by going to confession, calling someone we need to forgive, praying for someone who we need to forgive in our heart, or graciously extending mercy to someone who asks.

### *Return of the Precious Blood at Sunday Mass*

This weekend, for the first time in nearly 37 months, we will have the Blood of Christ as an option for the congregants at Sunday Masses.

While the whole Jesus is present in the Host, one may choose to receive from the chalice as well, as this better reflects the sign of the Eucharist, which is our spiritual food and drink.

I am grateful, too, that many parishioners are also resuming or are beginning to serve as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Thank you for serving our parish in this ministry.

We will have two ministers with the chalice at each Mass, one at each corner of the sanctuary where the Communion rail bends. Before receiving from the chalice, please bow. The minister will say, "The Blood of Christ," and the proper response is "Amen." Please take the chalice from the minister, receive a small sip, and then hand it back to the minister before returning to your pew.

As was true before the pandemic, we ask that, if you are feeling ill in any way, you not receive from the chalice to minimize the spread of germs.

As a reminder, it is not possible to receive Holy Communion by means of intinction. Intinction is the practice of taking the host and dipping it into the Precious Blood. The Church does not allow this practice because it appears that you are giving Holy Communion to yourself. This is reserved exclusively to the priest.

I also ask that parents speak to your children about your preferences regarding whether or not they should receive from the chalice.

Finally, I want to emphasize that this is a choice every person is free to make. One does not receive more or less grace by choosing or not choosing to receive from the chalice. Please be respectful of the choices people make about receiving from the chalice.