

Feeling Overwhelmed or Overburdened?

Take some time to renew yourself at the "Christ Renews His Parish" Retreat.



Save the Date:

A Renewal Retreat at St. Margaret Mary

*Men's Retreat: March 8th and 9th
Women's Retreat: March 15th and 16th*

QUESTIONS:

Amy Bartley
384-1969 or amyrosebartley@gmail.com
Jerid Miller
426-1588 or jmiller@stmm.org



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St. Margaret Mary Catholic Community



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ST MARGARET MARY
• CATHOLIC COMMUNITY •

NEWS

FALL 2013

A Word from Father Steve

BY FATHER STEVE POHL, PASTOR



Dear Parishioners,

I hope all of you had a great Thanksgiving weekend and that the Advent season is a spiritually renewing!

Our parish's strategic planning is underway, thanks to many of you who responded to the parish survey and to an outstanding and highly endorsed resource titled Rebuilt: The Story of a Catholic Parish, the experience of a parish's renewal in the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

Our leadership team, the parish council and the council's supporting committees have reviewed the survey results and used Rebuilt as a catalyst for discussion about best practices in light of our mission. The creation of goals and objectives in the areas of our parish's administration, formation, worship and service is proceeding.

The guiding principle of our planning is our parish mission – "To be disciples who know, love and serve God." This is what Jesus commanded all of us to do – "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..." (Matthew 28: 19a). Everything we do as a parish must be purposeful and closely associated with our mission. I'm really excited about our planning and the initiatives that are forthcoming.

As you know, our Holy Father Pope Francis is making headlines quite often since his election to the papacy over eight months ago. Recently he presented his first papal exhortation titled Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel), which basically outlines the mission, goals and objectives of his papacy. The Church must be a community of outreach, welcome and mercy. Beyond question Pope Francis' leadership is transformational. He's reinvigorating the Church's evangelical zeal.

I believe that our parish's planning is very complimentary to the vision and mission of our Holy Father. It seems coincidental, but I feel it's providential, that our mission and initiatives are coming at the same time as Pope Francis' invigorating papacy. It's very affirming that the spirit of the "New Evangelization" is being realized in our midst here at St. Margaret Mary.

I ask you to continue to pray that the Spirit of Wisdom will guide our planning and that our initiatives will truly reflect our mission as disciples of Jesus Christ.

May you have a Blessed and Holy Christmas!

Father Steve

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A Word from our Community Director

BY DONNA SCHMIDT, COMMUNITY DIRECTOR

Dear Friends in Christ,

St. Margaret Mary Catholic Community is a very busy place with many wonderful things happening. We've added several formation programs, enhanced our children's involvement in their Catholic faith and are looking to add a Sunday evening Mass. At this time, I'd like to take this opportunity to catch you up on some of the physical changes we've made in the last six months.

Another summer passed and with it we experienced several renovations to our campus, especially in the area of our school. The School Office and Teacher's Lounge were remodeled and the ceiling and lighting in the first floor hallway was replaced. Special niches were built in the school to display the Christ the True Vine painting in the front entrance and in the junior high area, emphasizing our Catholic Identity. Classrooms were painted, the west entrance received a new roof, pipes in our lower level were insulated and sleeved, and we relocated the Youth Room to an area over the gym and PAC. We also used the summer as an opportunity to clean out the pipes in several classrooms served by our boiler and chiller.

As you look to the front lawn you can see our new sign. The cross, being the dominant feature conveys, our Catholic Identity and gives us a presence on Shelbyville Road.

Here are some other projects and ideas that we are exploring:

- We are looking to replace our organ. No one is quite certain of our organ's age, but we do know that it was present in the original church and it needs servicing on a frequent basis. It would be such a blessing to have a new organ to grace our liturgies and enhance our worship!
- We continue to explore other church enhancements such as new flooring. We are now out of replacement tiles and some of the existing tiles are cracked.
- Ideas of expanding our gathering space in church to make the vestibule area larger and more hospitable have surfaced.
- Our phone system presents itself as a priority since it is very old and we can no longer get replacement parts for our current system. We are exploring an integration of our phones, door system and security as we perform our due diligence.
- We have been remiss in addressing the needs of our members who are handicap. Now would be the perfect time to install handicap accessible doors to all of our church entrances.

- Web enhancements are greatly needed. Having the ability to register for school and parish activities and programs online presents as a very nice asset for new and existing families. An integrated calendar which would display church, school, athletic, and other programming would be very accommodating for many of our busy families.
- As we examine our own hospitality we are looking at our signage to see how helpful it is for first-timers to navigate our property. Better labeling of our buildings could be very useful for visitors coming to funerals and other Parish programs.
- Eventually, we will need a new roof for the school. There are currently three separate surfaces and the integrity of the top surface has been compromised by tree limbs and the weather. Being a flat roof has caused many challenges.
- Storage is a major problem. Currently our Athletic Association is using temporary storage pods for the bulk of their uniforms and equipment. We are exploring options to meet their storage needs and address additional storage needs for other parish organizations.

While no decisions have been made on any of the projects above, they are listed to keep you informed of discussions that have been occurring here at St. Margaret Mary.

Our Parish Staff and our leadership teams are continuing to work on our strategic plan. We are exploring how to integrate our survey results and ideas that surfaced from reading and having group discussions on a book entitled Rebuilt. Thanks to everyone who participated in our survey in May which provided great information for us to incorporate into our planning.

Once again, I feel so privileged to be a part of this vibrant, blessed, Catholic community. With all of the wonderful things happening here I can see great opportunities for us to grow in our love of Christ.

It's an exciting time to be at St. Margaret Mary Catholic Community.

Respectfully,
Donna Schmidt
Community Director

School News

St. Margaret Mary School has an updated vision statement this year which reflects the new parish vision to create and nurture disciples of Christ. What a wonderful mission we have as educators in a Catholic school! Not only are we called to be disciples of Jesus, but we are also called to the formation of new disciples. With Christ at the root of all we do here, we cannot fail in this task. St. Margaret Mary School and its' students are a true testament to God's love and blessings.

Our students reflect God's love and blessings through the kindness and compassion they show to others. They share their gifts in numerous ways through service, academic excellence, athletics and the arts. If you walk the halls and visit the classrooms, you will see God's work in action. Our school theme for the year is "Rooted in Christ and Growing in Love." Students are recognized each day for being Christ to others.

The excellence of our school can be measured in numerous ways, both tangible and intangible. Our students experience a faith-filled education each day. They are using 21st Century skills to learn and grow in academics and social areas. Our teachers use the best practices in education to reach students and help them to progress to the best of their ability. It is a wonderful place for our children to thrive and achieve.

As supporters of our school, I know that you will be pleased to know that our students once again performed very well on the standardized testing given in the Spring. SMM students performed consistently higher than the archdiocesan averages on the Terra Nova and Acuity Math Test. Our 5th and 8th graders also take the ACRE religion test and scored well in all domains. We are very proud of our Mustangs! Thank you for your continued support of our school.

May God Bless You and Your Family,
Wendy Sims, Principal

St. Margaret Mary Financial Statements

SAINT MARGARET MARY 2012-2013 OPERATING INCOME STATEMENT

| | ACTUAL | BUDGET | VARIANCE |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| INCOME | | | |
| SUNDAY COLLECTIONS | \$4,100,631 | \$3,825,000 | \$275,631 |
| NON-RESTRICTED INCOME | \$110,995 | \$77,200 | \$33,795 |
| SCHOOL REVENUE | \$677,470 | \$578,850 | \$98,620 |
| FORMATION REVENUE | \$21,100 | \$21,780 | -\$680 |
| TOTAL PARISH INCOME | \$4,910,196 | \$4,502,830 | \$407,366 |
| EXPENSES | | | |
| ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURES | \$799,216 | \$911,370 | \$112,154 |
| SCHOOL EXPENDITURES | \$3,166,273 | \$3,118,993 | -\$47,280 |
| WORSHIP EXPENDITURES | \$162,446 | \$171,255 | \$8,809 |
| FORMATION EXPENDITURES | \$276,769 | \$287,450 | \$10,681 |
| SERVICE EXPENDITURES | \$13,050 | \$13,350 | \$300 |
| TRANSFERS TO OTHER ACCTS * | \$407,000 | \$0 | -\$407,000 |
| TOTAL PARISH EXPENDITURES | \$4,824,755 | \$4,502,418 # | -\$322,337 |
| NET INCREASE/DECREASE | \$85,442 | \$412 | \$85,030 |
| BUILDING A FUTURE OF HOPE | \$159,956 | | |

RESTRICTED FUNDS - NOT AFFECTING OPERATING INCOME

| | ACTUAL | BUDGET | VARIANCE |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| ATHLETICS | | | |
| REVENUE | \$96,781 | \$93,415 | \$3,366 |
| FUNDRAISING | \$17,060 | \$11,750 | \$5,310 |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$113,840 | \$105,165 | \$8,675 |
| EXPENSES | \$109,021 | \$105,165 | -\$3,856 |
| NET INCREASE/DECREASE | \$4,820 | \$0 | \$4,820 |
| CAFETERIA | | | |
| INCOME | \$253,360 | \$274,680 | -\$21,320 |
| EXPENSES | \$252,942 | \$264,061 | \$11,119 |
| NET INCREASE/DECREASE | \$418 | \$10,619 | -\$10,201 |
| PTO | | | |
| INCOME | \$157,184 | \$101,160 | \$56,024 |
| EXPENSES | \$144,800 | \$101,160 | -\$43,640 |
| NET INCREASE/DECREASE | \$12,384 | \$0 | \$12,384 |

The above figures reflect results for the fiscal year end 6/30/13 and the budget numbers for the current year 2013-2014. Our parishioners continue to be very supportive which enables us to fund the many wonderful ministries offered at St. Margaret Mary. Many thanks to all that give of their Time, Talent & Treasure.

* Transfers - \$1,000 to Seniors, \$6,000 to Church Enhancements for Religious Artwork, and \$400,000 to Capital Improvements for projects occurring like storage.

SAINT MARGARET MARY 2013-2014 BUDGET

| | BUDGET |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| INCOME | |
| SUNDAY COLLECTIONS | \$3,900,000.00 |
| NON-RESTRICTED INCOME | \$91,600.00 |
| SCHOOL REVENUE | \$644,210.00 |
| FORMATION REVENUE | \$21,300.00 |
| TOTAL PARISH INCOME | \$4,657,110 |
| EXPENSES | |
| ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURES | \$972,741.00 |
| SCHOOL EXPENDITURES | \$3,165,024.00 |
| WORSHIP EXPENDITURES | \$197,595.00 |
| FORMATION EXPENDITURES | \$306,300.00 |
| SERVICE EXPENDITURES | \$15,300.00 |
| TRANSFERS TO OTHER ACCTS | \$0.00 |
| TOTAL PARISH EXPENDITURES | \$4,656,960 |
| NET INCREASE/DECREASE | \$150 |

RESTRICTED FUNDS - NOT AFFECTING OPERATING INCOME

| | BUDGET |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| ATHLETICS | |
| REVENUE | \$104,624 |
| FUNDRAISING | \$16,275 |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$120,899 |
| EXPENSES | \$120,899 |
| NET INCREASE/DECREASE | \$0 |
| CAFETERIA | |
| INCOME | \$245,429 |
| EXPENSES | \$245,225 |
| NET INCREASE/DECREASE | \$204 |
| PTO | |
| INCOME | \$107,765 |
| EXPENSES | \$107,605 |
| NET INCREASE/DECREASE | \$160 |

JULY 1, 2012 - JUNE 30, 2013 SACRAMENTS/FUNERALS

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| BAPTISMS | INFANTS 59 | RCIA 1 |
| FIRST RECONCILIATION | CHILDREN 92 | RCIA 6 |
| FIRST EUCHARIST | CHILDREN 92 | RCIA 6 |
| CONFIRMATION | CHILDREN 95 | RCIA 7 |
| WEDDINGS | MEMBERS 8 | |
| ANNOINTINGS | MEMBERS 83 + ANNOINTING MASSES | |
| FUNERALS | MEMBERS 56 | |

Catholic Identity

BY JERID MILLER, DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG FORMATION



“Catholic Identity” is a phrase that gets thrown around a lot, particularly in conversations about Catholic education. But the reality is that few people have a sense of what Catholic identity means and what it looks like when it is manifested. Catholic identity is simply the complete expression of our Catholic Christian faith as it is lived out in any given context: our schools, families, organizations, social events, and organizational structures. If we are deeply rooted in our Catholic faith and attuned to the richness of our tradition then Catholic identity is a matter of course—it is simply how we operate and requires little fore-thought. If however, we are not rooted in the most ancient traditions of the Church and have not been trained to think and act in and through those traditions then Catholic identity becomes a “program” an “initiative” a “subject” and remains something that we only grasp at and contrive in the absence of a deeply rooted and enduring faith.

Many mourn the loss of the Catholic identity that has come with the decline of religious orders. However their absence has revealed that the “Catholic identity” that we so long for and identify with religious orders was really a sort of vicarious Catholicity. The Catholic identity that we associate with the religious orders that ran our Catholic institutions was simply the overflow and expression of their common life as religious. We watched and benefitted from the lived expression of the faith of religious orders in our institutions but failed to take ownership of those expressions of faith for ourselves. Some have come to associate a robust “Catholic identity” solely with the presence of monks, nuns and priests.

However the reality is that Catholic identity is created in parish schools and parishes when families, students, teachers and administrators possess a well developed faith and simply seek to live out that faith as a com-

munity of disciples in the classroom, in offices, on the athletic field, and in all parish and school functions. Catholic identity happens when all teachers begin class with prayer. Catholic identity happens when families of school children gather around the Advent wreath and pray their way through Advent. Catholic identity happens when every group, ministry and committee in our parish gathers in Christ’s name and calls upon his Holy Spirit in prayer. Catholic identity happens when coaches begin and end practices with prayer and teach Christian virtue through the culture they create on the field and through their own personal conduct. Catholic identity happens when well formed teachers decide to stop teaching religion and start providing opportunities for students and their parents to live, encounter and express the tenets of our Catholic faith in all subjects. Catholic identity happens when a Catholic family sits down for dinner at a restaurant and makes the sign of the cross as they pray together over their food. Catholic identity happens when artists and craftsmen put their God given talents at the service of the Christian community and create great Christian art that expresses the depth and richness of our faith in wood, canvas and paint. Catholic identity happens when we serve the poor in our city and stand with the marginalized. Catholic identity happens when students are comfortable leading prayer and ritual in the classroom and in our parish liturgies. Catholic identity happens when we sing and fully participate in the Mass. Catholic identity happens when parents bless their children at bedtime. Catholic identity happens when families attend Mass together. Catholic identity happens in these and thousands of other ways in parishes, schools and homes.

The good news is that Catholic identity is happening here, in big and small ways. The good news is that we are no longer chained



to the notion that Catholic identity only happens when habited monks and nuns staff our institutions. The good news is that at St. Margaret Mary we are beginning to embrace the call to create and manifest Catholic identity here as a community of disciples, in our homes, in our classrooms, in our work and in our parish. When we are at our best, Catholic identity is created and expressed in thousands of tangible and intangible ways, by the thousands of Catholics that comprise this community. The only thing inhibiting further creation of Catholic identity and Catholic culture is the limit of our imagination and the limit of our will.

Catholic Identity Made Manifest

If you have visited the school, the pastoral center or the junior high wing you may have noticed one of three niches that were installed this summer. The Vine and Branches Icon was commission (through a generous donation from the Ribar family) for the front of the school and is installed in the center of the triptych. The adjacent niches hold banners that indicate the liturgical season on any given day. As part of an enhanced religion curriculum component for the sixth grade classes will be responsible for checking the liturgical colors each day and hanging the banners in the niches. Through this activity the students are connected to the movement of the liturgical year and the school is connected to the liturgy in our Church. These expressions of Catholic identity are just the first in a series of physical manifestations of our Catholic identity in our parish school and in the parish.

Advent: The Season of Slowing Down

Department stores don’t disguise what it is they’re after this time of year. Before the Halloween candy even had a chance to clear the sales aisle at stores across America, Christmas decorations had already filled the shelves. Our consumerist society is fixated on us buying more...and quick! (To see statistics about our growing consumerist trends, visit the Advent Conspiracy at www.adventconspiracy.org).

The season of Advent invites us to slow down...and wait. We’re not used to waiting. We like to do everything with efficiency, from paying our bills online to getting our morning coffee from the drive through window. Waiting is oftentimes a challenge for us, but it is also an invitation to grow and prepare.

Consider the preparations a family goes through in anticipation to welcome a new baby. The long months before the birth of a new

baby is a time to ready the home, share the news and choose a name, among many other things. At Advent, we are asked to do the spiritual equivalent by preparing our hearts and minds for the coming of a child—the Christ Child.

This Advent, accept the invitation to slow down and ready yourself and your family for God’s greatest gift.

Stephanie Kornel is the Children’s Formation Coordinator at St. Margaret Mary.



The following activities are some ways to help you and your family savor the oft-rushed season of Advent:

- **Who is Coming To Our House?** Is a children’s book by Joseph Slate and Ashley Wolff that will help little ones understand the importance of preparing for Jesus. As Pig makes room, Lamb cleans up, Goose stacks the hay, and Duck lines the crib with eiderdown, Mary and Joseph are on their way by donkey. All the animals welcome the baby Jesus to their home.
- **Read Isaiah 35:1-7** together, then invite everyone to share one or two phrases that spoke to them from this passage. Invite everyone to create a list of all the promises Isaiah says God will deliver (for example, the blind shall see) when God’s people are freed once again.
- **Advent Calendars** come in a wide variety. Here is a creative example of marking the days leading up to Christmas: <http://www.designsponge.com/2011/12/diy-project-falling-stars-advent-calendar.html>
- **An Advent Chain** is easy to make using construction paper, glue/stapler, markers and scissors. Make a paper chain that has a link for each day of Advent. Write something that you can do together as a family or classroom on each link. Put the links together to form a chain. Each day, remove a link and do that activity together. Ideas: Say a prayer, make a meal together, read Scripture, purchase a gift for someone in need, act out one of the birth narratives from Matthew or Luke. Be realistic and simple with your ideas!
- **An Advent Greeting Card Contest:** Who can design the best card for the Advent season? Challenge everyone to come up with a slogan and a picture that captures what Advent is all about: Building up the Kingdom of God. For example, draw or find an image of a toolbox or a tool belt. Write the words “love,” “peace,” “service,” “faith,” and so on inside various tools. Below the image write a caption, such as “Building the best world.” Invite all to choose their best design (vote on it) and share. (Idea from *Prepare! Celebrate! Live!* By Mariette Martineau)



• **A Reverse Suggestion Box** is useful when ‘being good’ is too abstract a concept for a child. Use a tissue box, decorated with signs of Advent, and fill it with plenty of good suggestions to draw from. Write a letter to someone old or lonely. Brush the dog. Set the table tonight. Share a toy kindly with your little sister. Read a story to your brother. Plan an Advent meal prayer or reading and want to share. Take out the trash. (Idea from *To Dance With God* by Gertrud Mueller Nelson)

• **The Jesse Tree** can be made from bare branches or twigs and is decorated with symbols of all those who went before us to prepare the way for the coming of Christ. This is a great way to give children a background in the history of the Old Testament. Find ideas and materials here: www.eriescd.org/jesstree.htm

[eriescd.org/jesstree.htm](http://www.eriescd.org/jesstree.htm)

- **Advent Wreaths** are a popular tradition in many homes. Here is a simple way to have children create a paper Advent Wreath to mark the Sundays of Advent: <http://www.dltk-holidays.com/xmas/mpaperadvent.htm>
- **Create a Christmas Creche** as a family if you don’t already have one. Tell the story of the nativity as children use the figures to play out the scene. Here are some ideas for inspiration: <http://www.helium.com/knowledge/119959-christmas-crafts-how-to-make-a-homemade-creche>
- **Saint Nicholas Day on December 6** can be celebrated by making traditional St. Nick cookies: <http://www.stnicholascenter.org/pages/cookies/>
- **The Feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8** can be marked with a special dessert and night prayers at the Advent wreath, including a hymn to Mary or a reading of Genesis 3:9-15 in which we become aware of Mary as the new Eve.
- **Saint Lucy’s Day on December 13** is traditionally the day when the oldest daughter wakes the family with music, candles and a special breakfast. The traditional Swedish Lucy wears a crown of real candles on her head and brings the family breakfast in bed.