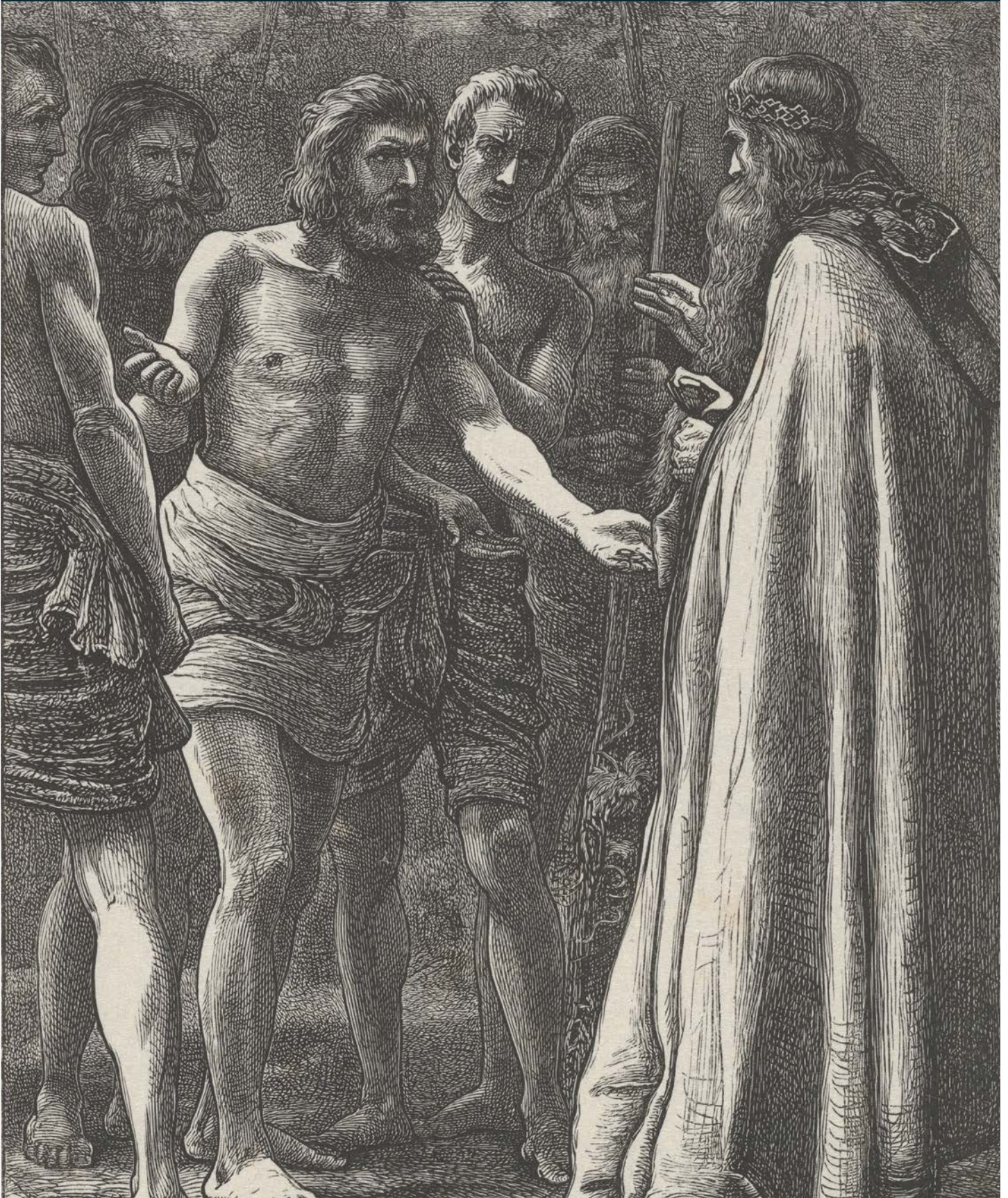


TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME | SEPTEMBER 20, 2026



THE CHURCH OF SAINT MARK | www.onestrongfamily.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Autumnal Equinox, St. Pio's Feast Day, and the Baggins' birthday are all this week, but none take the cover. For that it's a depiction of the Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard.

The preschool is seeking an **Afternoon Preschool Care Coordinator**. In exchange for 30 hours a week, they'll pay you and offer benefits! Yes, it's a job! Surely Addie Smith, Director, (asmith@onestrongfamily.org) would love to hear from any interested parties ASAP! For more info, contact Addie or see the posting at stmark.xyz/apcc

What're you doing once every four weeks? Consider going up to the altar ... *linens* [of God]! Help is needed starting October in our rotation of **servicing altar linens** (*i.e., smaller liturgical-use items like purificators, hand towels, and corporals*), involving picking up linens (Monday, preferably) and returning clean by Saturday, at the latest. It's a simple task: an ironing board and an iron are a must, if not exhaustive. Questions: mustardseed725@gmail.com

Pastoral care is not just for the pastors: you, too, can and should be an emissary of the mercy of God. Help is needed taking communion to the homebound et al! For these opportunities, as well as others in a similar vein, reach out to our pastoral associate, Audrey Koval (akoval@onestrongfamily.org)

Nazareth Nights are starting soon: Oct 07 is the first evening of our reconstituted ministry to support families. Recall Father David devoted an entire Sunday Bulletin Article to this new venture which will combine an every-time shared meal, catechesis and community offerings for PreK - 5th grade children, and, especially for the adults, these newly minted Nazareth Nights are ordered to feed your hunger for more fellowship, peer-to-peer wisdom sharing, and discussion: talking to each other about how you navigated certain challenges, comiserating and "co-parenting" in the best sense. You can sign up at stmark.xyz/nazareth

UPCOMING EVENTS

**THISWEEK
SUN-SUN
SEP**

Rummage Sale | M-W Donations Drop off (9:00 AM - 8:00 PM); Sale Tb-Sun | Carolyn Hall et al
AAAAAAAH! It's here! But much is not: for a secure and prosperous sale, bring donations and volunteer liberally for the sale. Donations can be dropped off M-W of this week; details on what can and cannot be received can be found at stmark.xyz/sale. Help is needed the whole week, starting with this Sunday (Sep 20), and signing up can be done via stmark.xyz/help

All your Rummage Sale ancestors are looking to you to make this the best sale ever! Do them proud. Donate, volunteer, spread the word, and shop liberally!

**TUES
22
SEP**

OCLA Kickoff | 7:00 - 8:30 PM | Community Room

AAAAAAAH! It's here! And you still have time to invite the Catholic-curious in your circle (even if you're reading this after Tuesday: OCLA runs until/through Easter Sunday, after all). Plus there are snacks and fizzy water, so even your hungry-or-thirsty-but-not-presently-conciously-Catholic-curious acquaintances can find something to draw them in. For more information, email ocia@onestrongfamily.org or visit stmark.xyz/in

40 Days for Life Kickoff Dinner at Nativity of Our Lord | 5:45 - 8:00 PM | Nativity's Steiner Hall

AAAAAAAH! It's here! Yet, every year, it leaps on the calendar out of nowhere. Nativity and St. Mark are once again partnering for prayerful vigil-keeping outside the local abortuary (Oct 02 and 22 are the adopted days), and the kickoff dinner is here to help the faithful get animated about saving lives! RSVP to karenmccann3@gmail.com or 612-964-4622.

Sunday, September 20, 2026 - 25th Sunday OT



“All those years of prayer. That mountain of prayer!”

These were the words of a member of our community who recently lost an adult child. Taken out of context, they might be understood as a complaint; even an accusation: “All those prayers... and this is how God responds!” But that wasn’t how they were meant. In reality, these words were a testament to her hope: “All those prayers... surely they were not for nothing. Surely God would not have allowed them to be without effect.” Those prayers were, in effect, an anchor of hope, a “mountain” of consolation for this grieving mother, another reason for hoping that, in ways only known to God, grace was at work to deliver and to save.

In the past two years, our parish family, alongside many others, amassed a veritable mountain of prayer for one darling little member of St. Mark’s, Ava Duchesne. Her parents led the charge, joined by their large extended families and friend networks with pilgrimages to Lourdes, prayers to candidates for canonization, constant pleas to Heaven, fastings, half-marathons, all night vigils, and Heaven knows what else. In October of 2024, when her diagnosis was still fresh and her treatment just beginning, we had the Healing Mass, for which little Ava was one major inspiration. More followed. Then the family rosaries on Wilder, outside the home. In the past few months, not a few Masses were offered for her in the Duchesne home. In her last weeks, Ava was a daily communicant. She received Confirmation and Anointing of the Sick. The relics of the Twelve Apostles, St. Gemma, and others were by her bedside. God only knows how many people across the continent and around the world have been imploring God to show mercy and heal this very special little girl.

All those prayers. That mountain of prayer! What are we to think about them today, now that Heaven has given Its answer? What was the miracle, or was there none?

I can’t give a full answer to that. I can give a beginning to one. I can say for certain that those prayers were not

without their effect. The ordinary “miracle” of prayer is that it draws us closer to God. Oh, how many souls were drawn closer to God and to one another these past two years! There is the miracle of how her parents bore this trial. And blessings that have yet to be discovered or bestowed, won from the heart of God by all those prayers, blessings that will continue to ripple outward through time and space, now that this little pebble has dropped into the ocean of eternity.

But the prayers were for Ava, which means the miracle, the choicest fruit, must have taken place in her heart.

And that fruit must remain, in part, hidden. But we are not without some idea of what God did in secret, in Ava’s heart, in answer to our prayers. Ava’s disease involved a progressive slowing down and loss of control over her little body. Meaning first she could no longer run, then no longer walk, then hold her own head up or speak. Which could not have been easy. It was not easy. Just when a child is usually learning to do everything on her own, Ava had to become more dependent, less able, more still and silent and isolated. Even so, there were signs of a blossoming within Ava’s soul. She never complained. She was entirely trusting. Her demeanor was always so peaceful, so resigned. And one day near the end, when little Ava could only communicate by moving her eyes, I asked Ava if she was ready for Jesus to take her home. She did not hesitate: her eyes shot upward in an emphatic “yes,” looking towards Heaven itself as she did.

Ava outlived her prognosis four times over, giving her that much more time to be filled with grace and “to grow into union with Christ through a death like His” (Rom 6:5). At her departure from this world, she was fully awake, entirely at peace, and in her parents arms until Jesus took her into His.

These, said Fr. Simon at Ava’s burial, were the miracles. Not the kind we had in mind. But far better than we could ask for or imagine. God has wrought a good thing in our midst: an awful thing, but a beautiful thing. And the best thing for Ava and us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

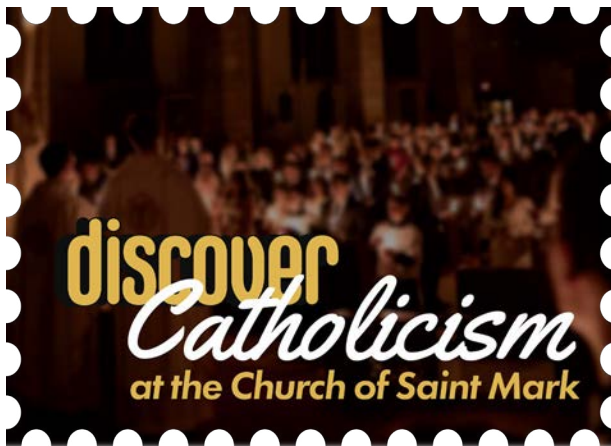
OUR MISSION IS TO LIVE AND SHARE CHRIST'S CALL TO HOLINESS

Still seeking: Facilities Maintenance

"My CPU is a neural net processor. A learning computer." - Larry Leif, T-800 Model

Are you titanium powered? While everyone else is slouched at a keyboard, you could be out hustling, getting work done with your hands, and taking care of the multifaceted, ever-evolving maintenance needs of the Church of Saint Mark. That's right. If you know someone who is or could readily be an apt handyman, physically fit, independent and motivated, then our opening in Facilities Maintenance could be a perfect fit! And with *the* Larry Leif in retirement, but never out of earshot, the need is keen to find someone who can help us keep the ship of St. Mark's afloat and in shape, and otherwise grow with the opening as St. Mark's moves onwards and upwards! Interested parties should be directed to our Business Administrator, Randy Lehnen (rlehnen@onestrongfamily.org)

OCIA Changes Lives!



Last year 19 men and women were received into the Catholic Church at St. Mark's. Nineteen people heard and the professed faith in Jesus Christ and his church. Nineteen people received the grace of the sacraments and found their home in God's family.

Who do you want to see have their life changed by the love of God? Invite them to explore OCIA! Our no-commitment **Introduction to OCIA evening is coming up on Tuesday, September 22 at 7:00 p.m.** at the Parish Center. For more information, contact ocia@onestrongfamily.org.



Your Guide for the New Year!

The Office of Publishing Pretty, Useful, and Pastoral Things at the Church of Saint Mark has made a novel[la?] guide for you for living out the now-begun year of being *A Family at the Feet of Jesus* here at the Church of Saint Mark! Get your copy while they can be got for a full-year's calendar, and other pastoral tidings and resources for 2026-2027! Display in a prominent space in your home, car, place of employment, favorite hangout spot, etc!

End-of-Life Workshop (Nov 07)

This is a comprehensive pre-planning workshop (Nov 7, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, St. John the Baptist, New Brighton) where you'll learn from expert speakers about a variety of end-of-life planning topics and fill out a pre-planning workbook. Registration includes seat and lunch. Attendees can optionally purchase the workbook as well. Find more information at the Catholic Cemeteries website: catholic-cemeteries.org

MASS AND PRAYER INTENTIONS

Mass Intentions for week of SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

7 AM

M: ***
T: Mary Jane Cullinan +
W: Reinkemeyer special intention +
Tr: Holy Souls in Purgatory +
F: Jena Tokarz +

Sa: Robert Combs (8 AM); Rachel Westermeyer (5 PM)
Su: Pro Populo (9 AM)

10 AM

M: ---
T: Chris Joyce (♀) +
W: Dan & Lucy Foley
Tr: Danielle Steffensmeier
F: Fr. David Hottinger

BECOME CATHOLIC

Are you interested in learning more about becoming Catholic? Or do you know someone who is? Our Christian Initiation Ministry provides an introduction to Catholic faith and life for adults who are not baptized, baptized in another faith, or Catholics seeking to receive Eucharist or Confirmation. The program cycle begins in the fall, but newcomers should reach out any time! To find out more, contact ocia@onestrongfamily.org. Or sign up at stmark.xyz/cim

WE ALSO USE EMAIL

THE BULLETIN IS ONE OF THE MAINSTAYS for Catholic parish communications, but, alas, it's still a limited medium! As such, we also have a weekly newsletter, which, in addition to helping remind you of goings-on, also features vanguard news from the parish, or items not featured in the bulletin! Subscribe to it!



ST. MARK'S PRESCHOOL

ST. MARK'S PRESCHOOL offers full-day and half-day programs, up to five days a week. Visit the preschool website, saintmarkspreschool.org, or contact Addie Smith, our Preschool Director at:

preschool@onestrongfamily.org
651-644-5030

ADORATION



Did you pray today? One of the saddest feelings in the world is it's 9:30 PM and you're about to turn in and you realize, oh no, I *didn't* [yet] pray today.

Just one of the many perks of a middle-of-the-night holy hour is you



can *wake up* knowing that you already prayed today! Commit to an hour at stmark.weadorehim.com! Can't cover a whole hour, regular? We also have a team-builder initiative where you can be matched with other adorers to adore in rotation! Share your interest and availability via stmark.xyz/team

The Church of St. Mark
*Our mission is to live and share
Christ's call to holiness.*
Learn more: onestrongfamily.org/mission

Know someone in need of prayers? Email your request to prayers@onestrongfamily.org and we'll be sure to pray for you!

SUPPORT ST. MARK'S

Thank you for your generosity! To donate, visit onestrongfamily.org/give-help. For questions, contact parishcenter@onestrongfamily.org



ONE STRONG FAMILY UNITED IN CHRIST

40 Days for Life et al

40 DAYS FOR LIFE's International Fall campaign for life is September 23-November 1. There will be a **40 Days for Life Kick off Dinner Tuesday, September 22nd** at Nativity, in Steiner Hall from 5:45 PM - 8:00 PM. Please RSVP to karenmccann3@gmail.com or 612-964-4622.

St. Marks and Nativity will share two adopted days, on **Friday October 2 and Thursday October 22**. Sign up for an hour of prayer between 7 am and 5 pm for those dates. (*Sign up details presumably coming soon.*)

Also, during the course of the fall 40 Days campaign, there will be a Pro-Life Sidewalk Ministry Annual Training Seminar, sponsored by Pro-Life Action Ministries, taking place at NATIVITY OF OUR LORD in Steiner Hall (basement of the church) on Tuesday evening Oct 20, from 7:00 PM - 9 PM.

Sidewalk Counselors are ordinary people who offer literature to abortion-minded parents about the (1) Help Available, (2) Humanity of Preborn Children, and (3) Harm of Abortion, while offering words of Truth and Love, encouraging them to choose life, and directing them to a Pregnancy Resource Center.

Both Counselor trainees and prayer supporters are encouraged to attend!! Please prayerfully consider joining us and spreading the word. This outreach has saved many lives!! Interested parties are asked to please watch a brief video that explains more about this important ministry, presented by Janet McCoy: **stmark.xyz/mccoy**

Former abortion workers have said that when people are there praying, they have up to a 75% no-show rate for abortion appointment. YOUR prayers and presence MATTER



Featuring
THE NORTHSTAR BIG BAND

ST. MARK'S GYM
1950 Marshall Ave. Saint Paul

7 PM. SWING LESSONS
7:30-10 PM. MUSIC

\$10. ADMISSION AT THE DOOR
(\$7 with student ID)

BEER AND WINE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE.

18+ EVENT

MORE INFO AT stmarkxyz/swing



New to the parish as of 2026? Registered or no[t yet], we want you to hit up the **Oct 04 New Parishioner Lunch! RSVP at stmark.xyz/npl**

Remembrance Service for Miscarriages (Oct 17)

Saturday, October 17, 10 a.m., Gethsemane Cemetery Chapel Mausoleum, New Hope and Resurrection Cemetery Chapel Mausoleum, Mendota Heights

This special service of remembrance is an opportunity for those who lost a child before birth. Find more information and promotional materials on the event page: **stmark.xyz/oct17**

STAFF

Clergy:

Fr. David Hottinger, PES.....Pastor
frdavid@onestrongfamily.org

Fr. Patrick Evans, PES.....Associate Pastor
frpatrick@onestrongfamily.org

Parish Staff:

Randy Lehen.....Parish Business & Facilities Manager
Sr. Daniela Ormeno, PES.....Faith Formation
& Ignite Youth Ministry

Annamarie Adkins.....Parish Family Life Coordinator

Kristen Grant.....Director of Discipleship

Kathrine Handford.....Director of Music and Organist

Audrey Koval.....Pastoral Associate

& Safe Environment Coordinator

Gina Brennan.....Administrative Assistant

Kevin Gearn.....Director of Communications

Parish Contact

2001 Dayton Ave, St. Paul, MN 55104

Phone.....(651) 645-5717

Fax(651) 644-0011

Pastoral emergency line.....(651) 354-9411

parishcenter@onestrongfamily.org

Parish Trustees: Kip Chaffee, Andrew Nowak

Parish Pastoral Council: Alex Coyne, Chair

Parish Finance Committee: Pat Shrake, Chair

Saint Mark's Catholic Preschool

Addie Smith, Director

651-644-5030

preschool@onestrongfamily.org

UPDATE YOUR INFO



Need to be added to or have your info updated in our new digital directory? Don't have access to it but you would like to? Have other operative questions thereto? All that and more can be found on the

parish website using the QR code to the left.

CONNECT



/ChurchofSaintMark



@churchofsaintmark

CELEBRATIONS

Mass:

Saturday Evening Mass: 5:00 PM

Sunday Mass: 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM

Daily Mass:

Monday-Friday: 10:00 AM

Tuesday-Friday: 7:00 AM

Saturday: 8:00 AM

Confession:

Tuesday-Friday: 9:30 AM

Saturday: 3:30-4:30 PM

Sunday: 8:30 - 9:00 & 10:30 - 11:00 AM

SACRAMENTS

Detailed information about Sacraments and Sacramental preparation can be found at onestrongfamily.org/sacraments or by contacting the Parish Center.

BAPTISMS are celebrated on Saturdays (exceptions for holidays or major parish events). You must register for Baptism at least one month before your desired date. If this is your first child being baptized in the Catholic Church a Baptism preparation class is needed at least two months before the Baptism takes place.

SACRAMENTAL MARRIAGE preparation must begin at least six months prior to your wedding date. Weddings are most often celebrated on Saturdays at 2 PM.

IF YOU KNOW OF A CATHOLIC WHO IS HOMEBOUND and would like to receive weekly Communion or have their confession heard, please contact the Parish Center to learn more about our Homebound Ministry.

RECEIVING THE EUCHARIST: All are welcome to join us in worship at the Church of Saint Mark. Nevertheless, because the Holy Eucharist is the real Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, the reception of Holy Communion is reserved to those Catholics who are in full moral and doctrinal communion with the Catholic Church, are not conscious of any grave unconfessed sin, and who have kept the Eucharistic fast of one hour.

PRO ECCLESIA SANCTA



The Church of Saint Mark is served by the priests, brothers, and sisters of Pro Ecclesia Sancta, which is an institute of consecrated life founded in Lima, Peru in 1992, whose members dedicate themselves to living and promoting the universal call to holiness in the Church. Their motto is *ad maximam trinitatis gloriam*. Everything "for the greatest glory of the Holy Trinity."

ST. MARK, PRAY FOR US

The Bible Study is Nigh (Oct 13-Nov 17)

Our 2026 Fall Bible Study will be kicking off what with fall falling. This year's study is *"The Acts (and Preaching) of the Apostles: The mystery of Christ Proclaimed through the Figures of the Old Testament"*

Based on the thesis written for his Licentiate in Theology, Fr. David explores the pattern of biblical preaching found in the Acts of the Apostles. From these we can learn how Christians are called to read and proclaim the Scriptures and discover how everything points towards Christ, who is the "Amen" to all of God's promises and the fullness of the One who fills all things!

Mark **Oct 13-Nov 17** on your calendar today; *registration details presumably coming soon.*



The Don Bosco House (DBH) is a house of young catholic men, in our very parish territory, striving to grow in virtue, prayer, and discipline, preparing for our vocations while fostering a welcoming community. Their mission to cultivate a joyful Catholic fraternity dedicated to holiness and hospitality guided by Don Bosco's example is to help us extend hospitality and serve in charity our local Catholic communities and parishes. Throughout the year they will be hosting events for young adults to foster community and share the Gospel. On behalf of the DBH, all the families of St. Mark's Catholic Church are invited to the DBH kickoff event of the year; their annual neighborhood block party Bosco Fest. They'll have games, live music, and a grill out.

IGNITE GAMES
"You are the light of the world."
Matthew 5:14
WEDNESDAY
SEPT 30TH
5:30pm - 8:00pm
ST MARK'S - CAROLYN HALL
Dinner included!

RSVP BEFORE 09/27

Suggested donation: \$5

HIGH SCHOOL Retreat
FRIDAY - SUNDAY
OCTOBER 23-25
AT DUNROVIN

\$225 until Sept. 15, then \$250
Register by Oct. 1

IGNITE: led by the Religious of Pro Ecclesia Sancta