

St. Mary of the Woods/St. Aloysius

Words from the Woods

FALL 2021

Upcoming Events in our Parishes....

- **Welcome Retreat**—Mens Oct 9th, Womens Oct 23rd. See the parish website for more information. (maryalloysius.com)
- Womens Retreat at St. Aloysius on October 13th, 9:00 a.m.—3:30 p.m.
- Knights of Columbus Rummage Sale at St. Mary of the Woods October 13-15, 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.
- Healing Mass at St. Mary of the Woods October 16th at 4:00 p.m.
- Harvest Dinner at St. Mary of the Woods on October 16th at 5:00 p.m.
- Eucharistic Ministers meeting after all Masses October 23rd & 24th.
- Wild Game Dinner October 23rd at 5:00 p.m.



Do you have an article you'd like to submit to the quarterly newsletter? Mail it or email it to the parish office at stmaryofthewoods@yahoo.com.

Faith Formation

Faith Formation is more than education or information, it's about transformation; learning and understanding our Faith on a deeper level and letting it soak in and effect the way we approach all aspects of life.

Family Faith Formation is beginning. Watch the parish bulletin, website, or contact the parish office for more information. It's never too late to join us.

Adult Faith Formation opportunities are also being offered including the Full Catastrophe Living Book Study, The 99 reflection and small group opportunity coming this Advent, and a plethora of home study opportunities available on the parish website at maryalloysius.com under the Daily Discipleship tab, or on the Formed website also available from our website.



Knights of Columbus

The Knights of Columbus. We are a world wide organization of Catholic men with strong ties to individual parishes. Our local council has ties to St Mary of The woods in Kalkaska , St Aloysius in Fife Lake, and St Anthony in Mancelona . Our goals are to lead with Faith, protect Family, to Serve Others and Defend Values. Our main purpose is to support the church and charities not limited to any race, religion or location. Some of the programs you maybe familiar with are help for the mentally impaired, coats for kids, help for local food banks and so on. Further programs are support for disaster relief, food for the poor, support of the Right to Life among many others. To join our cause or for additional information contact me, Dan Ingalls at dan2480@charter.net , or in person with any KofC member or online at KofC.org/JoinUs

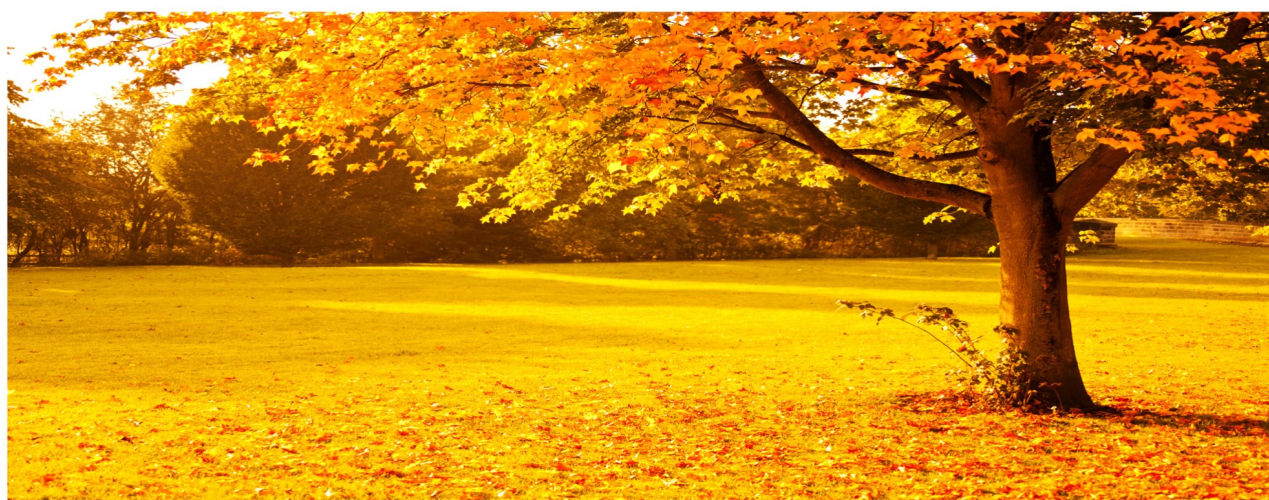


St. Aloysius-PCCW

The St. Aloysius Parish Council of Catholic Women Wants YOU

The St. Aloysius Parish Council of Catholic Women meets the first Wednesday of the month March through December at 6:30 p.m. in the St. Aloysius Parish Hall. The salary is nonexistent but the opportunities are many. The requirements are the love of God and neighbor and no prior experience is needed. The benefits are friendship, good experiences and eternal compensation.

There are fund raisers, social functions, spiritual development and much more. We have just finished the back pack/school supplies drive for Forest Area Elementary School. In addition, the recently held annual barn sale resulted in funds earned to be used for the local community including the Fife Lake Food Pantry, Forest Area schools, Women's Resource Center, families in need etc. Coming up is the ladies all day retreat "The Feminine Genius" to be held at St. Aloysius on Wednesday, October 13th beginning at 9:00 a.m. with mass. Snacks and lunch are provided. There is no charge to attend. (RSVP is required by Oct. 6 to attend this special event.) Additional activities will include a wreath decorating session/sale and an end of the year advent social night. Please contact any member for additional information



Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship, issued by the USCCB, begins by exploring “Why We Sing.”

“God has bestowed upon his people the gift of song. God dwells within each human person, in the place where music takes its source. Indeed, God, the giver of song, is present whenever his people sing his praises.”

I have read this statement many times since the document was published in 2007, and I see something new and I am reminded that music truly is a gift from God. I am reminded that as we raise our voices in congregational singing we can feel - or share - the presence of God in our midst.



I am reminded of a Sunday morning in 2005. I was sitting in the congregation at St. Francis Xavier in Petoskey. We were new parishioners having moved a few months earlier from Madison, Wisconsin. The move to Michigan forced me to give up my position as Director of Music and Liturgy in a large parish. I missed my job, my ministry and my parish. That particular morning, I turned to offer the Sign of Peace to the woman behind me, she shared the Sign of Peace and then went on to challenge me by saying, “if you’re not in the choir, you are wasting God’s gift.” The following week I introduced myself to the parish music director and I have been involved in music ministry in the Diocese of Gaylord since then.

If you have been given a musical talent, please share your gift. Our music ministry welcomes instrumentalists and singers. We welcome ministers with regular availability and ministers with occasional availability. If you know of someone who needs some encouragement to share their gifts, be the voice who challenges and motivates them!

To volunteer, see me after Mass or email me at szimmerman156@yahoo.com.

May we all continue to joyously sing God’s praise!

P.S. There are many gifts that can be shared! Think of the many ministries required to support parish life and discern where you can share your talents.

*Now's the time
to join the
Choir!*



GOD'S GARDEN

Fr. Norm initiated the idea for a mostly organic garden and the first crop was planted in 2011. It was done to provide fresh produce to local food pantries. A group of dedicated volunteers worked on the quality of the soil, fencing, and varieties of produce. We experimented with new varieties-keeping some and eliminating others until we found the right balance. As of 2019, we had grown over 15 tons of 28 varieties and are especially known for our tomatoes.

When Covid hit and with a reduction in volunteers, we took a summer off and regrouped in 2021. The decision was made to reduce the size of the garden by half and planting only the most popular produce. Fr. Mike contributed with leeks, which we had never tried before. A pesty groundhog devoured our cabbage. We used a live trap and re-located him to a perfect distant area.

As Fall approaches, we are already planning for 2022. Take a look at our bulletin board in the hall for photos and please consider volunteering. We're a great group of people dedicated to helping our local food pantries while enjoying each others company!



SHARING WITH THE SHUT-INS:

The 2nd Wednesday of each month at 1:00pm, we meet in the Community Center at St. Mary's. We enjoy the time to visit and catch up on the latest news. Most of us bring our latest project(s), such as knitting, crocheting, or sewing.



We usually make shawls or baby blankets. We often exchange ideas on yarn, patterns or just ask one another about issues arising with a pattern – maybe we can't figure it out, and two (or more) heads are better than one.

We enjoy just connecting with other like-minded people – no formal meeting, just a gathering and a need to connect.

We have home-bound individuals we wish to connect with and let them know they are thought about and they aren't alone. If we have shawls, lap robes or even baby blankets, they are shared with those who need to know that they are part of our community of love and prayers as fellow children of God.

If you have unused shawls, lap robes or baby blanks, you can also share your works of love by leaving them at St. Mary's office.

We would like to meet you – so think about joining us once a month for a get-together – ALL ARE WELCOME!



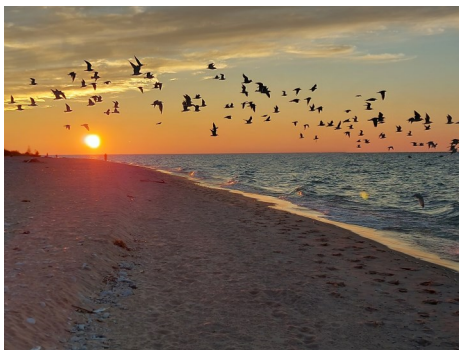
A Word from Fr. Mike ...

Since the first of the year, it has been my privilege to accept the assignment to serve as your "sacramental minister" for St. Mary of the Woods and St. Aloysius Parishes. I am a recently retired priest of the Archdiocese of Detroit where I served for 43 years. I am living on our family farm near Maple City and commute whenever I am needed here. Happily, Bob Bowersox's role as Parish Life Director, administering both parishes and directing the various ministries, frees me to serve exclusively in a spiritual role. It is a joy for me to be able to pray consistently with you each week at St. Mary's and St. Al's. You strengthen my own faith by your fidelity and example.

Autumn Glories!

In fall, nature's beauty surrounds us. The crisp autumn mornings reveal the changing colors of the leaves on the trees. Hunters sight in their guns and prepare for quiet vigils in the woods. At home, families begin the planning gatherings at Thanksgiving. Above all, it is a season for counting blessings and for giving thanks.

Even in difficult times, gratitude is the antidote for depression and grief related to losses. We turn our hearts and minds to ponder the big picture of God's caring love for nature around us, and for we who are created in God's own image. Even though the ongoing pandemic, political unrest and troubles in our families may weigh us down, we can look back in our own history to see how God has brought us through to this moment. Being grateful helps us to face the future with trust and confidence, knowing that we are loved above all.



Safety at Church

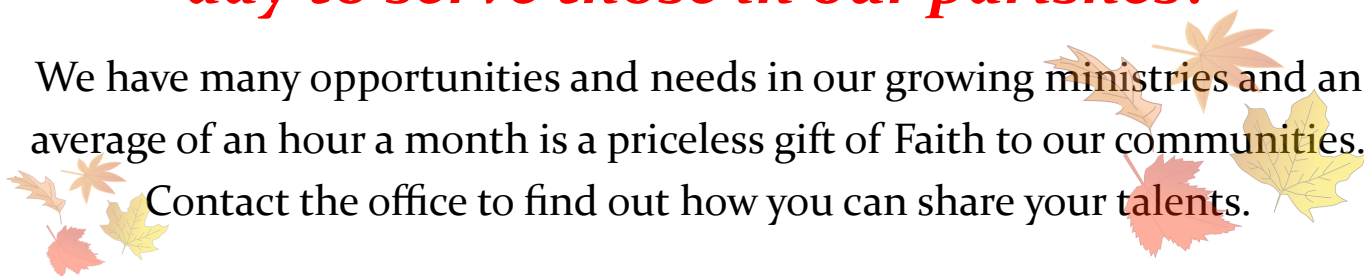
Speaking of the pandemic, we continue to practice the recommended safety protocols at church as members join in our weekly worship in greater numbers. Our bishop strongly urges, but does not mandate, the wearing of masks as we worship indoors at church, even for those who have been fully vaccinated. Along with this, our Catholic teaching recommends that those who are eligible be vaccinated. In his comments in August, Pope Francis said this: "Being vaccinated with vaccines authorized by the competent authorities is an act of love. And contributing to ensure the majority of people are vaccinated is an act of love." He went on to say that "vaccination is a simple but profound way of promoting the common good and caring for each other, especially the most vulnerable."

Fr. Mike Verschaeve

Are you able to offer an average of 2 minutes a day to serve those in our parishes?

We have many opportunities and needs in our growing ministries and an average of an hour a month is a priceless gift of Faith to our communities.

Contact the office to find out how you can share your talents.



MORNING OFFERING

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary,

I offer you my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day

for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart

in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world,

for the salvation of souls, the reparation of sins, the reunion of all Christians,

and in particular for the intentions of the Holy Father this month.

Amen.

Meditation

There are as many and varied methods of meditation as there are spiritual masters. Christians owe it to themselves to develop the desire to meditate regularly, lest they come to resemble the three first kinds of soil in the parable of the sower. But a method is only a guide; the important thing is to advance, with the Holy Spirit, along the one way of prayer: Christ Jesus.

Meditation engages thought, imagination, emotion, and desire. . . . Christian prayer tries above all to meditate on the mysteries of Christ, as in *lectio divina* or the rosary. This form of prayerful reflection is of great value, but Christian prayer should go further: to the knowledge of the love of the Lord Jesus, to union with him.

—*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2707-2708

WHAT IS *LECTIO DIVINA*?

Spiritual reading of Sacred Scripture, especially the Gospels, is an important form of meditation. This spiritual reading is traditionally called *lectio divina* or divine reading. *Lectio divina* is prayer over the Scriptures.

- The first element of this type of prayer is reading (*lectio*): you take a short passage from the Bible, preferably a Gospel passage and read it carefully, perhaps three or more times. Let it really soak-in.
- The second element is meditation (*meditatio*). By using your imagination enter into the Biblical scene in order to "see" the setting, the people, and the unfolding action. It is through this meditation that you encounter the text and discover its meaning for your life.
- The next element is prayer (*oratio*) or your personal response to the text: asking for graces, offering praise or thanksgiving, seeking healing or forgiveness. In this prayerful engagement with the text, you open yourself up to the possibility of contemplation.
- Contemplation (*contemplatio*) is a gaze turned toward Christ and the things of God. By God's action of grace, you may be raised above meditation to a state of seeing or experiencing the text as mystery and reality. In contemplation, you come into an experiential contact with the One behind and beyond the text.

October is the month of the Rosary

