

St. Mary of the Woods/St. Aloysius
Words from the Woods

WINTER 2022



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.

Important Dates

World Marriage Week (Feb 7-14)

Celebration at the Masses on the weekend of Feb 12 -13

Ash Wednesday—March 2nd

Easter Sunday—April 17th

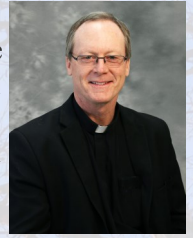
The 99 Experience—coming during Lent. Watch the bulletin
For more details

From Fr. Mike

A New Bishop for the Gaylord Diocese

Pope Francis has named the Reverend Jeffrey J. Walsh, as the sixth bishop of the Diocese of Gaylord. Bishop-elect Walsh, 56, is a priest and pastor of the Diocese of Scranton. He will be ordained as bishop and installed as the chief shepherd of the Diocese of Gaylord on Friday, March 4, 2022, at 2 p.m. in St. Mary Cathedral, Gaylord.

As bishop-elect Walsh prepares to assume leadership of our diocese, we certainly will support him with our prayers and best wishes. Additionally, we owe a debt of gratitude to Bishop Walter Hurley, the retired bishop of Grand Rapids, for serving as the apostolic administrator of the diocese for almost two years.



Preparing for 2023 Synod in Rome

Pope Francis has asked the whole People of God to contribute to the upcoming 2023 Synod of Bishops, commonly referred to as the “Synod on Synodality.” “Synodality” describes the participation of the whole People of God in the life of the Church. In every diocese, parishioners and members of the Church will be invited to give input on various questions. These include:

- ❑ “What is the Holy Spirit saying to our Church today?”
- ❑ “What should we do to improve our parish?”
- ❑ “A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, ‘journeys together.’ How is this ‘journeying together’ happening today in your local Church? What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our ‘journeying together’?”

This process of listening to the faithful will begin locally soon and continue into the spring. Here at St. Mary of the Woods and St. Aloysius, I urge you to consider being part of the process when it unfolds. The faith is strong here and as members of the Body of Christ, this will be an opportunity for us to share our love for the Church with others. We will ponder ways that the Holy Spirit is inviting us into deeper communion with Jesus on our journey together.

On a Personal Note

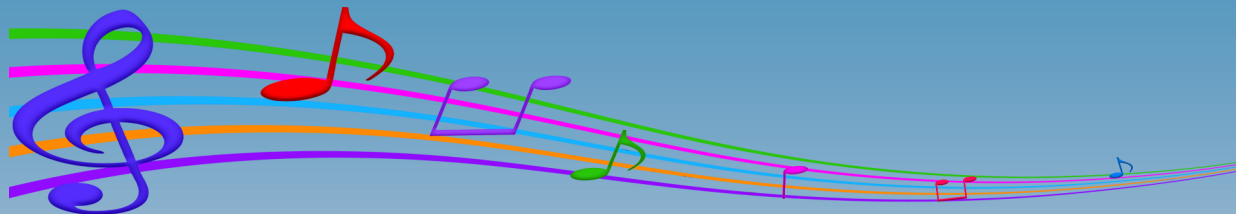
It’s hard to believe that more than a year and a half has passed since I became a senior priest and moved up north. A lot has happened during this time: my father, Charlie, died, and four new grandnephews were born, great-grandchildren of my parents now numbering 27. My mother, Evelyn, continues in good health at 93, is cute as ever as we provide her with brain exercises of Scrabble, pinochle, and euchre. With two of my siblings, I take turns staying overnight with Mom making sure that she is never alone.

For one year now, I have been serving as the “sacramental minister” to St. Mary of the Woods Parish in Kalkaska and St. Aloysius Parish in Fife Lake. Together these parishes number about 300 households. It has been a great pleasure for me to serve as a semi-retired priest with no administrative responsibilities. The drive from Maple City is scenic and about 40 miles each way. It connects me with these two vibrant faith communities that have graciously welcomed me and inspired me.

With so many of you, my heart breaks for the tragedy that occurred on November 30th in Oxford High School. From up north, I continue to be united in prayer with my former parish family, St. Joseph Parish in Oxford/Orion community. As they continue to bear the heavy burden of sorrow for the senseless loss of life, we continue to hope for better things and the change of heart that will lead to concrete actions to avert such tragedies in the future.

May this New Year bring choicest blessings to you and your loved ones, God’s peace, and love.

Fr. Mike Verschaeve



Sing to the Lord

Why it is important to sing at Mass – even if you can't sing

Why don't we sing at Mass?

- I don't have a good voice.
- I don't like to sing.
- I don't know this song.
- I can't read music.

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

Why should we sing at Mass?

Music at Mass is more than music. It is prayer and all the faithful are asked to participate.

The beauty of the music is found in the expression of the unified prayer (CCC 1157). It is the intention that counts, not the technical performance.

Catholics are called to bear witness to Christ, to participate in Mass and to be in communion with one another. Singing at mass brings us into unity and brings us closer to God.

The words of scripture and the beautiful melodies are the language of prayer. We can more easily recall a passage of scripture by singing it. Scientists have found that memory for music is quite powerful and helps us remember facts and details. You probably learned your ABCs by singing a song to the tune of Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star. Have you ever had an "ear worm"?

In conclusion:

You don't need a good voice. You were given a unique voice by God. Singing at mass is not a matter of pride. It is a chance to openly share your prayer.

If you don't know the song and can't read music, it's okay. Every little bit you do sing contributes to the prayer and the unity of the faithful.

Maybe you just don't like to sing. It's okay. Sing anyway. This is a no judgement zone and your opportunity to step out of your comfort zone to participate fully in the prayer of your faith.

As you become more comfortable with the unique voice and musical gifts you have been given, we warmly welcome you to share them as part of the Music Ministry team in our parishes. Rehearsals are 30 minutes before each mass.

Knights of Columbus

Up Date From the Knights of Columbus: It is our hope that you all had an enjoyable holiday season. Throughout that period, we have been a bit inactive although we have given monetary support to a number of needs.

Our next activity will be a food drive at the Mancelona Family Fare to help support the Mancelona food pantry. The date has not been set yet. In order to stay active in humanitarian needs we need the support of active members. A reminder to all Knights our meetings are held the first Thursday of the month at 7 PM with rosary beginning at 6:30 Please join us and voice your ideas. Being active in parish programs and needs is a fulfilling and enjoyable way to support your parish. God's love be with you all! Dan Ingalls, Grand Knight Council 7419.



GOD'S GARDEN

"For everything there is a season,
and a time for every matter under heaven."

Ecclesiastes 3:1

As for the fallow earth of God's Good Garden, this is a time to rest, a time to regenerate. And for the faith filled gardeners, a time to reflect, and a time to plan anew, as determined gardeners are wont to do.

For us, too, we have our time to weep, as we embrace the death of our dear brother in Christ, Mark Jacobs, who passed from his earthly home into the arms of Jesus on December 24th. Mark (along with his wife Patti) was an uncommonly dedicated worker in God's Garden. Mark was a Master Gardener, with a wealth of knowledge and experience on cultivating plants, who also rose to every gardening challenge that cropped up (with research squash bugs, powdery mildew, sluggish drip lines, etc.) He toiled with a zeal not only to reap a rich harvest, but also to be able to give that finest organic produce to the least of our neighbors. He answered the call of Fr. Norm "to especially love the poor". Mark was the heart of God's Garden.

RIP Tomato Guru



Crafty Ladies

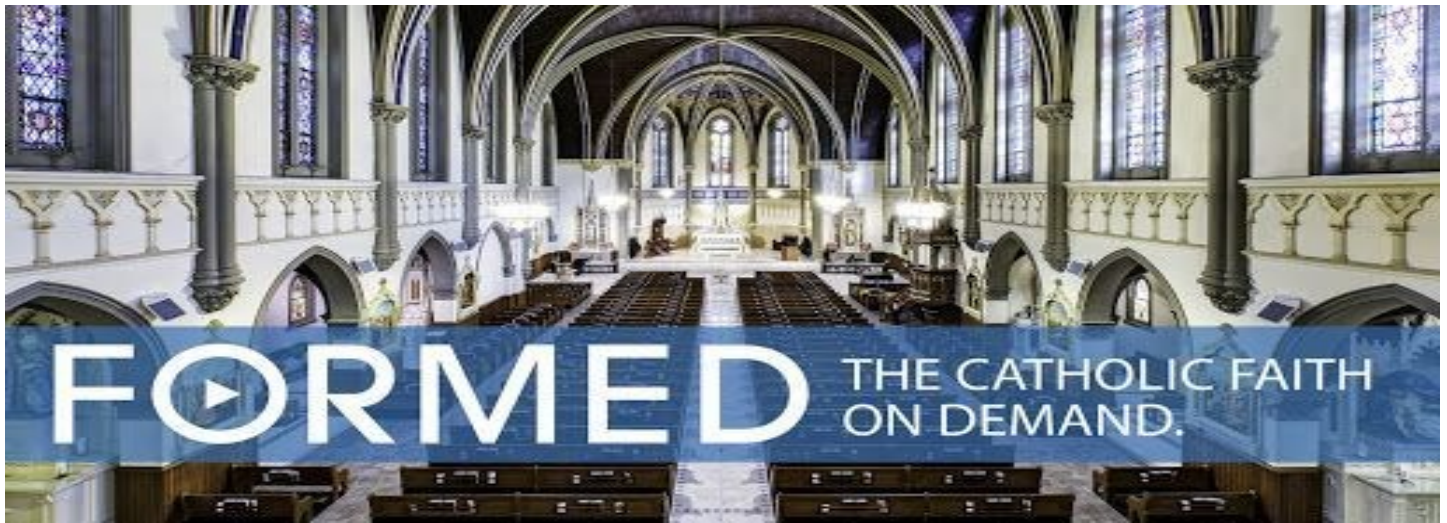
New Year's Greetings to all of you knitters, crocheters and crafters!

We are asking all of those who would like to join us in camaraderie to meet in the Church Family Center on the 2nd Wednesday at 1:00pm (weather permitting). We've kind of missed the last two meetings because of the weather.



Hopefully, on February 9th, we will have sunshiny skies (or at least no snow) for our get-together.

Looking forward to seeing you and getting all caught up with the latest from the Christmas season.



Formed is a website with family movies, Catholic cartoons for the kids, Bible Studies, daily prayer and more, FREE to you. It is the Catholic version of Netflix and Youtube. Through our parish subscription you will have access to countless programs on your tablet, phone and it supports streaming on your smart TV, Chromecast, Roku, Apple, Amazon Fire and Android..

“This Week on FORMED....”

The FORMED team suggests content for the week based on the liturgical calendar, introduces new shows, and gives updates on what is happening

- Go to maryalloysius.com
- click on the “Formed Catholic TV” link at the top of the page
- Follow the instructions for your FREE
- Subscription Learn Bible studies, watch Catholic movies, etc. so go take a peek & see what they have to offer!

Be sure to visit to see all the great programming!

Be sure to checkout our website at maryalloysius.com, there's resources for daily prayer, parish bulletins, schedules for Liturgical Ministers, upcoming events and more, including the Formed TV signup link.