

# *St. Mary of the Woods/St. Aloysius*

## *Words from the Woods*

*Winter 2021*



### **St. Mary of the Woods PCCW**

The St. Mary of the Woods PCCW meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. in the Parish Library.



All women of the Parish are welcome and encouraged to participate.

PCCW sponsors an Annual Craft Bazaar in October, a Chili-Cook Off in November, a Soup Supper in January. We support the Seminarian Education Fund, as well as various local community organizations such as the Kalkaska Baby Pantry and Health & Healing Ministry. We are in the planning stages for events for the year 2022. If you have ideas of things you would like to see happen here at St. Mary's please come to one of our meetings to share your ideas !

### **Parish Activities**

**St. Aloysius PCCW**—meets on the 1st Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm at St. Aloysius

**St. Mary's PCCW**—meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 5:00 pm at St. Mary's

**Crafty Ladies**—meets on the 2nd Wed of the month from 1-3:00 p.m. at St. Mary's

**Knights of Columbus**—meets on the 1st Thurs of the month at 7:00 p.m.

**Christ Our Life Faith Formation**—monthly after Sunday Mass

**Journey of Faith Faith Formation**—Tuesday afternoons at 3:30 p.m.

### **Holiday Mass Schedule**



**Dec 8—Feast of the Immaculate**

#### **Conception**

9:00 am—St. Aloysius

6:00 pm—St. Mary of the Woods

**Dec 20—Communal Reconciliation Service**

6:00 pm—St. Mary of the Woods

**Dec 24—Vigil: The Nativity of the Lord**

4:00 pm—St. Mary of the Woods

6:00 pm—St. Aloysius



## Knights of Columbus

Knights of Columbus update: Since our last news letter we have been quite active. We have had a large rummage sale. With the donations from you all and the work of a lot of our members it was a success. Thank you all! The money made will be used to help support many charities and needs of our parishes. Through out the month of October we have helped to make available group participation in The Holy Rosary at St. Mary of The Woods. Up coming soon will be a food drive to support several food banks in the area and other activities. In order to continue our work we need the support of you all and the active K of C members and new members. Consider being a Knight. The up coming seasons have many opportunities to come together as family and friends. Make the best of those times and do not forget to help the ones less fortunate than us. The love of God be with you all! - *Dan Ingalls, Grand Knight council 7419*



## GIVING TREE

Last year the COVID virus affected our Christmas Giving Tree project. Instead of shopping for families, we decided to sponsor 5 families with a complete Christmas. Thanks to the generous parish of St. Mary of The Woods, each family received enough gift cards to provide food and presents for their families.



The committee has decided to sponsor 5 families again this year. Please donate gift cards from our local community merchants or monetary contributions. You may drop off your gifts at the office or put them in the offering basket at church. Please label your gifts as Giving Tree.

\*Please donate by December 1, 2021. Thank you so much for your kindness & generosity!



## A Thanksgiving Day Blessing

Heavenly Father, on Thanksgiving Day, we bow our hearts to You and pray. We give You thanks for all You've done, especially for the gift of Jesus, Your Son. ... Let us always be aware that all gifts come from You, and may we serve Your heavenly will in everything we do. Amen."



## Ideas for Praying as a Family

- Every time God answers a prayer, put a bean in a jar and when the jar is full make bean soup as a reminder of all your blessings.
- Same as above but use chocolate chips and make cookies.
- Use the acrostic TIP when praying with your children...
  - T – Thank God for specific things that He has done.
  - I – “I’m sorry for...”, be specific about bad things that were done that they are sorry for.
  - P – “Please ....”, these are specific petitions that you would like to pray for.
- Make a prayer chart and write down all the prayers that God answers.
- Each time you hear a siren, pray for the rescue workers and for those that are in need of their help.
- At Christmas time, read the cards received at the dinner table and pray for those who sent the card.



## *Help Wanted (No wait... NEEDED!!)*

### Altar Servers

Ages 9-99, one hour a month, free training, great pay and long-term retirement plan. With this position you get a front row seat at all the big events. As part of the inner circle you get to see what happens behind the scenes, including working with incense!

### Extra-ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

To assist with distributing the Precious Body once a month at Mass. Visits to the home-bound also available to those who would like to assist.

### Lectors

Proclaim the Word of God. This high profile position offers the opportunity to tell it like it is. If you've got a passion for Scripture we've got a place for you!!



### Ushers & Hospitality

Meet, greet and find a seat!! That's what this position's all about. If you're social and like to kibitz here's your chance (just not during Mass 😬 )

*Please contact the office to signup or for more information 231-258-5021*

## GOD'S GARDEN

The Harvest Mass and dinner that followed on October 16th completed the 2021 garden year. We enjoyed a Mass which was God's Garden and "Caring with Blessed Oil" combined. The pot luck dinner had a terrific variety of delicious foods including desserts and decorating by Bonnie Bruman. Fr. Mike did a special Grace that was very personalized for the occasion!



It is sad to look at all the space we have-but the lack of volunteers will probably make 2022's garden the size it was this year. Many people on our Volunteer List 2021 never showed even once for the simple joy of planting seeds or picking produce. And those who **DID**, did the work of three people to keep Fr. Norm's dream alive. At a local small store in Kalkaska, I mentioned God's Garden in conversation. The cashier, even though she had a job, stated "Our family has received produce from the Garden and it has helped fill in our needs more than once." This is the first time I have had a personal contact from someone who benefits from our volunteers dedication and my heart was **overjoyed!**

We look forward to 2022 with the hope that **MORE** volunteers-with gloves and healthy knees -will find it in their hearts to fill it with that **JOY!**

## **Do Something Special for Advent!!**

***Join us Saturday, December 4th from 10:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m. at St. Mary of the Woods for a day of reflection and renewal. Lunch is included and we will close with Mass at 4:00 p.m.***



The 99 is an experience that will lead you through a better understanding of your Faith journey and those things that impact your relationship with God.

Please sign up by contacting the parish office or simply dropping a piece of paper in the collection basket with your name and a message to sign you up for The 99.

Email: [stmaryofthewoods@yahoo.com](mailto:stmaryofthewoods@yahoo.com) Phone: 231-258-5021

**For a preview see the trailer at [maryaloysius.com](http://maryaloysius.com)**

## Prayers for Advent Candle Lighting

### First Week

All-powerful God, increase our strength of will for doing good that Christ may find an eager welcome at his coming and call us to his side in the kingdom of heaven, where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God, forever and ever. ~AMEN.



### Second Week

God of power and mercy open our hearts in welcome. Remove the things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy so that we may share his wisdom and become one with him when he comes in glory, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. ~AMEN.

### Third Week

Lord God, may we, your people, who look forward to the birthday of Christ experience the joy of salvation and celebrate that feast with love and thanksgiving. We ask this through Christ our Lord. ~AMEN.

### Fourth Week

Father, all-powerful God, your eternal Word took flesh on our earth when the Virgin Mary placed her life at the service of your plan. Lift our minds in watchful hope to hear the voice which announces his glory and open our minds to receive the Spirit who prepares us for his coming. We ask this through Christ our Lord. ~AMEN.

Prayers taken from [\*A Prayer Book of Catholic Devotions\*](#)

## Choir



Advent, the four-week period of preparation for the season of Christ, begins the cycle of the Liturgical Year and focuses on the coming of the Lord. The first weeks offer a vision of the future, looking to the end of time when Christ will come again. The final weeks point more specifically to the birth of Jesus Christ. Christ the promised one, is awaited with joyful expectation.

To mark this new liturgical year and the change in seasons, you will see vestments and liturgical spaces turn from green to violet, you will see the addition of the Advent wreath to the sanctuary, and the music takes on a more solemn tone.

Because Advent can be seen as a time of fasting in preparation for the great feast of Christmas, the Gloria is omitted during Advent. On Christmas Eve, we are reminded that the first words of the Gloria came from the Angels as they sang it to the Shepherds to announce the birth of Jesus Christ. We will sing the Gloria in a tremendous feast of Christmas joy at Christmas Eve.

If you sing or play an instrument and would be willing to share your talents with your parish, we will be holding rehearsals 30 minutes before each weekend mass as we journey to Christmas. Please join us or contact Sharon ([szimmerman156@yahoo.com](mailto:szimmerman156@yahoo.com) or 231492-5461) for more information.

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

## The Incarnation

*15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation: 16 for by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. – Colossians 1:15-16*



The Church has a wide range of people and approaches to understanding and relating to God. These many spirituality types have a long history in the Church. Various spiritualities (Jesuit, Augustinian, Dominican, Carmelite, etc) have central themes that run through their approach to the Trinity. Franciscan Spirituality is Christocentric, meaning all of creation is fashioned after, for, and infused with Christ. The reading above from Colossians drives this point home.

The Incarnation, which literally means “to take on flesh”, is often times viewed from the position of God becoming man in the person of Jesus to die on the cross in atonement for our sins. How this is action saves us can be very difficult to understand. Regardless of how we understand that aspect of the crucifixion, we acknowledge that this act of love is our redemption.

This viewpoint is a central part of our understanding of the Incarnation. Franciscan Spirituality, being Christocentric, doesn’t negate this but goes a step further and says that sin doesn’t dictate the actions of God. Rather, God would’ve become man in the person of Jesus out of love, regardless of the presence of sin in the world. In other words God loves us so much that He wants to be with us, physically, so He entered into the world to be with us. Sin was not the motivation for the Incarnation, love was. Jesus dying on the cross was just another opportunity for God to show us the depths of His love, God writing straight with the crooked lines of sin if you will. The Incarnation was always in the plan even at the moment of creation.

God continues to be present with us today throughout creation, as the Catechism reminds us, especially at Mass in the Eucharist, the Word as it’s proclaimed, the presider, and the people congregating to pray the Liturgy. Scripture tells us that wherever two or more are gathered in His name, He is present also. It was not simply enough for God to create all we have and then watch from afar, He has to be with us physically and intimately and for all times. The more we make ourselves available to His presence with us, the more our eyes are opened to see this reality.

Recent polls have shown that people are feeling more and more isolated and disconnected, this was evident even prior to the pandemic. Now with virtual meetings, continued social distancing, livestreams taking the place of physical gatherings, and in many cases forgoing family gatherings or special events and holidays out of safety, depression and suicide are on the rise. Social Media is a cheap, no strings attached way to interact with people in a non-intimate, non-physical way but it comes with a price.

Genesis tells us that in the beginning God said “let US create man in OUR image”, a Community creating community for community, in the flesh and from the flesh. Jesus is the Incarnation and we are incarnational. As we enter this special holiday season and celebrate Christ coming among is in the flesh, take some time to reflect on how we, despite our current challenges, can be more incarnational. To be continued.... - Bob

*Happy Holidays*