

The Tells OF ST. MARY'S

2015 ADVENT NEWSLETTER • ST. MARY'S PARISH, TOMAHAWK

In this Issue

Earlier in 2015, Pope Francis announced the Extraordinary Jubilee, a Holy Year of Mercy, to highlight the Catholic Church's "mission to be a witness of mercy." If you do a quick search of the words, "Year of Mercy Pope Francis," you'll find thousands of articles and news stories sharing information and perspectives on the announcement.

In this issue of the newsletter, we have written articles related to the Year of Mercy to help each of you prepare for this focus throughout our church and church family. We have a God of mercy and we are people of mercy. As we look to the seasons ahead, let's reflect on this and work to bring mercy to our lives and those around us.

Join us for
Thanksgiving
Dinner
See page 5

EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY

By Rev. Fr. Louis Maram Reddy

Pope Francis has announced an Extraordinary Jubilee dedicated to divine mercy this year. Our pope says that God is "rich in mercy" and extends His mercy with abundance over those who turn to Him with a sincere heart. St. Paul reminds us that God never ceases to show the richness of His mercy throughout the ages.

Transformation of the heart that leads us to confess our sins is

God's gift. It is His work of mercy. In God there is mercy, not condemnation. No one can be excluded from the mercy of God.

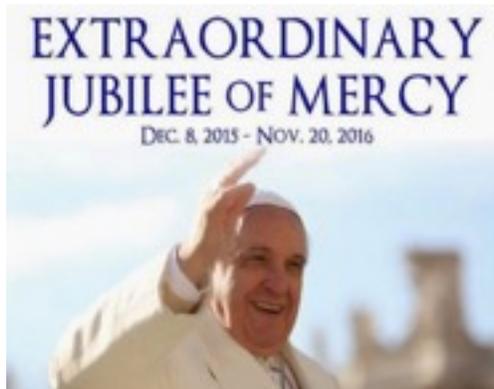
This holy year will begin on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, December 8th and will end on November 20th, 2016, the feast of

the Christ the King. Pope Francis says that he is convinced that the whole church will find, in this Jubilee Year of Mercy, the joy needed to rediscover and make fruitful the mercy of God. Our Pope also entrusts this holy year to Mother of Mercy, that she might turn her gaze upon us and watch over our journey.

God's mercy is always abundant. If we sit and think of the mercy God has provided us in our lives, it is tremendous! We can't help but bend our

head and fall on our knees to thank the Lord.

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Year of Mercy, continued...

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In spite of our sins, we are living today because of the mercy of God. In my life I can say that it is because God's mercy that I am a priest, an instrument in His hands. He has saved me from many situations both physically and spiritually and is leading me in His ministry. I could see very clearly the hand of God giving me blessings and guidance every step of my life. He doesn't count the sins that I commit but only forgives as soon as I repent and ask forgiveness. Many times I question whether I am worthy to enjoy my priestly ministry and other blessings that I have. It is because of the God's mercy that I am what I am.

My prayer to God is to keep me always in His presence safe and secure. He is my shepherd, my rock, my refuge, and my light. God is merciful and while he might delay for my own good, he never denies me as long as I obey or do His will.

As Theresa of Avila says, "Let nothing disturb you, all things are passing away; God never changes. Patience obtains all things. Whoever has God lacks nothing. God alone suffices." Hence, count on the mercy of God.

Jubilee is a time of reconciliation and liberation. In this Jubilee Year our Lord is calling everyone - it doesn't matter your state of life. No sin is beyond the mercy of God. By our baptism we are freed from all sins. Let us return to the same state and grow in the holiness by the mercy of God. In our prayer, let our Altar be our conscience and our offerings be our prayers and sacrifices that we make in our day to day lives.

**Your sin is not
greater than
God's mercy.**

News Briefs

Legacy Fund Update

As of 9/30/2015:
Remaining Balance to be Raised: \$155,581

Catholic Services Appeal Update

As of 9/30/2015:
CSA 2015 Goal: \$40,860
Total payments & pledges: \$19,883
Remaining to be raised: \$20,977

Usher Meeting

All St. Mary's ushers are asked to attend a meeting on Sunday, Nov. 15 at 9:15 a.m. in the church. New members are welcome to attend and participate!

Electronic Newsletter

To help us reduce printing and postage expenses, we encourage you to request this newsletter electronically. Visit our web site at www.stmaryschurchtomahawk.com and follow the instructions.

Contact us

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Phone: 715-453-2878
www.stmaryschurchtomahawk.com

THE JUBILEE OF MERCY

by Jan Huseby, Director of Music & Liturgy

Pope Francis made a dazzling impact in his recent visit to our country. Since his departure, have we reverted to our “normal”, or have we been changed? Complacency is not an option, as we prepare for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy (December 8, 2015 – November 20, 2016), announced by Pope Francis as a year to be lived intensely, that every person will encounter the mercy of God—through us!

In Rome, the year will be marked by the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica, on the third Sunday of Advent, and every diocese in the world will designate a particular door as a “Holy Door”. Here in our parish, a special banner will hang above our main entrance, a reminder to all who enter that we are a people of mercy.

Mercy is a virtue – the source of compassion for others. Pope Francis exemplifies mercy in action by stirring up the Vatican to care for the poor and the homeless. Crossing the threshold of our doors, we come to sing and to pray for awareness, for insight, for deeper compassion for the poor—the physically impoverished and the spiritually lost. But the real challenge will happen when we exit our doors—can we muster the courage to be more merciful in our attitudes, our speech, our gifts, in going out of our way to lessen another’s burden?

The Year of Mercy will begin with a parish mission here at St. Mary’s, on December 7-9, led by John Angotti. Plan to come and fill your spiritual well of mercy—in prayer, discussion, and song. We can’t share what we don’t nurture in ourselves. Details will be published. Some of our parish groups have already planned outreach activities in the community. How will you “live mercy”?



Volunteer in Action

Volunteer: Maureen “Donnie” Sutherland

Volunteer activities: Donnie is a volunteer on the St. Joseph Committee. This group meets every Tuesday to help clean the church and grounds. Donnie also cleans, purifies, and irons all the purificators, corporals, and towels used at Mass.



Why Donnie volunteers:

“Volunteering makes me feel really good. I want to give whatever I can to a need. Before I was retired, there were many things in the church that were happening that I couldn’t participate in because I was working. Now that I am retired, I can do more for the church and that makes my soul smile. I am more of a behind the scenes kind of person and I like interaction with other people. I am also able to participate in some of the programs the church offers and that makes me feel good too. I like meeting other people and giving what I can.”

To learn more about volunteer opportunities or to get involved as a volunteer, visit www.stmaryschurchtomahawk.com or call 715-453-2878.

Celebrating Mercy with Students

by Marilyn Pekol, St. Mary's School Principal

Pope Francis announced the Jubilee Year of Mercy by saying, "We want to live in the light of the word of the Lord." He also quoted from the gospel of Luke 6:36, "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful." Mercy can be thought of as having compassion for another's misfortune and working to relieve it.

St. Mary's School students will begin the Year of Mercy on Tuesday, December 15 with a Christmas Program entitled, "Christmas, Special Delivery." In this musical, Christmas is in the air and so is the Christmas crunch. Deadlines, wrapping, traffic, and general chaos are on the route for mailman Gabriel Willson, who doesn't have any Christmas spirit. A miracle is on the way that is heaven-sent, as he discovers the reason for the season.

In addition to the performance, slated for 6:00 p.m. at St. Mary's Church, the students will also be sharing their compassion for those who are feeling the crunch of Christmas at the Tomahawk Post Office on December 14. This day is expected to be the busiest day for the United States Postal Service as people everywhere try to get cards, letters and packages mailed on time for Christmas. Students will be working to relieve the stress of the holiday in a variety of ways, thus helping postal workers and others who may share mailman Willson's gloomy outlook of Christmas. Join us for both events!



To learn more about St. Mary's School, which serves 3-year-old preschool through 5th grade, contact the school at 715-453-3542 or smsprincipal@smstomahawk.com.

Becoming People of Mercy

by Kay Berg, Director of Religious Education & Youth Ministry

The Year of Mercy offers us many opportunities to become people of mercy – but what does that mean? How does one live a merciful life? For me, one of the best things I have done in my spiritual life to be more merciful towards others is to begin praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. It has been life changing for me! I have never prayed more, been more aware of the needs of others, and been more patient! Yes, I have prayed for patience and I think it is actually working!

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy was given to St. Faustina by Jesus Christ himself and it is prayed with a rosary. My favorite part of this prayer is the closing:

"Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless, and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us, and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments, we might not despair, nor become despondent, but with great confidence, submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is love and mercy itself. Amen."

Isn't that beautiful? We are begging God for His mercy! And we should! If you want to do something to celebrate the Year of Mercy, my suggestion is to begin praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet each day.



Jesus, I trust in You.

This image of Divine Mercy was also given to St. Faustina by Jesus Christ. The red and blue rays portray the blood and water that flowed from Jesus' side at his crucifixion. This image is intended to remind us of God's Mercy for all of us.



For a pamphlet on how to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet or to learn about opportunities to grow your child's faith, contact Kay Berg, Director of Religious Education and Youth Ministry at 715-453-2878.

Showing Mercy through Caregiving

by Ann Jelinek RN, PN, Parish Nurse Coordinator

Caregiving need not be an individual activity. We live too much in immense systems of strangers who serve and are served by us. These human, but impersonal systems are efficient, but they cannot supply us with intimate attention, love, tenderness and understanding. Caregiving is the act of providing unpaid assistance and support to family or acquaintances who have physical, psychological or emotional needs. In one sense or another we are all caregivers just because we have people we love and care about. Perhaps we take a neighbor shopping, take someone to their doctor appointment, make a meal, or just spend time with someone alone - these are all acts of caregiving.

Caring can be challenging, especially if you are new at the task. It is natural for individuals to run from illness or disability out of fear or lack of knowledge about the illness or disability. Some guidelines to follow as you look to provide care and mercy to those around you:

1. Learn about the illness or disability as well as the individual's needs. Research community resources that are available to not only educate yourself but also support the individual.
2. Plan immediate care.
3. Enlist others to help. Form a "Share the Care" team (friends, relatives, neighbors) with a common thread - the person in need. People want to help and in numbers there is strength. Together we are the body of Christ. Each person is an essential member of the body.
4. Organize important information.
5. Plan for the future as change occurs as each season passes.

THANKSGIVING DINNER

Plans are underway for the annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner held on Thanksgiving Day in St. Mary's Corpus Christi Center. Join us on Thanksgiving from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm for fellowship and good food. This is a FREE meal for all. If you need a ride, we can arrange that for you. If you can't join us and you would like a meal, it can be delivered to your home. Call 715-453-2878 for more information.

To volunteer before or during the meal, contact Julie Pankow at 715-453-8637.

"I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

- Philippians 4:13

BUDGET MATTERS

Fiscal Year 2015/16 (July 2015-Sept. 2015) Revenue

	ACTUAL	BUDGET	VARIANCE	
Church	\$165,645	\$167,956	-\$2,311	☹️
CCF-Y/M	\$12,168	\$10,700	\$1,468	😊
Cemetery	\$3,818	\$5,732	-\$1,914	☹️
School	\$170,105	\$173,709	-\$3,604	☹️
Total Revenue:	\$351,736	\$358,097	-\$6,361	☹️

Fiscal Year 2015/16 (July 2015-Sept. 2015) Expenses

	ACTUAL	BUDGET	VARIANCE	
Church	\$152,554	\$162,935	-\$10,381	😊
CCF-Y/M	\$8,073	\$8,496	-\$423	😊
Cemetery	\$5,008	\$5,959	-\$951	😊
School	\$103,847	\$106,772	-\$2,925	😊
Total Expense	\$269,482	\$284,162	-\$14,680	😊
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over Expenditures	\$82,254	\$73,935	\$8,319	😊

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St. MARY'S Church



Your latest issue of The Tells of St. Mary's has arrived. Please read and connect with us!

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