

# Saint Mary Magdalen Church

Building a family of faith in Jesus Christ through Catholic Worship, Formation & Charity.

22 MARCH 2026

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Dear Friends in Christ,

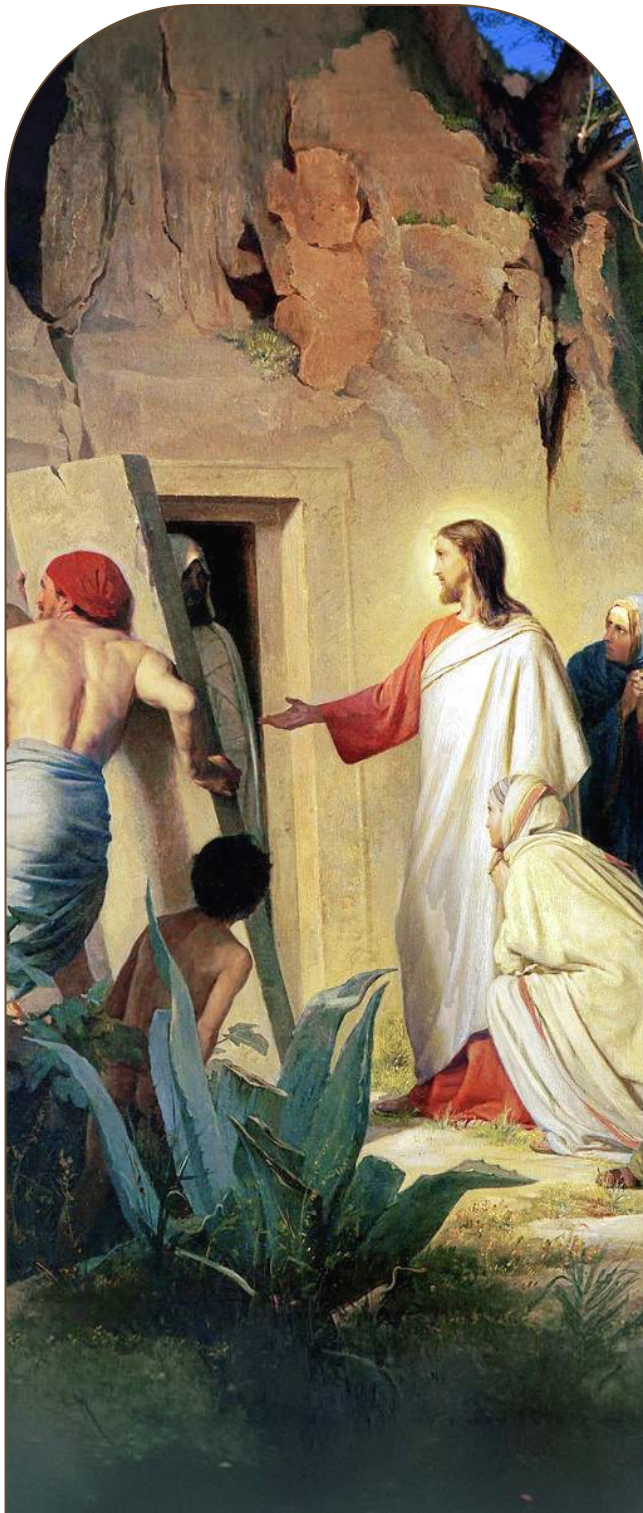
As we begin Passiontide, the final days leading up to the great feast of our salvation, the Church has a tradition of veiling the statues in church as we do here. I am not entirely sure where this pious tradition comes from. Suffice it to say, it is in line with what Lent is all about: putting aside what is not essential. Beautiful statuary and joyful instruments certainly have their place in giving honor and glory to God. But these days in particular create a kind of tunnel effect, in which everything is stripped down to the bare essentials. We do this as individuals, of course, when we sacrificially respond to the call to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. The goal is that our souls arrive at Good Friday emptied of our vain attachment to comforts, that we might look upon Christ, suffering yet victorious on the Cross, and see the source of our hope and that of the whole world.

So yes, even the Church building becomes bare. The art becomes hidden. We focus our attention on what truly matters, on the One who truly matters. Try not to rush to the Easter celebrations. Easter will come as surely as day follows night. But there is only one way to the joyful encounter with the Risen Lord: the way of the Cross.

This time of year, I think of the old spiritual with its haunting melody:

*There is a balm in Gilead  
To make the wounded whole  
There is a balm in Gilead  
To heal the sin-sick soul*

Let's admit it: the world, convulsed once again by war this Passiontide, is not as it should be. When a school full of children is destroyed by bombs falling from the sky, that should move all of us to deep repentance, especially when *our own military dropped the bombs.*



Carl Bloch, The Raising of Lazarus (1870)

*continued on page 3*

## 2 Mass & Devotions

### CLERGY

610-566-8821  
stmarymagdalen.net

Rev. Eric J. Banecker  
*Pastor*  
freric@stmarymagdalen.net  
Extension 110



Rev. Msgr. Ralph J. Chieffo  
*Pastor Emeritus*  
frralph@stmarymagdalen.net

Rev. Robert A. Pesarchick  
*Parochial Vicar*  
frbob@stmarymagdalen.net  
Extension 123

Rev. Mr. Jude Opara  
*Transitional Deacon*  
deaconjude@stmarymagdalen.net



Deacon James DiFerdinand, M.A.  
*Permanent Deacon*  
jamesdiferdinand@gmail.com

Deacon Joseph Boyle, M.Th.  
*Director of Parish  
& School Operations*  
deaconjoe@stmarymagdalen.net  
Extension 126

Deacon Bob Szipszky, M.Th.  
*Permanent Deacon  
OCIA Program*  
deaconbob@stmarymagdalen.net

Deacon E. Peter Zurbach, Ph.D.  
*Permanent Deacon, Retired*

### FOCUS

Tina Augustine  
*FOCUS Missionary*  
tina@stmarymagdalen.net

Jacob Barajas  
*FOCUS Missionary*  
jake@stmarymagdalen.net



### PARISH MASS & CONFESSION SCHEDULE

#### Sunday

7:30 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM & 7 PM

#### Weekday

Tuesday thru Friday  
6:30 AM & 8:30 AM

On Mondays Mass is at 8:30 AM.

#### Saturday

8:30 AM & 4:30 PM Anticipated Mass



**Confessions from 9 to 10 AM on Saturdays,  
and 6:15 to 6:45 PM on Sundays.**

For a private confession time, please call the parish office.

### PARISH DEVOTIONAL SCHEDULE

#### Adoration Chapel:

Monday from 7 AM to Friday until 1 PM.

#### Morning Prayer:

7:15 AM from Tuesday to Friday in the Chapel.

#### First Friday Holy Hour:

6:15 PM to 6:45 PM Confessions, followed by Adoration,  
Vespers, & Benediction at 7 PM to 8 PM

#### Legion of Mary:

9:30 AM on Tuesdays in the Gathering Room.

#### Rosary:

7:15 PM on Tuesdays in the Chapel.

#### Flame of Love Devotions:

Noon on Fridays in the Chapel.

See ministries and parish services on our website.

But the world's woundedness is often expressed in more mundane ways: in our indifference, in gossip, in estrangement in families. Yes, we are wounded.

We didn't cause it all, surely, but we also are not innocent, either. Christ's death is that healing balm, the salve of reconciliation. In Him, we are forgiven our sins and made a new creation. We are united to the Father in the Spirit, and so enter into communion with all those who believe in Christ and are filled with his charity through Baptism.

Then, as the hymn goes on to say:

*If you cannot preach like Peter,  
if you cannot pray like Paul,  
you can tell the love of Jesus  
and say, "He died for all."*

Yes, all of us who have been redeemed by the saving atonement of Jesus Christ are compelled to confess His goodness to others.

This, by the way, is where the word "Confession" comes from in describing the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. It isn't so much about confessing my sins, but about confessing the Lord's mercy.

By kneeling there with contrition and with a firm resolution to make amends, we confess with our whole being the goodness of the Lord, that His mercy endures forever. We acknowledge that we are completely dependent on His grace, but that with that grace, we are really capable of growing in holiness, in becoming like unto God. This reality must pervade our whole lives, such that we are willing to "tell the love of Jesus" to all we meet.

So then, please join us for our Lenten Day of Mercy this Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. We will have several visiting Confessors available from 1:15 PM to 2:25 PM and 4:30 PM to 6 PM. We also have several hours of Confessions planned on Good Friday.

Whether it has been a month, a year, or a decade, I beg you: don't let Lent go by without receiving the awesome gift of God's mercy.

May the Lord grant you peace!

–Father Eric Banecker



*"I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord;  
whoever believes in me, even if he dies,  
will never die." (John 11:25)*

## NEW! MASS PRESIDER SCHEDULE

### Saturday, March 28

4:30 PM—Fr. Eric Banecker

### Sunday, March 29

7:30 AM—Fr. Robert Pesarchick

9:30 AM—Fr. Eric Banecker

11:30 AM—Fr. Robert Pesarchick

7 PM—Fr. Eric Banecker

*\*This schedule may be subject to change without notice.*



## NEXT WEEK! KNIGHTS EASTER EGG HUNT PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 29

Calling all kids to the Knights of Columbus Easter Egg Hunt on Palm Sunday, following the 9:30 AM Mass. This delightful annual egg hunt will take place in the back of the church, near the lower-level parking lot. All children are welcome to participate, and will receive some candy—guaranteed!

## TRIDUUM & EASTER

### HOLY THURSDAY 🌿 APRIL 2

Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper at 6:30 PM

Night Prayer (Compline) at 9 PM in Chapel

*The Chapel closes at 11 PM*

### GOOD FRIDAY 🌿 APRIL 3

Office of Readings & Morning Prayer (Tenebrae) at 6:30 AM

Stations of the Cross at 8:30 AM

Confessions from 9 to 10:30 AM, 12:30 to 2 PM, and 6 PM to 7 PM

Liturgy of the Lord's Passion at 3 PM

### HOLY SATURDAY 🌿 APRIL 4

Morning Prayer at 8:30 AM

Confessions from 9 to 10 AM

Easter Vigil Mass at 8 PM

### EASTER SUNDAY 🌿 APRIL 5

The Resurrection of the Lord

Masses at 7:30 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM, and 1 PM (Low Sensory Mass)

No Confessions or 7 PM Mass

## PARISH

610-566-8821  
stmarymagdalen.net

Mrs. Gina Staiber  
*Office Manager & Notary*  
gina@stmarymagdalen.net  
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Mr. Ralph Purri  
*Director of Sacred Music*  
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Mrs. Dorothy Brown  
*Director of Religious Education*  
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Mrs. Kerry Boyle  
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Extension: 109

Mrs. Shelly Zeller  
Mrs. Mary Lou Mayer  
*Office Administrators*  
Extension: 107

## SCHOOL

610-565-1822  
stmarymagdalen.school.net

Mrs. Amy Crawford Bauer  
*Principal*  
abauer@stmarymagdalen.net

St. Mary Magdalen invites you to a

## DAY OF MERCY

Give yourself the gift of God's  
peace and forgiveness in the  
Sacrament of Reconciliation.

# MONDAY MARCH

# 23

1:15 to 2:30 PM  
& 4:30 to 6 PM

All are welcome!



**AFTER MASSES ON APRIL 11 & 12**



*Gaetano's Fresh Homemade*

## SAUCE SALE



**SMM Knights of Columbus**  
will offer Gaetano's of Clifton Heights  
famous Marinara Sauce (32 oz glass jars)  
after all Masses on April 11 and April 12  
while supplies last. \$12 per jar.

Pre-order to guarantee availability by  
emailing your name, phone number, and  
quantity to [smmgaetanos@gmail.com](mailto:smmgaetanos@gmail.com).

Proceeds from sale and  
good will donations will go to  
**LOCAL FOOD BANKS & CHARITIES**

**NEW! PRAY FOR OUR NEWLY CONFIRMED**

Congratulations to our sixty-three students who received the Sacrament of Confirmation on Thursday, March 19, when the Most Reverend John J. McIntyre conferred the sacrament on them. Please keep them, their families, and sponsors in your prayers. May the Holy Spirit continue to grow in and through them as God's witnesses and as His missionary disciples in the world.

Also pray for our adults preparing to be confirmed on Holy Saturday or Divine Mercy Sunday.

Emma **Joan** Achtert  
 Lincoln **Sebastian** Barnes  
 Nathan **Joseph** Benoit  
 Aleena **Elizabeth** Boas  
 Dean **John** Bozeman  
 Charlie **Michael** Buckson  
 Anika **Julie** Byrne  
 Madeleine **Teresa** Caldwell  
 Cortland **Jude** Chaffin  
 Hailey **Philomena** Cottrell  
 Ryan **Christopher** Cox  
 Henry **Francis** Crotty  
 Shane **Sebastian** Crowley  
 Nicholas **Michael** D'Ambr  
 Emily **Lucy** Dang  
 Carla **Juliana** DiPaulo  
 Khang **Patrick** Do  
 William **Sebastian** Domenico  
 Dylan **Ignatius** Eusebio  
 Isabella **Natalia** Frank-Duffy  
 Julie **Rose** Furia  
 Korynn **Teresa** Gerst  
 Christopher **Paul** Grandieri  
 Keegan **John** Halligan  
 Gemma **Elizabeth** Heckler  
 Nolan **Sebastian** Hemmert  
 Addison **Mary** Kaskela-Saunders  
 Jackson **Aloysius** King  
 Ella **Cecilia** Knee  
 Olivia **Elizabeth** Kohler  
 Evan **Matthew** Kokol  
 Samuel **Michael** Landgraff  
 Jack **Charles** Leighton  
 Kyle **Alexander** Lomas  
 Peyton **Catherine** Lubic  
 Riley **Therese** Lutz  
 Francis **Isaac** Marcozzi  
 Adriana **Rose** Martinelli  
 Piper **Gianna** Mascio  
 Peter **James** McCampbell  
 Brian **Michael** McDermott  
 Matthew **Michael** Mita  
 Austin **Peter** Monteleone  
 Ryan **Gabriel** Morgans

Molly **Maria** O'Shea  
 Isabella **Mary** Teresa Ortiz  
 Charlotte **Isabelle** Phillips  
 Noelle **Theresa** Quigley  
 Claire **Catherine** Reinert  
 Brooke **Frances** Richman  
 Paul **Sebastian** Rothkopf  
 Emily **Catherine** Scanlon  
 Mia **Rose** Scittina  
 Owen **Sebastian** Sheeran  
 Liam **William** Smith  
 Ryan **Carlo** Smith  
 Charlie **Sebastian** Sobel  
 Sabrina **Teresa** Solomon  
 Ava **Cecilia** Sullivan  
 Declan **Sebastian** Thompson  
 Kara **Mary** Walker  
 Elizabeth **Brigid** Wernert  
 Heidi **Melangel** Zola  
 Benjamin **Ladislaus** Zola

Adult Elect being  
 Baptized & Confirmed  
 on Holy Saturday:

Lisa Colterelli  
 Sebastian Fitzgerald  
 Jessica Pelesh  
 Serena Hart

Adults being Confirmed  
 on Divine Mercy Sunday:

Tyler James Williamson Deman  
 Elaina Fitzgerald  
 Justin Fitzgerald  
 Miranda Fitzgerald  
 Daniel Owen Kemp  
 Alexander Roman Losacco  
 Kristy Lynn McCarry  
 Mark Paul Salamne

**LENTEN EVENTS****CONFESSIONS**

Saturdays from 9 to 10 AM  
 Sundays from 6:15 to 6:45 PM  
 First Fridays from 6 to 6:45 PM  
 Good Friday: 9 to 10 AM, 12:30 to 2 PM, 6 to 7 PM.

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

7 PM on Fridays during Lent.

**MORNING & EVENING PRAYER**

Morning prayer: Tuesday through Friday at 7:15 AM  
 Vespers: Tuesday through Friday at 5:15 PM

**LENTEN BIBLE STUDIES**

Contact Fr. Eric or our FOCUS missionaries for times and information at [tina@stmarymagdalen.net](mailto:tina@stmarymagdalen.net).

**DAY OF MERCY 🌿 MARCH 23**

Give yourself the gift of God's mercy and grace.  
 Confessions from 1:15 PM to 2:15 PM and 4:30 to 6 PM.

**DAY OF REFLECTION 🌿 MARCH 28**

The Sisters of Life invite you to a Day of Reflection for Young Women ages 18-35 from 10:30 AM to 7:30 PM. The day will include Lunch & Dinner, talks by the Sisters, Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and Adoration & Confession. For more information email [philly@sistersoflife.org](mailto:philly@sistersoflife.org).

**PALM SUNDAY 🌿 MARCH 29**

Saturday Anticipated Mass at 4:30 PM  
 Sunday Masses at 7:30 AM, 9:30 AM,  
 11:30 AM & 7 PM  
 Confessions at 6:15 PM to 7 PM

**EASTER EGG HUNT 🌿 MARCH 29**

The Knights of Columbus annual Easter Egg Hunt on Palm Sunday after the 9:30 AM Mass.

**LIVING STATIONS 🌿 MARCH 31**

Join us for Living Stations of the Cross presented on Tuesday at 2 PM and 6:30 PM.

**KNIGHTS SIMPLE SUPPER 🌿 MARCH 31**

Enjoy pizza and salad in St. Francis Hall. Doors open at 5 PM. Any donations will go to benefit a Knights selected charity. Stay for Living Stations at 6:30 PM

**SOON! SISTERS OF LIFE AT SMM  
DAY OF REFLECTION FOR YOUNG WOMEN  
SATURDAY, MARCH 28**

As we enter Holy Week, join the Sisters of Life for a Day of Reflection on **Saturday, March 28, from 10:30 AM to 7 PM**, for young women (ages 18 to 35). We will enter into the mystery of the Triduum with Mary Magdalene. The day will include: lunch and dinner, several discussions with the Sisters, time for prayer and reflection, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and time for adoration and confession.  
To register, email [philly@sistersoflife.org](mailto:philly@sistersoflife.org).



**NEW! SENIORS' SOCIAL CLUB  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8**

The SMM Seniors' Social Club cordially invites you to join them on **Wednesday, April 8, from 12:45 PM to 3:00 PM** in St. Francis Hall. Enjoy a fun-filled afternoon with lively conversations, fellowship, and refreshments. Our entertainment this month will be Joey Vincent, Comedian and Singer. We hope you can join us!

**NEW! PRAY FOR PEACE  
AND OUR US SERVICE MEMBERS**

As we pray for peace in the Middle East and around the world, for an end to strife, let us pray for our veterans, all those currently serving in our military, and their families, especially in our SMM family, which includes:

**Timothy Brown**, 1st Lieutenant USMC, C-130 Pilot, stationed at Iwakuni, Japan.

**Mick Horrocks**, Lieutenant, US Navy

**Brian Szipszky**, US Navy Ensign. Stationed in Norfolk, VA, serving on the USS Ross.

**Jack Szipsky**, US Air Force Captain, 21st Special Operations Squadron. He is a CV-22 Osprey pilot based in Yokota Air Base in Tokyo, Japan.

**Mikayla Szipsky** (wife of Jack), a US Space Force Captain, is also based in Yokota Air Base in Tokyo.

**Eli Volk**, Lieutenant, US Navy

If you have a loved one or friend currently serving, or a veteran in need of prayers, please let us know by emailing John Gill at [jgill@stmarymagdalen.net](mailto:jgill@stmarymagdalen.net), and we will add them to our current prayer list.

Application deadline is March 31



## The Drs. John J. and Margaret T. Clark Memorial Scholarship

Dr. John J. and Dr. Margaret T. Clark were devoted members of St. Mary Magdalen Parish. The Clarks directed that a gift be made through their estate to endow scholarships for students who are members of Saint Mary Magdalen parish toward their post-secondary education.

Annually, one eligible student will be selected by the St. Mary Magdalen Scholarship Committee to receive a scholarship toward the first two (2) years of undergraduate tuition for their chosen college, university, or trade school. The annual scholarship amount is \$5,000 for up to two years. Eligible students must be active St. Mary Magdalen parish members and current high school seniors graduating in May or June of 2026.

The 2026 Application and information are available on the parish website under 'Clark Scholarship' or scan the QR code. Send questions to the scholarship committee at [clarkscholarship@stmarymagdalen.net](mailto:clarkscholarship@stmarymagdalen.net).



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Are you interested in joining our parish? Visit our website or stop by our parish office to register. We welcome new parishioners weekly.

Virginia Fitzsimons, The Dabagian Family



## CALLED HOME TO GOD

Our sympathy and prayers are extended to the families of **Robert Messina, Paul Ringiewicz, Joseph Cahill**, those souls who died due to wars or conflicts, including our U.S. service members recently lost in the Middle East, those lost to natural disasters or acts of violence, and the 4,000+ babies aborted daily.

## A TIME TO HEAL

Please pray for our sick. If you or a loved one is ill and would like to be included for the quarter, please call the Parish Office.

Paul Berenato, Jean Cotter, Delores Dohoney, Diane Delaney, Betty Dietrick, Lynn Finelli, Rodie Henson, Fr. Alan Okon, Michelle Okon, Nicholas Quercetti, Sr., Naomi Rouse, Cynthia Sannutti, Quintin Sarne, Mark Scaleri, Bill Snyder, Roseann Yannacone, and Ernie Zappacosta.



## MARRIAGES

Congratulations to our newest newlyweds!

Vincent Luciano & Kerry Lynch

## BAPTISMS

Congratulations to our newly baptized! For baptismal information, visit our website for an intake form, call, or email baptisms@stmarymagdalen.net.

Wyatt Brooks Cosse, Mia Devin Cottrell, Stella Donna Swahl



On March 8, at the 9:30 Mass, our four OCIA Catechumens received the First Scrutiny.

## MASS INTENTIONS

### SATURDAY, MARCH 21

8:30 AM - Ints. of Tom & Monica Grzeczowski  
4:30 PM - Catherine Hooven

### SUNDAY, MARCH 22

7:30 AM - Carol M. Diem  
9:30 AM - Donald L. Frank  
11:30 AM - Dr. Anthony Piraino  
7 PM - The People of the Parish

### MONDAY, MARCH 23

6:30 AM - No Mass  
8:30 AM - Joseph Sweeney

### TUESDAY, MARCH 24

6:30 AM - Ints. of Tina Felix & Family  
8:30 AM - Scott McNeila

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

6:30 AM - Diane Faux  
8:30 AM - Giovanni Liberatore

### THURSDAY, MARCH 26

6:30 AM - Christa Trapp Schutz  
8:30 AM - Philip Franco III

### FRIDAY, MARCH 27

6:30 AM - Edwina Lotka  
8:30 AM - Ints. of Joseph McCabe

### SATURDAY, MARCH 28

8:30 AM - Katherine Janoski  
4:30 PM - Joseph DelSordo

### SUNDAY, MARCH 29

7:30 AM - Ints. of The Duffin Family  
9:30 AM - Geraldine Marra  
11:30 AM - Donald Frank  
7 PM - The People of the Parish



## BREAD & WINE

In memory of David Franklin

## CANDLE

In memory of Josephine & Francis Gavio

**THIS WEEK! BEREAVEMENT SESSIONS  
WEDNESDAYS • 10:30 AM TO NOON**

St. Mary Magdalen offers our care and support to those who have suffered the loss of a loved one. Join us for in-person group sessions with Deacon Jude Opara in St. Francis Hall at 10:30 AM until Noon on **March 25, April 8, and April 22.**



**SAVE THE DATE! MOTHERS' HOME  
CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT  
MONDAY, MAY 11**

Join us for this year's Mothers' Home Charity Golf Tournament at Paxon Hollow Country Club on **Monday, May 11.** Enjoy lunch at 11 AM, followed by Golf with a 'Shotgun Start' at Noon. All proceeds benefit the Mothers' Home in Darby, who provide housing, support, and essential programs for moms-to-be and their newborns. **To sponsor or register for this year's event, please visit [mothershomegolf.com](http://mothershomegolf.com).**



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Scan the code to view and bid on our amazing auction items.

New items may be added each week.

Online bidders need not be present to participate—and win!

Auction bids close the evening of April 17.

**MASS INTENTIONS**

Our Mass Intentions Book is now open for all of 2026. To make a request, scan the code or visit our homepage.



**St. Mary Magdalen Church Now Offers  
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We are grateful for your support!



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**@StMaryMagdalenParish**

Don't forget to add your gift type e.g., Mass Collection.

**STEWARDSHIP & TITHING**

February 2026		<b>\$102,771</b>
Collection:	\$30,803	
Mail-in:	\$20,635	
EFT:	\$51,333	
February 2025		<b>\$94,315</b>
Collection:	\$27,229	
Mail-in:	\$19,962	
EFT:	\$47,124	

Parish Appeal 2026	<b>\$117,242</b>
Parish Appeal 2025	<b>\$85,295</b>

**We are grateful for your generous spirit!**



Scan our QR Code for a secure link to our 'Parish Giving' link for Weekly & Special Collections, Annual School Fund, In Memory, Single Gifts, Stewardship, School Fund, and more.

# The Knights of Columbus



*Lenten*

## Simple Supper

**TUESDAY, MARCH 31**

**Simple Supper** 🌿 5 to 6:20 PM 🌿 **St. Francis Hall**

*Join us for an evening of goodwill and fellowship that begins with a prayer and a meal of homemade salad and pasta, with sauce by Vincent Canzanese.*

*Any goodwill offerings will benefit a Knights local charity.*

**Living Stations** 🌿 6:30 PM 🌿 **Main Church**

*Afterward, we invite you to stay to journey with Jesus during a special presentation of the Living Stations of the Cross.*



**RSVP by Tuesday, March 24**

*Scan the code or email [events@stmarymagdalen.net](mailto:events@stmarymagdalen.net) and please include your name and number in your party.*

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