



ST. MARY'S & ST. PATRICK'S NEWSLETTER



April 26, 2020 • Edition 6

Keeping us connected during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Fr. Scott's Sharing Spot

Dear Friends...

Many people are wondering how our parishes might possibly be changed in the future by all that we've been going through these past six weeks. The fact that right now you're reading a joint newsletter that primarily comes through e-mail instead of getting a bulletin after Mass is a perfect example of this.

How will church life feel when we come out of the lockdown?

What changes that we're experiencing now are likely to be our "new normal" going forward?

There have even been some rumors that our two parishes might be merging, could that be based in any truth?

I'll begin by telling you that the parishes are **not merging**. That rumor is false. A merger is not on the table at all. I'll say more about that later in this Sharing Spot, but I wanted to say that upfront so you can be relaxed as you read this. 😊

When we return to "business as usual" – whenever that is and however that looks – many things will not change. Once we get an all-clear from the State, from the Diocese and from medical experts, we plan to return to a full Mass schedule. We'll continue to have Faith Formation and parish events and celebrate the seasons of the liturgical year. Just as Jesus gathered disciples in Israel 2,000 years ago, after COVID-19, God will again gather us.

However, you may have noticed that this has been a time of tremendous creativity and growth for our parishes in some ways. We didn't see that coming when this all began in mid-March, but we can't deny that there have been many unexpected blessings as a result of this challenge. Here are some of the ways life after this lockdown will be different for us.

SMALL PRAYER GROUPS are here to stay!

We have nearly 80 parishioners in small prayer groups now, gathering via Zoom and conference calls to share weekly prayer together. Those who have participated say that it is deepening their faith far more than they could have hoped or dreamed it could. That's here to stay for sure! We are becoming a better, stronger, more mature group of disciples because of it!

E-GIVING AS THE PRIMARY COLLECTION METHOD is here to stay!

E-giving is the safest, easiest way for parishioners to support their parish. And it has been our lifeline through Coronavirus. Our personal relationship with the National Bank of Cocksackie, our business manager's ability to contact parishioners with prompt, direct service, and the way

it allows our parish finance councils to budget accurately for the income of the year ahead make it the way of the future for sure.

LIVESTREAM MASSES as a form of Evangelization are here to stay!

Look at just one of the notes we got this week from a viewer, along with a \$100 donation...

"We have been very happy with the services we've livestreamed since COVID-19.

Fr. Scott's leadership... the homilies & music ministry have been a beautiful part of your services, and my husband and I look forward to Sunday Mass at home (something I never expected, since both of us are technically challenged).

We are from Lake Luzerne, NY and our parish does not livestream. While checking YouTube we came upon St. Patrick's and I'm so glad we did.

*Keep up the good work!!
Anne & Tom Reed*

Before Coronavirus, we had about 70 people watching our Sunday Mass.

Now we have thousands... all over the country. That outreach is here to stay!

VIRTUAL MEETINGS as options for easier connection are here to stay!

While there is no substitute for the synergy of face-to-face communication, we have many groups and committees in our parish that could meet just as effectively – and far more easily – on Zoom or another meeting platform so that everyone can have as much time for rest and family interaction as possible. Many of us remember our busy pace of life in the time before lockdown caused us often not to have a free night available for weeks on end. While the amount of time we've had lately has maybe been *a bit too much* 😊, we can also see the benefits it has in providing a healthier life balance for many of us. Incorporating these meetings into our parish life is something we'll be doing in the future.

MORE USE OF WEBSITES/E-MAILS/YOUTUBE FOR INFORMATION is here to stay!

It's been so helpful for everyone to access e-giving, Small Prayer Groups, the Sunday livestream Mass, the music we sing, Fr. Scott's YouTube channel, Facebook... everything from one homepage. St. Mary's is now working on liberating ourselves from our clunky diocesan website to something more like what St. Patrick's has – parishioner and professional web designer Michelle Brown is working on that and hopes to have it launched soon!

And now we've streamlined our e-mail lists so there is less duplication and no more "error" messages when we reach out to our parishioners. Getting this newsletter by e-mail has been welcomed as a big improvement by many of our members.

ONE APP FOR TWO PARISHES TO FIND INFORMATION in one place will help us!

Because there is so much good content on My Parish App that applies to both St. Mary's and St. Patrick's, it just makes sense to have one place for logging in on your phone or tablet and then an array of buttons for you to choose from to get just the information you need from the parish you choose.

WHAT WON'T BE CHANGING – TWO PARISHES

There is no plan at all for our parishes to merge. If that rumor reached you, know it was born out of fear and has no basis in reality. There are several reasons why that is the case...

- 1) Bishop Ed has gone on the record that he would like to avoid mergers of parishes.
- 2) Our parishes are both vibrant and have no need to merge to stay viable.
- 3) The things that could possibly cause a parish merger are, either:
 - A) If Mass attendance at either parish slips below the full seating capacity of one Mass per weekend (both of our churches each comfortably seat in the ballpark of 300 people)
 - B) If the parish finances go “in the red” more than one year in a row


Thanks to your generosity, our finances are in the black (and with our influx of e-givers and the faithfulness of envelope users mailing in their checks each week, we are praying that will remain the case, even despite this lockdown) and our weekend attendance at each parish hovers around 300 (around 600 when totaling the four Masses).

So, with this all in mind, two notes of caution are wise to be alert to when, after lockdown, we get back into our regular church schedule... **if our weekly attendance slips below 300 on a regular basis at either church (fewer than 150 people at a Mass)... or if we face multiple quarters below our income budget, we'll need to start paying close attention.** Those are the indicators that a parish is not as healthy as it once was.

Neither of St. Mary's Mass times are the most ideal (many consider 7:30 too early and 11:30 too late), but for nearly five years St. Mary's has been successful with both attendance and collections, and the Mass times have, in some cases, attracted people to Mass from other parishes because they find the times a good alternative when their schedule makes Saturdays and Sunday mid-mornings difficult for them. (If you want to see what I mean, come see the 7:30 on a beautiful summer morning... or the 11:30 on the weekend of the clocks going forward.) **So we have every indication that the health of the parishes is strong, and with your commitment to coming to Mass and giving what you can afford, they will remain that way.**

Coronavirus is a tragedy. That's clear. But it is also an opportunity. We can allow God to take us by the hand and direct us to a new and better way of living, now that we've had a big splash of cold water, waking us up to what is most essential in life.

I'm excited to be led with you by God... and to see what miracles lie in store for us.

Faithfully,
Fr. Scott 

Small Prayer Groups

E-Mail [Christa Desrosiers | derobccr@aol.com](mailto:derobccr@aol.com)

We post fresh prayer services every Monday by Noon on the St. Patrick's Parish Homepage under the tab “Small Prayer Groups.” There are brief audio instructions there as well that guide you through the process of praying as a group. We've made it easy! So if you don't want to join a formal group, go on our Homepage, get the materials, and do it yourself with family and friends.

Nearly 80 parishioners are now meeting weekly as part of one of 20 Small Prayer groups on Zoom or over the phone across both parishes! Please contact Christa today and get connected.

St. Patrick's Food Panty Delivers

Call Diane Hoffman | 518-330-6789

We are here to serve – Home deliveries are available! New clients are always welcome! Call **Diane Hoffman** at **518-330-6789** or **518-756-7779**.

Donations can be picked up by a volunteer! Please call us if you can donate:

Pancake Mix, Cake Mix, Brownie Mix, Mayonnaise, Toothpaste, Deodorant, Chicken Noodle Soup, Juice (Fruit Punch or Apple), **Canned Tuna and/or Chicken Breast.**

Reaching Our Youth & Families

E-Mail Christa Desrosiers | derobccr@aol.com

WANT TO TRY A FAMILY PRAYER SERVICE AT HOME?

Join us on FB live each week – this week we will be moving to **Thursday evening at 7 PM** – to share some ideas and invite you to join us in the home of a real-life Catholic family! We start with the family prayer service that is designed for families of school age children. It can be accessed from St. Patrick's parish homepage. We also email it to all families in our Faith Formation database. If you are not getting it, please let us know so we can add you.

TWO PARISHES - ONE APP IS HERE!

We have added St Mary's info directly to the MyParish App. You can find us by typing **App to 88202** and when it asks you to choose a parish, type **St Patrick and St Mary**. You can also locate us by typing **Coxsackie** or **Ravena** and it will find us.



TWO PARISHES - ONE INSTAGRAM!

Stmary's.stpatrick's on Instagram **st.mary's st.patrick's.** is our account. Follow us and encourage your young people to follow us. Look for some weekly challenges to have some fun and stay connected starting next Monday. (Prizes included, of course!!)

ONE MINUTE IN CHURCH: THE MASS.

Find us on FB live (and maybe IG live at the same time) as we chat for a few minutes each week about something interesting to look for when you watch Mass on Sunday. Our first episode will be this **Saturday evening at 6 PM**. Watch for details on our social media platforms.

ST MARY'S 10TH GRADE

Keep connecting through your 'Band' group. Looking forward to having you share your favorite music this week!

Online Schedule

SUNDAY	9:30 = Mass (St. Patrick's YouTube channel or Mid-Hudson 901) 3:00 = Praying in your home
MONDAY	By Noon = Prayer Service #6 for small groups posted on St. Patrick's Homepage 3:00 = Praying in your home
TUESDAY	3:00 = Praying in your home
WEDNESDAY	3:00 = Praying in your home 4:00 = Hymn sing led by Lisa & Bob (Facebook Live) 7:00 = Adult Education Group led by Deacon Mike (Zoom) → <i>Interested in the Group? E-mail Deacon Mike at dcnmcd@aol.com</i>
THURSDAY	3:00 = Praying in your home 7:00 = Family/Youth Prayer Service (Facebook Live)
FRIDAY	3:00 = Praying in your home
SATURDAY	3:00 = Praying in your home 4:30 = Hymn sing led by John Vasto (Facebook) 6:00 = A Few Minutes in the Church: The Mass (Facebook Live)
SUNDAY	9:30 = Sunday Mass (St. Patrick's YouTube channel or Mid-Hudson 901) 3:00 = Praying in your home

Service to the Community

Call Bob Desrosiers | 518-444-8184

FACE MASKS – 600 MADE BY OUR PARISHIONERS!

We have just reached the 600-mask mark! What a miracle of cooperation and generosity! We thank all of our sewers for their dedication and we ask everyone else to please consider becoming a maskmaker! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkWQ6FT-hoQ>

For assistance, please call **Maria Mintz** at **518-731-6704**.

There is a labeled box at the church entrances for your completed face masks.

Now that the State has asked everyone to have a mask in public, the need is greater than ever. Please let anyone who needs a mask know they can come get one in church. And please take just one mask per person for now until we catch up with the demand.

QUARANTINE SPACE NEEDED

If you have a separate space in your house that could be used to quarantine a health care professional or other essential worker who needs to protect their family from exposure, please call recently-returned **Peace Corps Volunteer Caroline Lewis** at **518-364-0238**.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR SERVICE:

If you wish to volunteer for any task that could be helpful, please contact Bob at stmaryffo@aol.com or 518-444-8184 to match your skills and abilities with people's needs.

ESSENTIAL ITEMS

Please bring any extra essential items you have (TP, sanitizer, Clorox wipes, etc.) to the church and leave them on the labeled pews for those in need.

CROP WALK 2020 – JUNE 28

The CROP walk is being rescheduled to the last Sunday in June. More information to come.

Collections & E-Giving

E-Mail Lisa Muccilli | parishbusinessmanager@gmail.com

E-giving is what will keep our parishes strong and solvent no matter what the future may bring. Your response to our call for everyone who possibly can to enroll in our e-giving program has been truly INCREDIBLE! Between our two parishes, we now have **124 enrolled e-givers**, including the **65 new households** that have signed up since March 16!

Right now at St. Patrick's, **50 households** e-give, 36 of those are new since March 16. And at St. Mary's, **74 households** e-give, 29 of whom are new since March 16. And 23 gifts have come from livestream viewers – folks who have never visited our parishes in person, but consider themselves members because they are truly one with us.

Would you like to join the growing list of e-givers in our parish. We truly would appreciate it! If so, [Click Here](#) to request enrollment.

(Remember, those who wish can still always mail us your donations. Weekly collections and one-time donations will be collected and processed from our Rectory mail boxes regularly.)

Thank you for your incredible love and support for our beloved parish communities.

The Sick, Elderly & Homebound

Call Bob Desrosiers ^{or} Michelle Fralick | 518-756-9779

If you know someone who is infected with COVID-19, please let us know so we may all pray for them and reach out to their family, when appropriate.

ELDERLY & HOMEBOUND CONNECTIONS

Please volunteer to make phone calls to the elderly of our parish (those ill seniors on our Pastoral Care List and others who are not on the list but still would enjoy some conversation). Please contact Bob at stmaryffo@aol.com or 518-444-8184.

ST. MARY'S PRAYER CHAIN

Requests may be forwarded to Bob Desrosiers via e-mail at stmaryffo@aol.com or by phone at 518-444-8184. If anyone wishes to become a prayer chain team member, please contact Bob. There are lists of addresses of our homebound parishioners on a table as you enter church, so parishioners may also send cards of encouragement to our homebound.

ST. PATRICK'S PRAYER CHAIN

Requests may be forwarded to Michelle Fralick via email chelli1126@aol.com or by phone at 518-756-9779. Michelle will share names and telephone numbers of the homebound to all the Pastoral Care ministers (normally who make visits on 1st Wednesdays of the month) so they can send cards or make occasional phone calls. Come get the name and address of a homebound parishioner from the back of the church and send someone an Easter card that will mean the world.

Connecting with the Parishes

Online | Phone | E-Mail

SUNDAY MASS:

9:30 AM on **St. Patrick's YouTube** channel (also on-demand)
and on **Mid-Hudson Cable channel 901** (live at 9:30 only)

FR. SCOTT'S HOMILIES AND VIDEO MESSAGES:

In YouTube search bar: **Fr. Scott VanDerveer**

FIND US ONLINE:

Parish Websites (updated regularly)
Facebook (updated daily)

MY PARISH APP (Two Parishes, One App):

Text **APP** to **88202** to subscribe

INSTAGRAM (Two Parishes, One Instagram):

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st.mary's
st. patrick's.

CHURCH BUILDINGS:

Open daily from around dawn until around dusk

PHONE (voicemails checked daily):

St. Mary's Office = 518-731-8800
St. Patrick's Office = 518-756-3145

E-MAIL (checked daily):

St. Mary's Main office email: stmoff@aol.com
St. Patrick's Main Office email: office@tcosp.org
Business Manager (Both Parishes): parishbusinessmanager@gmail.com