



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



Sept. 27 & Oct. 4, 2020 • Edition 19 • Weeks 28 & 29

Keeping us connected during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Fr. Scott's Sharing Spot

Dear Parish Family....

When I was a child, I generally found church boring. Now, please understand when I say this: I loved God. In fact, I had a beautiful relationship with God, often chatting through the day with my Maker as some kids might with an imaginary friend. But church didn't quite seem to fully capture how cool this God was. I saw my grandmother, my great aunt (a nun), my mother and several other family role models loving God the way I did, but they seemed to *actually like* church and acted as though it "scratched their itch" for God. For me, it didn't. It was too long, it felt too mechanical and it didn't seem related to my real relationship with God.

One exception was when the incense came out. I knew then we were in for something *good*. It was only at special occasions - the funeral of someone, a special prayer service, or Holy Week (my favorite), when church suddenly seemed to get really interesting and really relevant.

The idea of incense in prayer is ancient, and the reason it is so loved by believers around the world is because what it symbolizes is so clear. If you were to ask me "What does the incense mean?" or "What does that signify, exactly?" rather than answer you, I'd ask you to watch it being used and then tell me what it meant to you.

The smokiness evokes the mystery of God. The plumes rise the way our prayers ascend. When a priest surrounds the casket of someone with incense at a funeral, it almost feels like we're sending them on a chariot of cloud to our true home. And the cloud is our faith... our prayers... our grief... our never-ending love for them. The aroma awakens our souls to know that we're on holy ground. Because of all of this, to not understand incense is almost like not understanding a hug, or not getting why grandma baked our kid a cake on her birthday. Explaining it in words would just mess it up.

I fostered an orange Tabby cat named Scarlett this summer and just loved her. She's now been adopted by the Bame Family in Earlton and she's getting treated like the queen she considers herself to be. For the seven weeks she lived with me, she'd come over with great curiosity each morning when I'd light incense before sitting down to do my morning prayers. She'd study the smoke and cock her head in wonder. If she could talk, she may have wanted to ask me why I was doing that, but honestly, even her cat brain seemed to get it on some level. She always sat close and liked me to keep a hand on her while I was praying. She felt it. (And those of you who have cats know that she would never have done that unless she absolutely wanted to. Cats are not pleasers.)

I recently spent eight days on retreat at a monastery of cloistered nuns. Incense was a part of their chanted prayers every morning and again every evening. They'd leave the thurible (incense burner on a chain) open in front of the altar as they sang Psalm 141 "Let my prayers rise like incense, O Lord, and my hands like a daily offering."

It got me remembering what incense meant to me as a child. How it drew me into the mystery and made church magical and true.

And then I thought about how many people have told me that they are allergic to incense and that I should not use it because it makes it hard for them to go to church. (At my former parish in Oneonta, some parishioners asked for one of the Masses to be the "non-smoking Mass.") ☺ For that reason, out of respect, we tend to only use it at funerals and some of the very highest holy days.

But, from another perspective, what a pity that is. What about today's kids who could be so engaged by the rising of the smoke? Imagine them going from being distracted and fidgety to riveted and filled with wonder. The Mass is meant to be both a supernatural sacrifice and a community fellowship gathering – all in one. We offer lots of ways to highlight the fellowship and the community nature of our gatherings. Perhaps it would be fair to say that sometimes we may need to bring more emphasis on the supernatural in order to keep the balance.

Because of allergy concerns, we now purchase very high-grade incense from St. Joseph's Abbey in Spencer, MA, a Trappist monastery where the monks make the incense by hand using all natural ingredients. It isn't a powder, it's a concoction of damp sticks that have been soaked in resins. The monks have had it tested and it has been rated hypoallergenic. It smells like what I imagine the Temple in Jerusalem smelled like back in the times of Jesus. And it reminds me of the day of my ordination.

I wanted to let you know that I am thinking about using incense at Mass a little more often for all the reasons I have shared here. I don't want you to think that I'm going to go over the top - it should still be special and distinctive (not like Corelle, more like china). But I think the reasons why incense helps so many people pray, and the fact that we go out of our way to get the good, homemade, hypoallergenic stuff (and the fact that for once in our lifetimes we're all wearing masks all through Mass!) this would be a good time to increase our use of it a little.

I hope that you find things like incense that make you fall more and more in love with our Catholic faith. The challenges of 2020 have helped us to see more than ever just what a gift that faith is.

This comes with love,

Fr. Scott ☺



Schedule

SUNDAY 9/27	9:30 = Public Mass at St. Patrick's (for St. Pat's Parishioners A-L) (also St. Patrick's YouTube channel or Mid-Hudson 901) 3:00 = Praying in your home
MONDAY 9/28	By Noon = New Prayer Service for small groups posted on parish Homepages 3:00 = Praying in your home
TUESDAY 9/29	2:00 = New Content posted on Fr. Scott's YouTube Channel 3:00 = Praying in your home 6:30 = Rosary, St. Mary's (All are welcome!)
WEDNESDAY 9/30	3:00 = Praying in your home
THURSDAY 10/1	3:00 = Praying in your home
FRIDAY 10/2	3:00 = Praying in your home
SATURDAY 10/3	3:00 = Praying in your home 4:30 = Public Mass at St. Mary's (for St. Mary's Parishioners M-Z)
SUNDAY 10/4	9:30 = Public Mass at St. Patrick's (for St. Pat's Parishioners M-Z) (also St. Patrick's YouTube channel or Mid-Hudson 901) 3:00 = Praying in your home
MONDAY 10/5	By Noon = New Prayer Service for small groups posted on parish Homepages 3:00 = Praying in your home
TUESDAY 10/6	5:30 = Confession (St. Mary's) 6:30 = Rosary, St. Mary's (All are welcome!)
WEDNESDAY 10/7	3:00 = Praying in your home
THURSDAY	3:00 = Praying in your home

10/8	
FRIDAY 10/9	3:00 = Praying in your home
SATURDAY 10/10	3:00 = Praying in your home 4:30 = Public Mass at St. Mary's (for St. Mary's Parishioners A-L)
SUNDAY 10/11	9:30 = Public Mass at St. Patrick's (for St. Pat's Parishioners A-L) (also St. Patrick's YouTube channel or Mid-Hudson 901) 3:00 = Praying in your home

Annual Diocesan Appeal

E-Mail Dawn Brownson | parishbusinessmanager@gmail.com



**For we
walk by faith,
not by sight.**

The Diocesan Appeal, July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

**Help us
meet our goal!**

[Click here: donation made easy!](#)

- Monthly or one-time gifts by credit card can be made via secure website at <https://donate.thebishopsappeal.org/>.
- You can make a pledge at that site as well as pledge payments.
- The appeal year runs through June 30, 2021.
- For more information on the appeal, visit www.thediocesanappeal.org.

Questions? Call **518-453-6680** or email stewardship@rcda.org

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany
Vicariate for Catholic Faith Formation and Education

Opening Wide Our Hearts: Our Faith Speaks to Racism

Tuesday, September 29, 2020
4:00 - 5:30 PM via ZOOM



Dr. Kim R. Harris was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and is the Assistant Professor of African American Thought and Practice in the Department of Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount University. Along the way, she spent many years in the Albany Diocese at home in beautiful Schoharie County. While pursuing her Ph.D. at Union Seminary in New York City, Kim composed the *Welcome Table: A Mass of Spirituals*, along with composer M. Roger Holland II. (GIA Publications) Kim teaches, records and travels the nation, performing concerts, lecturing on the music of African American freedom traditions, and leading music in a variety of liturgical settings.

Opening Wide Our Hearts: Our Faith Speaks to Racism

Despite promising strides made in our lifetimes, racism still infects our nation and our church. Our United States Bishops call us to “open our minds and hearts to Christ’s love for all people and to the experiences of those who have been harmed by the evil of racism.” In this webinar, we will come together to pray and reflect on the pastoral letter “Open Wide Our Hearts.” We also will be in conversation about our plans for action, the necessary conversion and challenging work, from which all will benefit.



To register:

[https://webapps.rcda.org/
parishfaithformation](https://webapps.rcda.org/parishfaithformation)

We look forward to “seeing” you!

If you have any questions, please call us at

518-453-6670

\$10.00 registration fee

Option to pay online at time of registration: Pay Pal
or

Payment can be made by check and mailed to:
Office of Lay Ministry and Parish Faith Formation
40 North Main Ave., Albany, NY 12203

ST. MARY'S CHURCH PRESENTS

ANNUAL *Outing* GOLF

18 HOLE SCRAMBLE FORMAT

\$70 PER PERSON

\$270 PER FOURSOME

INCLUDES:

LUNCH

18 HOLES OF GOLF WITH CART

BARBECUE FOLLOWING PLAY

THUNDER HEART GOLF COURSE

2740 ROUTE 67 FREEHOLD, NY

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

10AM TEE TIME

PLEASE ARRIVE EARLY TO CHECK IN

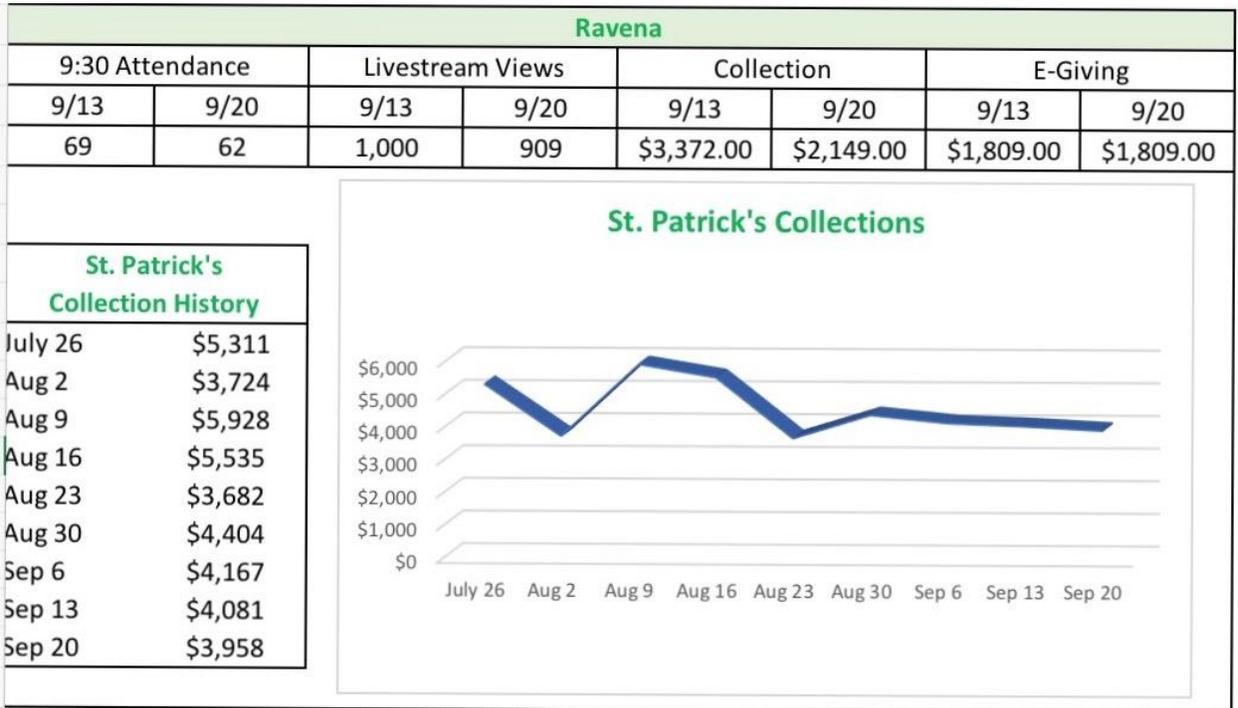
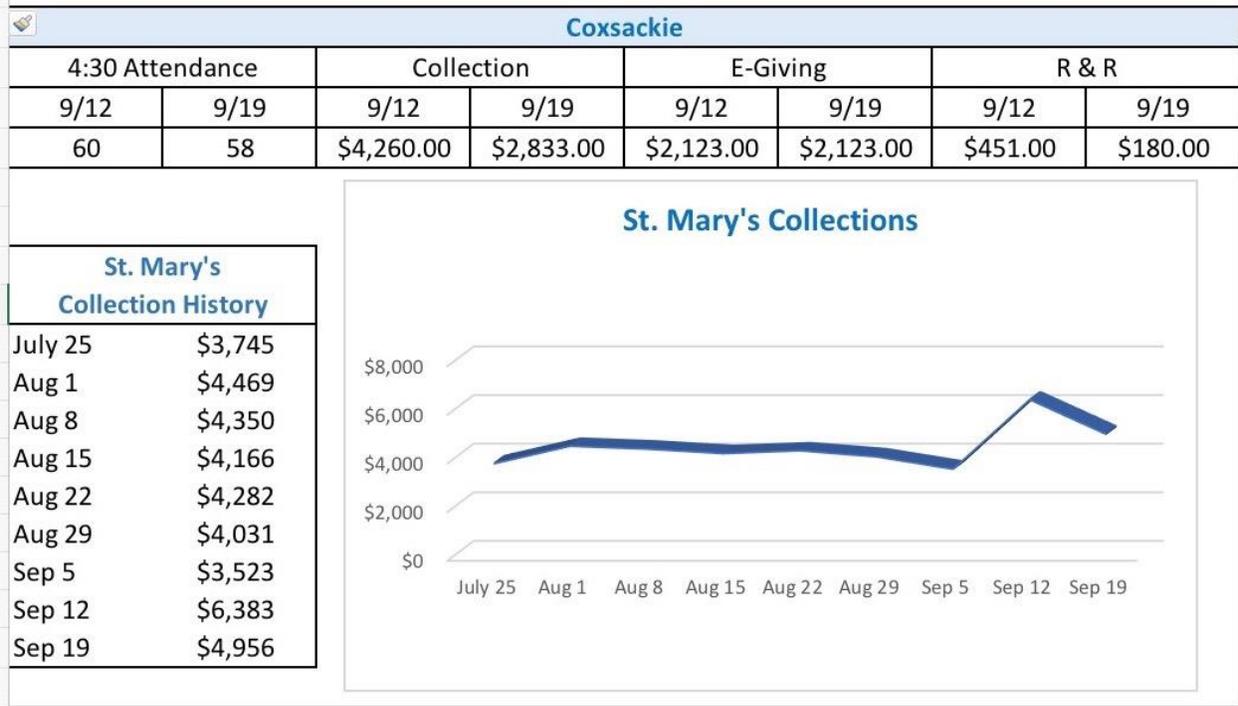
DUE TO COVID-19

NO PAPER CHECKS OR CASH WILL BE ACCEPTED PRIOR TO THE EVENT.
PLEASE BE PREPARED TO PAY UPON ARRIVAL.

PLEASE CONTACT FRANK LIMONE VIA EMAIL OR PHONE TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE
NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2020.

LIMONEFRANK19@GMAIL.COM
518-291-6623

all are welcome



E-GIVING MADE EASY

If you'd like to give e-giving a try, knowing how much it helps the parish and that you can change your mind at any time, [Click Here](#). **Thank you all for your enduring generosity!**

Youth Faith Formation at St. Marys

Call Bob Desrosiers | 518-444-8184

OPTIONS FOR THE FALL

We anticipate beginning FF Sessions in mid-November as we are now doing final preparations for the celebrations of the Confirmation and First Communion Sacramental Groups. All families have been given a chance to vote for assorted options for Faith Formation session formats, during this time of Pandemic. Please let Bob know what option you choose for your children and youth as soon as possible as this will assist in scheduling and planning for social distancing.

FIRST COMMUNION

Congratulations to the following who celebrated First Communion this weekend: Jocelynn Bolduc, Gavin Byrne, Quinn Carroll, Olivia Conrad, Margaret Geiger, Phoenix Hosier, Mason Hubert, Ethan Lenzo, Giovanni Paljusaj, Kendall Rochler, Owen Tetro, and Natalie Thompson. We are so proud of you and wish you many years of receiving Jesus in the most intimate way we can in this world!

Reopening for Mass News

E-Mail Christa Desrosiers | derobccr@aol.com

Each week, we have continued to hold steady with about the right number each at both Masses to fill the church, but not have to turn anyone away.

Please remember our volunteers have been helping make this process smooth for over 3 months and it doesn't look like they can quit anytime soon! *Your patience and compliance with their directions is SO appreciated and necessary to ensure we can continue to worship in person safely.*

Faith Formation at St. Patrick's

E-Mail Christa Desrosiers | derobccr@aol.com

We are trying to design our program to make it accommodating and effective, but not overwhelming for families or catechists. So far of the roughly 90 students historically enrolled in our program, we have the following preferences: 26 In-Person 24 Online and 40 we have not heard from yet. Our goal is to have our program planned and starting by the end of October. It will certainly look different than previous years, but we are excited to incorporate more family involvement and continue spreading the Good News that Jesus is Savior for ALL of us - and EACH of us.

Upcoming Events at St. Mary's

COLUMBIETTE MEETING

Maria Hall at **1:30, October 15th**. All members, please attend.

2020 PUBLIC SQUARE ROSARY CRUSADE

Please join us in praying for our nation and world on **October 10, 2020 at Noon** in **Coxsackie Riverside Park**. Please contact Lisa Baker at 518-810-3609 for more information.

Food Pantry at St. Patrick's

Diane Hoffman | dhoffman7249@yahoo.com

"The Pantry" is in need of donations of:

rice, cookies, brownie mix, BBQ sauce, canned or jar gravy, lunch box snacks.

Connecting with the Parishes

Online | Phone | E-Mail

WEEKEND MASSES:

4:30 PM Saturday at St. Mary's (by weekly invitation)

9:30 AM Sunday at St. Patrick's (by weekly invitation)

9:30 AM on **St. Patrick's YouTube** channel (also on-demand)

[Click here](#) and then please subscribe

and on **Mid-Hudson Cable channel 901** (live at 9:30 only)

WEEKDAY MASS (On Facebook Live from Our Lady of Victory Parish, Troy)

[Click here](#) to watch live at 8:30 AM Monday - Friday

or on demand later in the day

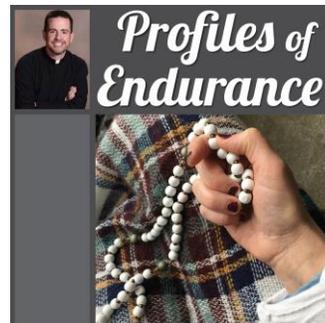
FR. SCOTT'S HOMILIES AND VIDEO MESSAGES:

[Click here](#) and then please hit 

"PROFILES OF ENDURANCE" (Fr. Scott's Podcast)

Interviews with parishioners about facing life's challenges

**SUBSCRIBE TODAY
ON APPLE PODCASTS
OR ON SPOTIFY**



FIND US ONLINE:

[Click here](#) for St. Patrick's Parish Website

<https://churchofsaintpatrick.wixsite.com/church-ravena>

[Click here](#) for St. Mary's Parish Website

<https://stmaryscoxsackie.com>

Parish Facebook Pages (updated daily)

MY PARISH APP (Two Parishes, One App):

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

INSTAGRAM (Two Parishes, One Instagram):

[stmary's.stpatrick's](https://www.instagram.com/stmary's.stpatrick'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 e-mail: stmoff@aol.com

St. Patrick's Main Office e-mail: office@tcosp.org

Business Manager (Both Parishes): parishbusinessmanager@gmail.com