



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



February 7 & 14, 2021 • Edition 28 • Weeks 47 & 48

Keeping us connected during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Fr. Scott's Sharing Spot

Dear Parish Family....

One of the most important shifts we can make in life is the awareness that life is hard. Even on a good day, life is challenging.

Take one of the best days of your life: a wedding, the birth of a child, an ordination. All of those events feature wonderful moments and lots of joy, but weddings also involve negotiating conflicts with family members that don't mix well, worries about the meal the caterer serves, sore feet from uncomfortable shoes. Ordinations are magical days of celebration that also involve the anxiety of having to do everything for the first time in front of a big audience. Births involve smiles and tears, cooing and cuddling... and a lot of blood.

When life is hard, when it's painful and complicated, that doesn't necessarily mean that we're doing anything wrong. It's just that life is that way. It's hard. And maybe that's simply because this is not our truest home. We're all just passing through on our way to our true home in God's heavenly kingdom. The late poet John Donohue captured this well when he wrote, "It's strange to be here, the mystery never leaves you alone."

Once we accept that life is hard, that there's no way to sidestep difficulty or outsmart suffering, we can start to make better decisions. We can begin to recognize that a lot of life's worst problems come about from whenever we are trying to avoid the suffering in life that can't be avoided. For example, when marriage is hard, we begin to suspect that it clearly indicates that we chose the wrong partner and need to leave him or her. But whenever I ask our parish couples who have been together for 40, 50 or 60 years (or more) what the secret of marriage is, they always say, "It's hard work, Father." They say it without any shame, without acting as though that means that they've done it wrong. In fact, they'll often go further and say, "Tell the younger couples not to expect that it's easy," and many will add, "But nothing worthwhile ever is."

...Nothing worthwhile is ever easy. Isn't that true?

Life is hard, but it's supremely worthwhile. It's the best of all God's gifts because it's the table on which all the other gifts of God are spread.

Since we can't sidestep the legitimate challenges of life, we have to see that many of the "exits" we would take from challenging situations would lead to at least as much suffering as we're experiencing by staying in those situations. A poem that has recently made the rounds on social media captures this starkly, but quite well....

Marriage is hard
Divorce is hard
Choose your hard.
 Obesity is hard
 Fitness is hard
 Choose your hard.
Being in debt is hard
Financial discipline is hard
Choose your hard.
 Communication is hard
 Not communicating is hard
 Choose your hard.
Life will never be easy.
It will always be hard
But we can choose our hard.
Pick wisely.

I find this to be a tremendously challenging, but equally inspiring thought. Nothing ever takes away from us our ability to choose how to react to a given situation. We may not be able to find an exit from the fact that life is hard, but we can choose our hard.

After all, as our elders have wisely told us... nothing worthwhile is ever easy.

This comes with love...

Fr. Scott 😊

Schedule

SUNDAY 2/7	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 6:30 = Eucharistic Adoration (St. Patrick's)
MONDAY 2/8	By Noon = New Prayer Service for small groups posted on parish Homepages
TUESDAY 2/9	11:00-12:00 = St. Patrick's Women's Prayer Meeting – Classroom 5 2:00 = New Content posted on Fr. Scott's YouTube Channel 2:00 = Rosary, St. Patrick's 3:00 = Praying in your home 5:30 = Confession (St. Patrick's) 6:30 = Rosary, St. Mary's (All are welcome!)

WEDNESDAY 2/10	3:00 = Praying in your home
THURSDAY 2/11	1:00-2:00 = St. Patrick's Men's Prayer Meeting – Classroom 5 3:00 = Praying in your home
FRIDAY 2/12	3:00 = Praying in your home
SATURDAY 2/13	3:00 = Praying in your home 4:30 = Public Mass at St. Mary's (for St. Mary's Parishioners M-Z)
SUNDAY 2/14	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 2/15	By Noon = New Prayer Service for small groups posted on parish Homepages
TUESDAY 2/16	11:00-12:00 = St. Patrick's Women's Prayer Meeting – Classroom 5 2:00 = Rosary (St. Patrick's Church) 3:00 = Praying in your home 5:30 = Confession (St. Mary's) 6:30 = Rosary, St. Mary's (All are welcome)
WEDNESDAY 2/17	ASH WEDNESDAY *All parishioners A-Z are welcome to the liturgies* 7:00 AM = Mass with ashes (St. Patrick's) 8:00 AM = Service with ashes (St. Mary's) 3:00 = Praying in your home 6:00 PM = Service with ashes (St. Patrick's) 6:00 PM = Mass with Ashes (St. Mary's)
THURSDAY 2/18	1:00-2:00 = St. Patrick's Men's Prayer Meeting – Classroom 5 3:00 = Praying in your home
FRIDAY 2/19	3:00 = Praying in your home 6:00 PM = Stations of the Cross (St. Patrick's) 6:00 PM = Stations of the Cross (St. Mary's)
SATURDAY 2/20	3:00 = Praying in your home 4:30 = Public Mass at St. Mary's (for St. Mary's Parishioners A-L)
SUNDAY 2/21	FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT 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

Opportunities For You – To Serve/Pray/Grow

DELIVER BEDS TO CHILDREN IN NEED ON SAT. FEB. 13 – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Please join us as we take a day to share Jesus' love with Albany & Schenectady children and families in crisis. JFO recently received a \$5,000 donation to purchase beds for local kids. On **Saturday, February 13** please join volunteers from St. Patrick's as we collaborate with other churches working with Justice for Orphans (JFO) to meet as many needs in our local CarePortal platform as we can. Together we can spread God's love throughout these two cities on "Love Albany & Schenectady Day!"

We need volunteers to load, drop off and minister to these families. If you would like to volunteer please contact: Shari Wells at shariwells66@yahoo.com



Annual Diocesan Appeal

E-Mail Dawn Brownson | parishbusinessmanager@gmail.com

ST. PATRICK'S

139 gifts so far
73% of goal (out of 190 gift goal)
Base gift = **\$25**
Highest gift so far = **\$3,000**
Average gift = **\$316**
Total donations to date = **\$42,306**

ST. MARY'S

134 gifts so far
80% of goal (out of 175 gift goal)
Base gift = **\$25**
Highest gift so far = **\$1,600**
Average gift = **\$295**
Total donations to date = **\$39,174**

Help us meet our goal!

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

If you choose to make your gift via a check, please make your check payable to the **Diocesan Appeal** and mail your donation directly to the Diocese at the following address:

**Diocesan Appeal
40 North Main Ave.
Albany, NY 12203**



Interfaith Story Circle

Stories of Moments of Embarrassment

No one likes being embarrassed, but this occasional feeling is part of the cost of admission to being human. And sharing a story of your embarrassment may also be the fastest route to making a connection with another person, since embarrassing moments are touchstones of humility for us all. Join us for a down-to-earth evening of laughter and commiseration about those moments we ordinarily might rather forget.



Our guest teller, Father Scott VanDerveer, spent 20 years discerning what God was calling him to do with his life and had a number of jobs (corporate regional manager, grant writer for a hospice home, school bus driver) followed by a seven-year career in teaching before he was ordained a Catholic Priest in 2013 at age 38. Fr. Scott is now the pastor of St. Mary's in Coxsackie and St. Patrick's in Ravena and loves using storytelling as a bridge connecting ancient wisdom to modern life.

**Come share your stories related to the theme, or just come to listen.
Either way, you will be warmly welcomed.**

Wednesday, February 10, 2021 7:15 – 8:45 p.m.

This Circle will be held on Zoom

Free and Open to the Public

For more information or to register and receive a Zoom link to join our circle

email ifsc@withourvoice.org

Interfaith Story Circle is a program of WithOurVoice, Inc.

www.interfaithstorycircle.org



Faith Formation Update for St. Mary's

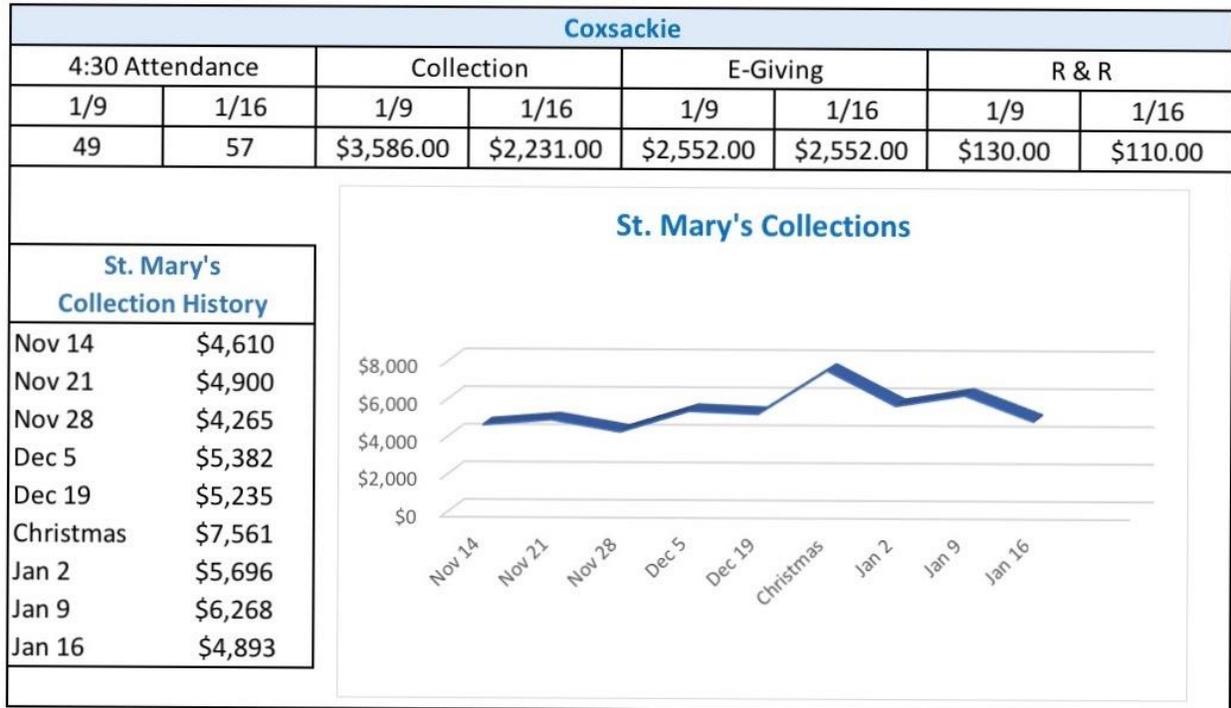
Call Bob Desrosiers | 518-444-8184

What do you like about this year's new format? What would you like to see tweaked?
Your opinion matters! Contact Bob with feedback... he's all ears and eager to hear!

ENVELOPES, CHECKS & CASH GIFTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME, BUT E-GIVING DOES WORK BEST

Might you like to give e-giving a try, knowing how much it helps the parish budget for the future and be assured of support, regardless of the weather, COVID restrictions or other unforeseen challenges? If so, [Click Here](#). Know that you can give it a try and later change your mind at any time.

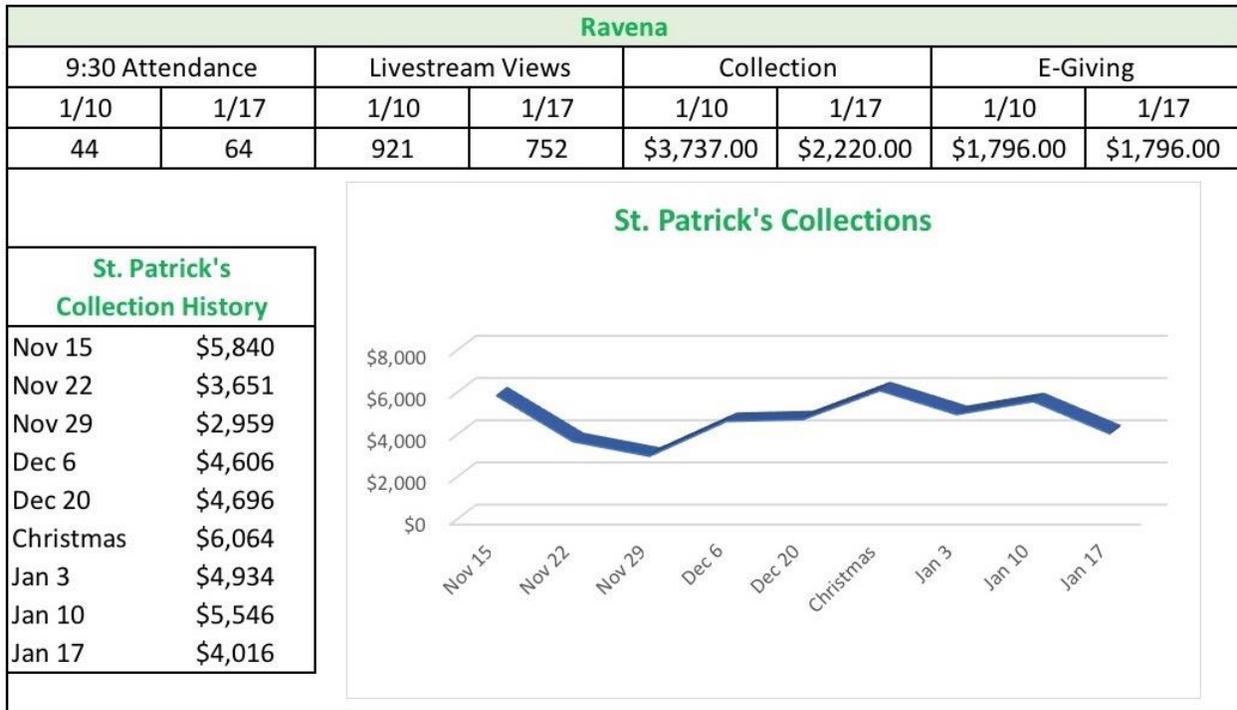
Thank you all for your incredible generosity!



REPAIRS & RENOVATIONS ACCOUNTS ARE LOW

We like to alert our loyal parishioners when we’ve discovered an indicator that our parish finances need attention. Recently St. Mary’s parish Finance Council met and analyzed our parish income collection from the beginning of our new fiscal year on July 1 through December 31. In doing so, we rejoiced to see that our weekend income was just a little below our budgeted expectations (which, considering the COVID surge we’ve been experiencing recently, is not any reason for alarm). But our monthly **Repairs and Renovations** collection has fared less well. **We are currently about \$12,000 below budget** for the first half of the fiscal year. This loss may soon be somewhat offset by the number of families who lost a loved one recently that have chosen to ask the community to give to the Repairs & Renovations account in their loved one’s memory “in lieu of flowers,” but a deficit will likely remain, nonetheless.

We continue to have R&R collections once a month and your gifts mean more than ever since we have fewer people at Mass giving cash offerings. If you are able to make an offering to the R&R account, 100% of your donation will go to contribute to the upkeep of St. Mary’s 120-year-old church, 135-year-old rectory and beautiful campus. (Please be sure to note that the contribution is for Repairs and Renovations in the memo field or your check or on the envelope.) We are so grateful for your loving attention to the needs of our parish family home.



Three New Catholics in 2021!

Nothing brings us more joy than welcoming new members to the church!

Camlynn Corbett and **Juan Colon** have never been baptized (so we call them “catechumens”) and **Lori Lepage** (who was already baptized in another Christian church, so is a “candidate”) are preparing to celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil.

Please keep them and our RCIA Team (Regina McGrath, Kathleen and Doug Baxter) in your prayers as we all journey together to the Easter Vigil Celebration!

“If I’ve been out of state, can I go to Mass?” E-Mail Christa Desrosiers | derobccr@gmail.com

Currently, the answer is **NO**, so please instead watch our livestream Mass on YouTube. The NYS DOH is trying to stop the surge of COVID-19 by requiring a mandatory quarantine if you cross state boundaries. The list includes all 49 states, but states will be removed as the numbers drop. [Please keep updated by checking that list here.](#)

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)

FR. SCOTT'S HOMILIES AND VIDEO MESSAGES (New postings multiple times each week):

[Click here](#) and then please hit 

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

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

Interviews with parishioners about facing life's challenges

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



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

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](#)



EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

First Sunday of the month 6:30-7:30 PM at St. Patrick's

WOMEN'S TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY

1:00-2:00 PM on Tuesdays at St. Patrick's in classroom 5 of the school

MEN'S THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY

1:00-2:00 PM on Thursdays at St. Patrick's in classroom 5 of the school