

Service & Outreach

Assist with Parish Mailings

There are times when volunteers are needed to assist with major parish mailings. The parish office staff prepares the materials and volunteers are called in to finish the final steps before the mailing goes to the Post Office. These steps include folding and inserting materials into envelopes, sealing them, and putting on the address labels. A parish mailing consists of approximately 1000 envelopes. Each mailing usually involves an hour or two of your time. We usually need six to eight volunteers for each mailing, so you are not expected to come each time. This is a great way to meet other parishioners and help the church.

Homebound Ministry

Homebound Ministers take the Eucharist and the gospel to people confined to their homes or nursing homes. The day and the time can be arranged between the minister and the homebound person. The minister may choose to see one or several people in his/her ministry. Sometimes a pair of ministers is assigned to each homebound person. One minister in the team will cover weeks one and two. The other will cover weeks three through five. Time should be allowed for a short visit to bring parish news, prayer and scripture.

Welcome Committee

In our mobile society, people move into our community and join St. Mary Parish and need to know that we desire their participation. A St. Mary welcome team has existed in the past and needs to be renewed. If you believe that we are either growing or dying, we need active new members. Catholics move and come to us! We'll make sure that their gifts are identified and utilized by a welcome visit.

Rides for those in Need

From time to time someone needs a ride and calls St. Mary. Sometimes this is in Portage and other times out of town to the bus station in Wisconsin Dells or Madison. Helping our neighbor in need is helping Jesus. Calls for rides are placed as needed, usually with short notice. A list of potential drivers makes it more likely that someone will be available during a time of need.

Garden Committee

The garden committee maintains the beauty of the grounds around our church and school. Any parishioners interested in working with plants and flowers are encouraged to participate in this gratifying project. Interested? Contact the Parish Center to volunteer.

Meals On Wheels

St. Mary Portage participates in The Meals on Wheels program, which is made up of volunteers from a number of churches within our community. As volunteers they deliver meals, which are prepared by the Divine Savior Nursing home, to those that have a hard time leaving their home due to injury, illness, or frailty. The program provides a nutritious meal to those who are unable to prepare one at the present time. Besides just delivering a meal, the volunteers provide a warm hello, smile, and a bit of conversation to those receiving the meals. St. Mary Portage Parish is responsible for delivering meals every six weeks (M-F). You can volunteer one day or all five days during that time.

Compassionate Cuisine & Care

"We are pilgrims on a journey. We are brothers on the road. We are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load."

This is from the Servant Song and is very appropriate for this group. Our goal is to help people in need at the time of their need. Compassionate Cuisine and Care can provide meals for a family dealing with an illness or run errands/pick-up groceries for elderly parishioners. Whatever the need we are here to help, nothing will be denied. We are looking for people who want to help each month with some small deed. These small deeds by many of us can help bear the load for those in need. Does this sound like something you would like to be part of? Or, if you are in need of something in particular and this group sounds like the group to help bear the load, please call and we will try and help.

Catholic Women's Club

The Catholic Women's Club has been active since 1921. We meet on the second Monday of the month from September through December and in April & May and our annual fee is \$10. Our meetings are held in the St. Mary School cafeteria or we meet at one of our local restaurants. Following dinner and a short business meeting we feature a guest presenter to address areas such as spiritual development, Christian family life, education or community outreach. We welcome new members along with new ideas for programs and projects.

Knights of Columbus

The Knights of Columbus are the largest lay Catholic family service organization. The Knights support vocations, evangelization and Catholic education and Right to Life. The four principles of the Order are Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism. Today, the Order is a grass roots organization where the local council develops the programs they believe will best serve the local community. Membership is open to any Catholic man who is not less than 18 years of age. The local council awards scholarships, provides breakfast at the cancer "Walk for Life" provides aid to the St. Mary School for special needs and holds a basketball and soccer skills contest for Portage Youth. In addition, they support special needs people with money raised through the Tootsie Roll Program and cut wood for Mary House once a year. The main funding for the local council comes from the Knight of Columbus Fish Fry held on the First Friday of each month year round and every Friday during lent.

Funeral Luncheon Committee

The Funeral Lunch Program began at St. Mary in the 1960's and has continued to this day. The purpose of the committee is to help the family at the time of a death. The luncheon after a funeral is a sharing time for family and friends— a time to ease the grieving for those who have just buried a loved one. Families are most appreciative of this service. At the present time the Funeral Lunch Committee consists of six groups— each group

having two chairpersons. Each group is responsible for a two-month period. The funeral director contacts one of the chairpersons when there is a funeral. One of the chairpersons plans the menu with the family and orders the main food items, which the family pays for. The other chairperson calls for help and for donations of food if necessary. The committee picks up the food from the grocery store, serves the food, and cleans up the kitchen and cafeteria. Left over food is packaged for the family to take home. The family usually makes a donation to the Luncheon Committee and this money is used for supplies and things needed in the kitchen, school, or church.

Each Funeral Luncheon Group has a list of regular workers who help them with the luncheon. In addition there are usually family members and friends who bring in food for the luncheon. We are always ready to welcome anyone who would be able to help in any way, either as a worker or as someone who would be glad to donate a salad or dessert when needed. If you are interested in this area of stewardship, please call the parish office, 742-6998.

