



# Our Lady of HOPE

CATHOLIC CHURCH



## Excitement Building for Upcoming BINGO EXTRAVAGANZA

*April Event Benefits Washington Catholic Schools*

**M**ark your calendar and get your bingo daubers ready, because the Bingo Extravaganza is set for Saturday, April 6 in the Washington Catholic Middle/High School gym. The Bingo Extravaganza promises big winnings that evening, but the real winners are our Washington Catholic Schools with the receipt of the proceeds.

The doors will open at 4 p.m. and the bingo excitement begins at 6 p.m., running through 10 p.m. There will be no reason to go hungry, as the Beta Club will be running the food concession, to raise funds for their national convention.

Bingo Extravaganza also is held in November. During that event, the Senior Parents run the food concession to raise funds for the after-prom expenses.

“The reason we have it when we do is to avoid bad weather,” says Betty Litwiler, Chair and staff member at

the Washington Catholic Elementary School. “We hold it in November before the bad weather arrives and in April, after the bad weather is gone. We set these dates because we kept getting snowed out!”

What puts the “extravaganza” in the Bingo Extravaganza is the money given out. During the regular bingo nights held on Friday and Sunday in the elementary school gym, the total winnings are \$6,000 per night, with the proceeds also going to our schools. The Bingo Extravaganza pays out a total of \$20,000 that night, with each game paying out \$1,000.

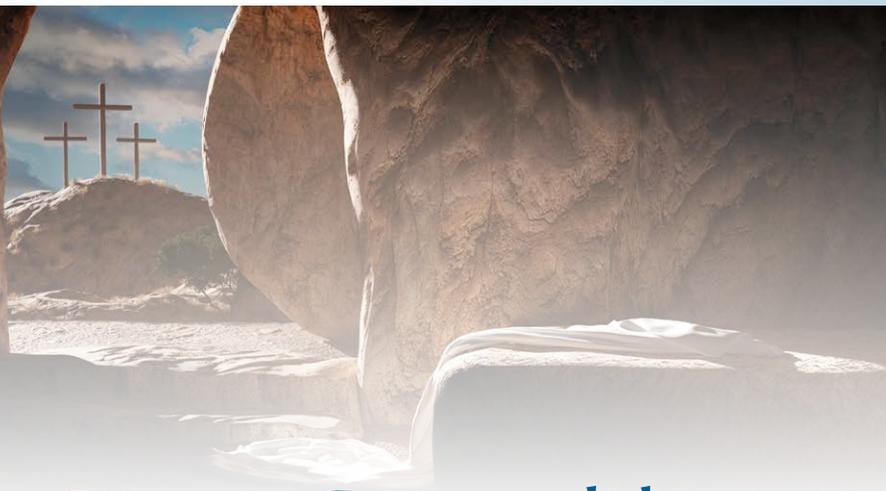
“It is a pretty exciting bingo,” Betty says. “This is not your grandma’s bingo!”

The price of admission is the cost of the packet sold.

“There aren’t individual cards sold during the evening,” Betty says. “Everything is contained in the packet.”



*Betty Litwiler is chairing the Bingo Extravaganza, set for April 6 at the Washington Catholic Middle/High School gym. Proceeds go to our schools.*



## Easter Stewardship: *Sharing Hope of the Resurrection with Those in Need*

**W**hat hope Jesus' Resurrection offers to us! Indeed, had He not raised Himself from the dead, our faith would be in vain, as St. Paul says. And yet, this hope is for every human being, even those who do not know Him.

Jesus calls us as Catholic Christians to rejoice in the hope He gave us through His Resurrection, but He calls us to share the joy of His Resurrection with the world, particularly with those whose condition in life makes it difficult for them to be joyful.

As we celebrate Easter in the comfort of our homes and churches, let us do our part to reach out to those, who at this time, still find themselves amid great suffering. So many are still experiencing Christ's death, as it were — the victims of war-torn areas around the world, the unwanted and abused, the homeless and the starving — many of whom cannot find a reason or meaning for the tragedy in their lives.

If there is anything worse than suffering, it is the horror of feeling alone in one's suffering. When we devote our lives to sharing the Gospel and the love of Jesus with these poor souls, we undertake a truly awesome and meaningful task — to show those in pain that they are not alone, to assure them of the compassion of Jesus, Who experienced all the physical pain, all the effects of sin, the very same sufferings endured by every person who has ever lived or will live on this earth. Who of all people is more ready to show compassion to the suffering than our Precious Lord?

As St. Paul says, "We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses" (Hebrews 4:15). But the great triumph in the tragedy of the Cross is

that Jesus did not merely experience suffering; He sanctified it, redeemed it, and ultimately conquered it through the Resurrection, thereby bringing hope to every person who suffers.

Jesus calls us to put our faith in His Resurrection into action, to show by the way we live our lives that we really believe it makes a difference even in the darkest places of the world. How can we shine the healing light of the Resurrection on those still in the shadow of the Cross?

We do not have to travel abroad to find a soul in suffering. Perhaps there is someone in our parish to whom we can minister this Easter season, or someone in our local community. We are all called to pray for our brothers and sisters who suffer, but perhaps we can do even more than that. Even if some of us may not have the freedom to devote our time or talent to serve the suffering, through our means, we can minister even to the furthest reaches of the globe. This is one reason why supporting Catholic outreaches and charities is so vital to the Church and our own faith lives. The Scriptures even say, "If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,' but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead." (James 2:15-17).

Is our faith still buried in the tomb, or is it alive and bearing fruit in our lives and in the lives of others this Easter season? Let's not shrink back from the awesome task Jesus has bestowed on us.

*Honoring the*

# FEAST OF ST. PATRICK *with a Spirit of Stewardship*

Dear Parishioners, .....

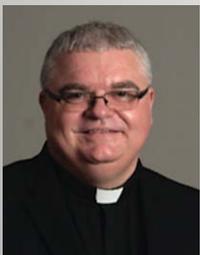
While March means we are in the middle of our Lenten journeys, it also brings the festive holiday of St. Patrick's Day, a time for us to reflect on the Catholic teachings and spiritual significance of this celebration. St. Patrick's Day is not merely about revelry and merriment; it is rooted in the life and teachings of St. Patrick, who was a devout Catholic bishop and patron saint of Ireland.

St. Patrick, known for his missionary work in Ireland, brought the Catholic faith to the Irish people. His dedication, faith, and tireless efforts in spreading Christianity serve as an inspiring example for us all. In celebrating St. Patrick's Day, we can embrace this Catholic heritage and faithfully observe the holiday through acts of Catholic stewardship, particularly during the Lenten season. Here are some ways to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in a spiritually meaningful and stewardship-focused manner:

- **ATTEND MASS:** On St. Patrick's Day, make attending Mass a central part of your celebration. St. Patrick's commitment to the Catholic faith should inspire us to come together in worship and prayer, reaffirming our own faith.
- **LEARN ABOUT ST. PATRICK:** Take some time to learn about the life and work of St. Patrick, his dedication to God, and his missionary efforts. Reflect on how his example can guide your own faith journey.
- **SHARE YOUR FAITH:** Just as St. Patrick shared his faith with the people of Ireland, take this opportunity to share your faith with others. Engage in conversations about Catholicism and encourage open dialogue about your beliefs.
- **EMBRACE THE LENTEN SPIRIT:** St. Patrick's Day often involves indulgence, but as it falls within the season of Lent, consider refraining from excessive feasting and drinking. Use this day to practice moderation and self-discipline, aligning your actions with the spirit of Lent.
- **ACTS OF CHARITY:** St. Patrick's Day can be a time for acts of charity. Donate to a Catholic charity, support a local food bank, or participate in community service to help those in need. These acts of love and generosity reflect St. Patrick's dedication to serving others.
- **CELEBRATE IRISH CULTURE AND TRADITION:** While celebrating Irish culture is an integral part of the day, do so in a manner that respects your faith. Enjoy traditional Irish music, dance, and cuisine, but do not lose sight of the spiritual significance of the holiday.
- **STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENTS:** Use St. Patrick's Day to renew your commitment to Catholic stewardship. Reflect on how you can contribute your time, talents, and financial resources to support our parish and the broader Catholic community.

By celebrating St. Patrick's Day in a way that aligns with Catholic teachings and focuses on stewardship, we can honor the legacy of St. Patrick and his dedication to spreading the Catholic faith. Let us remember that the core of St. Patrick's work was to bring the light of Christ to the people of Ireland, and we, too, can continue to share the love and teachings of Christ with those around us.

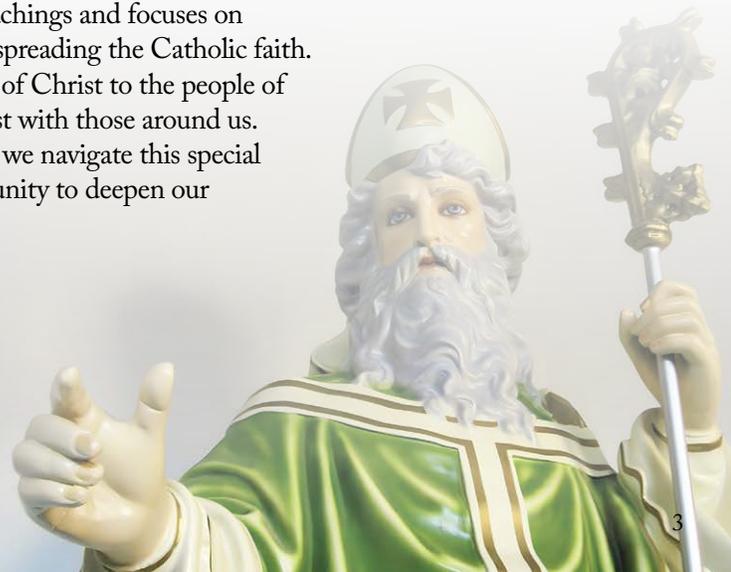
May this St. Patrick's Day be a time of faith, reflection, and service as we navigate this special day during the season of Lent. Let us use this opportunity to deepen our relationship with God and one another.



In Christ,

*Fr. Paul Ferguson*

Fr. Paul Ferguson  
Pastor





## SPONSOR COUPLES

*Providing Valuable Guidance and Support*



*Dustin and Kelli Barnard*



*Bill and Maria Killion*

Marriage is the foundation of a strong family, so the Church prioritizes preparing engaged couples for the Sacrament of Marriage. This usually takes place in the form of a marriage preparation course that must be completed before the wedding. Our Lady of Hope is working to enhance its commitment to marriage preparation by re-establishing a Marriage-Sponsor Couple Ministry. Marriage sponsor couples will be training to journey with engaged couples as they prepare to enter into the Sacrament of Marriage. In turn, the married couples will strive to provide working examples of what it takes to achieve a lifelong marriage.

Bill and Maria Killion were involved in this ministry many years ago. For them, it was a rewarding and spiritual experience that led to several lifelong friendships. They are excited to help Our Lady of Hope bring this ministry back to provide this incredible experience for engaged couples and also provide another option when completing marriage preparation requirements.

“We have developed lifelong friendships with two of the couples that we sponsored in 1999 and 2003,” Maria says. “We feel we have become like an extended family for them, and have shared in many important moments in their family lives, such as marriage, RCIA, Baptisms, First Communion, Confirmations, etc. We have also developed strong friendships with their parents and have been included in numerous celebrations with the families of the siblings of our engaged couples. We are also Godparents to two of the children.”

Sponsor couples will complete a training and certification process that will last about two hours. The

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*To get involved, or for more information, contact Bill and Maria Killion by calling or texting 812-698-7540 or 812-486-9559, or emailing them at [billkillion2015@gmail.com](mailto:billkillion2015@gmail.com) or [mkillion55@gmail.com](mailto:mkillion55@gmail.com).*

# COUPLES MINISTRY:

## *Support During the Marriage Preparation Process*

training will be facilitated by Eric Girten, Director of the Office of Marriage, Family, and Life for the Diocese of Evansville. The *For Better For Ever* program suggests six sessions with the sponsor and engaged couples. Outreach by the sponsor couple after the marriage is also recommended.

During their engagement many years ago, Brenda and Matt Meredith were sponsored by the Killions.

“Having a sponsor couple as we prepared for marriage in the Catholic Church was a wonderful experience,” Brenda says. “The program allowed us to begin our marriage with a stronger foundation, and a couple to turn to when we needed advice or guidance. They shared their wisdom and experiences and weren’t afraid to talk about what worked and didn’t work over the years. We are so thankful this program brought us together in this way.”

Kelli and Dustin Barnard, another couple sponsored by the Killions, highly recommend that engaged couples get involved in this ministry.

“It was helpful for us when the sponsor couple also shared some of their struggles and successes and how they dealt with them,” Kelli says. “We built and maintained a relationship with the sponsor couple. The program

reinforced that although marriage is not easy, it is a lifelong commitment and a beautiful sacrament.”

Bill and Maria will reach out to parishioners who express interest in serving in this ministry through the commitment cards turned in during the annual Stewardship Renewal.



*Matt and Brenda Meredith*

## Bingo Extravaganza *continued from front cover*

There is a need for volunteers to help at the Bingo Extravaganza, but there is a greater need for helpers during the Friday and Sunday bingo games, which Betty and her husband run. They began operating the parish bingo games in 1991.

Whether you are a bingo player or a volunteer, there is a wonderful payout for both.

“It’s a great way to meet new people,” Betty says. “You meet wonderful people who come and support our schools. There are parents I wouldn’t have met if they hadn’t come to bingo. There is tremendous fellowship.

*Interested in volunteering for regular weekly bingo games or for the Bingo Extravaganza in April? Contact Betty Litwiler at [blitwiler@evdio.org](mailto:blitwiler@evdio.org).*

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# *Healing Power* of Confession:

## *A Guide to Preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation*

The Sacrament of Reconciliation, often known as confession, is a cornerstone of the Catholic faith. It provides us with an opportunity to seek forgiveness for our sins and reconcile with God. This essential sacrament is a powerful way to renew our spiritual journey, and proper preparation is key to making a good confession.

Confession is more than just admitting our sins; it is a sacred encounter with God's mercy and love. Through this sacrament, we acknowledge our human frailty and seek God's forgiveness, allowing us to start anew with a clean slate. It's a moment to rekindle our relationship with Christ and grow spiritually.

### PREPARING FOR CONFESSION:

- **Examination of Conscience:** Before confession, take time for self-examination. Reflect on your actions, thoughts, and words since your last confession. A thorough examination of conscience helps identify the sins that need to be confessed.
- **Sorrow for Sins:** Genuine contrition is essential. Sorrow for sins should come from the heart and a desire for true repentance. Recognize the harm your sins may have caused and your intention to avoid them in the future.
- **Make a List:** Consider making a list of your sins to guide you during the confession. This list can help you remember all the sins you wish to confess, ensuring a thorough examination.

### APPROACHING THE CONFESSIONAL

Entering the confessional can be intimidating but remember that the priest is there to guide you through the process with compassion and understanding.

- **Begin with the Sign of the Cross:** When you enter the confessional, start with the sign of the cross, invoking

the Holy Trinity. This gesture signifies your intention to confess your sins.

- **Confession:** Begin your confession by stating your sins. Start with the most serious ones and then proceed to the others. Be honest, straightforward, and specific. For example, instead of saying, "I was mean to someone," specify the incident, such as, "I spoke hurtful words to a family member."
- **Listen to the Priest:** After you've confessed your sins, the priest may offer guidance or ask questions for clarification. Listen attentively and respond honestly.
- **Accepting the Penance:** The priest will assign a penance, which may involve prayers, acts of kindness, or other spiritual exercises. Accept this penance with a willing heart and a commitment to complete it.
- **Act of Contrition:** The priest will then ask you to recite an act of contrition, expressing your sorrow and commitment to avoid sin. You can use a traditional act of contrition or speak from your heart.

### RECEIVING ABSOLUTION

After your act of contrition, the priest will absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. At this moment, your sins are forgiven, and you are reconciled with God.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a profound way to experience God's mercy and grace. Approach it with humility and a sincere desire for spiritual renewal. Through proper preparation and heartfelt confession, you can embrace this sacrament as a means of drawing closer to God and leading a life more in accordance with His teachings. Remember that the priest is there to assist you and be a conduit of God's mercy, and your confession should always remain confidential.

# Spring Garden Gala Offers Great Way to Support Our Catholic Community

*Join Us on April 13 for a Night of Fun*

Our annual Gala is fast approaching, and its organizers wish to invite all parishioners and members of the greater community to enjoy an evening of food and entertainment.

The Gala has been a parish community fixture since 2013. The theme for this year's event is the Spring Garden Gala, which will take place on April 13 at 5 p.m. in the Washington Catholic Middle School Gym. All are welcome and invited to attend — your participation benefits the fundraising efforts for the school and community.

“We need the support of the Catholic community of Washington to make this event a success,” says Chairperson Sharon Carie. “Many hours of planning go into the event, but we need you to participate.”

One way to participate is for individuals, businesses, or organizations to donate items for the silent auction. The online silent auction will be available for online bidding beginning on March 30 and ending at 6:30 p.m. on April 13. The link for the auction is [BiddingOwl.com/CCW](http://BiddingOwl.com/CCW).

Parishioners and other community members can also help by attending the event, helping with setup, or simply praying for the Gala's success.

“The Gala is one of the largest fundraising events of the year,” Sharon says. “All proceeds benefit the Catholic Community of Washington, including the Washington Catholic Schools.”

Last year's Gala raised more than \$100,000 for our Catholic community. This included the fund-a-need of more than \$50,000 for the soccer field improvements.

“The committee hopes that this year's Gala will be the best one yet!” Sharon says. “Besides providing much support for our Catholic community, it is hoped to bring about great fellowship to all participating.”

In addition to food and fellowship, this year's entertainment will feature comedian Mike Armstrong. Mike



*A great time was had by all at last year's Gala event.*



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## Spring Garden Gala *continued from page 7*

has appeared on HBO, Comedy Central, and CMT and has opened for Michael Bubl , Alan Jackson, Tracy Lawrence, and David Allan Coe. His content is family-friendly and clean.

“He is one comedian you won’t want to miss and you will leave the Gala with a smile on your face,” Sharon says.

The cost of this year’s Gala is \$80 per person. Reservations must be made by March 29.

“Please consider attending,” Sharon says. “It is an evening filled with good food, great fun, terrific entertainment, and wonderful fellowship.”



*Reservations may be made by calling 812-254-2883,  
online at [www.ccwash.org](http://www.ccwash.org) or via email at [tjoyce@evdio.org](mailto:tjoyce@evdio.org).*