

A photograph of the interior of a church, likely Saint Mark, showing a long aisle with wooden pews, white columns, and stained glass windows. The floor is tiled, and the lighting is warm. The text "A GREAT LIGHT HAS SHONE." is overlaid in the upper left, and "SAINT MARK" is overlaid in large letters at the bottom. Below the church name, the date and page information are provided.

A GREAT LIGHT
HAS SHONE.

— ISAIAH 9:1

IN MY NAME THEY WILL

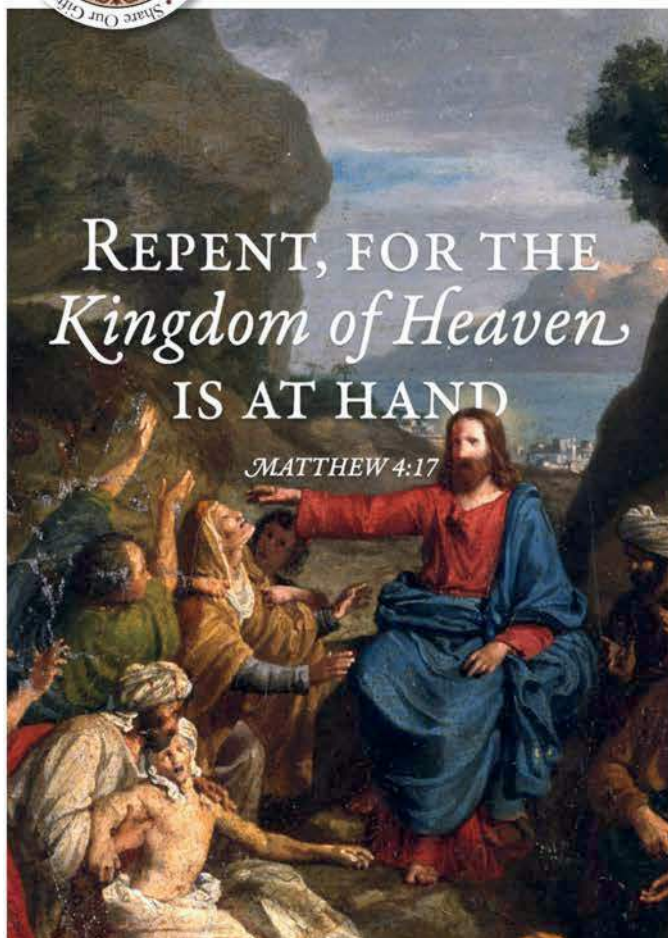
DEN

SAINT MARK

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, January 25, 2026, Español página 16



Welcome to St. Mark!



REPENT, FOR THE
Kingdom of Heaven
IS AT HAND

MATTHEW 4:17

Today is the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time. Despite its name, Ordinary Time is anything but ordinary. It is the season in which we walk with Jesus through His public ministry and learn what it means to live as His disciples in the daily rhythms of life. Ordinary Time is not centered on a single feast, but on how faith is lived: in our families, our work, our relationships, and our choices. Week by week, we are invited to follow Christ more closely and to allow His presence to shape the way we live.

Readings can be found in the music handouts or on page 891 of the St. Augustine Hymnal. The Order of the Mass can be found on page 7.

At St. Mark, we believe we are all called as one by Christ to embrace the spirit of stewardship and engagement to Grow in Christ, Serve One Another, Share Our Gifts and Connect in Faith. This mission is our quest for holiness. It is by our intentional discipleship that each of us become stewards of the gifts God has given us and to share them with others. Our time, our talent and our treasure are given to us by God to share with others by spreading the Gospel and building His kingdom.

We invite you to make St. Mark your parish home!

If you are interested in registering as a member of St. Mark, please go to stmarknc.org/registration or scan the code. You may submit the form online or bring a paper copy to the Welcome Desk during normal business hours. Forms can be found in the narthex. Please know, you do not need to be Catholic to join and come to our parish.

Stay up-to-date on all happenings at the parish by following us on social media or signing up to receive our e-newsletter at stmarknc.org/emailnewsletter.



Please join us in the Prayer to St. Michael after the Final Blessing. **Please do not leave the church until after the priests, deacons, and servers have exited the church. Thank you.**

Saint Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do Thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the Power of God, cast into hell, Satan and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



Thank you for generously sharing your gifts with the parish. You may make an online donation at stmarknc.org/online-giving

Guidelines for Communion For Catholics

1. To be in a state of grace, that is to say, to be free from any unconfessed mortal sin.
2. To abstain for at least one hour before Holy Communion from any food and drink, with the exception of water and medicine.
3. To know what you are receiving and to approach the altar with devotion.
4. You may receive Holy Communion standing or kneeling.
5. **Please consume the Holy Eucharist in front of the minister of Holy Communion, before walking away.**

For Non-Catholics: We welcome you to Holy Mass and are glad you are here. Please feel free to participate by singing, standing, kneeling, etc. However, the reception of Holy Communion is reserved for Catholics in a state of grace. At the time of Communion, please feel free to come forward with your arms crossed over your chest for a blessing or to remain in your pew.

See page 1302 in the hymnal for more information.

FROM THE PASTOR



Today's readings remind us that stewardship is not just a thing we do — rather, stewardship is at the core of who we are as disciples of Christ.

Our first reading, from Isaiah, contains this prophecy of Christ and what His saving message would mean to all who embrace it. "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone." We are among those blessed people on whom the light of Christ has shone. By virtue of our Baptism, we, who were once in the darkness of original sin, have been reborn into the great light that is God's grace in us. We are cherished members of God's family.

What a privilege! Yet, with this privilege comes the responsibility to actually live for God and to bring His Good News to all those we meet — at work, at school, in our community and right in our own home — in other words, to live as His good stewards.

And there is a certain urgency that comes with the call to a stewardship way of life as we see in our Gospel passage from Matthew. Jesus says, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." In other words, turn away from selfishness, turn towards God and live as His disciple now — don't wait!

In this same passage, the very first disciples give us examples of a good steward's prompt "yes" when the Lord called to them. Our Lord invites them to "Come after me and I will make you fishers of men." They did not hesitate but "at once they left their nets and followed him." They put our Lord and His will first.

This is the essence of a stewardship way of life — to be always ready for the ways that our Lord is calling us to bring His light to others. It's more than something we do — it's who we are. © Catholic Stewardship Consultants, 2025.

Pastoral Pondering – This past Thursday was the 53rd anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe vs. Wade* decision that legalized abortion. *Even though that decision and the one that followed have been overturned by the Court, the work of defending life continues.*

Even though the U.S. Supreme Court's 2022 decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* overturned *Roe v. Wade* and returned abortion regulation to the states, the Catholic Church's commitment to the sanctity of human life remains unchanged and multifaceted. From a Catholic perspective, grounded in scripture, tradition, and teachings like those in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (e.g., CCC 2270-2275), advocacy for life isn't solely tied to one court ruling or legal framework—it's a holistic moral imperative that extends beyond abortion to all threats against human dignity. The key reasons why Catholics are called to continue this work:

1. Abortion Remains Legal and Accessible in Many Places Including NC

The *Dobbs* decision didn't ban abortion nationwide; it simply decentralized the issue. As of 2026, abortion is still legal in over half of U.S. states, often with few restrictions up to viability or beyond in some cases (e.g., California, New York). Millions of abortions occur annually, and access has expanded through measures like mail-order abortion pills (e.g., mifepristone). Catholics are urged to advocate for protective laws at the state and federal levels to safeguard the unborn, as the Church views direct abortion as intrinsically evil and never justifiable.

Beyond legislation, this includes supporting crisis pregnancy centers, adoption services, and policies that help women facing unplanned pregnancies, aligning with the Church's emphasis on mercy and practical charity.

2. Ongoing Cultural and Political Challenges

Pro-abortion initiatives continue to gain traction, such as ballot measures in states like Florida and Arizona that have sought to enshrine abortion rights in constitutions, or federal proposals to codify *Roe*-like protections. The Church teaches that Catholics have a duty to participate in the public square (e.g., via voting, lobbying, and education) to counter these efforts and promote a "culture of life," as articulated by Pope St. John Paul II in *Evangelium Vitae* (1995).

Globally, abortion rates remain high, and issues like international funding for abortion providers (e.g., through U.S. foreign aid) persist, requiring advocacy on an international scale.

3. The Broader Pro-Life Ethic

Catholic pro-life advocacy isn't limited to abortion; concern for life issues encompass all stages of life. This includes opposing euthanasia and assisted suicide (now legal in 10+ U.S. states and parts of Canada/Europe), promoting alternatives to the death penalty, embryonic stem cell research, human trafficking, poverty, war, and environmental degradation that harms the vulnerable.

Overturning *Roe* was a milestone, but it doesn't address root causes like economic inequality, lack of family support, or societal pressures that lead to abortion. Catholics are called to build a society where life is welcomed and protected through social justice initiatives, echoing Pope Francis's calls in *Fratelli Tutti* (2020) for integral human development.

4. Spiritual and Moral Witness

Ultimately, the Church's stance is rooted in the belief that every human life is sacred, created in God's image (Genesis 1:27), and that protecting the innocent is a core Gospel mandate (e.g., Matthew 25:40). Laws may change, but moral truth doesn't—Catholics are to witness to this truth through prayer, education, and personal example, fostering conversion of hearts rather than relying solely on legal victories.

Organizations like the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) emphasize that the fight for life is ongoing, urging parishes to engage in initiatives like Walking with Moms in Need to provide tangible support.

In summary, while *Dobbs* was a significant win, it's not the end of the road. The Catholic call to "stand up for life" is perpetual, driven by faith, compassion, and a vision for a just society.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Please Pray For

Julie Andrews
Sarah Armstrong
Donald Arrup
John & Casey Ball
Daisy Bayona
Deidre Beck
Catherine Belloni
Richard Biddy
Beatrice Bilodeau
Marilyn Bissinger
Brian Blatchford & Family
Virginia "Gini" Bond
Kathy Brandt
Dave Breen
Helen Sally Buff
Elaine Burkinshaw
Carmen Cabranes
Anne Caestecker
Michelle Chicoine
Rod Clair
Jim Clark
Murphy Clark
Beth Collins
William Conklin
Vic Crognale
Janice D'Angelo
Sheila DeArmon
Judy and Rich Deboer
John Deluca
Henry Diener
Charlie Donovan
Jane & William Dragoon
James Dupree
Barbara Dutty
James P. Durcan
Jack Evans
Frances & Kai Ferrell & Family
Charles Fillipo
Al Fischlein
Joseph Fiore
Tom Fox
Alan Friedl & Family
Maureen K. Frost
Carmine Gallo
Teri Gay
Valeria Gerbasi
Denny & Monica Golden
Tom Goodwin
Josette Grace
Robert Graham
Paige Grieshop

To submit a prayer request, visit: stmarknc.org/prayerchain

Rachel Grieshop
Hank Griffin
John Grivizas
Helen Haddad
Fran Hehn
Laura Hehn
Allan Helmbrecht
Madeline Louise Henwood
Kevin Herman Sr.
Hannah Hopkins
Frank Hunnicutt III
Jerry Jackson Jr.
Cathi Kalberier
Karen Kastle
Gary Katz
Carol & Frank Kenny
Dennis Koenig
Jackie Kopicki
Peggie Lauricella
Craig Leiker
Joan Lesch
Marie Ligon
Peter R. Loew
Kitty Long
Mary Jo Lucey
Margaret Lynch
Tom & Colette Manente
Dr. Sivaramalingam
Manickavasagar
Rosina Marcucci
Vernon McCord
Cathy Milligan
Terry Milstead
Lucille Modica
Vincent Montoya
Mary Morgan
Haleigh Moss
Niall Mulkeen
Elizabeth Mulligan
Jamie Mulvihill
Angeles Murphy
Maria Magdalena Murphy
Carl Muti
Paul Nealon Jr.
Paul Sr. and Sally Nealon
Margaret Nelson
Joann Nigro
The Ober Family
Blanca Yolanda Ojeda
Louise Painter
Margaret Paquette

Hazel Palmer
The Patterson Family
Fernando Paverpai
John Pecoraro
Doug Peterson
Angela Piraino
Gianni Piraino
Ellen Posey
Ella Postlewait
Nicole & Bruce Preiss
Thomas Ranney
Joette Reid
Lindsay Remington
Butch Remesch
Lola Rodriguez
Maria Rubinos
Thomas Rynne
Phyllis Searles
Daniel Sheffield
Sherwood Family
Mark Shields
Sue Sia
Pennie Singh
Todd Singh
Bill Sirnack
Robert Somerville
Betsy Spartz
Jeff Stark
John Williams Stoker & Family
Terri Summers
The Tate Family
Kenneth Terry & Family
Cheryl Thompson
Mike Tolbert
Alston Torres
Zaida Torres
Lucia Solis Vallarino
Robert Virgint
Caroline Vogel
Jonathan Wark
Welcome Retreat Staff
Paul Widman
Carol Woodard
Mary Jane Zimmerman

Please pray for the souls of
Catherine Belloni
Mother of Patty Crawford
Kathie Bunch
Mother of Ryan Bunch

MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, January 25

7:30 am † GERALDA Capristo
9 am Rachel Cannon
11 am † Charles Kern
1 pm † Esperanza Rodriguez
4:30 pm † Joan Loughlin
5 pm † Thomas & Ellen Barcellona

Monday, January 26

7 am Micky Nassauer
9 am The Doolin Family

Tuesday, January 27

7 am Zak Kennedy
9 am † Therese Churchill

Wednesday, January 28

7 am † Anthony Conter
† Constance Harris
6:30 pm Purgatorial Society Mass

Thursday, January 29

7 am St. Mark Parishioners
9 am † Timothy & Eileen Reardon

Friday, January 30

7 am † Olivia Pate
9 am † Michael Zitnik
7 pm † Maria Rodriguez

Saturday, January 31

9 am † Nancy Breen
5 pm Jack & Nadine Agliata

Sunday, February 1

7:30 am † Maria Torres
9 am † Charles Kern
11 am † Eileen Marino
1 pm The Gonzalez
4:30 pm † Derek McDonald
5 pm † Jose Mendoza

† Deceased

Pray for Our Military

Air Force: C4C Andrew Bauders; Airman Gregory Burke; Amn Antoinio Diaz; Lt. Col. Michael Dragoon; Capt. Stephen Hack; Lt. Col. Douglas Lincoln; Capt. Ryan Loyd; Alejandro Martinez; Sgt. James McCormick; SCANG Sgt. John Andrew McCormick; 2nd Lt Connor Milligan; SrA. Benjamin Salber; Airman Chloe Scott; Amn Michael F. Yellico
Army: 2nd Lt. Amelia Andretti; 1st Lt. Patrick Camatcho; 1st Lt. Sarah Camatcho; Major Robert Caracillo; SSgt. Darcy Fisher; Kyle Hawk; PFC. J. Parker Hogan; Capt. John Hughes; Pvt. Chaz Margo; Maj. Daniel McCormick; 2nd Lt. Maria Morell; PV2 Matthew Pressley; Maj. Stephen J. Romeo; Andrew Santos; Capt. Ramon Ricardo Tapia; Spl. Forces Nolan Tillotson; Josh Wagner; 1st Lt. Nick Worth
Marines: LCPL. Richard Breier; Sgt. Andrew Sales; Maj. Matthew Santoli; Cpl. Ben Holden; 1st Lt. Nathanael Rusciolli
Navy: DCFN Matthew J Bixler Jr.; LCDR. Matthew Giannone; SR Chase T. Golden; Lt. Albert Remmey, Jr.; LCDR. Jordan Mayo; ENS. Rory Moran; OSSN. Daniel Pressley; LCDR. Jenna Hehn Quist; ENS. Tyler Spear; LCDR. William Vey; CTT2. Zachary Wortham

...and all service members not listed.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

For the Week of January 25, 2026

Sunday Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Is 8:23-9:3; Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14; 1 Cor 1:10-13, 17; Mt 4:12-23 or 4:12-17
Monday Memorial of Saints Timothy and Titus, Bishops
2 Tm 1:1-8 or Ti 1:1-5; Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 7-8a, 10; Mk 3:22-30
Tuesday 2 Sm 6:12b-15, 17-19; Ps 24:7, 8, 9, 10; Mk 3:31-35
Wednesday Memorial of Saint Thomas Aquinas, Priest and Doctor of the Church
2 Sm 7:4-17; Ps 89:4-5, 27-28, 29-30; Mk 4:1-20
Thursday 2 Sm 7:18-19, 24-29; Ps 132:1-2, 3-5, 11, 12, 13-14; Mk 4:21-25
Friday 2 Sm 11:1-4a, 5-10a, 13-17; Ps 51:3-4, 5-6a, 6bcd-7, 10-11; Mk 4:26-34
Saturday Memorial of Saint John Bosco, Priest
2 Sm 12:1-7a, 10-17; Ps 51:12-13, 14-15, 16-17; Mk 4:35-41
Sunday Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Zep 2:3; 3:12-13; Ps 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10; 1 Cor 1:26-31; Mt 5:1-12a



Valentine's
DAY

DATE NIGHT

February 14, 6-10 pm

Dinner. Music. Games. Talk. Friends.

All married couples are invited to our third annual **Marriage Ministry Date Night** as we reflect on this year's National Marriage Week theme from the USCCB: **"Man and Woman, He Created Them: Together with Purpose."**

Marriage is more than a commitment, it is a sacred sacrament, a vocation through which husband and wife reveal Christ's faithful love to the world. This Valentine's Day, step away from the busyness of life and enjoy an evening designed to strengthen your bond, celebrate your unique gifts as a couple, and reconnect with joy and intention.

Registration: stmarknc.org/marriage-ministry; \$50 per couple; in the Parish Hall.

Questions? Christine Wisdom, christine.wisdom@stmarknc.org





Small Groups

growing disciples. connecting lives. building community

Now Registering: Small Groups Lenten Study

The Activated Disciple: The 40-Day Challenge with Jeff Cavins

Registration is now open for our upcoming Small Groups Lenten Study "The Activated Disciple: The 40-Day Challenge with Jeff Cavins."

For nearly 10 years, Small Groups at St. Mark have provided parishioners with a meaningful way to grow in faith, build authentic relationships, and feel more connected to parish life. Whether you are new to St. Mark or have been here for decades, Small Groups offer a welcoming space to pray together, reflect on Scripture, share life, and walk the journey of discipleship side by side.

This Lent, we invite you to join a group—or form one of your own—as we take part in an eight-week study designed to help solidify the daily habits of a true disciple. The Activated Disciple is a forty-day challenge that provides practical structure for prayer, Scripture, and intentional faith practices, helping participants move from good intentions to lasting transformation.

Jeff Cavins explains that many people desire to pray more, read the Bible more consistently, and live their faith more intentionally—but often lack a rhythm that makes these practices stick. This study offers a clear and accessible framework to help you encounter Christ multiple times each day and make walking with Jesus a natural part of everyday life.

Small Groups are more than a study, they are about connection. They foster friendship, accountability, encouragement, and a sense of belonging within our parish community. Groups meet in a variety of settings and formats, making it easy to find (or create) one that fits your schedule and comfort level.

Whether you join an existing group, invite friends to form a new one, or step into Small Groups for the first time, this Lenten journey is an opportunity to grow spiritually while deepening your connection to the St. Mark community.

Registration is now open.

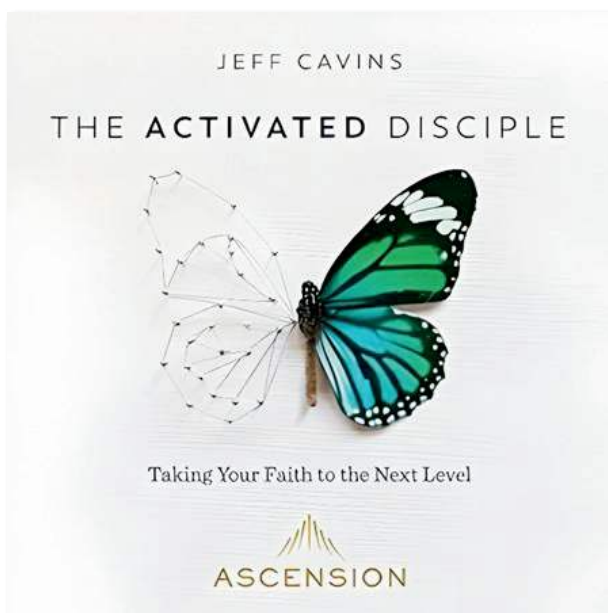
To register, join a group, or start a new group, visit: www.stmarknc.org/small-groups.

New to Small Groups:

1. Select a group by clicking "Choose a Group."
2. Complete registration and payment by clicking "Registration/Payment."

Current Small Group Members:

If your group is participating in this study, simply register, no need to select a group.



Coming Up at Saint Mark

Tuesday, January 27

Prayer and Praise

January 30 & 31

Fidelis January Jumpstart

Sunday, February 1

New Member Meet and Greet

February 7 and 8

Women's Welcome Retreat

Wednesday, February 11

Young at Heart Luncheon

Catholic Classics Concert, 7:30 pm

Saturday, February 14

Marriage Date Night

Sunday, February 15

Donut Sunday

Wednesday, February 18

Ash Wednesday

Friday, February 27

Knights of Columbus Fish Fry

February 28

Stewardship Renewal Weekend

Saturday, March 7

Family Ministry First Saturday Dinner

Monday, March 9

St. Serra Mass

Friday, March 13

Knights of Columbus Fish Fry

Sun-Tues, March 16-18

Parish Mission, Benedict Croell OP

Saturday, March 21

St. Patrick Dinner and Show

Friday, March 27

Knights of Columbus Fish Fry

Tuesday, March 31

Chrism Mass

April 2-5

Easter Triduum and Easter

Sunday, April 12

Divine Mercy Sunday

Wednesday, April 29

Young at Heart Ministry Luncheon

Saturday, May 23

Diaconate Ordination

Saturday, May 30

Priest Ordination



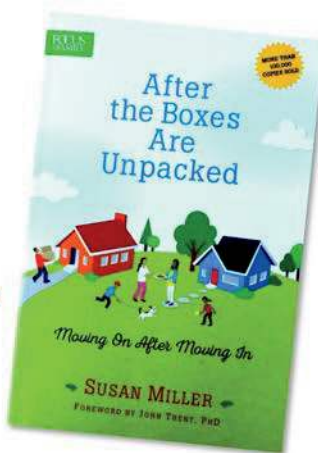
Are you new to Saint Mark?
(Or not "new" but still feel "new"?)

Women Newcomers

**Please come join us to laugh, cry,
and make new friends!**

Wednesdays
February 4-April 22
10-11:30 am

New to our parish or still feel "new"? The class is based on Susan Miller's book **"After the Boxes Are Unpacked"** dealing with the spiritual, emotional and practical needs when making a move. It is a great way to meet fellow parishioners and make new friends.



Space is limited; reserve your spot today!
To register or for further information, please call
Catherine, 704-340-6234 or Maxine, 515-570-1293.

We look forward to meeting you!

Prayer & Praise Night

When: Tues., Jan. 27, Rosary 7 pm and Prayer and Praise 7:30 - 8:30 pm
Where: Sanctuary

As we begin 2026, one Scripture that comes to mind is Isaiah 43:18-19: *"Remember not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing..."*

Are you longing for a new beginning? Have personal or global burdens left you weary? Are you crying out to God and waiting for His response? Whether you feel like the prodigal who needs to come home, or the one who is already home yet needs to be reminded of the Father's great love, this invitation is for you.

We invite you to come and be renewed, refreshed, strengthened, and encouraged in your walk with the Lord. As Revelation 22:17 declares: *"The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come.' ... And let him who is thirsty come. Let him who desires take the water of life without price."*

Future dates: February 24, March 24, April 14

Contact information: Fernando 252-412-9978 (call or text)

New Parishioner Meet and Greet

When: Sun., Feb. 1, 10:15-11:30 am
Where: Parish Hall

Are you new to St. Mark or still feeling new? We'd love to welcome you personally at our next New Parishioner Meet and Greet!

Join us after the 9 am Mass for a relaxed reception and a light breakfast where you'll meet fellow parishioners, connect with our clergy, staff, and ministry leaders, and discover all the ways you can get involved in parish life. Whether you're looking for spiritual enrichment, community events, volunteer opportunities, or just friendly faces, you'll find it here.

This is a perfect way to ask questions, learn more about the parish, and start feeling truly at home at St. Mark. Please RSVP at stmarknc.org/meet-and-greet.



Volunteer Opportunity: Food Pantry Parking Attendant

When: Thursdays, 9 am - 12 pm
Where: Nourish Up Food Pantry located at Huntersville United Methodist Church on Stumptown Rd.

Join us in making a difference! Nourish Up is looking for a friendly, dependable volunteer to help manage their parking lot on Thursday mornings.

What you'll do:

- Welcome clients with a smile and assign arrival numbers
- Keep the flow of guests moving smoothly into the building
- Assist with loading groceries into cars

Your help ensures families receive food with dignity and care. If you enjoy meeting people and lending a hand, this is the perfect role for you!

Contact Lauren Steele at laurenfloyd@verizon.net to get started.

"Young in Spirit" Exercise Class

When: Tuesdays 1- 2 pm
Where: Family Center

A group of parishioners gather on Tuesdays in the Parish Hall for fun, light exercise. A chair is available if needed for seated or standing support. The class is free, all seniors are welcome!

Contact: Janet Ceraldi
janetceraldi@gmail.com

PARISH LIFE

Stephen Ministry

The Stephen Ministry is made up of St. Mark parishioners who have received extensive training to give emotional and spiritual care/ support to fellow St. Mark parishioners as well as to those in our community.

This ministry is a confidential, one to one opportunity to receive Christian care in a comfortable meeting place, whether in your home, parish hall, or even in a park setting.

We all go through times of grief, children leaving home, divorce, parenting, job loss, issues related to aging, cancer diagnosis, adjustment to retirement, medical crisis, job stress, spiritual crisis, unemployment, stress of being a caregiver, relocation, hospitalization, changing in living situations, terminal illness, natural disaster, chronic health conditions, adjustment to disability, rehabilitation from illness or injury, marital separation, pregnancy.

Stephen Ministry is here to serve you, so you don't have to suffer alone. *For more information, please contact either Leanne Vaccaro at leanne.vaccaro@stmarknc.org or Rich Kull at rkkull1216@gmail.com or visit our website at stmarknc.org/Stephen-ministry.*

Virtue for the Week: Humility

As we continue our journey through Ordinary Time, the Church invites us to grow in the virtue of humility—the virtue that allows us to be taught, formed, and led by Christ.

Humility is not weakness or self-diminishment. It is truthfully recognizing who we are before God and trusting that everything we have is a gift. In the early weeks of Ordinary Time, Jesus forms His disciples quietly and patiently, shaping their hearts before sending them into the world. Humility makes that formation possible.

In our church, the pillar marked Humility is located in the left transept—somewhat hidden, easily passed without notice. This placement itself reflects the nature of the virtue. Humility does not seek attention. It does not announce itself. It is lived faithfully, often unseen.

Beneath this pillar stands the statue of St. John Neumann, a shepherd known not for prominence, but for tireless service, simplicity of life, and deep pastoral care. Though he became a bishop, he lived humbly among his people, giving himself fully to the work God entrusted to him. His relic rests beneath our altar—a quiet reminder that holiness is often rooted in hidden fidelity rather than recognition.

The opposite of humility is pride or self-sufficiency, believing we can follow Christ on our own terms. Humility turns us instead toward trust, obedience, and openness to grace. It teaches us to listen before acting and to receive before being sent.

As Fr. John has encouraged us this year, spiritual growth often means allowing God to transform our vices into virtues. When we choose humility—through prayer, repentance, and teachability—we make room for God to work more deeply within us.

As we walk with Christ through Ordinary Time, may we ask for the grace to grow in humility, following the quiet example of the saints who learned to serve not for recognition, but for love of God and His people.



Stewardship Spotlight:

Stewarding the Light

Growing in Christ, Serving One Another, Sharing Our Gifts, and Connecting in Faith

"The Lord is my light and my salvation." (Psalm 27:1) As children, many of us are taught the song, "This Little Light of Mine," and encouraged to let the light of Jesus joyfully shine through us to others. When children are joyful, there is no hiding their light. Our readings for today share reminders of the light we have in Christ. Stewarding His light means living, even in the face of difficulties and trials, as though I trust in Jesus, my salvation.

When we struggle to feel that light, sharing the light with others becomes challenging, if not impossible. We are here to help and invite you to grow your light in Christ by connecting in faith through one or more spiritual groups at St. Mark. May our lives bear witness for those who still walk in darkness.

Be A Man, Mary's Women of Joy, Rosary Prayer Group, Called & Gifted, Men's Bible Study, Small Groups, Divine Mercy Cenacle, Men's Fellowship Group, The Rescue Project, Evangelical Catholic, Millions of Monicas, Welcome Retreats, Exodus 90, OCIA, Young Adult Ministry, Family Ministry, Regnum Christi, Holy Face Devotion



PARISH LIFE

Homebound Eucharist Ministry

The St. Mark School Kindergarten students prepared 150 cards for the St. Mark Parishioners that can no longer attend Mass. These people are served weekly by our Clergy and dedicated Home Bound Extra-Ordinary Ministers. These cards, developed by the St. Mark Kindergarten students were delivered to the parishioners who all received them with great joy. They were truly touched and so grateful to the St. Mark students and teachers for this gift of love.

The kindness of the St. Mark school truly touched over 100 people who are struggling. Thank you and bless you from the bottom of our HBEM hearts.



Catholic Classics Concert

When: Wed., Feb. 11, 7:30 pm

Where: In the church

Join us for an evening of prayerful, joy-filled music at our Catholic Classics Concert, part of the new Little Flower Concert Series.

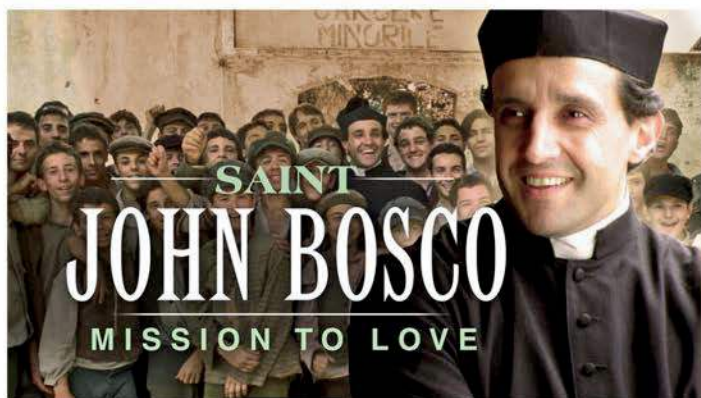
Under the direction of Manuel Mora, the St. Mark Choirs will lead a *sing-along concert* celebrating the depth and beauty of Catholic sacred music across generations.

The program features works by classical masters such as César Franck and Franz Schubert, whose compositions are known for their rich harmonies, expressive melodies, and deep sense of reverence—music that lifts the soul and draws the listener into prayer.

Alongside these timeless classics, the concert also includes beloved contemporary Catholic hymns by Dan Schutte and Marty Haugen. Their music reflects the prayer and spirit and invites full participation through accessible melodies and heartfelt texts rooted in Scripture.

This is a *sing-along concert*, designed for everyone, whether you love traditional sacred music, modern Catholic hymnody, or simply enjoy lifting your voice in praise with the parish community.

All are welcome. Come listen, sing, and experience the beauty of our Catholic musical tradition—shared together as one parish family.



formed™
Forming Catholics for Life.

Saint John Bosco: Mission to Love

Flavio Insinna gives a winning performance as John Bosco, the great priest and educator of youth. Beautifully filmed in Italy, this epic movie dramatizes the many challenges that he had to overcome from his childhood all the way to founding his religious order.

Our parish has a free Formed subscription for you! Simply scan the QR code or visit formed.org/signup to create your account and select our parish to get free access to this content and much more!



An offering from the  AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE

ADORATION

For Peace...

By: Donna Fodale/Adoration Coordinator

This morning at Mass I was asking the Lord. What do you want me to ask our Adorers to pray for this week?

Soon after that prayer someone came up to me and handed me a sheet of paper and said that it was a prayer for peace written by St. John Paul II.

I love how the Holy Spirit works!

Of course, the Lord is inviting us to pray for peace! At Fatima the Blessed Mother asked each of us to pray for peace and the conversion of sinners. The prayer that was handed to me is specifically a prayer to Mary, the Light of Hope.

Peace is a gift. Peace is something that we should desire that everyone has. Peace in families, communities, countries and peace in our hearts.

True peace though, can only come from God. When we spend time before the Lord in Adoration, we experience that kind of peace.

The true presence of Christ in the Eucharist casts out the darkness and fills us with His light, His love and His peace.

These days we see more than ever the need for peace. This week when you visit the Chapel, I would like to invite you to pray from deep within your heart for peace, through the intercession of the Blessed Mother. Below is the prayer that was given to me. I hope that you pray it. I know that the Lord is listening. Scripture tells us:

"Amen, I say to you. 'Whatever you ask in prayer, if you believe you will receive it, it will be given to you.' Says the Lord".
Mark 11: 23,24.

Prayer For Peace to Mary, The Light Of Hope

(By Pope Saint John-Paul II):



Immaculate Heart of Mary
help us to conquer the menace of evil
which so easily takes root in the hearts of the people of today,
and whose immeasurable effects
already weigh down upon our modern world
and seem to block the paths toward the future.
From famine and war,
deliver us.

From nuclear war, from
incalculable self-destruction, from every kind of war, deliver us.
From sins against human life from its very beginning, deliver us.
From hatred and from the demeaning of the dignity of the
children of God, deliver us.
From every kind of injustice in the life of society, both national
and international,
deliver us.

From readiness to trample on the commandments of God,
deliver us.

From attempts to stifle in human hearts the very truth of God,
deliver us.

From the loss of awareness of good and evil,
deliver us.

From sins against the Holy Spirit, deliver us.

Accept, O Mother of Christ,
this cry laden with the sufferings of all individual human beings,
laden with the sufferings of whole societies.

Help us with the power of the Holy Spirit to conquer all sin:

individual sin and the "sin of the world", sin in all of its manifestations.

Let there be revealed once more in the history of the world

the infinite saving power of the redemption:

the power of merciful love.

May it put a stop to evil.

May it transform consciences.

May your Immaculate Heart reveal for all the light of hope.

Amen.

To become an adorer: register at: www.stmarknc.org/adoration
TO BE A SUB PLEASE CONTACT donna.fodale@stmarknc.org

Roof Above Men's Shelter Monthly Dinner Service

When: Second Wednesday of Every Month

Where: Roof Above, 1210 North Tryon St., Charlotte

As we begin a new year, you may be seeking new ways to serve our community in Jesus' name. We invite you to consider joining this meaningful ministry serving the gentlemen who reside at the Roof Above Tryon Campus.

On the second Wednesday of every month, volunteers prepare, cook, and serve a meal to approximately 150 gentlemen. This is a deeply rewarding opportunity, as you can experience firsthand the gratitude and appreciation of those we serve.

This ministry is open to volunteers of all ages and is a wonderful opportunity for middle school-aged students to serve alongside a parent. We aim to have at least eight volunteers each month. No prior experience is required—just a cheerful spirit and a willingness to serve.

St. Mark extends heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped serve the gentlemen of Roof Above in 2025, including Carol and Andrew Mayernik; Jim and Lisa Martel; Kyle and Lisa Ritchie; Ellen and Brian Reichard; Neil Eibler; Kaitlin Eibler; Rita Healy; Kathy Creighton; Robert Matsey; Bobby Matsey; and many others. Your generosity and dedication are truly appreciated. Thank you.

Information: Roofabove.org Contact: Carol Palillo, 704-363-4128, cpalillo1@gmail.com



Diaper & Wipe Drive

Now-February 8

5th Annual Drive!



My name is Annie Morell. I am a sophomore at Community School of Davidson and parishioner at St. Mark.

This year, I have taken the lead—along with fellow parishioner Lelia McQuaid—of the Pro-Life Club at our school. Our mission is to raise awareness about the reality of abortion and to support women who choose life.

My sister, Colette Morell, founded the Pro-Life Club four years ago. I assisted her throughout that time, and after her graduation, I felt inspired and called to continue this precious mission at our school.

This month, we are hosting our 5th Annual Diaper Drive.

Over the past four years, our club has collected more than 50,000 diapers and over 100,000 wipes. Imagine the number of mothers and babies who have benefited from your generosity! Thank you to the St. Mark parishioners for your enthusiastic and faithful support of these efforts.



We are currently collecting diapers and wipes to donate to MiraVia and other local organizations that serve mothers and children in need.

Thank you for supporting life.

You may leave donations in the Narthex Bin.



Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.~Jeremiah 1:5

GROWING HOME – UPDATE

Growing Home: An Update on the New Rectory

If you've driven by Ranson Road lately, you've probably noticed the new rectory taking shape. It's exciting to see this long-planned part of our Growing Home Capital Campaign becoming a visible reality.

St. Mark is blessed with an active and growing clergy presence. We currently have our pastor, Fr. John Putnam, two parochial vicars, Fr. Kevin Martinez and Fr. Christopher Angermeyer, and Fr. Aaron Huber, chaplain at Christ the King High School, who lives in residence and assists with Sunday Masses.

Throughout the year, and especially during summer, Christmas, and Easter breaks from seminary, the rectory is also home to upper-level seminarians and transitional deacons assigned to St. Mark for pastoral formation. At any given time, it is not uncommon for four to eight men to be living in the house.

The new rectory is designed to support this reality of parish life:

- Allowing our priests and seminarians to live on campus, close to the church and parishioners

- Supporting daily prayer, Mass, study, and homily preparation

- Making it easier to respond to hospital visits, emergencies, and late-night calls

- Providing appropriate space for fraternity, rest, and hospitality

A rectory is a working home. It is where priests pray for the parish, prepare for the sacraments, welcome those in formation, and live the shared life of ministry. Creating a space that supports this way of life helps ensure that our priests can serve generously and sustainably.

Watching the rectory rise is a visible sign that St. Mark is truly growing home—for our parish family, for our priests, for seminarians, and for those God may be calling to the priesthood in the years ahead.



**Food Fun and Fellowship
Invites all 55 & over to our**

Valentine Luncheon
Wednesday,
February 11, 2026
11 am in the Parish Hall

**Entertainment will be
provided by Rearview Rock**

\$15 donation per person
Envelopes are at the Welcome Desk
Cut-off date for reservations is
Monday, February 2

**Place your envelope in the Black Box
on the wall by the Welcome Desk doors.**

Saint Mark Purgatorial Society

Saint Mark offers the opportunity for you to have your loved ones remembered at a monthly Wednesday 6:30 pm Mass for a calendar year. Names enrolled for the year will also be placed on the altar during our Masses in November. To enroll a family member, please contact the Office at 704-948-0231 or complete the form on our website at www.stmarknc.org/purgatorial-society.

The following members were remembered on December 31, 2025

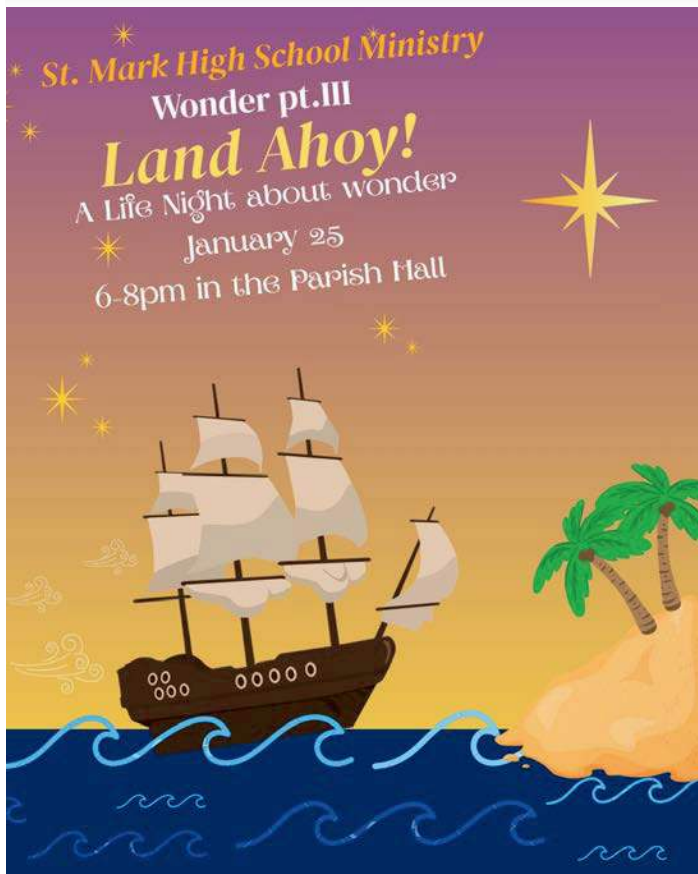
Albert J. Ender, Dorothy A. Ender, Thomas Dano, Eileen A. Dano, Jack and Dennis Dutton

The following members will be remembered on January 28.

James L. Cleary, George A. Bronson, Rev. Deacon Joseph S. Chillemi, Grace E. Chillemi, Guillermo Hasbun Sr.



HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY



High School Youth Ministry January

When: Most Sundays, 6–8 pm

Where: Family Center Parish Hall

The new year is a natural time to begin again, and our High School Youth Ministry is resuming with a January Life Night series built around the seasons of the Church and the journey of faith.

These evenings are designed especially for teens. A place to gather, ask questions, build friendships, and grow in faith in a way that feels real and welcoming.

Each Life Night includes

- Dinner together
- Prayer and reflection
- Time to connect with other teens
- Honest conversations about faith and life

No pressure. No need to have everything figured out. Just come as you are.

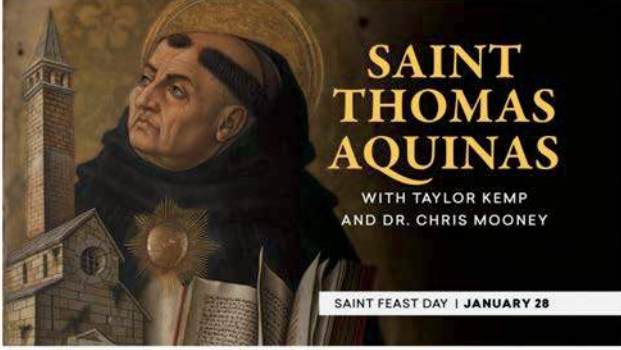

Whether your teen has been involved before or is thinking about coming for the first time, this is a great moment to jump in. Many teens find that these nights become one of the highlights of their week, a place where they feel known, supported, and encouraged.

High school students are invited to come, bring a friend, and be part of something meaningful this winter as we continue through the Holy Season of Christmas, Ordinary Time, and toward Lent together.

Stay Connected! REMIND App: Class code **smhsym2025**

Instagram: @stmarkncyouth


Join our Email List: augustine.free@stmarknc.org.




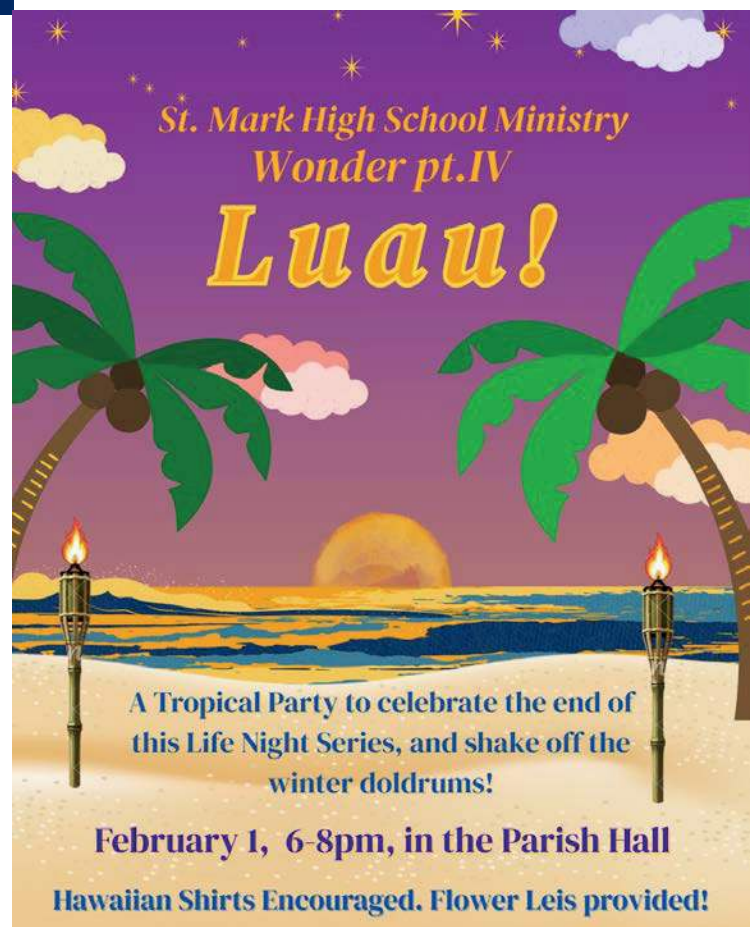
St. Thomas Aquinas | Catholic Saints

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In celebration of being a student in Catholic School, students are wearing their Mass uniforms and serving at the Saturday 5 pm and Sunday 9 am Masses.



Saint Mark Parish Directory

stmarknc.org | 14740 Stumptown Rd, Huntersville NC 28078

Parish Office | Mon-Thur 9 am-7:30 pm, Fri 9 am-4:30 pm

Sun 8:15 am-12:15 pm | Phone: 704-948-0231

Pastor

Very Rev. John T. Putnam, JV

Parochial Vicars

Rev. Kevin Martinez

Rev. Christopher Angermeyer

Rev. Aaron Huber (in residence)

Deacons

Rev. Mr. Thomas Martin

Rev. Mr. Richard McCarron

Rev. Mr. Thomas McGahey

Rev. Mr. Tom McMahon

Rev. Mr. Louis Pais

Rev. Mr. Ramon Tapia

Director of Parish Operations

Scott Bruno

scott.bruno@stmarknc.org

704-948-0231, Ext. 118

Sacristan

Sr. Mary Agnes

sacristan@stmarknc.org

704-948-0231, Ext. 211

Liturgy Coordinator/Office Manager

Emily Bixler

emily.bixler@stmarknc.org

704-948-0231, Ext. 102

Annulments, OCIA

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deacon.rich@stmarknc.org

704-948-0231, Ext. 113

Sacrament Admin/Adoration

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Donna.fodale@stmarknc.org

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704-948-0231, Ext. 130

Director of Finance

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704-948-0231, Ext. 116

Hispanic Ministry Coordinator

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emilio.gomez@stmarknc.org

704-948-0231, Ext. 117

Stewardship Coordinator

Karen Donahue

karen.donahue@stmarknc.org

704-948-0231, Ext. 136

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704-948-0231, Ext. 123

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paul.laskowski@stmarknc.org

704-948-0231, Ext. 121

Director of Faith Formation

Sarah Boyd (Formerly Rider)

sarah.boyd@stmarknc.org

704-948-0231, Ext. 137

Elementary Faith Formation Coordinator

Maddie Torres

elementary@stmarknc.org

704-948-0231, Ext. 124

Middle School Youth Ministry/Confirmation Coordinator

Olivia DiGiovanni

olivia.digiovanni@stmarknc.org

704-948-1306, Ext. 105

High School Youth Ministry Coordinator

Augustine Free

augustine.free@stmarknc.org

704-948-0231, Ext. 122

Director of Preschool

Amanda Rametta

amanda.rametta@stmarknc.org

704-948-8015

Office of Faith Formation

Faith Formation Main Office Line:

704-948-0231, Ext. 103

Tribunal Advocate

Rod Brostrom

rnbrostrom@rcdoc.org

Bulletin Team

bulletin@stmarknc.org

Mass Schedule

Mon/Tue/Thu: 7, 9 am

Wed: 7 am, 6:30 pm

Fri: 7, 9 am

7 pm (Spanish)

Sat: 9 am, 5 pm Vigil

Sun: 7:30, 9, 11 am, 1 pm (Español), 5 pm

All Masses may be watched live: stmarknc.org/livestream

Please use Online Giving or mail in your offertory

stmarknc.org/Online-Giving

Please do not attend Mass if you are sick, have a fever or are in a high-risk group.

Confessions

Confessions are held 45 minutes prior to the start of Mass for a 30 minute duration.

In addition, Wednesday: 6 pm — 7:15 pm and Saturday:

3 pm — 5 pm

Rosary in the Church

Tue: 7—7:30 pm

Wed: Immediately preceding 6:30 pm Mass

Sat: Immediately preceding 5 pm Mass

Sun: Immediately preceding 7:30 am Mass

Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration

Available in the Monsignor Bellow Adoration Chapel in the Family Center. See stmarknc.org/adoration for complete details.

Hospitalization

If you or your loved one are in an area hospital, call the Parish Office to reach one of the Priests. The Priests offer Confession, bring the Holy Eucharist to you or administer the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

Baptisms & Weddings

The use of the Church for Baptisms, Weddings and other Sacramental events is available to active parishioners. Contact the Parish Office. (Please note that weddings and baptisms cannot be celebrated during Lent.)

Financial Counseling

Complimentary and confidential services are available to provide financial literacy training, personal financial coaching and/or advocacy support for you and your family. Contact the Parish Office.

Carolina Catholic Corner Gift & Book Store

Open daily in the Family Center

Coffee & Conversation Social Gathering

Tuesdays, 9:30 am, Parish Hall.

Cursillo

Visit www.CharlotteCursillo.com for information on upcoming retreat weekends, ultreyas and group reunions.

Parishioner Assistance

Financial:

St. Vincent De Paul Society:

Emily.Bixler@stmarknc.org

Life Crisis: Stephen Ministry

stmarknc.org/stephen-ministry

Food Insecurity:

Parish Office

stmarknc.org/assistance or

Emily.Bixler@stmarknc.org or

704-948-0231, Ext. 102

Al-Anon

Ellen | 704-907-8555

Alcoholics Anonymous

Tom | 704-604-7739

Alateen program

Paul G. | 704-641-0654

Divorce Support Group

For anyone going through separation and/or divorce. Meetings are held Monday evenings at 7 pm in Room 204. If parish offices are closed, meetings are held at Lowe's Foods, exit 23.

Contact: divorce.support@stmarknc.org

Natural Family Planning

Joe and Kathy Hack; Sympto-Thermal Method;

704-548-1834; hackhouse@bellsouth.net; ccli.org

Elisabeth Laskowski; Creighton Model;

creightonmodel@gmail.com; 484-332-9084

Crisis Pregnancy Help

Community Pregnancy Center of Lake Norman:

704-727-0535

Catholic Charities: 704-370-3262; Birthright:

704-975-8572; Post Abortion: 1-800-5-WE CARE

Poor prenatal diagnosis? You're not alone. There is help.

benotafraid.net

Taken Abortion Pill? It may not be too late: Abortion Pill

Reversal 877-558-0333 or abortionpillreversal.com



Las lecturas de hoy nos recuerdan que la mayordomía no es solo algo que hacemos, sino que la mayordomía está en el núcleo de quienes somos como discípulos de Cristo.

Nuestra primera lectura, de Isaías, contiene esta profecía de Cristo y lo que Su mensaje salvador significaría para todos los que lo abracen. "El pueblo que

caminó en la oscuridad ha visto una gran luz; sobre los que habitaron en la tierra de la penumbra ha brillado una luz." Estamos entre aquellos bendecidos sobre quienes ha brillado la luz de Cristo. Por virtud de nuestro Bautismo, nosotros, que una vez estuvimos en la oscuridad del pecado original, hemos renacido en la gran luz que es la gracia de Dios en nosotros. Somos miembros queridos de la familia de Dios.

¡Qué privilegio! Sin embargo, con este privilegio viene la responsabilidad de vivir realmente para Dios y de llevar Sus Buenas Noticias a todos los que conocemos — en el trabajo, en la escuela, en nuestra comunidad y en nuestro propio hogar — es decir, vivir como Sus buenos mayordomos.

Y hay cierta urgencia que viene con el llamado a una forma de vida de mayordomía, tal como vemos en nuestro pasaje del Evangelio de Mateo. Jesús dice: "Arrepiéntense, porque el reino de los cielos está cerca." En otras palabras, aléjate del egoísmo, vuelve hacia Dios y vive como Su discípulo ahora — ¡no esperes!

En este mismo pasaje, los primeros discípulos nos dan ejemplos del "sí" de un buen mayordomo cuando el Señor les llamó. Nuestro Señor les invita a "Seguid a mí y os haré pescadores de hombres." No dudaron, pero "de inmediato dejaron sus redes y le siguieron." Ponen a nuestro Señor y su voluntad primero.

Esta es la esencia de una forma de vida de administración: estar siempre preparados para las formas en que nuestro Señor nos llama a traer Su luz a los demás. Es más que algo que hacemos: es quienes somos. © Consultores de Gestión Católica, 2025.

Reflexión pastoral – El pasado jueves se cumplió el 53º aniversario de la decisión del *Tribunal Supremo Roe vs. Wade* que legalizó el aborto. Aunque esa decisión y la posterior hayan sido revocadas por el Tribunal, el trabajo de defensa de la vida continúa.

Aunque la decisión del Tribunal Supremo de EE. UU. en 2022 en el caso *Dobbs contra Jackson Women's Health Organization* revocó *Roe contra Wade* y devolvió la regulación del aborto a los estados, el compromiso de la Iglesia Católica con la santidad de la vida humana sigue siendo inalterado y multifacético. Desde una perspectiva católica, basada en las escrituras, la tradición y enseñanzas como las del Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica (por ejemplo, CCC 2270-2275), la defensa de la vida no está ligada únicamente a una sentencia judicial o marco legal: es un imperativo moral holístico que va más allá del aborto a todas las amenazas contra la dignidad humana. Estas son las principales razones por las que los católicos están llamados a continuar con este trabajo:

1. El aborto sigue siendo legal y accesible en muchos lugares, incluida Carolina del Norte

La decisión *Dobbs* no prohibió el aborto a nivel nacional; simplemente descentralizó el asunto. A fecha de 2026, el aborto sigue siendo legal en más de la mitad de los estados de EE. UU., a menudo con pocas restricciones hasta la viabilidad o más allá en

algunos casos (por ejemplo, California, Nueva York). Millones de abortos se realizan anualmente, y el acceso se ha ampliado gracias a medidas como las píldoras abortivas por correo (por ejemplo, la mifepristona). Se insta a los católicos a abogar por leyes protectoras a nivel estatal y federal para salvaguardar a los no nacidos, ya que la Iglesia considera el aborto directo como intrínsecamente malo y nunca justificable.

Más allá de la legislación, esto incluye apoyar centros de embarazo en crisis, servicios de adopción y políticas que ayudan a mujeres que enfrentan embarazos no planeados, en línea con el énfasis de la Iglesia en la misericordia y la caridad práctica.

2. Desafíos culturales y políticos continuos

Las iniciativas proabortistas siguen ganando terreno, como las medidas electorales en estados como Florida y Arizona que han intentado consagrar el derecho al aborto en las constituciones, o las propuestas federales para codificar protecciones similares a *Roe*. La Iglesia enseña que los católicos tienen el deber de participar en el espacio público (por ejemplo, mediante el voto, el lobby y la educación) para contrarrestar estos esfuerzos y promover una "cultura de vida", tal como lo articuló el Papa San Juan Pablo II en *Evangelium Vitae* (1995).

A nivel mundial, las tasas de aborto siguen siendo altas, y persisten cuestiones como la financiación internacional de proveedores de abortos (por ejemplo, a través de la ayuda exterior estadounidense), lo que requiere defensa a nivel internacional.

3. La ética provida más amplia

La defensa católica provida no se limita al aborto; La preocupación por la vida abarca todas las etapas de la vida. Esto incluye oponerse a la eutanasia y al suicidio asistido (ahora legales en 10+ estados de EE. UU. y partes de Canadá/Europa), promover alternativas a la pena de muerte, la investigación con células madre embrionarias, la trata de personas, la pobreza, la guerra y la degradación ambiental que perjudica a los más vulnerables.

Revocar *Roe* fue un hito, pero no aborda causas profundas como la desigualdad económica, la falta de apoyo familiar ni las presiones sociales que conducen al aborto. Los católicos están llamados a construir una sociedad donde la vida sea bienvenida y protegida a través de iniciativas de justicia social, haciendo eco de los llamamientos del Papa Francisco en *Fratelli Tutti* (2020) para un desarrollo humano integral.

4. Testimonio espiritual y moral

En última instancia, la postura de la Iglesia se basa en la creencia de que toda vida humana es sagrada, creada a imagen de Dios (Génesis 1:27), y que proteger a los inocentes es un mandato fundamental del Evangelio (por ejemplo, Mateo 25:40). Las leyes pueden cambiar, pero la verdad moral no: los católicos deben dar testimonio de esta verdad a través de la oración, la educación y el ejemplo personal, fomentando la conversión de corazones en lugar de depender únicamente de victorias legales.

Organizaciones como la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de EE. UU. (USCCB) enfatizan que la lucha por la vida continúa, instando a las parroquias a participar en iniciativas como Caminando con Moms in Need para proporcionar un apoyo tangible.

En resumen, aunque *Dobbs* fue una victoria significativa, no es el final del camino. El llamado católico a "defender la vida" es perpetuo, impulsado por la fe, la compasión y una visión para una sociedad justa.




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