



ST. MARY'S PARISH nlooker

Friends of St. Mary's Parish

Pastor: Rev. Stephen Vrazel

Fall 2023

From Our Pastor Father Stephen Vrazel

Dear Parishioners of St. Mary's,

Over the last year, my gratitude to God that I have been called to be pastor of St. Mary's has only grown. It is hard to believe that I have already spent three years ministering among you in this wonderful parish family. The dust has finally settled after the pandemic. It's time to roll up our sleeves and set about the work God is calling us to in our little corner of midtown Mobile. This year will see special attention given by the parish council and myself to our mission of evangelization, but already we are hard at work. Most recently in September, we carried out a door-to-door mission to the households of our geographical parish boundary. Throughout the year we have wonderful opportunities for encounters with Christ, including Marriage Night, Lent and Advent Missions, high school bible studies, CCD, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Booster Club, and of course our largest ministry: St. Mary's Catholic School.

And yet, there is more that we can and should be providing. Be on the lookout, especially for an increase in opportunities for adult faith formation and prayer. I'm so proud of the direction in which we are moving, and I invite you to dive in head first to what God has in store for our parish family.



Congratulations Father Vrazel on earning his MS in Bio-ethics from St. Thomas University Miami and for winning Best Clergyman/Pastor/ Spiritual Leader category in the 2022 Lagniappe Nappies!

Signs of Progress

Thank you to all who have helped with progress around the church this past year. All church doors have been restored, and outside lanterns that have been in storage for years have been placed back where they belong at the church campus entries by St. Mary's **Michael Provost**. Most recently, we have installed our long-awaited seating walls in our St. Mary's Plaza in front of the church. We hope you will join us for the blessing of the plaza on **Sunday, December 3 beginning with 9:30 a.m. Mass**, followed by the blessing and reception in the plaza.

Thank you to parishioners **Joe Kulakowski** for keeping these historic lanterns safe for us and **Louise McClelland** for transporting them back to their home. Church rectory renovations continue to take place under the leadership of **Matt Arensberg, Matt Boos, Luke Dyas, Michael Provost, Father Vrazel**, and a project team of parish council and finance council members and parishioners. Goals of this team are to develop and complete major projects with cash on hand allowing for progressive, continued renovations, to get the priest suites livable, and continue historical sensitive renovations. To date, the rectory has been cleaned out, has a new roof and roof deck, new gutters and downspouts, new sump pump and dehumidification system in the basement, restored pastors quarters, exterior stucco and window repairs, and a newly painted exterior. Plans in progress include the hiring of a mechanical consultant and engineer to produce floor plans and replace the HVAC system, room by room rewiring and stucco repair and paint as necessary. Thank you to **The Hearin-Chandler Foundation, Robert Dueitt Construction, L.L.C., and Cummings Architecture** for helping us make continued restoration progress to our historic rectory. If you are interested in partnering as a donor for the rectory restorations, please contact the parish development office at mrnaman@stmarymobile.org



Welcome Back St. Mary's Faculty and Staff!

St. Mary's Catholic School faculty and staff under the leadership of new Principal, **Corinne Cuffle**, were welcomed back on August 7 to begin training for the new academic year. The week included training both with the St. Mary's staff and with the overall Archdiocese of Catholic Schools faculty. Pictured are members of the 2023-2024 team after a welcome back Mass celebrated by St. Mary's Pastor, **Father Stephen Vrazel** in St. Mary Church.

St. Mary's Catholic welcomes their newest Faculty Members: **Corinne Cuffle**, Principal, **Denise Thompson**, K-2 Resource Teacher, **Connie Arensberg**, Middle School Language Arts, and **Jenna Strickland**, First Grade Teacher!





Passing the Baton of Excellence St. Mary's Principal, Debbie Ollis passes her leadership role to Corinne Cuffle

Our Principal of 22 years, **Mrs. Debbie Ollis** has retired from her position as principal of St. Mary Catholic School at the end of the 2022-2023 year. She remains in Catholic Schools and began a new journey as Principal of Little Flower Catholic School.

Debbie passed St. Mary's baton of excellence to **Mrs. Corinne Cuffle** who began as our new Principal this summer.

Father Vrazel notes, "On behalf of our faculty, staff, students, and parents, I would like to express our deep gratitude for Mrs. Ollis's many years of dedicated service. Her leadership, guidance, and tireless efforts have been a constant source of inspiration to us all. As a first class Catholic school principal, she has provided us with an unwavering example of faith, compassion, and commitment to education. For over two decades she has poured her entire self into our school and has left a lasting impact on our parish family and the wider community. She has always had an open door policy and was always willing to listen to the concerns of teachers, parents, and students alike. All students and alumni from her tenure at St. Mary's have been better for their time here, thanks to the Christ centered environment she created and maintained."

Debbie notes, "During my time here as Principal, we have endured epic events; 911, Hurricanes Ivan and Katrina, The BP Oil Spill, and the COVID-19 Pandemic. Our school response to these events included praying the rosary as a school on 911, accepting dozens of students after the storms, assisting families in need, and creating a new way to educate with 24-hour notice. St. Mary is not about new buildings or structures but about the people. The family of St. Mary Catholic School has accepted with open arms all students whose parents sought a Catholic education for them. The individual student has always been a priority, and moving each child forward is the ultimate goal. To my former and current students alike, you are all spectacular gifts from God, and it has been a privilege to serve you."



Welcome Corinne Cuffle, New Principal for St. Mary's beginning in August of 2023

St. Mary's Parish welcomes St. Mary's Catholic School Principal for the 2023-2024 school year: **Mrs. Corinne Cuffle**. Corinne comes to us from St. Patrick School of Terre Haute, Indiana, where she served as Principal from July 2020 to

the present. She holds a Master of Education with a Middle Grades Science Concentration from North Georgia College and State University, a Bachelor of Science in Education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, and a Leadership Add-On Certification Program in Educational Leadership from Kennesaw State University. Corinne also boasts an impressive tenure in the public school system serving as Assistant Principal of Sawnee Elementary in Georgia and as instructional technology specialist. Corinne's experience also includes serving as a Title I Instructional at Chestatee Elementary in Georgia and as a fifth grade teacher.

Corinne is a strong servant leader focused on building a foundation of faith while cultivating saints and scholars. While at St. Patrick's, she fostered and deepened a distinctly Catholic environment while concentrating on dynamic teaching and learning. In her three years as principal, she led a faculty and staff of 45, growing enrollment from 279 to more than 330 students.

A native of Indiana, Corinne is no stranger to Mobile. She served as Principal of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School from fall of 2017 to spring of 2020. Ready to come back to Mobile, where she fell in love with our community, Corinne and her husband Harry—with their two children, Cecilia and Rhett—are establishing new roots at St. Mary. Corinne notes, "We are beyond thrilled to be back to the rich, vibrant,

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St. Mary's Mrs. Ellen Marston retires as St. Mary's Kindergarten Teacher after 37 years

St. Mary's Kindergarten teacher, **Mrs. Ellen Marston** retired at the end of this school year after 37 years of educating generations of students. **Father Vrazel** notes,

"I have the unique privilege of bidding farewell to Mrs. Ellen Marston on behalf of the St. Mary's family, not only as her pastor, but as her former student. We are all so grateful for her decades of service to our school and parish, touching the lives of hundreds of students and their families through the years. As a child, I distinctly remember her classroom as both fun and well structured, and it has been special to enter her classroom as an adult and see and hear all the familiar sights and sounds still forming young minds and hearts. Still, nothing can last forever, and so we bid a bittersweet farewell to our beloved Mrs. Marston."

As Mrs. Marston moves on to her next chapter of being a grandmother, she reflects, "Retiring was a bittersweet decision for me, but I am very excited to begin my new adventure of 'grandma-ing'. I have loved being a part of the Kindergarten world for so long. This age group is like no other—their innocence, curiosity and down-right cuteness is unique to them.

I have also loved being a part of St. Mary's School family. I have taught so many students over the years and even several of my former students' children. I still had students come by school and visit and they were amazed that I remembered them! I tell them I could never forget any of my children. My family laughs every time we go out in public to see how many people know Mrs. Marston! I will always hold a special place in my heart for the many students and parents that have been a part of my life for these past 39 years."



Thank you to all who came out to celebrate Mrs. Debbie Ollis who retired from St. Mary's after more than 2 decades of dedication to St. Mary's Catholic School! We also honored faculty and staff members who are also retiring to include our Kindergarten Teacher, Mrs. Ellen Marston who retired after nearly 40 years, our school counselor, Mrs. Carolyn Davidson, our Resource Teacher, Mrs. Donna Anderson, our Bookkeeper, Mrs. Katie Killion, and Ms. Tonya Edwards from our Preschool staff.

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and irresistibly Catholic culture of Mobile. I am honored, humbled, and incredibly excited to be the new leader of St. Mary's Catholic School."

Father Vrazel notes, I want to express my tremendous enthusiasm for this next step for our St. Mary's family. For three years I had the privilege of working alongside Corinne. She is one of the most capable, devoted, and faith filled Catholic school principals I have ever encountered. She is among the greatest assets in Catholic education today. St. Mary's is accustomed to excellence in leadership and administration, and I am confident that Corinne will continue that tradition."

Special thanks to St. Mary's Principal search committee for their commitment to choosing our new Principal. **Melanie Winter, Ronnie Hathorne, Matthew Binion, Ellen Marston, Katie Sasser, and Lacy King** performed admirably in representing the needs and opinions of our families, faculty, and parishioners. Their input was invaluable in reaching this historic decision, making sure that our new Principal will meet the needs of all.

Wishing Father Cecil Spotswood a Happy Retirement!

St. Mary Parish celebrated Parochial Vicar, **Father Cecil Spotswood** on Father's Day Sunday, June 18 for a retirement Mass and party. God Bless Father Spotswood, also an alumnus of St. Mary's Catholic School who has dedicated more than 26 years of service to the Priesthood!



Father Spotswood and Family



Deacon Mark Thompson and Family

St. Mary's Deacon, Mark Thompson!

Congratulations to St. Mary's Deacon Mark Thompson who has given over a year of service at St. Mary's Permanent Deacon. Deacon Thompson was ordained Saturday, June 11, 2022 at The Cathedral and celebrated his first Mass as St. Mary on June 12, 2022. Thank you

to all who helped prepare for this wonderful occasion for Deacon Thompson, his wife **Ashley**, and their children **Andrew, Caleb, and Anna Catherine**, and for the family of St. Mary Parish. Deacon Thompson has been a blessing to our parish in assisting our parish in Masses and ministries.

St. Mary's Music Director, Dr. Collin Lowery Gregorian Chant Class 2023

Dr. Collin Lowery and his family joined our St Mary's Family in August of 2022. As St. Mary's Music Director, Dr. Lowery spent his first year with time split between directing liturgical music for Masses and special services, and teaching students at St. Mary Catholic School. Dr. Lowery has made great strides in changing the music landscape at St. Mary's. Ending the year with a 9 week Gregorian Chant Summer Course with musicians from around the Archdiocese made the year complete!



St. Mary's Ollis Pavilion and Lauten Courts

St. Mary's held the official surprise reveal for our donors in September of 2022, and the big surprise was that the new Pavilion was named for St. Mary's Catholic School Principal, Debbie Ollis!

St. Mary held the official surprise reveal for our donors in September of 2022 and the big surprise was that the new Pavilion was named for St. Mary's Catholic School Principal of over 20 years, **Debbie Ollis**! A parish celebration of The New Ollis Pavilion and Lauten Courts was held on Sunday, October 16 where **Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi** officially blessed the Pavilion. Over the past year, students have enjoyed P.E. Classes and social activities in this newly renovated space to include an upgraded Thompson Field playground with new turf and play equipment. Many social events have also taken place throughout the year. This is the first new construction at St. Mary's since 1949! Thank you to Pavilion Chairs, **Matt Boos** and **Joe Collins** for leading the fundraising and master plan efforts.



Archbishop Blesses Pavilion



Ollis Pavilion

AROUND THE PARISH

St. Mary's Parish 2023 Confirmation Class

St. Mary's Pastor, **Father Stephen Vrazel**, welcomed **Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi** Sunday, April 23, to confirm St. Mary's 2023 Confirmation class after many months of preparation for this very special sacrament. This year's Confirmation class includes: **Raley Cathryn Adams, Mary Margaret Arensberg, Peyton James Armstrong, Andrew Thomas Baucom, William Pate Blankenship, Jack Adrian David Boyes, Damien Kaimana Brack, Brooke Elizabeth Castleberry, Anne Marie Delaney, Beckett Wilton Fancher, Allen Shepard Faulk, Troy Anthony Flowers, Jolie Vereen Goleman, Sadie Rush Hanks, Julian Zydan Kahalley, Reagan Olivia Knight, Anan Ruth Mathers, Amaya MaKayla McCollough, Matthew Naman McPhillips, Andrew Jason Moore, Connor Mitchell Mosley, Jackson Dayne Murphy, Robert Stephen Murray, Matthew Alfred Naman, Markus Jeffrey Nelson, Peyton Canady Saylor, Ryan James Shine, Kellen McDermott Thompson, and Amari Skyy Toomer.**



*2023 Confirmands Photo
photo by Shane Rice*

Congratulations St. Mary's First Communion Class of 2023

St. Mary's congratulates the First Communicants for 2023! Thank you to our second grade teachers and CCD instructors, for preparing these young parishioners for this beautiful sacrament, **Bethany Brewer, Jessica Martin, and Hattie Alexander.** This year's class includes:

Emma Harper Anderson, Elin Malia Alexander, Anderson Thomas Binion, Anna Belle Bolling, Callan Jenner Buckridge, Addie Lewis Carroll, Kaitlyn Elaine Castle, Katherine Malone Copeland, Jameson Johnson (Dustin) Daffin, Anna Elizabeth Davis, Miles Andrew Hathorne, Luca Vincent Hinds, James Turner Jackson, William Ozley Jollit, II, Calvin Palmer Jones, IV, Nolan Patrick Kennedy, James Gabriel Laird, Conrad McDermott Lancaster, Harrison Thomas Marcet, Elaina May McDavid, Demetrius Tashun Moore, II, Michael Lamar Pace, III, Channing Aubree Pettaway, Emmie-Jane Elizabeth Powell, Robert Daly Scroggins, Lillian Scott Sharp, Wilson Henry Simmons, Carter Alexander Skific, Sebastian Bay Smith, Hadlee Louise Stanford, Eric Robert Stowe, Bennett Paul Teske, Kyla MaRyah Thornton, Oliver Francis Tucker, Sunny McConnell Tyler, Mason Heitzmann Waller, Julia Marie Wishon, Elizabeth Adair Yarbrough, and Gregory Augustine Zieman, III.



First communicants 2023

Congratulations Catechumens and Candidates

St. Mary's welcomes New Catechumens & Candidates during the Easter Vigil Mass. Under the instruction of **Father Stephen Vrazel** and **Mr. Joe Arensberg**, St. Mary's Parish prepared this year's catechumens and candidates through RCIA for this year's Easter Vigil Mass where all were welcomed into the Catholic faith. St. Mary's welcomes **Keith Acton, Taylor Acton, Eleanor April Acton, Gerard Thomas Neely, III, Camellia Grace Neely, Rameh Stephen Khazen, Broker Rameh Khazen, Paul Thomas Anderson, Carisa Bernadette Anderson, Charles Aaron Hines, Haley Criswell Milling, Diane Byrd, Amberly Kathleen VanHoosen, Matthew Allen Thomas, and Taylor Alston Singletary.**



New Catholics 2023

St. Mary's KOC Steve Thompson Memorial Golf Tournament

St. Mary's Knights of Columbus 15th and 16th Annual **Steve Thompson** Memorial Golf Tournaments under the leadership of **Matt Boos** and his committee, had amazing turn outs! The weather was perfect each time and so was the course! Thank you to our 135 golfers and our sponsors for helping us raise over \$30,000 in 2022 and \$34,000 in 2023 to benefit the St. Mary's Pavilion and Master Plan Project. The total raised since the tournament's inception with **Desi Tobias** as the founder of this tournament, has raised over 300,000 for special projects of St. Mary's Catholic School.

Proceeds from our 2022 and 2023 tournaments benefit our Master Plan Project and Thompson Field capital improvements to include St. Mary's Ollis Pavilion Fund, continued Pavilion and Thompson Field improvements, a new sound system, new benches, and more!



Steve Thompson Memorial Golf Tournament

Thank you to 135 golfers in 2022 and 136 in 2023 and all of our sponsors for helping us honor the memory of Steve Thompson and improving the campus of St. Mary's Catholic School! Our generous sponsors included: **Boos Navarre Consulting Engineers, Satterwhite Reece Law Firm, Cowles, Murphy, Glover & Associates, The LeGrone Family, Gulf Distributing Co. of Mobile, Storage Products Co. Inc., Zoghby's Uniforms, Mobile Bay Roofing, Callaghan's Irish Social Club, United Rentals, The Tobias Family, Dr. Baldy-Mobile Premier Pediatric Dentistry, The Gould Family, American Home Lending USA, LLC, The Strickland Family, EMO Trains Inc., Robert Dueitt Construction, Mobile Premier Pediatric Dentistry, Global South Logistics, L.L.C., Gulf Coast Tours, Royalty Products, State Farm- Lad Drago, St. Mary's Booster Club, Bay Area Plastic Surgery, Foosackly's, Benton Thompson/Raymond James, St. Mary's Class of 2031, Harvey Thomas Orthodontics, Camelia Flooring, Real Estate Matrix, The Winter Family, Mike and Monica Thompson, United Rentals, Performance Contractors Inc., Alabama Crown, Cold Blooded Fishing, Cold Snap, Gulf Distributing Co. of Mobile, L.L.C, Apalachicola Oyster City Brewing Company, Ashland Midtown Pub, BBD Fine Beverages, Fairhope Brewing Company, Frank Ledbetter Metal Art, Braided River Brewing, Blue Gill Restaurant, Big Bad Breakfast, Ghost Train Brewing, Heroes Sports Bar & Grille Olensky Brothers, University of South Alabama Jaguars, Battleship Memorial Park, Felix's Fish Camp, Cedar Street Social Club, Chuck's Fish, El Papi, Grace, Nixon's, Debris Po-Boys, Mancini's Antique Club, Mobile Azalea Trail, The Haberdasher, Roosters, Chuck's Fish, Noble South, O'Daly's, Loda Bier Garten, Lucky's Irish Pub & Grill, Chick-fil-A, Delta Fly Fishing, Moe's Original Barbeque, Ruth's Chris Steak House, Bluegill Restaurant, The Royal Scam, Taco Mama, Conde Systems, POST Craft Cocktails and Wine Bar, Which Wich Superior Sandwiches, and Wintzell's Oyster House.**

St. Mary's Trivia Night!

Thanks to all who joined in on our 2022 "That's So Mobile" and 2023 "Games People Play" Trivia Nights! Beautiful Fall weather under St. Mary's Ollis Pavilion was the perfect setting for our second and third annual events! Each year, 30 trivia teams of 8 came dressed in the event theme and competed for the big brains trophy! Congratulations to our 2022 trivia winners, "Happy to Be Here" in first place, "Azalea Trail Old Maids" for best costume, and "Carpe Diem" for the Too Tall for the Tunnel Losers Prize! Our 2023 trivia winners were "Once A Pawn a Time", in first place, "Price is Righteous" for best costume, "Pongs" for best table, and "The OGs" for the 2023 Losers Prize! Over \$34,000 raised these two events benefit our church endowment fund!



Trivia Night

Thank you to our sponsors: **iHeart Media, American Weatherstar, Mobile Pediatric Clinic, Actor: David Eves, Greer's, Christopher Clarke of Roberts Brothers, Coastal Appraisal, Inc., Danny McAleer, Mobile Machine Lacrosse, DeMouy General Contracting, Emili Hansen of Roberts Brothers, Gloria's Midtown Flower Shop, American Home Lending, and MH3 Printing and Ad Specialties.** Special thanks to our emcee **Uncle Henry of iHeart Radio**, our Auctioneer, **Jon Green**, our priests, deacons and religious experts who were bid on to include **Msgr. Warren Wall, Father Pat Driscoll, Father Stephen Vrazel, Father Paul Zoghby, Deacon Mark Thompson, Dr. T.J. Singleton, Dr. Collin and Victoria Lowery**, and our fabulous volunteer committee under the leadership of **Jack McManmon**. Mark your calendar for the **October 24 for our 2024 Trivia Night!**

FUN & FUNDRAISING



Third Grade Dads Steak Out

Steak Out 2022 and 2023 bring in over \$50,000 to St. Mary's Catholic School!

Thank you to our 2022 Steak Out Chair, **Joe Collins**, and our 2023 Steak Out Chair, **Matt Binion** for two successful Steak Out Events benefitting St. Mary's Catholic School. Both events featured the Steak Out main event with Steak Out Teams offering the best of the best to guests who also enjoyed a great evening of music and

fun. The 2023 event added a Spring Swing Golf Outing, a Mix & Mingle Ladies Night, and a Kids PlayDay. Collectively, both events brought in over \$50,000 to St. Mary's Catholic School towards the St. Mary Ollis Pavilion and Lauten Courts and campus improvement projects.

Thank you to our 2022 Sponsors to include **Alabama Coasting, Keith Blackwood for District Attorney, Blaze Pizza, BOOS NAVARRE Consulting Engineers, Braided River Brewing, Cammie's Old Dutch Ice Cream Shoppe, CINTAS, DUEITT Construction Company, ELM, Fairhope Brewing Company, Ghost Train Brewing Co., Gulf Distributing Company of Mobile, LLC, HEROE'S Sports Bar & Grill, LAGNIAPPE, L&L Financial Services, LLP, Jon Zimlich, CFP, Mobile Pediatric Clinic, MH3, Oakworth Capital Bank, PRMI Primary Residential Mortgage - Sean Renfrow, Regions, SYSCO, and Witherington Construction General Contractors**

Thank you to our 2023 sponsors to include **BASF, iHeart Radio, OWA, Redmont Vodka, Kevin Ollis Catering, WKRG TV 5, Costco, The Wellness Collective, Midtown Media, Royal Street Agency, Mobile Bay Roofing, DeMouy Contracting, Lights By The Bay, Alabama Burning, Boogie Inc., Donaghey Orthodontics, CINTAS, Century Bank, Pro Inflatables, Firetrol Protection System, McNair Historic Preservation, Jon Zimlich Strategic Wealth Specialists, SAI Wholesale, Pillars Mobile, Royal Restrooms, American Weatherstar, Fairhope Brewing Company, Braided River, Chandeleur Brewing Company, Oyster City Brewing Company, GT, and Bay Paper Co.**

Mark your calendar for St. Mary's 2024 STEAK OUT Week **April 21 – April 27** to include a Spring Swing Pickleball Tournament, Ladies Mix & Mingle Cocktail Competition, Kids Play Day, and our STEAK Out Cooking Competition!

St. Mary's Marriage Night Bliss!

Thank you to all who have joined us for this year's marriage nights. Each monthly marriage night offers a theme, a fabulous dinner, and great socialization. Please join us for upcoming marriage nights on **January 24, March 13, and May 1!**

The \$30 suggested donation per couple includes dinner, program, and dessert. All are asked to bring a bottle of wine to share. Childcare is complimentary with reservations. For more information or to make reservations, contact **Laurel Wallace** at lwallace@stmarymobile.org.

St. Mary's Catholic School Annual Fund Donors

Through the generosity of donors, \$33,981 was raised in the 2021-2022 Annual Fund Appeal for St. Mary's Catholic School! In addition... golfers and sponsors from the 2022 Steve Thompson Memorial Golf Tournament brought in an additional \$30,138 with a combined total of \$64,119 to meet our goals! Generosity provided for classroom academic dollars, Pavilion project and master plan funds, teacher professional development, new named iron fence panels and courtyard bricks, and school recruitment dollars! To see a complete list of our 2021-2022 donors and to donate to the 2022-2023, visit our website at www.StMaryMobile.org or scan the following QR Code!



St. Mary Marriage Night 2022



Women of St. Mary Art Class

Women of St. Mary Paint and Sip!

Thank you **Jennifer Martorana** for organizing a Paint and Sip Evening for all Women of St. Mary, and to McGill-Toolen Art Teacher, **Ann Carr** for serving as the instructor! Special thanks also to **Chip McClelland** for donating supplies to help keep costs low. The end result? Beautiful Easter Door hangings uniquely created by every participant, and a great evening of fellowship and fun! To join the Women of St. Mary for activities and events throughout the year, contact **Jennifer Martorana** at jennmartorana@hotmail.com

St. Mary's Splashes into VBS Fun!

St. Mary's Parish hosted a week of fun at our 2023 Vacation Bible School, July 24-28! PreK4 through 5th grade VBS campers learned about how their faithful God is on life's wild ride. Kudos to St. Mary's VBS organizer **Elizabeth Blanchette** and her fabulous committee for organizing VBS again this year. We welcomed 115 students from PreK4 through 5th grade who were guided by 50 student volunteers in grades 6 through 12, and 20 adult volunteers! The week was made possible by these volunteers and all who helped provide daily snacks and decorations to fit the VBS theme. The last day of the camp, our campers were surprised with 175 yogurt treats from Cold Snap. St. Mary's is grateful to Cold Snap owner **Loren Barbour** for the tasty surprise!



Father Dan for Parish Mission

Father Dan Good was our guest speaker for a beautiful Lenten mission focusing on Matthew, Chapter 9. Thank you to the parishioners of St. Joan of Arc and St. Mary's for the great work to make this event a success, from providing wonderful soups for our opening night and organizing babysitting for our guests each evening.



Father Dan Good

Feast of St. Joseph

Thank you to all volunteers who made Sunday's Feast of St. Joseph Celebration held Sunday, March 19, a success. Thank you **Emily Montague** and **Ashley Thompson** for organizing our St. Joseph Altar and to all who contributed baked goods, fruit and religious items to make it bountiful. Thank you to all volunteers who assisted **Father Vrazel** to prep and serve a fabulous pasta dinner!



Feast of St. Joseph

St. Mary's and St. Joan of Arc Parishes Celebrated The Feast of Corpus Christi with a Procession of Faith!

St. Mary's and St. Joan of Arc Parishes co-hosted their third annual Feast of Corpus Christi Celebration, Sunday, June 11. The celebration began with 9:30 a.m. Mass at St. Mary Church followed by a procession of faith led by First Communicants, altar servers, and St. Mary Pastor, **Father Stephen Vrazel**, carrying the Blessed Sacrament. The one mile procession through historic midtown ended at St. Joan of Arc Church with a beautiful Benediction. The event ended with a fellowship and fun at luncheon in the St. Joan of Arc in the Hall of Angels. St. Mary and St. Joan of Arc thank you to all who volunteered to make this day a success! Both parishes are especially grateful for a delicious lunch organized by St. Joan of Arc with dishes contributed by parishioners of both parishes.



*Feast of Corpus Christi
Photo by Shane Rice*

St. Mary's Catholic School Scholars Bowl Champs!

The St. Mary's Scholar's Bowl team brought home the 1st place trophies for both A Team and B Team in their division and **Sam Hanks** won the highest overall score in the entire region! Scholar's Bowl is an academic competition involving 36 schools (both public and private) throughout Mobile and surrounding counties.

Scholar's Bowl A Team members include Addison Feirman, Sam Hanks, Thomas Arensberg, Bud Urquhart, Xavier Montague, John Dudley, Henry Hewitt, and Patience Strickland.

Scholar's Bowl B Team members include Andrew Stowe, Alex Gould, Archer LeGrone, Ellis Dean, Casten Padgett, Jackson O'Dowd and Braydon Arata

Thank you to our Scholar's Bowl Moderators, Mrs. Stephanie LeGrone and Mrs. Carolyn Davidson!



Scholars Bowl Team A-2



Scholars Bowl Team B

CYO Basketball Champs in Three Divisions!

St. Mary Catholic School Girls CYO Basketball teams took home championships in three divisions! The D3 Girls Team coached by **Nicole Orso, Tim Talbott, and Jacob Bowlus** won the Mark Tapia Memorial Tournament. The D4 Team coached by **Thomas Sasser, James Daffin, and Matysan McClendon** took home the championship in the Greg E. Smith Hoops at The Loop Tournament, and St. Mary's D6 Team won the Pat Dumas Memorial Tournament, coached by **Ronnie Hathorne, Marian Warner, and Brian Lang**. Go Mustangs!



D6 Girls Champs



D4 Girls Champs



D3 Champs

St. Mary's Toy Bowl Fun!

Congratulations to our 2022 and 2023 Toy Bowl Court members, athletes and cheerleaders! St. Mary's 2022 Toy Bowl Court raised \$17,466.34! Congratulations to St. Mary's Second Lady to the Queen **Louise Harmon Lague** and **Knight Xavier Francis** Montague and all of our court Members for working hard to raise these funds for their CYO program that is near and dear to their hearts!

Congratulations to 2023 court for raising \$11,550 for the CYO Sports Program! Our students raised funds through our First-ever Mother/Son-Father/Daughter Dance (raised \$6,000 with \$2,000 donated to CYO), Concessions at McT Games, Boston Butt sales, SMS yard sign sales, and Spirit Wagon Raffle!

Toy Bowl Court 2023



Toy Bowl Court 2022



St. Mary's takes home the Trifecta Toy Bowl Champions for 2023!

St. Mary Mustangs Division 6 Football Team took home the 74th annual Toy Bowl Classic Championship on October 29, 2023 at Lipscomb Field. St. Mary's awesome coaches team includes **Bobby Bullcock, Mark Perniciaro, Matt Quinn, and Ioannis Zarifis**. St. Mary's Mustangs Soccer teams also took first place as champs in their divisions to include the D2 and D4 teams. Go Mustangs!



Toy Bowl Football Champs



All Girls Flag Football Team

St. Mary's introduces First CYO ALL GIRLS Flag Football team for 2023 Season!

St. Mary's Catholic School is thrilled to introduce the very first ALL GIRLS CYO Flag Football team! This Mighty Mustang Crew representing the third grade 2023 D3 Division is coached by St. Mary's parents, **Ryder Copeland** and **Steven McDavid**. Go Mustangs!

Congratulations to St. Mary's Division 4

St. Mary's Flag Football 2023 Toy Bowl Champions!

St. Mary's Mustangs Division 4 Flag Football Team took home the 2024 Championship on October 28! St. Mary's winning coaches include **Matt Boos, Luke Dyas, Brandon Hambright, and Blake Stein!**



D4 Flag Football Champs 2024

SCHOOL NEWS/ALUMNI NEWS



8th Grade Cunningham Recipients

Eighth Grade Awards

Congratulations to our St. Mary's 8th Grade Class of 2023! Honors last night included our Model Christian Students; **Elijah Gales** and **Jaliyah Nobles** in 8A, and **Wesley Pringle** and **Allie Walsh** in 8B; our Marian Honor Award recipients with medals for both Math and Science to **Louise Largue**; our 4.0 Awards to **Thomas Arensberg**, **John**

Dudley, **Bailey Ehlert**, **Bailey Ford**, **Charlie Heinz**, **Henry Hewitt**, **Louise Largue**, **Xavier Montague**, **Adrian Moore**, and **William Porter**; and finally our Rev. Msgr. Peter J. Cunningham Awards to **Louise Largue** and **Charlie Heinz**.

St. Mary's Mustang Walk!

St. Mary's welcomed back the 8th grade class of 2019 for the Mustang Walk on May 17. Walking through the hallways of their alma mater, sitting in their old desks, reminiscing with former teachers, and having fun with the St. Mary's students of today made for a complete journey home! We welcome St. Mary's Class of 2020 to our 2024 Mustang Walk on **May 15!**



Mustang Walk 2023



Colson Tidikis

Perfect ACT Score!

Congratulations to **Colson Tidikis**, St. Mary's Alumnus of the Class of 2020 and a senior at McGill-Toolen Catholic High School, who scored a perfect 36 on the ACT. This was Colson's second time taking the ACT - he scored a 35 the first time!



Matt Laird Outstanding Business Partner

St. Mary Catholic honors Outstanding Business Partner, Matt Laird of Midtown Media

St. Mary's Catholic presented the 2023 Outstanding Business Partner Award to class of 2000 St. Mary Alumnus, **Matt Laird**, owner of **Midtown Media Productions**. Matt was presented the award for his volunteer service of video production, and years of various volunteer work including coaching, altar server training, and leadership roles, giving to his alma mater. Pictured is Matt with his wife **Megan** and children, St. Mary's students **Gabriel** and **Jacob**.

The Mustang Name Reveal!

Meet "Mighty" the Mustang! Our new Mustang Mascot was introduced this September during our Grandparent's Day and Pavilion Reveal celebration. After a school wide contest, St. Mary students chose the name of our fearless and Mighty Mustang announced at this year's Toy Bowl Pep Rally! #22 will always mark the year Mighty was named!



Back of Mighty



Backpack Blessing and Welcome Back Meet & Greet!

St. Mary's Catholic School welcomed students and families for a Backpack Blessing and Welcome Back Celebration on Sunday, August 13. Students were able to meet their new Principal, **Mrs. Corinne Cuffle**, and their teachers, and see their new classrooms for the 2023-2024 school year!



Harry Partridge Alumni Award

St. Mary's Honors Alumnus, WWII Hero Lt. Harry "June" Partridge with NCEA Distinguished Graduate Award

St. Mary's presented the 2023 NCEA Distinguished Graduate Award posthumously to St. Mary's Alumnus and WWII Hero, **Lieutenant Harry "June" Partridge**. The award was accepted by Lt. Partridge's sister **Eleanor Partridge Cummings**, and his nephew, **Ben Cummings**. Lt. Partridge was honored by his

alma mater 80 years later for his heroic act of putting others above himself in steering his plane shot down by enemy fire in 1944 to save a village in Boffalora, Italy. Witnesses told the story that Lt. Partridge steered his plane away from the village to nearby woods to spare the village when he could have saved his own life by parachuting out of the plane. Lt. Partridge was buried in the village's Catholic cemetery, ironically, named St. Mary Catholic Church. The village saw him as a hero for his actions and created a memorial trail from the church to the crash site just this year where some of his Mobile family members were able to attend the dedication this past December.

St. Mary's still has his school records, now more than 100 years old.

Although Lt. Partridge's body was brought back to the United States in the late 1940s, his heroic story was unknown for over 70 years until a genealogical researcher happened upon his record in the Italian Church only a decade ago.



Fish Fryers 2023

St. Mary's Knights of Columbus and St. Mary's Dad's Club Lenten Fish Fry Fridays

Thank you to our Knights of Columbus and St. Mary Dad's Club for sponsoring fabulous Fish Fry Fridays in Lent of 2023. Friday nights during Lent were filled with family fun and socialization on Thompson Field! Thank you to this group of men who serve our parish in so many ways throughout the year!

Trunk or Treat at St. Mary's Parish!

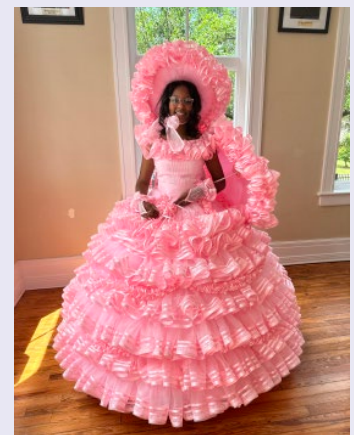
Thank you to all who came out to support our 2022 and 2023 Trunk or Treat October Events!

These family events offered our smallest parishioners an afternoon of trick or treat fun! The events featured decorated cars with trunks of candy, prizes for best trunk, and best costumes. Thanks to **Jamie Piper** and committee for organizing both the 2022 and 2023 St. Mary's Trunk or Treat.



Congratulations Jasmine Edwards, Mobile's Azalea Trail Court Queen!

Congratulations **Jasmine Edwards**, Queen of the 2023-2024 Azalea Trail Maid Court! Jasmine is an alumna of St. Mary's Class of 2020. She represents the court as a senior at McGill-Toolen Catholic High School where she plays the drum in the marching band, serves as a school ambassador, is a member of the Spanish club, the Future Medical Leaders club and the National Honors Society. Her honors include school letters for excellence in academics, Outstanding Freshman of the year, Roll of Excellence, SGA recognition award, and the Tulane University Book Award. Jasmine plans to attend the University of South Alabama to pursue a degree in biology and Spanish.



Jasmine Edwards Azalea Trail Queen



"Thank you to our crew of volunteers who spread the good news of our parish on September 30 to nearly 2,000 of our neighbors within our parish boundaries! The Feast of The Archangels Novena began 9 days before the mission to lead us to success. Thank you to our mission leadership team to include Deacon Mark and Ashely Thompson, Fran and Taylor Pecci, and Chris and Mary Carroll, and to all of our volunteers who made this event a success. Truly a day of blessings!"

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

NOVEMBER 27, 28, 29 ADVENT PARISH MISSION

for St. Mary's & St. Joan of Arc Parishes
with Father Mike Conway of the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Mission takes place at St. Joan of Arc

MISSION SCHEDULE:

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27:

5:30 p.m. Family Dinner in St. Joan of Arc Hall of Angels

6:45 p.m.: Rosary in St. Joan of Arc Church

7 p.m.: Mission Talk follows in church (Babysitting provided)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28 AND WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29

6:45 p.m.: Rosary in St. Joan of Arc Church

7 p.m.: Mission Talk follows in Church (Babysitting provided)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3

St. Mary's Plaza Blessing
follows 9:30 a.m. Mass

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6

Feast of St. Nicholas

ST. MARY'S LIGHTING UP MIDTOWN AND ANNUAL TREE LIGHTING!

7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

This family event takes place on the St. Mary's Campus with activities under the Ollis Pavilion, beginning with the Christmas Tree Lighting and the arrival of Santa! Join us for great food, festivities, fun, and... SNOW!

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7

Feast of the Immaculate Conception Vigil

Mass: 5:30 p.m. at St. Joan of Arc

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Masses: 6 a.m., 8:10 a.m., and 5:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve

Masses: 4 p.m., 6 p.m., and Midnight

4 p.m. at St. Joan of Arc

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

Christmas Day

Masses: No Mass at St. Mary's

9:00 a.m. at St. Joan of Arc

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

New Year's Eve

Holy Hour: 11 p.m. to Midnight

MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 2024

Feast of Mary, Mother of God; New Year's Day

Mass: 9 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24

ST. MARY'S MARRIAGE NIGHT!

6:00–8:00PM, Sisters of Mercy Building

\$30 suggested donation per couple, includes dinner, program, and dessert. Please bring a bottle of wine to share! Childcare is free with reservations. RSVP with Laurel Wallace at lw Wallace@stmarymobile.org or (251) 380-8772.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7

50+ VALENTINE'S DAY LUNCHEON

12 Noon in the Sisters of Mercy Building
Sponsored by St. Mary's 8th Grade

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14

Ash Wednesday, Lent Begins

Ashes distributed at 6 a.m. and 8:10 a.m.
Masses, and at 5:30 p.m. Vespers (not a Mass)

Lenten schedule to include a Lenten Mission, Masses and Services, and Fish Fries on Fridays. Please visit StMaryMobile.org for details.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

ST. MARY'S MARRIAGE NIGHT!

6:00–8:00PM, Sisters of Mercy Building

See Jan 24th listing for details

TUESDAY, MARCH 19

ST. JOSEPH'S ALTAR & PASTA DINNER

5:30p.m. in the St. Mary's School Gym
Join us for a pasta dinner and traditional St. Joseph's Altar! It's a feast to remember.

HOLY WEEK

SUNDAY, MARCH 24: PALM SUNDAY

Regular Mass Schedule

THURSDAY, MARCH 28: HOLY THURSDAY

Mass of the Lord's Supper, 7:00 Mass

FRIDAY, MARCH 29: GOOD FRIDAY

3:00p.m. Passion Liturgy

6:30p.m. Stations of the Cross

7:00p.m. Tenebrae

SATURDAY, MARCH 30: HOLY SATURDAY:

9:00a.m. Tenebrae

3:00p.m. Confessions

8:00p.m. Easter Vigil Mass

SUNDAY, MARCH 31: EASTER SUNDAY

Regular Mass Schedule

10:30a.m. Parish Easter Egg Hunt

SUNDAY, APRIL 21 – SATURDAY, APRIL 27 STEAK OUT WEEKEND!

St. Mary's brings the fun for these fundraisers!

SPRING SWING (Pickleball Tournament):

Sunday, April 21 at St. Mary's School

MIX & MINGLE

(Ladies' Cocktail Competition):

Thursday, April 25, location TBA

KIDS PLAY DAY (FREE Family Fest):

Saturday, April 27 at McGill Field

STEAK OUT (Steak-Cooking Competition and Tasting): Saturday, April 27 at St. Mary's School

WEDNESDAY, MAY 1

ST. MARY'S MARRIAGE NIGHT!

6:00–8:00PM, Sisters of Mercy Building

See Jan 24th listing for details

EVERY WEEK AT ST. MARY'S

Regular Mass Schedule

SUNDAY: 6 AM, 9:30 AM, & 11:30 AM

MONDAY:NO MASS

TUESDAY: 6 AM

WEDNESDAY: 6 AM

THURSDAY: 6 AM

FRIDAY: 6 AM

FIRST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH: 7:15 AM

SATURDAY: 4 PM

(AT ST. JOAN OF ARC)

CONFESSIONS:

TUES. & THURS.....5 TO 6 P.M.
WITH HOLY HOUR

APPOINTMENTS FOR

CONFESSION: PLEASE CALL
(251) 432-8678 TO SCHEDULE

ADORATION IN CHAPEL:

FRIDAYS 6:30 A.M. TO 4 P.M.
YEAR-ROUND

IF YOU WOULD TO SIGN UP FOR AN
HOUR WITH OUR LORD IN THE
CHAPEL, PLEASE CONTACT
LAUREL WALLACE AT (251) 432-8678

For more information on all St. Mary Parish programs for both St. Mary Catholic Church and St. Mary Catholic School, visit www.StMaryMobile.org or contact the parish office at (251) 432-8678 or the school office at (251) 433-9904.



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St. Mary's Plaza Blessing!

Sunday, December 3, beginning with 9:30 a.m. Mass
followed by the blessing and reception
on St. Mary's Plaza.

Join us as Father Vrazel blesses our St. Mary's Plaza
in front of our church to include our long-awaited
seating walls!

The seating walls nearest the church are named in
honor of **Mrs. Elise Host's** 90th birthday and in
memory of John Wil-
liam Host, and in mem-
ory of St. Mary's beloved
preschool teacher, **Lillis
Lott Lewis**. Thank you
to the donors who made
these seating walls pos-
sible. There will be op-
portunities to name the
remaining seating walls
soon to be announced!



St. Mary's Lighting Up Midtown and Annual Tree Lighting!

Wednesday, December 6 on the
Feast of St. Nicholas 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

This family event takes place on
the St. Mary's Campus with activ-
ities under our the St. Mary's Ollis
Pavilion. The event begins with the
Christmas Tree Lighting and the
arrival of **Santa!**

Join us for great food, festivities,
fun, and... SNOW!

Thanks to our 2022 and 2023
Chair **Leslie Fowlkes** and her
crew of volunteers for making this
event possible. For our 2022 event, St. Mary's Alum-
na, **Millie Dixon**, celebrated her recent 90th birthday
by lighting last year's Christmas Tree! Thank you to
our local Fire Departments for assisting Millie in our
tree lighting and for joining us each year to bring in Santa!



*Millie Dixon Lighting
Up Midtown*