



St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Community

Madison Heights, MI www.stvincentferrer.net

April 21, 2024 † FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

From The Pastor

Why does Jesus identify himself as the Good Shepherd? There are seven 'I am' statements made by Jesus in the New Testament. I am statements are more than a metaphor. They are direct statements of Jesus' identity with God, as God. Jesus applies the I am name to himself to express his oneness with God as the revelation of God Incarnate.

Consider the seven I am statements: I am the Light of the World. I am the Bread of Life. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. I am the Gate. I am the True Vine. I am the Resurrection and the Life. I am the Good Shepherd. Each title or name expresses a different aspect of God's love and care for the world. Christ brings the world out of darkness into the Light of goodness and truth. Jesus as bread feeds the world in its hunger for meaning, truth, and love, as well as bread for the body through those who show compassion to the poor. Jesus is the way to God, the truth of God, and the life of God. One comes to the life of God through the gate of Jesus who is the Shepherd of the sheep. We enter through faith in Jesus and can come in no other way. Jesus is the Vine who nourishes and prunes the branches. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who alone is willing to give his life for his sheep. We are the sheep of his flock whom he leads with tender and protective care lest we become lost or snatched away by the wolf, losing faith in the ways and disorder of the world.

Today's image is that of the Good Shepherd. It is one of the most well-known and beloved of all the I am expressions of Jesus. Why does Jesus use such metaphors? The images are used to invite faith, secure hope, and instill the life of God in all who seek him. To believe in someone and come to love them is dependent on knowing them. The power and the life of faith we hold is in the person of Jesus; Jesus the Christ of God who willingly gave his life to assure our union with God here and hereafter. Our relationship with God, with Jesus, is the premier and most essential relationship any of us will ever have.

This might sound like an overreach, but it is not. Consider that every other trusted, loving, life-giving relationship you have is grounded in God through Christ. In deep friendships and healthy marriages most will say the other is their best friend; they say they feel trust, love, security, and commitment from the other.

How many people of faith can say that about God, or Jesus? Seriously, have you ever said that Jesus or God was your best friend? God is love and where there is love, there is God. God is ever-present in all we do,

all we are, and all we have. God can be seen and realized in any relationship of love. Despite the inevitable trials and hurts of our relationships, we persist because of the love that binds and holds us together. Never is this truer than in our relationship with God.

This is one reason Jesus identifies himself as the Good Shepherd. Jesus is not merely a caretaker of the sheep through whom he gains income or advantage. Jesus loves his own and has given his life to assure that those who seek him will find a safe home in him.

Notice the language Jesus uses. "I am the Good Shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father; I will lay down my life for the sheep." The way Jesus knows the Father, he knows you, deeply and in perfect love. Jesus knows and wants to know everything about you. If that seems scary or vulnerable to you, then the best remedy is to get to know Jesus more deeply to relieve your fears and concern.

Do you know Jesus in a deep and trusting way beyond your practice of religion? This is the invitation of the Good Shepherd. The Shepherd is approachable, kindly, and caring to all who come to him. Using the image of a shepherd is not by accident. Sheep will not follow a stranger. Once they know the shepherd and his sensitive and protective care, they will love him and stay close to him. This is the invitation and desire of Jesus our Good Shepherd.

How do I come to know the Shepherd with trusting faith and secure hope? First, having an active faith in Jesus as the Son of God, our Redeemer, Lord, and friend. This kind of knowing is dependent on a personal relationship of prayer, openness, honesty, and maturing trust. Relationships need time and will grow with commitment and mutual sharing. Open yourself to Jesus. More than just prayers, devotions, or 'the way I have always done it,' pray from your heart. Reveal to Jesus your deepest longings, needs, hurts, and losses. Share your failures, shame, or mistakes with Jesus. In doing so, you will learn and perceive deeply his patience, understanding, and mercy in a way no devotional prayers could convey. You will come to know the protection and peace of Jesus in good times and bad, in joy and in sorrow. Jesus will become real for you, as real as your Father's love. Then you will know him as a Good Shepherd following with surety, peace, and commitment.

Father John Esper

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

DAILY MASS

8:00am Monday thru Thursday

WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday - 4:00pm

Sunday - 9:00am

Church doors open 1/2 hour before Mass begins

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays 3:00 - 3:45pm
in Adoration Chapel

Only one person allowed in chapel at a time. Persons seeking Sacrament of Reconciliation will be allowed in church to line up at 3:00pm

LIVE
STREAMING

Live Streaming of Mass
Monday thru Thursday 8:00am and
Sunday 9:00am

Adoration on Tuesdays
8:45am to 10:00am

Livestream of Rosary on Thursday
following Mass

Search for St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church (in Madison Heights) on youtube to find our channel or connect via our APP or website

CONTACT INFORMATION

ST VINCENT FERRER PARISH OFFICE

28353 Herbert St., Madison Heights, MI 48071
248-542-8720 Fax 248-542-8721
Website: www.stvincentferrer.net

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday
9am to Noon - 1:00pm to 4:30pm,
Friday 9-Noon
Closed Saturday & Sunday

Parish Office Staff

Reverend John C. Esper, Priest in Solidum
Deborah Tourville, Bus. Mgr/Adult Faith Formation
Sheryl Brown, Parish Secretary/Bulletin
Jim Balistreri, Music Coordinator
Mary Ann Przybysz, Evangelical Charity Coordinator/
Order of Christian Initiation of Adults(OCIA) Coordinator
Carl Copen, Facilities Supervisor
Alex Mototolea, Maintenance

Faith Formation Office

248-398-1743

Matthew Zinser, Childhood Faith Formation Coordinator

For information on Baptisms, OCIA and
Funerals contact the Parish Office 248-542-8720

Mass INTENTIONS

MONDAY, April 22, 2024

8:00am Mass: Linda Karolski† req. by Regina Juska-Svoba

TUESDAY, April 23, 2024

8:00am Mass: Christopher Hudy (Special Intention) req. by Mom

WEDNESDAY, April 24, 2024

8:00am Mass: Sheryl Brown (Admin Professional Day Appreciation) req. by Bernadette Gutowski

THURSDAY, April 25, 2024

8:00am Mass: Intentions of the members of the Immaculata Rosary Group

SATURDAY, April 27, 2024

4:00pm Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer
Donna Dietrich† req. by Family
Peter Conway (Special Intention) req. by Mom
Intentions of Jeff Karolski & Family req. by Patricia Mason

SUNDAY, April 28, 2024

9:00am Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer
Barbara Merchel† req. by Family
Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family
Leonard Kwapis† req. by Members of the SVF St. Vincent de Paul Conference
Linda Karolski† req. by Meg & Sam Lamerato
Charles Ray† req. by Meg & Sam Lamerato
Michael Ray† req. by Meg & Sam Lamerato



READINGS FOR THE WEEK

April 21, 2024

- Sunday: Acts 4:8-12/Ps 118: 1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 28, 29 (22)/1 Jn 3:1-2/Jn 10:11-18
- Monday: Acts 11:1-18/Ps 42:2-3; 43:3, 4/Jn 10:1-10
- Tuesday: Acts 11:19-26/Ps 87:1b-3, 4-5, 6-7/Jn 10:22-30
- Wednesday: Acts 12:24—13:5a/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6 and 8/Jn 12:44-50
- Thursday: 1 Pt 5:5b-14/Ps 89:2-3, 6-7, 16-17/Mk 16:15-20
- Friday: Acts 13:26-33/Ps 2:6-7, 8-9, 10-11ab/Jn 14:1-6
- Saturday: Acts 13:44-52/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4/Jn 14:7-14
- Next Sunday: Acts 9:26-31/Ps 22:26-27, 28, 30, 31-32 (26a)/1 Jn 3:18-24/Jn 15:1-8



In our politically charged society, I imagine many have heard the quote, "It takes a village..." Whether or not one likes the politics of the author of that quote, in the words are truth. It takes many people to create and sustain a community.

For those of us who are Catholic, we believe in the power of vocations to help spread the Gospel message. And vocations are an important part of the community. The vocations to priesthood, or the diaconate, or religious life are at the center of our efforts to spread the good news. However, we need to also speak about the vocation of married life as service to the church; and furthermore, the vocation of single life. It is at our baptism that we are given the mandate to spread the Gospel through our vocation in the church.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, then I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me" (Rv 3:20).

We hear in Scripture that Jesus stands at the door of our heart and knocks. He only invites and never demands or breaks into our lives without our acceptance. He knocks, we open the door, and the invitation and welcome are complete.

Let us pray...

*God of the invitation,
you knock upon the door of everyone's heart.
We seek the courage to open that door, for we know
the responsibility of saying yes.
We humbly ask you for your wisdom to serve your
church with compassion and acceptance.
We believe that when we say yes, you will provide
the grace for the work ahead.
Give grace to those men and women who have dedicated
their lives to constant service to your church.
Also give grace to those couples and single men
and women who work for the church in their
secular lives.
We ask all this through Christ our Lord and
brother, who live and reign with you and the Holy
Spirit. Amen.*

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***“Our life finds fulfilment when we discover
who we are, what our gifts are, where we can
make them bear fruit, and what path we can
follow in order to become signs and
instruments of love, generous acceptance,
beauty and peace, wherever we find ourselves.***

Pope Francis (4-21-24)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY Blessings

to parishioner Louise Lovsin
who turns 100 years old this week!!!

The LORD bless you and keep you;
The LORD make his face shine on you,
and be gracious to you;
The LORD look upon you kindly and give you peace.

Numbers 6: 24-26

First Communion

Sunday, April 28th - 9:00am

Next Sunday, April 28th, six of our young people will be welcomed to the table of the Lord to share in the Eucharist. Please keep them and their families in your prayers this week.

VOCATION OR CALLING

Question: Can you explain what we mean by a vocation or calling? I have heard this term used in many different contexts and am not sure what it means. Does it apply to religious life?

Answer:

A vocation or calling refers to a spiritual experience whereby a person senses within oneself the closeness of God and what he is asking in one's life. It is a realization of what one's part in God's plan could be. Vocation comes in all kinds of ways. Some are as dramatic as St. Paul's, being knocked off his horse, blinded, and hearing God's voice. Others are less dramatic, often occurring over time through little events and personal interests. Others happen in a hurry, accompanied by great spiritual insight or conversion. We often think that this applies to religious vocation, but in fact, every Christian has a vocation, a calling to serve others in and through the church. Whether married or single, religious or lay, we are all called to live out our baptismal commitment to preach and teach the Gospel message. Each of us has our role to play in God's plan, and we become coworkers with God in the work of redemption. With a little confidence, a willing spirit and God's grace, we can and will respond to his unique call.

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**HOW WILL YOU SERVE THE LORD?
Pray to discern and fulfill your vocation.**

HEALING MASS NEXT SATURDAY

APRIL 27, 2024 - 4:00pm

Fr. John will administer the Sacrament of the Sick after Mass. Prayer teams will be available for individual prayer.



Anointing of the Sick



The Good Shepherd and the Wolf

by Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

I remember very clearly the first movie I watched during my pregnancy with my eldest child. In this film, there is a scene where a young boy is kidnapped and shoved into the back of a van guarded by vicious dogs. His mother persists in trying to free him, even as the dogs snap at her. Their bared teeth and full-throated snarls don't slow her efforts in the slightest.

It wasn't a great movie or even a particularly great scene, but I'll never forget this scene. I'll never forget those dogs.

I had just learned that I was a mother a few days ago. The life growing deep within seemed to me as frail as a whispered secret, but I loved it powerfully. I worried constantly if the baby was safe and healthy. I agonized over signs — real or imagined — that could tell me if the poppyseed-sized child was thriving or failing.

I understood, for the first time in my life, why a woman would charge a pack of attack dogs without hesitation — not because she should, but because she has to.

She could choose not to fight, certainly. She could walk away. But why would she? A future without her son is so much more painful than any physical wound. She may fear for her life, but she fears a life without her child so much more.

The Good Shepherd discourse reveals to us the motivation behind God's actions throughout all of salvation history. From Adam to Noah to Abraham, all the way down to the time of the Messiah and beyond, He keeps trying to get us back. He keeps braving the attack dogs, time after time. He never stops. He never grows weary. And it baffles us: *what's in it for Him?* we wonder, because we are quicker to give up on ourselves than He is. *Why does He keep trying?*

He could choose not to fight, sure. But why would He? He doesn't want a future without us.

"I will lay down my life for the sheep."

— John 10:11
©LPi

INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES ARE NEEDED TO HOST THE TRAVELING VOCATIONS CHALICE



Please commit to hosting the Traveling Vocations Chalice for one week. Prayers come with the chalice. Sign up sheets are at the table outside the chapel wall near the Herbert door entrance.



...all government leaders to seek wisdom in finding peaceful solutions to world wars and tensions.

...medical and humanitarian aid for those suffering from hardship due to catastrophic weather, fires, wars, floods, earthquakes and disasters.

...the safety of men and women dedicated to protecting lives and freedom.

...the homeless, the addicted and all who are suffering physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.

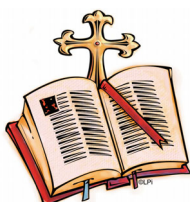
...all who are sick, homebound, undergoing or recovering from surgery, medical procedures, treatments or testing, and those who have made specific prayer requests.

Lord Jesus,

You are the Divine Physician and Healer. To You, we lift up in prayer all who are lonely, homeless, sick or addicted; all who are unemployed or underemployed; all who are anxious or depressed and all who are suffering in any way spiritually, physically or emotionally. In their pain and brokenness, we ask that you bring them the comfort of your loving presence. In You, may they find strength for the day and hope for the journey. Amen

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP & SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

Saturday, April 27, 2024 at 9am
Faith Formation Office in School



The men's fellowship group gathers for a scripture reflection/sharing every other Saturday. All men are welcome.



PRAYER BLANKET MINISTRY MEETING
APRIL 25, 2024

The Prayer Blanket Ministry will meet this Thursday, April 25th from 6-9 PM in the social hall. (Note the change back to 3 hours instead of 2 hours.)

**WHY DO WE DO THAT?
CATHOLIC LIFE EXPLAINED**

4th Sunday of Easter

READING THE BIBLE

Question: What is unique or different about the way Catholics read and are exposed to the Bible?

Answer: Catholics are exposed to Scripture primarily through the Sunday readings from a book known as the *Lectionary*. The *Lectionary* is a book of selected passages from the Bible set in the context of a liturgical season, such as Advent, Lent, or ordinary time. There are four readings assigned to any Sunday: the first reading (usually from the Old Testament), the responsorial psalm, the second reading (usually from a New Testament letter), and the Gospel reading.

These readings together give them a new context. The selected readings relate to one another in a unique manner that is not present in the Bible text itself. In close proximity to each other, these readings now have the opportunity to converse with each other in a way that would have not been possible before. A homilist pays attention to all four readings, preparing a reflection that speaks of this conversation among the readings, enabling us to zero in on what this unique combination of God’s word has to say to us this particular Sunday.

Next time you attend Sunday liturgy, try reading the Scripture ahead of time and see how this new relationship among the readings addresses and challenges you to be a better Christian here and now.

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Recently I was with my little dog Libby at a retreat center in the Arizona desert. I sat in a chair near a ravine filled with shrubs. Unbeknownst to me, Libby wandered down there and disappeared. Suddenly an animal’s wild shriek erupted from the area. Without thinking, I bolted down into the ravine fully expecting to see coyotes, javelinas, or rattlesnakes. I didn’t care. I desperately wanted to get Libby out of there, without any self-regard. Before I could face whatever danger lay hidden, my dog blissfully trotted out from an entirely different area, utterly unaware that I had (quite heroically) just placed my life on the line.

When the adrenaline wore off, I thought to myself: how far would I have been willing to go to save her? I don’t know. But I do know, if I had literally died, my friends and family would have certainly thought me insane for dying for a dog. No offense, Libby.

How passionately Jesus wants us to know him and his willingness to die for us! This week he says, “**I know my own and my own know me,**” and “**I lay down my life for the sheep.**” Here we encounter an insanely excessive love for us. Christianity is a relationship and not simply a religion or ethical code. In Jesus, God rescues and saves us. He laid down his life for you and me — and he has taken it up again. So often we are like Libby — blissfully ignorant of the reality of both our spiritual danger and his saving love. This Easter season, the risen Jesus calls us to be more conscious than ever before about his love. He never ceases to lay down his life for us.

— Father John Muir
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QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK FOR REFLECTION

First Reading: Acts 4:8-12

Peter bore witness to the Sanhedrin that it was the crucified and risen Jesus who healed the crippled man and through whom we are saved. Have you ever told someone else about your faith in Jesus?

Second Reading: 1 Jn 3:1-2/

John tells us that as believers we are destined one day to be like the resurrected and glorified Jesus. How do you think we can best prepare for such a future?

Gospel: Jn 10:11-18

As the “Good Shepherd,” Jesus speaks of the power given to him by the Father to lay down his life for his sheep. What could you do this week for the benefit of another?

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Ministry Schedule		
April 27/28, 2024		
Mass	4:00pm	9:00am
Sacristan	T Riley	T Karolski
Reader #1	M Simmons	J Kosnak
Reader #2	T Riley	T Karolski
EME	M Kairis	P Miles
	M Simmons	L Yolkiewicz
	J McCown	M Waskowski
Greeters	L Collins	P Miles
	R Bertolini	T Lane
	R Pasiak	B Turchin
	T Pasiak	R Juska-Svoba
Traveling Chalice Host beginning week of April 27/28, 2024		
Jennifer Ballantine		

EUCHARISTIC SAINTS SERIES

ST. PASCHAL BAYLÓN
(1540-1592)



St. Paschal Baylón was born in Spain to impoverished Catholic parents. He worked alongside his father as a shepherd from his childhood until his 20's. He often prayed while working in the fields, listening daily for the church bells that would ring at the point of Elevation of the Eucharist during Mass to remind him to spend time with the Lord. He was known for his work ethic and honesty among his neighbors and desired a religious life from a young age.

Baylón taught himself to read so he could pray the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, a prayer popular in his time. He would give parts of his dinner away to those in need when it was brought to him as he was shepherding in the field. He also had great compassion for the sick.

At age 24, Baylón joined the Friars Minor and although invited to study to be a priest, he chose to be a brother. In this vocation he served his brothers in many ways, including as a chef, door man, gardener, and official beggar. As a Franciscan lay brother, he took a vow of poverty but remained generous to those poor who came begging at the monastery — to the point that the other friars sometimes tried to limit his giving.

St. Paschal found particular solace while praying before the Blessed Sacrament. His devotion to Christ in the Eucharist was tangible as he was known to spend most of his free time in adoration and would occasionally experience visions after all-night prayer. Because of this devotion, he is the Patron Saint of Eucharistic Congresses and Societies. He was also known widely for his spiritual council. People all over the region would visit him to talk about faith and life. St. Paschal Baylón, pray for us! ©LPI

INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

Jesus the Good Shepherd knows that real love is an action, not an idea. His sacrifice is the proof of his love for his flock. Let us remember to love one another as the Good Shepherd loves us: not just in words but in actions, in choices, in deeds. ©LPI

OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK

Sunday: 4th Sunday of Easter; World Day of Prayer for Vocations
 Monday: Earth Day
 Tuesday: St. George, Martyr; St. Adalbert, Bishop and Martyr
 Wednesday: St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen, Priest and Martyr; Administrative Professionals' Day
 Thursday: St. Mark, Evangelist
 Friday: Arbor Day
 Next Sunday: 5th Sunday of Easter ©LPI

SPRING*How to Fail Your Way to Heaven*

You know what are some of my favorite moments in Scripture? The little “Easter eggs” of Jesus’ humanity, things like Jesus falling asleep, Jesus drawing in the sand, Jesus playing with kids. And how about Jesus rising from the dead, appearing to his disciples and saying, “So, have you got anything to eat?”

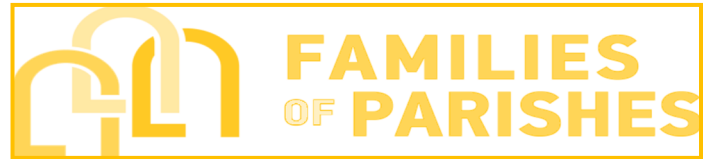
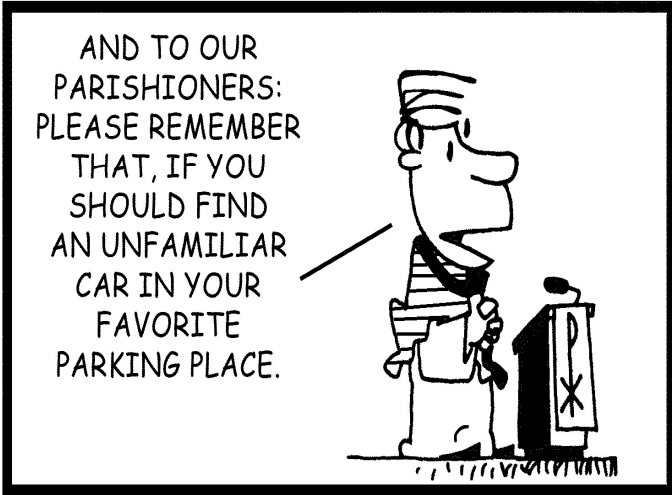
It’s right for us to always keep in mind that Jesus is God. But we also have to remember that he was man. He got hungry. He cried when he felt sad and laughed when he felt happy. He got tired. He got bored.

Because he was God, none of those feelings ever led him into sin, like they do us. He never spent a car ride trying to pass the hours by seeing how annoyed he could make his older sister. He never smacked Peter over the head for saying something really stupid. But he did unleash some Biblically righteous anger on those traders in the temple, didn’t he? And he wasn’t shy about calling Peter “a Satan” when his friend tempted him to take the easy way out.

It’s the tightrope walk we all try to balance every day, honoring our human emotions while still answering God’s call to be better. Being perfect isn’t the domain of the Christian — that’s the domain of Christ only. Trying and failing, then trying again (and failing again) and again and again? That’s the domain of the Christian.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

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MASS SCHEDULES

National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica

2100 W. 12 Mile, Royal Oak, 48073

SATURDAY- 8:30am and
4:30pm (livestreamed)

SUNDAY-7:30am, 9:30am (livestreamed),
11:30am

4:00pm (Spanish-livestreamed), and 6:00pm

WEEKDAYS (*Monday - Friday*)

6:30am (livestreamed), 8:30am

St. Justin, St. Mary Magdalen

1631 E. Elza Hazel Park, 48030 (St J)
50 E Annabelle Ave. Hazel Park, 48030 (St MM)

SATURDAY - 4:00pm - St. Justin

SUNDAY - 9:00am & 11:00am - St. Mary Magdalen

MON-WED & FRI- 9:00am - St. Justin

St. Mary

730 S. Lafayette, Royal Oak, 48067

SATURDAY - 4:30pm

SUNDAY - 9:00am, 11 am

MON, TUES, THURS, FRI - 7:30am

WED - 12:10pm

CSA
CATHOLIC SERVICES APPEAL
2023

A reminder to those still fulfilling their 2023 pledge...
CSA 2023 Campaign ends April 30, 2024.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP GIVING - WEEK ENDING APRIL 13/14

<i>Fiscal Year 7-1-23 to 6-30-24</i>	Budgeted	Actual	Over/Under	YTD
Offertory Env. Used & e-fund participants	245	100		
Offertory (including loose cash)	\$ 5,293.00	\$5,380.31	87.31	(9,206.95)
Energy	289.00	153.00	(136.00)	(1,674.61)
Other: Coffee & Donuts, Flowers, Memorial Trees, Candles	\$ 1,115.39	87.00	(1,028.39)	(37,217.39)
Mass Intentions	n/a	100.00		5,155.00
Holy Days: Easter	n/a	100.00		6,104.00
Budget deficit donations		350.00		7,832.00
2023 CSA overage (pledges outstanding - 2,392.12)				7,378.88

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