



# St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Community

Madison Heights, MI [www.stvincentferrer.net](http://www.stvincentferrer.net)

April 28, 2024 † FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

## From The Pastor

All living things are dependent on love. God is the only reality of love that has no other source or origin. Every other living thing that is capable of love, growth, or generating new life cannot be independently self-sustaining. More than a few human beings resist this reality. Somehow, we prefer self-sufficiency and independence from others. This is not the nature of what it means to be human. We are not independent, and without God or others we cannot realize our full nature and capacity by ourselves. The isolation of the Covid pandemic has once again made this clear.

Love is the foundation of what it means to be human, and with love human beings have the greatest capacity for growth in self-love that inspires mature love for others. As any self-aware person knows, this is not an effortless process. Love can hurt, disappoint, and betray. It takes persistent effort to mature. Being in love, by its nature, will mature a person beyond self-sufficiency, isolated personal gain, and basic selfishness. This process necessitates giving up something of the self for the sake of another. This creates a path to deeper self-realization that supports personal happiness. Many want to think they can make themselves happy all by them self, but this is a contradiction of nature. Love is undeniably relational. Love has a source and origin from which it flows. Love flows back to its source in the fruit it bears through connection with others.

I hope this opens and enriches the image of Jesus as the Vine and us as the branches. This is one of the seven 'I am' statements of Jesus in the gospel of St. John. "I am the Vine and my Father is the vine grower... I am the Vine and you are the branches." The image is clear. Our life in love flows forth from the love of in the Father, through the Son, into ourselves through faith in the Lord Jesus. In Christ, we bear much fruit and without his love we can do nothing. Separated from the Vine, we can do nothing that bears the fruit of love.

Notice that Jesus does not claim to be the source of love, but a vine that grows from the love of the Father. The Father is the Vine grower. Jesus is the fruit and gift of the Father's love that is given to unite us to the Father. It is an image of union, oneness with God through Christ, united in the Spirit. This is the union of redemptive love that breaks the disorder of independence and the illusion of self-sufficiency. The idea of independence or self-sufficiency may be comfortable and convenient, but it will not bear fruit

apart from Jesus, the Vine.

Notice the Father prunes the branches of those who come to faith in Jesus. Pruning is a work of love. It serves to sever or discard that which is unnecessary and hinders the growth of maturing fruit. This is another effective image. Any good farmer or gardener knows the value of effective pruning. It is a necessary process to produce an effective and fruitful crop. Fruit trees for instance may have a full third of their blossoms pruned so that what remains will come to full stature. Branches growing downward are typically severed to remove excess weight from the large branch allowing the upward growing fruit to come to full size.

This is an effective image for a person growing in faith, or any relationship of love that seeks maturing or greater union. Inevitably through time, things that were formally fruitful for the growth of love will no longer be effective. They must be let go so new life in love may be realized. As a person grows in faith and the awareness of the grace of God, less mature ways of living must be surrendered for the sake of more mature ways of love and virtue. Love that is not growing or moving in its natural rhythm will not remain for long.

This is why Jesus uses the image of the branches separated from the vine. Conversion must take place on one or several levels as the relationship of faith matures through various stages of growth. Love necessitates some loss, some surrendering to realize itself. If a person is praying at middle age or later the same way they prayed in grade school, an adult relationship with God is not being realized. If a married couple of fifty years clings to honeymoon type expectations, something is amiss. Pruning is necessary to stimulate new growth, shedding old or ineffective ways that hinder maturing commitment.

Jesus says that those who remain in him with faith and love may 'ask anything whatever you want, and it will be given you.' That is a bold statement. Yet, those who remain in a maturing and pruned relationship with Jesus in the fruit of the Father's love, will ask for things that nurture and support mature love, faith, and self-giving. This is not a free for all in whatever I want, it is what I seek and desire in God, in love, in mature faith that bears fruit in the will and life of God.

You are in God and God is in you. Bear good fruit in Jesus the Vine. Deeply connected to Jesus, accept the pruning of conversion that your love may give life to others as you give glory to God.

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,  
Closed Friday, 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



### MONDAY, April 29, 2024

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

### TUESDAY, April 30, 2024

8:00am Mass: Jacquelyn Pantano† (4th R.A.) req. by Family

### WEDNESDAY, May 1, 2024

8:00am Mass: Linda Karolski† req. by Frank & Nina Virga

### THURSDAY, May 2, 2024

8:00am Mass: Dominic Bologna† req. by Sheryl Brown

### SATURDAY, May 4, 2024

4:00pm Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer  
Linda Proszkowski (Birthday Blessings) req. by Family  
Peter Conway (Special Intention) req. by Mom

### SUNDAY, May 5, 2024

9:00am Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer  
Kristine Maulding (Memorial Birthday) req. by Regina Juska-Svoba

Cathy McCarthy† req. by Corrine McCarthy

Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family

Leonard Kwapis† req. by Members of the SVF St.

Vincent de Paul Conference

Jacqueline Mason req. by Patricia Mason

Linda Karolski† req. by Paula Moran



“Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament has His hands full of graces, and He is ready to bestow them on anyone who asks for them”

St. Peter of Alcantara

## READINGS FOR THE WEEK

### April 28, 2024

- Sunday: Acts 9:26-31/Ps 22:26-27, 28, 30, 31-32 (26a)/1 Jn 3:18-24/Jn 15:1-8
- Monday: Acts 14:5-18/Ps 115:1-2, 3-4, 15-16/Jn 14:21-26
- Tuesday: Acts 14:19-28/Ps 145:10-11, 12-13ab, 21/Jn 14:27-31a
- Wednesday: Acts 15:1-6/Ps 122: 1-2, 3-4ab, 4cd-5/Jn 15:1-8
- Thursday: Acts 15:7-21/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 10/Jn 15:9-11
- Friday: 1 Cor 15:1-8/Ps 19:2-3, 4-5/Jn 14:6-14
- Saturday: Acts 16:1-10/Ps 100:1b-2, 3, 5/Jn 15:18-21
- Next Sunday: Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4 (see 2b)/1 Jn 4:7-10/Jn 15:9-17



**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.

**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter**

My friend and fellow pastor, Father Paul, noticed unsightly, overgrown trees near his parish church. He asked the maintenance crew to cut back the growth, which they happily did, telling him the trees would be much healthier and even fuller after a good pruning. A few days later, Father Paul received a letter from an irate man in the neighborhood who wrote, "Jesus would never prune trees like that. He loves trees, unlike you."

I suspect that the neighbor was not familiar with this week's Gospel in which Jesus says of his Father, "**He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit**" (John 15:2) I don't mean to pick too much on that fellow. He was perhaps ignorant of arboriculture. But I'd wager his main confusion was the pruning and removing quality of God's love. That confusion afflicts us all to some degree, doesn't it? It is just so darn easy to react negatively when God cuts something out of our lives and assume it's not his work at all. In the moment, all we see is the loss, and not the loving desire for future flourishing.

The cross is the great pruning of Christ's body. Jesus' rising is the brand-new growth. It is God's promise to us that all the painful pruning in life is leading us somewhere beautiful. What has been cut back or out in your life? A friend, an opportunity, a sense of certainty, a job, health, a relationship? This week, offer those dry branches to the one who lovingly prunes us in order to make our lives burst with verdant growth.

— *Father John Muir*  
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**SAVE *the* DATE!**

**JOIN US IN CHURCH FOR**  
**Praise & Worship**  
**WEDNESDAY**  
**May 8th - 7:00pm**  
**Followed by Fellowship**  
**and Afterglow**

**First COMMUNION**  
**This Sunday - 9am Mass**

*We thank the parents, Children's Faith Coordinator, catechists, and Fr. Esper for preparing our young people for their First Communion. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.*

**CSA 2024**

CATHOLIC SERVICES APPEAL

**Catholic Services Appeal 2024 will kick off next weekend.**

Thank you to everyone who generously donated to the CSA 2023 Campaign. Over \$7,300.00 was returned to our parish.

# BABY SHOWER THANK YOU

I hope everyone got a chance to see all the wonderful gifts brought to the Right-To-Life Baby Shower 2024.

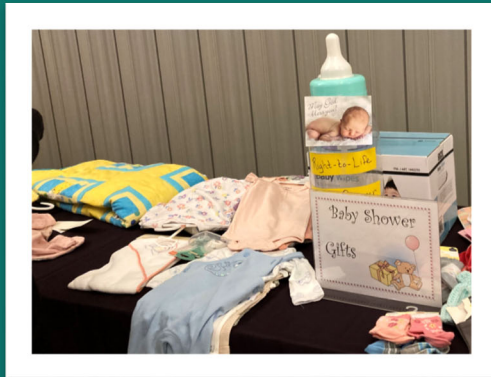
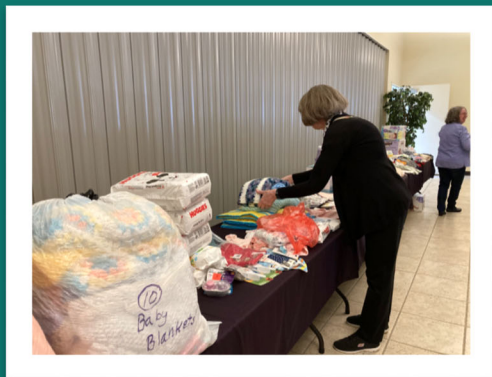
It never ceases to amaze me how very, very generous our parishioners are. So many parents and babies benefit from the diapers, wipes, onesies, little outfits, booties, sox, bottles, stuffed animals, shampoo, baby soap and lotions, and the blankets were especially lovely, so many crocheted/knitted. The cash collected will help with whatever else is needed.



I delivered the items to Madison Family Planning and Wee Care.

I thanked them for all they do, and each of the directors said to thank the St Vincent Ferrer family, because without people like you, they couldn't do their ministry. So thanks to everyone and God bless us all.

Rorie Grant.



...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



## Excerpts from two Prayer Blanket Thank You Notes

"I just finished my fourth round of chemo with two more left to go. Prior to that, I had a CT scan, which, there was no cancer detected on the scan. Also, my blood work was in the normal range. I will have two more treatments and then another scan. I just wanted to thank your church prayer warriors for all your love, concern and prayers. It really means the world to me, and I am thanking God for all of you."

Moe

"I'm writing to thank all the people who were so loving and thoughtful in creating my beautiful prayer blanket. It gives me such a warm feeling to think that so many of your church prayed for me as they created this blanket. I've put it over my shoulders or on my lap as I prayed... The pain, severe itching, burning, fatigue, (from Shingles) has continued as post herpetic neuropathy... I thank you again and again for my prayer blanket. You have given me continued hope for relief. God bless you all!!!

Roxanne

### Women's Sacred Journey

SATURDAY, MAY 4TH - 9:00AM

FAITH FORMATION OFFICE  
SVF SCHOOL BLDG.



All women in our Family of Parishes are invited to join other women to pray and reflect on Scripture passages. The gathering is every other Saturday. No registration or fee required.





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

**CHASTISEMENT VS. PUNISHMENT**

**Question:** What is the difference between a chastisement and a punishment?

**Answer:** The distinction between chastisement and punishment is, in many ways, a subtle one, but which is still relevant in our Catholic tradition.

First, chastisement is a concept that is grounded in Sacred Scripture. Here, we see chastisement as a response by God to people’s actions that is intended to teach a lesson. As St. John Paul II observed, “chastisement appears to be ... a kind of divine pedagogy, in which the last word is reserved to mercy: He scourges and then shows mercy, casts down to the depths of the nether world, and he brings up from the great abyss” (Tobit 13:2). The idea here is that in order to capture our attention or to highlight how we have not lived out our covenant-relationship with God as we should, there are times when God uses events in life to draw us back to the quality of relationship or faith that we should have.

The concept of punishment, however, has a different sense. The Catechism of the Church observes that punishment is the consequence of a damaging action that “has the primary aim of redressing the disorder” and to protect the community and the common good from further damage or harm (see no. 2266). Although we always hope that someone who is being punished for a crime or some other harmful action will learn from their actions, punishment isn’t necessarily intended to teach a lesson in the same way that a chastisement is.

Ultimately, how we make the distinction between chastisement and punishment is a matter of discernment. As with almost everything in life, our experiences can be an opportunity for grace — or for something less — depending on how open we are to recognizing the movement of God’s Spirit within them.

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**QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK FOR REFLECTION**

**First Reading:** Acts 9:26-31

The disciples were unwilling to trust that Saul (Paul) was a true believer until Barnabas offered support for Saul. How easily do you trust people you don’t know well?

**Second Reading:** 1 Jn 3:18-24

John speaks of the importance of knowing in your heart that you believe in Jesus and truly love others. How does anyone know what is in their heart?

**Gospel:** Jn 15:1-8

Using the metaphor of a vine and branches, Jesus speaks of the importance of staying connected to him and the Father. When do you feel close to Jesus?

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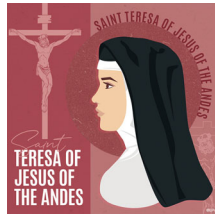
<b>Ministry Schedule</b>		
May 4/5, 2024		
Mass	4:00pm	9:00am
Sacristan	D Tourville	L Yolkiewicz
Reader #1	T riley	A Goll
Reader #2	D Tourville	L Yolkiewicz
EME	M Simmons	A Goll
	T Riley	P Allen
	R Pasiak	M Waskowski
Greeters	L Collins	T Oparka
	J Ballantine	N Oparka
	M Smith	B Gutowski
	P Miles	T Lane
<b>Traveling Chalice Host beginning week of May 4/5, 2024</b>		
<b>NEEDED</b>		

**INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK**

*Every Christian is a vine awaiting the loving attention of our gardener to prune and perfect us, to remove the parts of ourselves that are dead so that the fruitful parts burst forth with life. Trust the wisdom of the gardener. He alone can make us bloom.*

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**EUCCHARISTIC SAINTS SERIES****ST. TERESA OF JESUS  
OF THE ANDES**  
(1900-1920)

St. Teresa of Jesus of the Andes was born Juana Enriqueta Josefina of the Sacred Hearts Fernandez Solar. Her family and friends nicknamed her Juanita. As a youth she read a biography of St. Thérèse of Lisieux that inspired her to grow in her faith and choose a path in life that led toward a religious vocation. By the age of 14 she knew she wanted to consecrate herself as a religious Carmelite nun.

At the age of 19, she began her novitiate with Carmelites and took the name “Teresa of Jesus.” She was particularly drawn to the religious life with the Carmelites because she enjoyed the simple life offered in the convent, the companionship of the other sisters living and serving Jesus alongside her. She also found joy in her proximity to the Blessed Sacrament where she would often be found in prayer.

During her short time with the Carmelites before her death, she wrote many letters to friends, family, and other community members. She considered these letters her apostolate and shared her thoughts as well as spiritual encouragement with those with whom she corresponded. Her writings frequently focused on her experiences of and thoughts on living a fulfilling spiritual life.

After a particularly violent attack of typhus, she was permitted to take her vows early because it was feared she would die. After her vows and receiving her last rites, she succumbed to the disease just three months before her twentieth birthday.

St. Teresa of Jesus of the Andes’s short yet faith-filled life stands as a lasting testament to believers everywhere that one’s life doesn’t have to be long and filled with lofty accomplishments to be an amazing example of faith and Christ’s love. St. Teresa, pray for us!

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**OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK**

Sunday: 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter  
 Monday: St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church  
 Tuesday: St. Pius V, Pope  
 Wednesday: St. Joseph the Worker  
 Thursday: St. Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church; National Day of Prayer  
 Friday: Sts. Philip and James, Apostles  
 Next Sunday: 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

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**CATHOLIC TRIVIA – JUST FOR FUN**

**Question:** What is the name of the small container used to transport the Eucharist to those sick and homebound?

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Answer: Pyx.

**Love in Deed**

by Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

*It’s a Wonderful Life* is one of my favorite Christmas movies. It only occurred to me recently, though, that this film, for all its yuletide aesthetic, is actually more of an Easter story.

I love this movie because it’s a very Catholic film — not overtly, although we do see the main character, George Bailey, going to Mass. No, it’s the themes that are Catholic, not the set dressing. It’s a story about the choices we make — to love, or not to love? To sacrifice, or not to sacrifice? To put oneself first, or to put oneself last? It’s a story about what the consequences of those choices look like here in the world, and what they look like in heaven.

In the film, we meet a young George Bailey who dreams of growing up to do amazing, impressive things. Over the years, he makes a choice here and he makes a choice there ... and when all is said and done, the adult George Bailey is a tired, overworked husband and father with no worldly attributes that anyone would envy.

But he’s a man who has loved in deed, not just in word, and who has reaped the spiritual rewards of those choices.

The season of Easter is about rejoicing in true redemption, not in worldly triumph. The Word of God is not a bedtime story. It’s a pruning shear. To hear it is to be changed, to be shaped. To live it is to lose some things, so that you might bloom in unexpected ways. To welcome the Word is to be willing to look different, to feel different.

Anyone can say, “I love you, I accept you, I want to help you.” But what does it actually look like, to love in deed and not just in word? It looks like giving something up: free time, wealth, comfort, worldly approval. It looks, to the casual observer, like pain.

To someone who has no concept of how plants grow and thrive, a gardener’s pruning shears look like an executioner’s sword. To someone who has no concept of how souls grow and thrive, a tomb barred by a stone looks like the end of a story, when in fact it’s just the beginning.

“Children, let us love not in word or speech, but in deed and truth.” — 1 John 3:18

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**REGIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT**

The Archdiocese of Detroit will host four regional Eucharistic Congress events this Spring and Summer. The Congresses will include dynamic speakers, amazing music, time in prayer, and more. Attend a Congress near you! See below for details.

**Who are the congresses for?**

This event is for all people who want to learn more about Jesus or the Eucharist. Whether you have known Jesus your whole life or haven't met him yet, you are welcome to come. We recommend you RSVP for the event to help us in our planning.

**Why attend a regional congress?**

Who is Jesus? Who am I to Jesus? What does this mean for my life? If you've ever asked yourself these questions or want to know more, join us.

**What is the larger context for these congresses?**

As the Archdiocese of Detroit joins the celebration of the National Eucharistic Revival, join us this day for an inspiring speaker (English or Spanish), dynamic music, prayer, and more.

**Northwest Region**

**9:00am to 1:00pm on Saturday, May 11th**

Hosted by Rochester Area Catholic Family of Parishes

**St. Andrew Catholic Church**

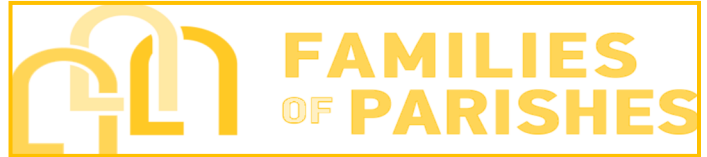
1400 Inglewood Ave, Rochester, MI 48307

English Keynote Speaker: Mari Pablo

Spanish Keynote Speaker: Socorro Truchan

Mass Celebrant: Bishop Gerard Battersby

**To RSVP visit: <https://www.aod.org/love-outpoured>**  
(Choose Northwest Region)



**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

**National Eucharistic Congress**

Indianapolis | July 17 - 21, 2024

For more information visit:

<https://www.eucharisticcongress.org>

**FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP GIVING - WEEK ENDING APRIL 20/21**

<i>Fiscal Year 7-1-23 to 6-30-24</i>	Budgeted	Actual	Over/Under	YTD
Offertory Env. Used & e-fund participants	245			
Offertory (including loose cash)	\$ 5,293.00	\$ 5,548.72	255.72	(8,951.23)
Energy	289.00	165.00	(124.00)	(1,798.61)
Other: Coffee & Donuts, Flowers, Memorial Trees, Candles	\$ 1,115.39	120.26	(955.13)	(38,172.52)
Mass Intentions	n/a	30.00		5,185.00
Budget deficit donations		153.00		7,985.00
2023 CSA overage (pledges outstanding - 2,308.12)				7,561.88

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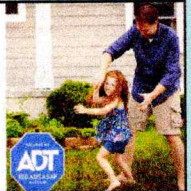
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