



St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Community

Madison Heights, MI www.stvincentferrer.net

MAY 11, 2025 † FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

From The Pastor

The Fourth Sunday of Easter is always ‘Good Shepherd Sunday.’ It is only a coincidence that it is also Mother’s Day. One might not immediately see any connection between the two, but the spiritual image of Jesus as our Good Shepherd and the natural role of a mother is quite similar.

The appeal of Jesus as the Good Shepherd is that of protector, defender; one of strength, protection, and one who guides and directs to the safety of green pastures. The care of the Good Shepherd is genuine, sincere, and committed. Jesus the Good Shepherd is willing to lay down his life for his sheep. Those giving themselves to the Shepherd’s care know his voice and readily follow.

Many of these same qualities fit the role and identity of a mother. Every mother knows the voice of her child down to the slightest tone and inflection. In a split second, a good mother will know if a cry is one of complaint, discomfort, or crisis. Every mother fills the role of protector, defender, leading and guiding her children on paths of safety and right order. Children similarly know the voice of their mother confident and secure in her nurturing care and faithful love. Children know the tone and context of a mother’s call. Right now, maybe later, maybe not at all, or she did not really mean that. Every mother knows what I mean.

Today we celebrate and honor with love, respect, and gratitude for the gift of our mother’s love. With the love and support, a mother readily gives herself to those in her care. Mothers are a true good example of the nature and care of Jesus, our Good Shepherd. Do not miss the opportunity to express your love, support, and appreciation for your mother. Do not doubt that she will honor and value your words of love and sincere gift. Where would we be without our shepherding mothers who lead us with their guiding care?

In the context of the gospel, Jesus is responding to the resistance and expectation of the religious leaders. Jesus knows these leaders do not believe in him. They do not accept his words nor in faith hear his voice. To this, Jesus responds: “My sheep hear my voice; I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.” In this spiritual context the words have a different meaning. Those who have faith in Jesus will hear his voice and seek to follow him. They will desire his way, find

security in his care, and protection in his defense. In him they see and trust the path he offers to eternal life. The voice of the Shepherd is heard in the heart.

In a world of endless noise, shouting voices that seek our attention, and all the demanding ploys of a consumerist culture, how do we learn to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd? In the truest sense, this is the wisdom of the words and the reason Jesus is so intent on gathering, protecting, and defending his own. Jesus knows the pitfalls that constantly distract and ploy against even his most ardent followers that are pulled away from the personal relationship to which he calls us.

How do we learn to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd? Faith and desire play a critical role. More than following the rules and rubrics of religion, Jesus calls us to a personal relationship of trust and commitment. Any loving relationship needs time and a willingness to attentively be with the beloved one whom we seek. Any commitment to a loving relationship will soon learn the voice of the beloved and a yearning for the one whom they desire.

In a spiritual relationship with Jesus these bonds of love are built up in prayer. More than recitation of prayers, a deep relationship with the Divine will call for quiet stillness. This takes practice, but in time one who practices quiet prayer will learn to hear the voice of the Shepherd. This is a common practice not limited to mystics or those in a religious vocation. It is normative to all the baptized.

You have ‘heard’ the voice of the Lord yourself. A person shared with me that they heard the Lord say: “Take off the ring.” It was obeyed and bore fruit. As I prepared for Holy Week, the Lord said very clearly to me: “Be still.” I obeyed and it changed my whole attitude and outlook. Jesus led me through the whole week in a peaceful way. Honestly, the examples are endless.

Make an effort to quiet the inner voices we all hear; our self-talk that complains, corrects, wrestles with us, and mostly will not shut up. Turn off the TV, put down the phone, and close the computer. If you want to know Jesus more deeply, sit still and be quiet. Life slows down, you slow down, the ear rests, and the heart opens. Honestly, most people resist this, but if you want to hear the voice of your Shepherd, this is the way to do it. For now, obey the inner voice that is telling you to express love and appreciate your mother.

Father John Esper

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

DAILY MASS

8:00am Monday thru Thursday

WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday - 4:00pm

Sunday - 9:00am

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays 3:00 - 3:45pm
in Chapel

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
Thursdays 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

LIVE
STREAMING

Mass Intentions

MONDAY, May 12, 2025

8:00am Mass: Mary Jo Kronbach† req. by Mary Ann Simmons

TUESDAY, May 13, 2025

8:00am Mass: Dod Marash & Luc Zef Hysoj †, Vitore Dool Vushaf † and Special Intentions of the Family of Fila Vuktilaj

WEDNESDAY, May 14, 2025

8:00am Mass: Pat King† req. by Mary Ann Simmons

THURSDAY, May 15, 2025

8:00am Mass: Jerry & Bernadette Gutowski (Memorial Wedding Anniv.) req. by Bernadette Gutowski

SATURDAY, May 17, 2025

4:00pm Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer Rimantas Labieka (3rd R.A.) req. by Regina Juska-Svoba

SUNDAY, May 18, 2025

9:00am Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer William Olszewski† req. by Family Pat King† req. by Corrine McCarthy Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family Aurore Marie Farrand† req. by Peter & Mary Jo Miles Karen Schimmel's Brother† req. by Marie Sankuer Living & Deceased Members and Families of Fr. Heary Knights of Columbus Council

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 9am to 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 – call for appointment

Matthew Zinser, Childhood Faith Formation Coordinator

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



READINGS OF THE WEEK

May 11, 2025

Sunday: Acts 13:14, 43-52/Ps 100:1-2, 3, 5 (3c)/
Rv 7:9, 14b-17/Jn 10:27-30
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 1:15-17, 20-26/Ps 113:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8/Jn 15:9-17
Thursday: Acts 13:13-25/Ps 89:2-3, 21-22, 25 and 27/Jn 13:16-20
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 14:21-27/Ps 145:8-9, 10-11, 12-13 (see 1)/
Rv 21:1-5a/Jn 13:31-33a, 34-35

To Our Blessed Mother Mary, and to all those women in our lives that nurture us physically, Emotionally, and spiritually both here and from above...



CATHOLIC SERVICES APPEAL

Please help reach our target of \$37,917.00



CSA 2025 Campaign materials have been mailed. To make a pledge or contribute by mail, follow the instructions on the pledge card and use the return envelope provided. **Checks need to be payable to Archdiocese of Detroit-CSA and mailed to the AOD gift center in Albert Lea, MN** You can donate online at our website. For other optional ways to make a donation, please see "Other Ways to Give" on the pledge card.

Pledge cards are available at the parish office for those who are not registered at St. Vincent Ferrer and would like to make a pledge or contribution.



A few years back, I felt as if I couldn't hear God's voice the way I used to. The words in the Bible seemed like cold ink on a page. Prayer felt like sitting anxiously in a lonely room.

I was worried — how could I, a priest, preach or help others if I couldn't hear God's voice? It went on for months.

Then a friend encouraged me to go on a retreat and spend as much time as possible in silence. After a day or two of quiet prayer, I noticed gentle but clear thoughts of repentance in two specific areas of my life. I asked God for the grace to change, and I went to confession. Suddenly, the divine silence that haunted me was filled with a sense of God's closeness and goodness. I realized, gratefully, that God had been speaking to me in the quiet voice of my conscience.

This week we hear Jesus say, **"My sheep hear my voice. I know them and they follow me"** (John 10:27). Jesus links the hearing of his voice to following him. He speaks to us in our conscience in an intimate, personal way, when we most need to hear him. When you feel deaf to God's voice, perhaps it is time to listen in silence for His voice in your conscience calling you to hear and follow the Good Shepherd of your soul.

— *Father John Muir*
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DEVOTIONS, EXPLAINED! – CONNECT WITH TRADITION AND GROW YOUR FAITH

Retreat, Explained

Spiritual retreats are an act of removing oneself from one's daily life for a period of prayer and reflection, with the intent of returning to that daily life transformed.

It was Christ himself who was the greatest and earliest advocate of spiritual retreat. In the Gospels, he is constantly depicted as withdrawing from other people to be alone in prayer. Likewise, participants in a modern retreat most often go somewhere like a retreat center to seek silence, solitude and communion with God. There are many different varieties of retreats; they can be guided and take place in a group setting, or they can be undertaken alone by just one person. Some are focused on a specific topic or theme; some are defined by periods of total silence. Though clerics are compelled by canon law to go on retreat regularly, all faithful are encouraged to make retreat part of their spiritual life.

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Local retreat opportunities can be found at Manresa Jesuit Retreat Center in Bloomfield Hills. Visit: www.manresa-sj.org and Capuchin Retreat Center in Washington, MI. Visit: <https://capretreat.org/>

INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me." To follow him, we must know him. This week, how can we know Jesus better?

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EVANGELICAL CHARITY



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL MEETING TUESDAY, MAY 13 - 6:00PM

The St. Vincent de Paul Ministry will meet this Tuesday at 6:00pm in the church. Those interested in learning more about this ministry are welcome.

PRAYER BLANKET & DECORATING CARDS FOR SHUT-INS MINISTRIES THURS., MAY 15TH - 6:00PM - PARISH HALL

Our next Prayer Blanket and Decorating Cards for Shut-Ins Ministries meeting is Thursday, May 15, 2025. We will be meeting from 6 PM - 9 PM in the church social hall. The Prayer Blanket Ministry needs volunteers to arrange squares for the blankets, cut material for the squares, decorate squares, and sew the blankets together. Come join us and have a good time. No artistic skills are needed, just a willingness to give of yourself to someone in need. For further information call Renee Hauzie at 586-718-6371.

MONTHLY HOSPITALITY/ BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS NEXT WEEKEND - SUNDAY, MAY 18

On Sunday, May 18th, Angela, our Parish Nurse will be checking blood pressures at our monthly Coffee and Donut Hospitality.



*...the Holy Spirit's guidance for a new pope
...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.
...respect for life from conception to natural death
...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

Reluctant Sheep

Sheep get an awfully bad rap, linguistically. Some are quick to label people as “sheep” if we think they haven’t sufficiently questioned authority or if they’re too willing to go along with someone else’s plan. We say someone has “the wool over their eyes” if they aren’t willing to see what we think is very obvious. “A wolf in sheep’s clothing” is what we call someone looking to take advantage of those too gullible to identify a real threat.

Taking all this into account and considering how often we are referred to as sheep in Scripture, you’ve really got to wonder if God trying to tell us something about ourselves.

If you look at the phraseology associated with sheep, it’s no wonder that nobody *wants* to be one. Sheep are innocent. Sheep can’t protect themselves. They’re vulnerable and easily misled.

We want to see ourselves as the opposite of all that. We like to think we’re shrewd, with plenty of common sense. We want to believe that we don’t have to rely on anybody for anything. We would sooner identify with the wolf than with the sheep — at least the wolf can take care of himself.

We do this because we often resist the need to rest in the greatness of God. Like a child walking to school alone for the first time (forgetting his mom is following watchfully in the car), we want to think we can handle it all by ourselves.

The truth is that God *is* trying to tell us something by comparing us to sheep: *You don’t have to do this on your own.*

Every time I look at an obstacle and think that there is no way around it, I am forgetting that I have a shepherd who knows the location of the gate.

Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS ©LPI

CATHOLIC TRIVIA – JUST FOR FUN

Question: What pope served the shortest pontificate at only 13 days?

©LPI

Answer: Pope Urban VIII



World Day of Prayer
for Vocations ©LPI

Sunday, May 11th

Loving God,
You speak to us and nourish us through the life of this Church community.

In the name of Jesus, we ask you to send your Spirit to us so that men and women among us, young and old, will respond to your call to service and leadership in the Church. We pray especially, in our day, for those who hear your invitation to be a priest, sister, or brother.

May those who are opening their hearts and minds to your call be encouraged and strengthened through our enthusiasm in your service. Amen.

Women's Sacred Journey

**SATURDAY, MAY 17TH AT
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**

THE TRADITION OF GENUFLECTION

Question: Why do Catholics genuflect?

Answer: Genuflection is an act of devotion that literally means “to bend the knee.” For many Catholics, it’s an almost automatic gesture that we perform before entering our pew or row of seats at Mass. But, like many of the symbols and gestures of our faith tradition, genuflecting can also be an invitation for deeper reflection.

The practice of “bending the knee” is an ancient way of recognizing the presence of someone greater than we are. It has been said that the practice dates back to the time of Alexander the Great, but it became a common part of etiquette in the royal courts of the Middle Ages. From throne rooms and palaces, it was a small step to genuflecting becoming part of the devotional lives of Christians, who used this secular gesture as a way of recognizing the presence of the One who is King of Kings, especially in the Eucharist.

Today, Catholics are asked to genuflect in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament (whether in the tabernacle or exposed on the altar during eucharistic adoration). So, while it has become second nature to genuflect before entering your seat in church, we should pay attention to where the Blessed Sacrament is kept in each church or chapel that we visit, and genuflect in the direction of the tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament is kept. In churches or chapels in which the tabernacle is in a separate space, we are invited to simply bow toward the altar.

In addition to genuflecting before the Blessed Sacrament, we are also instructed to genuflect before the cross used for veneration on Good Friday (during the solemn celebrations of the Lord’s Passion) and any time a relic of the True Cross is displayed for veneration. This long-standing tradition is a way of honoring the cross as the great sign of our salvation and of showing devotion to the passion of Jesus.

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St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Community

extends its deepest sympathy and support to the family and friends of

Mary Lou Stema

Please remember her and the souls of all the faithful departed in your prayers.

May all the deceased be welcomed into paradise!



QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK FOR REFLECTION

1st Reading Acts 13:14, 43-52

Question:

Paul and Barnabas experienced resistance from some of the Jews and leaders of the city of Antioch. What sustains you in difficult and challenging experiences?

2nd Reading Rv 7:9, 14b-17

Question:

John sees a vision in which those who have suffered and died for the faith are comforted by God and relieved of their distress. Is there a family member or friend you could comfort this week?

Gospel Jn 10:27-30

Question:

We hear how Jesus gives eternal life to all who follow him. How does following Jesus impact your work or family life?

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| Ministry Schedule | | |
|---|-------------|--------------|
| May 17/18, 2025 | | |
| Mass | 4:00pm | 9:00am |
| Sacristan | R Pasiak | L Yolkiewicz |
| Reader #1 | M Kairis | J Kosnak |
| Reader #2 | J McCown | L Yolkiewicz |
| EME | L Collins | P Allen |
| | M Kairis | M Waskowski |
| | J McCown | M Black |
| Greeters | R Bertolini | M McLaughlin |
| | L Collins | D McLaughlin |
| | P Miles | P Rarus |
| | T Pasiak | D Vu |
| Traveling Chalice Host beginning week of May 17/18, 2025 | | |
| Duane & Marge McLaughlin | | |

GETTING TO KNOW OUR SAINTS

ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA
(1247 – 1297)
MAY 16

Though St. Margaret of Cortona is today known as being an incredibly pious Catholic, she didn't start out that way. Born into a farming family in Laviano, Tuscany, her mother died when St. Margaret was seven. Her father remarried, but life with her stepmother was so difficult that St. Margaret moved out of the home and instead chose to live with a man named Arsenio, though they weren't married. They had been living together for nine years when she gave birth to a son. Knowing in her heart that this wasn't the life that God intended for her to have, she prayed for purity.

One day while waiting for Arsenio, his dog led her into the forest where she found Arsenio murdered. So shocked was St. Margaret that she fell into a life of penance. She and her son returned to Laviano, but still found her stepmother to be as unwelcoming as ever. They then went to Cortona, and eventually her son became a friar.

Three years after her conversion, St. Margaret followed in her son's footsteps and became a Franciscan tertiary. During her life, St. Margaret established a hospital and founded a congregation of tertiary sisters. She was canonized in 1728.

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Excerpt from *Spes Non Confundit*,
the papal bull of St. Francis for the
Jubilee Year 2025

"4. Saint Paul is a realist. He knows that life has its joys and sorrows, that love is tested amid trials, and that hope can falter in the face of suffering. Even so, he

can write: "We boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope" (*Rom 5:3-4*). For the Apostle, trials and tribulations mark the lives of those who preach the Gospel amid incomprehension and persecution (cf. *2 Cor 6:3-10*). Yet in those very contexts, beyond the darkness we glimpse a light: we come to realize that evangelization is sustained by the power flowing from Christ's cross and resurrection. In this way, we learn to practice a virtue closely linked to hope, namely *patience*. In our fast-paced world, we are used to wanting everything now. We no longer have time simply to be with others; even families find it hard to get together and enjoy one another's company. Patience has been put to flight by frenetic haste, and this has proved detrimental, since it leads to impatience, anxiety and even gratuitous violence, resulting in more unhappiness and self-centredness."

Pope Francis



We Don't Follow Strangers

by Colleen Jurkiewicz
Dorman

I get a little crazy when it comes to my kids' safety. We've probably had a few too many conversations that could be entitled "What to Do If Mommy Loses You At the State Fair" or "Don't Trust People Just Because They Smile At You." Am I making them paranoid? Possibly. But that's something they can sort out later with their therapists.

Because here's the bottom line of it all — I don't want to instill a fear of strangers into my kids, but I do want them to understand that you can't always trust people you don't know (heck, you can't always trust the people you *do* know, but that's another therapy-provoking conversation we can have when they're older).

If someone says, "Hey, follow me," and we don't know them, it's not always a great idea to comply. First, we have to ask questions. "Where are you taking me? Why are we going? Who else will be there?"

But if someone we know and love and trust says, "Hey, follow me," we don't even think twice, and we don't need to ask any questions. We know wherever we're going is a safe place for us because we have a relationship with the person doing the leading. We feel comfortable putting ourselves in their care.

That's why it's so important to Christ that we know him. That we have a relationship with him. That we trust him.

Because we don't follow strangers, do we?

I don't have all the answers to the questions I would love to ask Christ. "Why is this happening? Where are you taking me?" But the beautiful thing is, I don't actually *need* those answers. I know him. He's got my hand. Wherever we're going is where I want to be.

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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, 11:30am 3:30pm (Spanish), and 6:00pm

WEEKDAYS (Monday thru 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 - 10:00am - St. Mary Magdalen

St. Mary

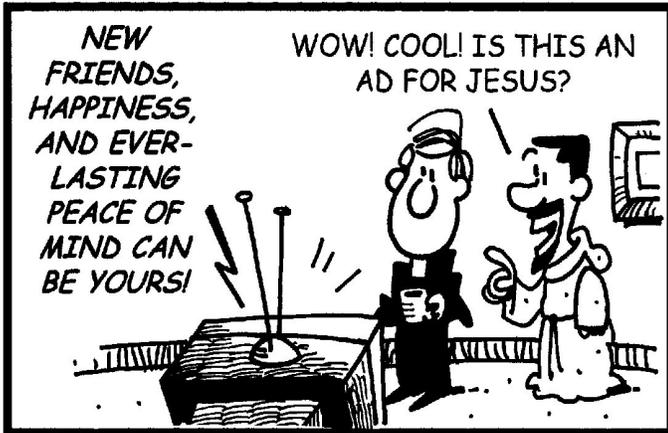
730 S. Lafayette, Royal Oak, 48067

SATURDAY - 4:30pm

SUNDAY - 9:00am, 11 am

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

WED - 12:10pm



OBSERVANCES OF THE WEEK

- Sunday: 4th Sunday of Easter; World Day of Prayer for Vocations; Mother's Day
- Monday: Sts. Nereus and Achilleus, Martyrs; St. Pancras, Martyr
- Tuesday: Our Lady of Fatima
- Wednesday: St. Matthias, Apostle
- Thursday: St. Isidore
- Next Sunday: 5th Sunday of Easter

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To support St. Vincent Ferrer with a financial contribution scan the code below to connect to our tithe.ly giving site.



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP GIVING - WEEK ENDING MAY 3/4, 2025

| Fiscal Year 7-1-24 to 6-30-25 | Budgeted | Actual | Over/Under | YTD |
|--|-------------|-------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Offertory Env. Used & e-fund participants | 243 | 103 | | |
| Offertory | \$ 5,185.00 | \$ 8,205.20 | 3,020.20 | 29,364.53 |
| Energy, Coffee/Donuts, Flowers/Trees, Candles, Mass Intentions | 472.00 | 741.00 | 269.00 | 1,405.00 |
| Fundraising: includes Budget Deficit envelope, CSA returned | 1,673.00 | 396.50 | (1,276.50) | (28,148.21) |
| Bequests | | | | 3,766.80 |
| AOD Collections: | | | | |
| Holy Days: Easter | | 100.00 | | 6,895.00 |
| Final CSA 2024 Pledged 76,160.34 | | | | Paid 75,160.34 |

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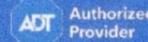
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