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### St. Mary Magdalene E-News August 28, 2020

### A Note From Father Chris

"What can one give in exchange for their life?" This question from Jesus to the disciples is to be answered by all of us. "What can one give in exchange for their life?"

The answer comes in our service and sharing of our gift of life. Jesus also assures us that what we receive will be more than what we give. As we all navigate the changes around us, it is good to remember that everything we have is a gift from God. A God that is actively with us, and available to us. May we continue to be challenged to exchange our gifts with one another.

The parish has received a great new gift in the ministry of Deacon Rick Stevens! In an answer to prayers, Bishop Zarama has assigned Deacon Rick to us here at our church. Read about Deacon Rick and Cathy Stevens in this edition of the E-News. We continue to pray for more faithful deacons to serve God's people. If you are interested in the next formation program for deacons, please let us know.

Gratefully yours,

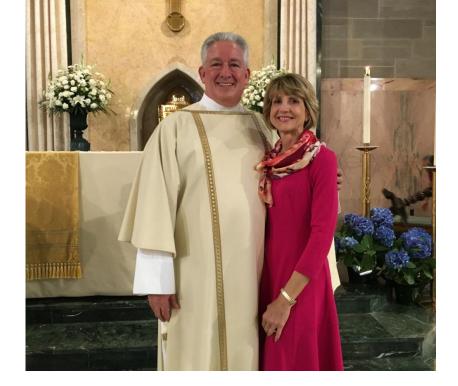
Fr. Chris



#### New - Chapel Hours

Beginning Monday, August 31st, the Chapel will be open from 9am until Noon. Please wear a mask, hand sanitize, and remember to social distance.

## **Welcome Deacon Rick Stevens**



Deacon Rick Stevens and his wife, Cathy recently relocated to Apex from Central New Jersey. Rick was born and raised in Elizabeth, NJ but moved south to attend college in Athens, GA, where he and Cathy first met. After graduation from the University of Georgia, the couple settled in Marietta, outside of Atlanta, where they lived for 20 years.

In 2000, a job transfer took Cathy and Rick back to New Jersey. Rick spent most of his professional career in New York City with Mercer HR Consulting, a subsidiary of Marsh & McLennan Companies as a benefits administration consultant. Cathy left her job as a registered nurse in Atlanta to join Merck & Co., where she worked for 19 years in Clinical Trial Operations. Both are recently retired.

Rick was ordained in the Diocese of Metuchen, NJ in May 2017 and assigned to ministry at St. Ann's Parish and School in Raritan where he also served as Business Manager. Just prior to ordination, he received a Master's Degree in Systematic Theology and Certificate in Diaconal Ministry from Seton Hall University.

Cathy was active in ministry at St. Ann's as a reader, Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, and member of the Columbiettes, the Pastoral Council and the Liturgical Committee. Outside the parish, she also volunteered as a literacy tutor for ESL students.

The couple has two adult children and one granddaughter- son Matthew, who lives in St. Augustine Beach, FL, and daughter Mary Catherine (Katie) who also recently relocated from New Jersey to Apex with husband Steve and their two-year old daughter Leah.

### **Our 9am Mass is Live Streamed!**

Click <u>HERE</u> to Live Stream our 9am Mass

Please remember to subscribe to our channel STMM Church Live

to receive reminders when events are added and go live.

### Music for this week's Mass 8/30/20

Gathering: Gather Your People	#314
Psalm 63: My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord, thirsting for you my God.	
Preparation: I Will Chose Christ	#511
Communion: Spirit and Grace	#345
Sending Forth: Go Make a Difference	#498

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If you would like a copy of the Breaking Bread hymnal to use at home, there is a box in the covered drive at church.

## **Distribution of Communion**

Hello StMM parishioners,

Until we can gather together as a community again inside the church, we are obligated to abide by the guidelines set forth by both the Governor of NC and the Bishop of Raleigh. Our plan for the summer is to continue **live streaming the 9am Mass** and on our <u>YouTube channel</u>. We also invite you to come to the church after the 9am Mass to receive Communion. This will begin about 10.

The assumption is you will have watched the live stream Mass & then come to church where we will be distributing Communion. Please drive to StMM, park your car, and proceed on foot to one of the Communion stations. We will give Communion until all have received, until 10:30.

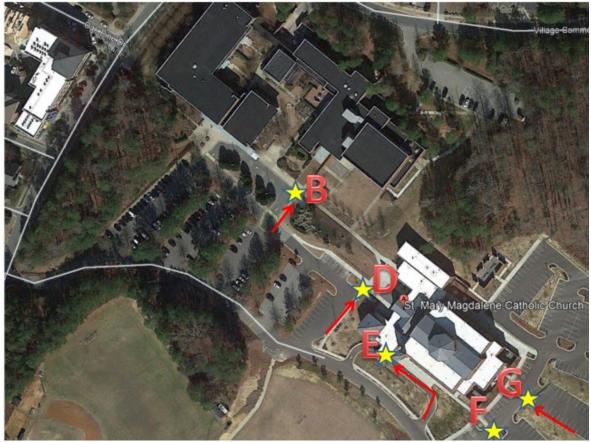
Extraordinary Ministers will be located in different locations to distribute Communion. There will be 5 stations located around the church & school property (please see the map which has the marked spots and the flow for foot traffic)

We have never done anything like this before so we please request that you show great patience, respect social distancing guidelines, & remain reverent.

If inclement weather should occur, please check the website at <u>www.stmm.net</u> for updated information.

- 1. Please see the overhead image of St. Mary Magdalene Church for the marked distribution stations located around the property and notice the direction you should follow while waiting to receive.
- 2. There will be a station under the drive thru portico on the chapel side of the church for anyone who meets the following criteria: Parishioners over the age of 60, anyone in the medically high risk population, & those who require a gluten free host. In the drive thru please stay in your car to receive the Eucharist.
- 3. According to the CDC guidelines, each person is asked to wear a mask
- 4. Ushers will be on hand with hand sanitizer at each line. Please sanitize your hands prior to receiving the Eucharist.
- 5. We ask you not to receive the Eucharist on the tongue, only in the hand. Please extend your hands in a flattened manner stacked one on top of the other.
- 6. After receiving Communion please return to your vehicle and exit the property safely
- 7. Do not engage in casual conversation before or after receiving, please remain prayerful as you

- would in church.
- We miss gathering together and look forward to when we can be united again under one roof.



Stations for Communion



**BAPTISMS** - See the Guidelines on the Website - then email the Church Office, <u>info@stmm.net</u>. First time parents must attend a baptism class [a good time is during the 9 months prior to birth.] Please contact the Parish Office to schedule.

**CONFESSIONS** - Confessions are usually, but not every week, at 10:30am on Saturdays in the Church. There will be Confessions this Saturday, August 29nd at 10:30am.

WEDDINGS - See the Guidelines on the Website - then email weddings@stmm.net

### **Financial Matters**

**OUR NEW CHURCH** - We have the obligation to make large monthly payments for 13 years for the construction of the church. In addition we are challenged to respond to new parish endeavors in all our parish programs. We are grateful to those who help us in the weekly Offertory for regular expenses and in the monthly white envelope for debt payments for the church.

### **DONATE NOW TO OUR NEW CHURCH**

(Click on the above link to Donate)

# Pictures of the Week





Mason Otto, Caleb Otto, Coby Harrison, and Ethan Otto received First Communion on August 24th.



Colin Stokes and Elianna Jodice received First Communion on August 26th.



Sophia Krutisia and Aiden Dart received First Communion on August 27th



Top left: Ethan Mahns, Lower left: Dean Rampaul, Top right: Michael Brazell, Lower Right: McKayla Hause received First Communion on August 28th.

### **Bereavement Ministry Program**

The Bereavement Ministry Program initiated in our parish in July assists the bereaved family at a critical time immediately following the death of a loved one. Volunteers will be asked to reach out to the family to arrange for a meal to be delivered to their home. If you are interested in assisting your fellow parishioners in this new ministry, or have questions, kindly email Theresa Parish at <u>bereavementministry@stmm.net</u>.

# **Elementary Faith Formation**



Dear Parents,

Back in March when we shut down our Parish Religious Education Programs due to Covid, we never imagined that we'd be separated from our beloved parish community for so long. We miss seeing you and your children come through our doors and greet us with their beautiful smiles. We miss sharing the Gospel with all our STMM families. We would like to return this October in a safe, socially distanced manner, once the school year is up and running and families have a chance to adjust to their new school arrangements.

We have worked hard to come up with a solution to the many issues we face while providing an opportunity to grow together in our Catholic faith. What we didn't want to do is send you another virtual lesson or video to watch to add to the growing list of virtual burnout. Please read below the details of what we would like to offer you and your families.

We are keenly aware that many of you are juggling school, sports and all the extracurricular activities. Our prayer is that Church never becomes one more thing on your "to do" list. This is why we're so excited to share with you our new family centered faith formation program called GATHER. This new format is not only fun while formative, it also will allow you to control your own schedule of when your family focuses on faith.

This program replaces "PREP." We have merged "PREP" and the "ROCK" into this one new program "Gather." This model is based on experiential learning rather than classroom learning and promotes building community; something we have all truly missed. For those of you who had children in the ROCK, rest assure, the format will remain largely the same for the breakout sessions. They will NOT be going back into the classroom teaching model even though they will be "in the classroom".

GATHER provides you with the tools you need to help form your child's faith so that it will last long after high school. The benefit of this program is that it only requires you to be on campus one night per month, while teaching your children at your convenience, the other three weeks of the month. Families will attend together in the church, arranged in pews by family, socially distanced seating every other pew and wearing facemasks.

Beginning at 6:30 pm, we will open with prayer, enjoy praise & worship music and then a brief teaching lesson will be taught by either our priest, one of our youth ministers or a guest speaker. At approximately 6:50 pm, following the lesson, parents will remain in the church for the next 45 minutes to receive training on three more lessons to teach your children at home. During this time, the children will be escorted by their grade specific small group leaders to classrooms on campus with no more than ten children, seated socially distanced, wearing facemasks. They will play a game, or do an activity related to the lesson. At 7:20, children will return to church where they will be joined with their families for dismissal.

Please note if your child is eligible to receive the sacrament of First Reconciliation and First Communion, that training will also be offered to both parents and their children.

Your choices include (pick one):

- 1. First Week of the Month on Wednesday night 6:30 7:45 pm
- 2. Second Week of the Month on Tuesday night 6:30 7:45 pm
- 3. Third Week of the Month on Wednesday night 6:30 7:45 pm
- 4. Fourth Week of the Month on Tuesday night 6:30 7:45 pm
- 5. GATHER Virtual Only with Monthly Packet Pickup

A packet will be sent home with each family that contains the lessons for the next three weeks of the month. Through engaging, down-to-earth, easy to understand lessons and activities, Gather brings parishes and families together to learn their faith in joy and with excitement. This shared learning experience develops traditions and spills over into families' everyday lives-incorporating the Catholic Faith becomes a way of life!

Should you have health concerns that prohibit you from attending a session, there will be a virtual component available. We hope you will join us in our efforts to continue your children's faith formation

and that Gather will provide many blessings for your families.

"Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray and to discover their vocation as children of God. The parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families; it is a privileged place for the catechesis of children and parents." (CCC 2226).

Please see this addendum for more details: <u>Gather COVID Protocols</u>

#### Gather Registration Link

In response to COVID, this will be a one year commitment. We will be unable to take additional registrants or change your registration after the program begins.

Registration Fees Options:

- 1. Registration for registered/contributing StMM parishioners is \$80.00 per child until September 15th 2020. After September 15th, a \$50.00 late fee will be charged to all children registering.
- 2. If you are new to our parish your fee is \$160.00 for the first year regardless of date of registration.
- 3. If you are not a registered parishioner of StMM or a registered/non-contributing member your registration fee is \$160.00 for this year until September 15th. After September 15th, a \$50.00 late fee will be charged in addition to the \$160.00 fee.
- 4. Late online registration will remain open until September 30th. Registration will officially close on September 30th and spots will be considered on a case by case basis. Gather will begin in October.

## Youth Ministry News

We are grateful for your patience as we prayed, planned and prepped for what youth group would look like come Fall 2020. And we are excited to announce that online registration for all youth groups (Edge, The Way and Apostello) will go live this Saturday August 1st. It comes as no surprise to anyone, that all programs will look a bit different and extra measures will be needed in order to implement our vision for this year's faith journey for our teens.

If you've been around STMM long enough, you know the reason why our youth groups are thriving. It isn't because we have the best curriculum, or the most innovative object lessons, or even the most creative skits and games. It has nothing to do with the "room rotations", or the guest speakers, or service projects. What makes our youth group so incredibly fruitful? The people. More specifically, our adult core team leaders. These folks show up week after week to love on our teens. It is through their love, our teens experience the love of Christ. So, when COVID hit and threatened to wipe out this kind of "love based ministry" that we are so accustomed to here at STMM, your answers to our parent survey did not surprise us one bit. When asked if you were comfortable sending your teens back to campus (give safe COVID protocols were instilled) a resounding 70% of you said yes. Another 24% said you would absolutely consider it. So after much prayer and planning we are thrilled to say we will be back on campus in the fall. If you, or a family member, is in the high risk category, and will be unable to join us on campus this fall, we will be offering you a virtual option. There are many changes to all of the programs. We ask for your continued patience as we move forward. You will find detailed instructions for all programs on their specific registration pages. Please read through all of the information before emailing questions. Once you've read everything, and if you still have questions please do not hesitate to reach

out to one of us. Be assured of our continued prayers for each of you and your families as you continue to navigate these challenging times.

Online Registration for all youth groups runs from Aug. 1st through September 15th.

A late registration fee of \$50 will be applied to everyone who registers after September 15th. Registration closes September 30th.

Registration is a one year commitment. Regardless of what changes may occur throughout the year you may not change your registration.

#### **Online Registration Link**

#### What is the EDGE?

The **EDGE** is a dynamic youth faith formation program open to teens in middle school, grades 7-8. The Edge meets every Thursday from 6:30-7:45pm. The EDGE topics-broken open by adult CORE team leaders-use different forms of media and instruction to teach teens the importance of their Catholic faith during their middle school years. The program schedule rotates through catechetical topics, service projects, social nights, and social justice issues. For the beginning of the year, all of this will be taught only in a small group environment. Please see the addendum for more details on what this specifically looks like. <u>EDGE COVID Protocols</u>

It doesn't take a village to run our programs, it takes a small army, and with COVID we will now need a battalion! We humbly ask for you to consider volunteering in some capacity. We need you. There are many opportunities in the EDGE: small group leader, Tech team, Safety Team or Service Team. If you can volunteer please email Janine McGann at janine.mcgann@gmail.com

#### What is The Way?

The Way is a youth faith formation program open to teens in grades 9th-12th who are looking for community and also for those seeking the sacrament of Confirmation. At STMM we confirm in Spring of 10th grade. The Way meets every Sunday from 7:15pm-8:30pm. Youth Mass will be held on Sundays at 6pm in the church if the COVID guidelines for the state of NC allow. The Way topics-broken open by adult CORE team leaders-use different forms of media and instruction to teach teens the importance of their Catholic faith during their often times tumultous high school years. The program schedule rotates through catechetical topics, service projects, social nights, and social justice issues. For the beginning of the year, all of this will be taught **only** in a small group environment.

Please see this addendum for more details on what this specifically looks like: Way COVID Protocols

It doesn't take a village to run our programs, it takes an army, and with COVID we will now need a battalion! We humbly ask for you to consider volunteering in some capacity. We need you. There are many opportunities to assist with youth mass, small group leaders at The Way, service projects, and more! If you can volunteer please email Liz Sams at <u>liz.sams@gmail.com</u>.

#### What is Apostello?

Apostello is for high school teens in 11th and 12th grade who are already confirmed and are interested in a youth group that focuses on building fellowship in the Catholic Church, growing in spirituality, and coming together to serve others. Apostello groups may meet on Sundays from 4?30pm-5:45pm in a room reserved for their small group or their group may pick a different time/day of the week that works best for them. If you are in a high risk medical group, we will be offering a virtual Apostello zoom small group option.

Apostello will consist of small groups focused on deepening personal Christ centered relationships. We'll do this through using and understanding how God's story intersects with our stories. The small group will utilize Scripture to get to know God and understand high school life in relationship with Him. A Catholic small group knows and lives 1 Corinthians 12:26 "If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it.

If one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it". Apostello groups will follow the same COVID safety protocols in this addendum for The Way which can be found at this link:

#### Way COVID Protocols

### StMM School News

#### SCHOOL MASS LIVE STREAM

Our Thursday school masses are now being live streamed on the church YouTube channel. Watch mass live on Thursdays beginning at 9:15am. StMM school children will watch the mass in their classrooms. Mass can be viewed at, <u>https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7wpkWA5NgzXgQgmIxtNRZA?</u> view\_as=subscriber.

#### SINGERS NEEDED FOR THURSDAY SCHOOL MASS

Adult volunteers are needed to sing at the Thursday school masses at 9:15am. If you are interested, please contact Elizabeth McSweeney at <u>elizabeth@brookwoodcp.com</u>.

### New Cohort for Diaconate Formation

The Diocesan Office of the Permanent Diaconate is preparing to start the next cohort for the Formation of Permanent Deacons. Practicing Catholic men that are discerning a vocation to the Permanent Diaconate should send an email to <u>Amy.breindel@raldioc.org</u> by Sunday, September 13.

Appointments will be made for those who express an interest to learn more about the Diaconate in the Diocese of Raleigh and have the opportunity to ask questions about the formation process. This is the first step for candidates who are interested in forming the next group of Aspirants to the Diaconate.

### **Tuesday Daytime Bible Study**

We will study the book of Revelation using Ascension Press' The Kingdom Yet to Come. There is a virtual and in person option. Tuesday afternoons starting Sept. 8 - Nov. 17, 2020. Please contact Laurie Wendt for details. <u>lauriewendt@gmail.com</u> or 919-669-9455

### Sunday Night Men's Bible Study

The Men's Bible Study, consisting of men from St. Andrews & St. Mary Magdalene, is starting a Catholic Scripture Study on First Samuel. The group meets Sunday evenings from 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM in Room #4 of STMM's Church building. The first lesson is on Sunday October 18th. TBD if it will be virtual or face to face. All men are welcome. The deadline for signup is September 13th and the cost of materials is estimated to be about \$40. If you are interested, please contact Mike Barnack at 919-637-4446 or ski4mike@gmail.com.

### **Rosary Thursday Nights**

"The Rosary is .. the prayer of the ordinary people and the saints... it is a prayer from my heart." - Pope Francis Join the members of our parish praying the Rosary every Thursday at 7 p.m. Find STMM Rosary On FaceBook <u>https://www.facebook.com/STMM-Rosary-115180550121735/</u> and Instagram <u>https://instagram.com/stmmrosary?igshid=dk6zl88nql4t</u>. No experience necessary! Online guides are available from the Knights of Columbus. <u>http://www.kofc.org/en/</u> <u>resources/cis/devotionals/4772.pdf</u> you may leave prayer requests on the Rosary page even if you are unable to join us online. For more information or to leave a prayer request contact Joe Sebik @ joeysebik@gmail.com.

## Knights of Columbus Operation Feed Thy Neighbor

The Knights of Columbus Council #7186 (based at St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Church) is partnering with St. Mary Magdalene, Wake County Human Services and several other local churches in the area to serve desperately needed meals to children, as well as the unemployed & underemployed in the Apex area during the COVID-19 crisis.

We will continue to operate an emergency food distribution site on Saturday and Sunday evenings located here in Apex. In the first twenty weekends, we have served almost 11,000 dinners to Apex residents who are in need, and have distributed several hundred bags of non-perishable goods. A sincere **THANK YOU** to all who have supported our efforts through prayer, financial donations, or contributing to our non-perishable goods collection.

We are called by Jesus to be His hands and feet on Earth in feeding the hungry. Your support will enable us to continue to provide healthy meals to our most vulnerable neighbors during this crisis.

Please join (or partner with) us in performing a corporal work of mercy!

### Donate by clicking here

## Want to help, but don't know how? Here's an easy way

Dear StMM families,

StMM youth programs (Prep, The Rock, Edge, The Way & Apostello) have been looking for a way to help during this difficult time. Our own StMM Knights of Columbus have partnered with Wake County Human Services & several other local churches in the area to serve desperately needed meals to children, as well as the unemployed & underemployed in the Apex area during the COVID-19 crisis. They have set up an emergency food distribution site on Saturday and Sunday evenings located right here in Apex. In the first two weekends, they have served over 900 dinners in total to Apex residents who are in need. Their supplies and funds are running low and we'd like to humbly ask you to help out in whatever way you can during this time. We realize that not everyone is in a position to give goods or financial donations, and if that's where you find yourself right now please just join our efforts through prayer.

If however, you are in a position to help here are 2 ways we need you:

1) The KOC are putting together bags with a list of food items in them. There will be tubs located under the drive through portico on the chapel side of the church starting Monday until Thursday of each week. One tub will be labeled "Completed bags" and the other will be labeled "Bag items". If you cannot fill an entire bag, please just give what you can and we'll put bags together out of whatever we collect. This allows for a 'no contact' way to help out during this difficult time.

Here are the items for one completed bag:

- $\cdot\,1\,\text{Rice}$  or dried beans
- $\cdot$  1 Pasta & 1 Small Canned Sauce
- · 1 Boxed Meal (hamburger helper or Mac-N-Cheese)
- · 1 Canned Vegetable

- · 1 Canned Fruit
- · 6 Snack Items (individually wrapped)
- ·1 Breakfast Items
- $\cdot$  1 Hygiene Item
- · 1 Roll of Toilet Paper

Please bag these items at home and only include "like" items from above. We are not able to date check the donations, so please fill these bags with in-date items we can hand directly to folks in need. Please make sure everything fits into ONE bag which can be double knotted!

2) If you would like to help by just a financial donation, you can go to this link and donate online: <u>Donate</u> by clicking here

We will keep this going over the upcoming weeks so if you can't participate this week, know you will have a chance in the weeks to come. This is a great family service project too and is an example of one of the corporal works of mercy to feed the hungry.

If you know of anyone within our parish that is sick, in need of food or any other kind of assistance with getting groceries, picking up prescriptions, etc. Please contact either Suzanne Will at <u>will@stmm.net</u>, Janine at janine.mcgann@gmail.com or Liz at <u>liz.sams@gmail.com</u>.

# RCIA



Are you interested in becoming Catholic? Are you Catholic but not confirmed? We can help! The **RCIA** process at StMM assisted 10 adults in completing their sacraments of initiation this spring. Soon, we will begin another faith-filled journey. Will you join us? Let's have a conversation. Please contact Scott and Kathy Strednak at <u>rcia@stmm.me</u> with any questions.

# Adult Faith Formation Opportunities

**ADULT FAITH FORMATION OPTIONS:** STMM offers a wide variety of adult faith formation options, and some are continuing to meet virtually during the pandemic. Prayerfully consider how you can grow deeper in your faith and download our brochure of options by <u>clicking here.</u>

For more information and for the point of contact for each ministry, please see the website: <u>Ministry Contacts</u>

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