

A NOTE FROM FATHER FRANCIS

MY FAMILY, A PIVOT

A family is like a proverbial Barkcloth tree/*ficus natalensis* [mutuba or omutoma], this tree like most of the tropical trees can manage to survive in the shallow, nutrient-poor soils by using its buttress roots which are often vulnerable as some are above the surface. It also spreads these shallow extensive root mats to absorb quickly decaying surface nutrients as well as keeping it anchored and stable. When grown fully, it provides shade and fodder for livestock and agriculture textile production without decaying. Despite its vulnerability, it is very creative and eco-friendly.

No worries, I'm not a botanical student, but guess what! When a child was born from home [including myself] the after birth/placenta would be honored and respectfully be buried under the Barkcloth tree, wow! And this practice, symbolically was a reminder that this is your cradle and so for good or for worse home is home. Equally, that the family counts on your sacrifices for its strength and your team work like the buttress roots to overcome the test of the time. Traditionally, the afterbirth preceded us to the ground so there is our grave yard assured.

In the same vein, as you know the placenta acts as a baby's life support system in the womb- doing work of the lungs, liver, kidney,and building the baby's immunity before birth, so it is my work to build and sustain our family.

Our weaknesses, differences and any challenges and frustrations as a family should be surmounted and meanwhile, our team work and self-sacrifices, will always remain the family pivot.

Thank you to every one for making a difference in my life and for your joyful spirits.

May the good God guide your steps, strengthen you in spirit, heal those sick and comfort the afflicted.

Happy New Year 2026.

I love you.

God is good.

Fr. Francis

Giving Portal



Would you like to make a Pledge to support the building of our new Parish Life Center? Campaign pledge cards may be picked up at the Campaign table in the narthex, or you may make your donation online [HERE](#).

Helpful directions for donating online are found [HERE](#).

Thank you for your support!

Upcoming Events & Mass Intentions

The Parish Office phone system is currently undergoing maintenance and might be offline. Please contact the Parish Office by emailing info@stmm.net.

Friday Jan 2- First Friday

9am- Mass (Doris Orozco †)
Adoration will be in the Chapel after Daily Mass until 7pm.

Saturday Jan 3

10:30am- Confessions
5pm- Mass (Maria Kollbach †)

Sunday Jan 4

9am- Mass (Rita Silagyi †)
10:15am- Breaking Open The Word
11am- Mass (Parishioners of StMM)

Monday Jan 5

9am- Mass (Joseph & Agnes Baker †)
6:30pm- Family Rosary
8pm- Adult Pick-up Basketball

Tuesday Jan 6

9am- Mass in the Chapel (Georgiana Melonis †)
6:15pm- Gather/ ROCK

Wednesday Jan 7

9am- Mass (Patti Bryant †)
9:50am- Morning Rosary with CSO
12:30pm- Book Club

Thursday Jan 8

10:30am- JobWorks Career Ministry Meeting
12pm- Mass in the Chapel (Nathaniel Capps †)
7pm- Care for God's Planet Meeting

Friday Jan 9

9am- Mass (George Melonis †)

Saturday Jan 10

10:30am- Confessions
5pm- Mass (Mary Baker †)

Sunday Jan 11

9am- Mass (Irene & Stephen Rotich)
10:15am- Breaking Open The Word
11am- Mass (All who were baptized at StMM in 2025)
2:45pm- Chrysalis Meeting
4:30pm- Apostello
6pm- Youth Mass (Parishioners of StMM)
6:30pm- Sunday Night Men's Bible Study
7:15pm- Edge/ the Way

Mass This Weekend

Click [HERE](#) to Live Stream our **9am Sunday Mass** and our **Mon/Wed/Fri weekday Masses**.

Music for Weekend Masses

Gathering: We Three Kings/ King of Kings (Hillsong 6pm)

Responsorial Psalm: 72: Lord Every Nation On Earth

Intercessions: Christ Our Light Hear Our Prayer

Preparation: The Blessing

Communion 1: Child Of The Poor/What Child Is This?

Communion 2: Away In A Manger

Communion 3: Silent Night

Communion 4: The First Nowell

Sending Forth: Angels We Have Heard On High

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Take this opportunity to consider donating flowers to St. Mary Magdalene to beautify the altar and church for weekly Mass to honor our Lord. These flowers will be donated in honor of or in memory of your loved one. Click [here](#). For questions, contact floralministry@stmm.net



SCAM ALERT

You might have received an email that appears to come from Fr. Mike asking for help, money, or gift cards. Please know that these are phishing emails and they are a scam. All legitimate emails from Fr. Mike will ONLY come from mcoveyou@stmm.me. If you ever have a question about the legitimacy of an email from Fr. Mike, contact Deb Prewitt, our parish secretary, at prewitt@stmm.net. Thank you!

Ministry, Group, and Event Highlights



Parish Athletics provides sports the old fashioned way, friends playing with friends, building a community one sport at a time.

Registration is now open for Spring Soccer (pre-K through 8th grade) and Baseball (pre-K through 4th grade).

For more information about Parish Athletics, please go [HERE](#).

To register for Spring Soccer or Baseball, please go [HERE](#).

The Columbiettes 3rd Annual Bingo Night will be on Saturday, Jan. 24, from 7 to 9pm in the StMM School Cafeteria. Doors will open at 6:15 pm and play will begin at 7pm.

Bingo Night is fun for all ages and there will be many chances to win prizes. There will also be a raffle for themed Gift Baskets!

Reservations are limited to 150 players. Please go [HERE](#) to register and for more information.

New Life in Christ Mass – Celebrating Those Baptized in 2025

All parishioners baptized in 2025 and their families are warmly invited to attend a New Life in Christ Mass on Sunday, January 11, 2026, at the 11:00 AM Mass. A reception with light refreshments will follow. More information and registration may be found [HERE](#).

We look forward to celebrating this joyful milestone with you and your loved ones.

Church News, School News, Ministries, Groups, and Events

Please click on the link for more information.

Church News

- [Baptism Information](#)
- [Safe Environment Training for Volunteers](#)
- [OCIA \(Order of Christian Initiation\): For those looking to become fully initiated into the Catholic Faith. Please click here to learn more.](#)
- [First Friday Eucharistic Adoration information may be found here.](#)
- [Adult Faith Refresher & Confirmation Prep with Deacon Rick- Click here for more information.](#)
- [Divorced Catholics Seeking an Annulment- more information can be found by clicking here.](#)
- [Join Father Mike on a Pilgrimage to Fatima, Lourdes, & Spain from 4/28/26 through 5/8/26.](#)

Ministries, Groups, & Events Continued

- [Prayers & Squares Prayer Quilt Ministry](#)
- [Traveling St. John Vianney Ministry- sign up to pray for our priests.](#)
- [Project Rachel Support Group - for hope and healing after abortion.](#)
- [Courage - A support group for those facing same-sex attraction.](#)
- [EnCourage- A support group for relatives of people who experience same-sex attraction.](#)
- [Walking with Purpose started a 22-week bible study on Sept. 4, especially designed for women to grow in faith and love for the Lord.](#)
- [Are you gluten-free due to a medical condition and need a low-gluten Communion Host? Click here to](#)

- Our Sound and Video System Ministry needs help with Masses, Funerals, and Weddings. The hours and commitment level are flexible. Can you help us out?
- Breaking Open The Word is a new weekly Gospel discussion group that is held after the 9am Sunday Mass.
- The 2025 StMM Annual Stewardship Report and the 2025-2026 Quarterly Report are available on our website.

School News

- Thinking about a Catholic education for your child? StMM school tours are now being scheduled.
- 2026-2027 School Year Applications are now being accepted.

Ministries, Groups, & Events

- Would you like to be an Angel for expectant mothers? Gabriel Project needs Walking Angel volunteers to accompany women facing crisis pregnancies with prayer, practical assistance, and loving friendship.
- To all StMM parishioners who were baptized in 2025- Fr Mike invites you to join a Celebration of New Life Mass on Sunday, Jan. 11, 2026. Please click [here](#) for more information and registration.
- The 2026 Wedding Anniversary Mass will be held at Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral on Saturday, Feb. 14.
- JobWorks Career Ministry will present Building a Personal Brand That Advances Your Career on Thursday, Jan. 8 at StMM in Church room 1, from 10:30am to 12:30pm. Please RSVP [HERE](#).
- Family Honor is presenting Understanding the Human Person at the Diocese of Raleigh Catholic Center on Feb. 13 & 14. Please go [HERE](#) for more information and to register.
- Family Honor is presenting Leading & Loving: Practical Principles for Catholic Parents in the StMM Media
- learn how to receive low-gluten Communion at StMM.
- Hearts on Fire, a charismatic prayer group with Deacon Dev, meets in the Church at 6:30pm on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month.
- StMM Book Club meets the first Wednesday of the month to discuss a selected reading. The next meeting is on Jan. 7. Everyone is welcome. Click [here](#) for more information.
- St. Mary Magdalene's marriage enrichment fellowship group, Chrysalis, provides space monthly for couples to grow in their love for God & their spouse. Childcare is provided.
- Catholic Senior Organization (CSO) meets the 3rd Monday of the month. The next meeting is on Monday, Jan 19, at 10:30am
- A Bible study on the Book of Revelation with Deacon Dev has two meetings left, Thursday, Feb. 5 and Thursday, Feb. 19. Please click [here](#) to register. All are welcome to join!
- Parish Athletics Spring Soccer and Baseball registration is now open.
- Lend a Hand to Moms in Need: Support Families Affected by SNAP & WIC Losses by donating to the Western Wake Crisis Ministry or Catholic Parish Outreach.
- Forward in Hope, a grief support group at StMM, will begin a new session in January.
- StMM Community Golf Outing hosted by Parish Athletics- Save the Date- April 20, 2026. Click [here](#) for more information on how to register.
- Let Your Faith Flow- Help Us Bring Clean Water to Uganda! St. Mary Magdalene is launching the Uganda Water Project to bring life-changing clean water to the people of Kicheche, Uganda.
- The Care for God's Planet Team will have a meeting at 7pm on Jan. 8 in church room 1. All are welcome! For more information, please email STMMCareForGodsPlanet@gmail.com
- The Columbiettes annual Bingo night will be on Saturday, Jan. 24,

Center on Jan. 23 & 24. Please go [HERE](#) to register.

from 7 to 9pm. Please sign up [HERE](#) to register. Thank you!

- St. Bernadette Catholic Parish is hosting National Speaker Danny Bader for an Interactive Lunch and Learn on Saturday, Jan. 24 from 11am to 1:30pm. Please go [HERE](#) to register.

Pictures of the Week



Congratulations to Roger Reilly and Marie Zmuda, who were married on Dec. 27.

Congratulations to Sophia and Garrett Scoggins, who were united in marriage on Dec. 20.

Congratulations to Lucas and Yuliya Bachman, who were married on Dec. 19.



Remy Yarboro was baptized on Tuesday, Dec. 30 by Fr. Francis.

Forward in Hope, a grief support group at StMM, wraps up four seasons. A new group will be forming in 2026.

Paula Hils, a StMM parishioner, was recently featured in the *NC Catholics* magazine for her dedication and tireless efforts to support mothers in need. Thank you, Paula, for your compassionate witness and generous heart in serving others. The full *NC Catholics* article may be found [HERE](#).

**FOLLOW StMM
ON SOCIAL MEDIA**



Faith Formation

[Click HERE for the 2025-2026 Faith Formation Calendar](#)



Registration for the High School Mountain Retreat opens on November 1. Please click [HERE](#) for more information and how to register.

Questions about Faith Formation:

GATHER (K-4th grade)- contact Suzanne Will at will@stmm.net or 919-657-4800 x7280

THE ROCK (5th & 6th grade)- contact Sarah St. Aubin at st.aubin@stmm.me or 919-657-4800 x7307

EDGE (7th & 8th grade)- contact Sarah St. Aubin at st.aubin@stmm.me or 919-657-4800 x7307

Apostello and the Way (9th-12th grade)- contact Niki Furnier at nfurnier@stmm.net or 919-657-4800 x7309

Confirmation- contact the coordinator at confirmation@stmm.net

St. Mary Magdalene | 919-657-4800 | 625 Magdala Place | Apex, NC 27502 US

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