

*The*  
**WINGED LION**

St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church

AUGUST 2021



*The Immaculate Heart of Mary*

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# “How Have The Pandemic Restrictions Affected Your Faith Life?”

## 2021 Women’s Guild and Knight of Columbus Scholarship Applicant Respond.

By Nicholas Wilson



At the start of 2020, my faith life was full of amazing friends, numerous youth ministry planning meetings, and extensive time in prayer. I attended a weekly guys bible study,

Life Teen, several Teen ACTS director meetings, and daily mass twice a week. Life was good, and I was anticipating the summer to be even better. However, weeks into the new year we, a community of faith, found ourselves in lockdown.

My eventful weeks came to a halt and I found myself limited to praying alone in my room and watching Mass on TV. Life in lockdown was drastically different. I continually

found myself yearning for that deep connection to the community that I had before, but always unable to reach it. As the lockdown lasted much longer than expected, having fortitude in my faith became nonexistent. I lacked the motivation to seek God on a daily basis and discovered myself to be further from him than when my faith journey began. This was especially difficult because I was still a director for the Teen ACTS retreat and had to plan and run meetings with my co-directors. Regardless, some hope remained in me as my plans for the summer were still on. I envisioned rediscovering my relationship with God on the retreat and then strengthening it a few weeks later at Life Teen Camp Covecrest. Unfortunately, Covid restrictions shattered that last bit of hope as both events were canceled.

Now, at the lowest I have ever been in my life, I had to find a way



By Matt Tobar



How have the pandemic restrictions affected my faith life? Well, that is a double-edge sword. They have affected my faith life both positively AND negatively. Posi-

tively, it has given me more chances to sit down and read the bible. I also have been reading Matthew Kelly’s “Perfectly Yourself,” it’s a very interesting read, and I am glad I had the time to read it. On top of all that, I got confirmed this summer, which was a really interesting thing to do in the middle of a pandemic.

It was both a blessing and a curse to get confirmed during this pandemic. All classes were cancelled, so I didn’t get the full education or the

retreat. This allowed me to put my own creative spin on my education. I picked my best friend to be my confirmation sponsor, and it was one of the best decisions I have ever made. He is incredibly religious, hyper involved in Life Teen at St. Mark, and he was even one of the Co-Directors for the summer Teen ACTS retreat before it was cancelled due to the pandemic. He made it a point to take me to confession the week before my confirmation. That way I was as pure as I could be before the big day. He and I even used to text each other a bible verse every day to read and reflect on. We got a lot closer, especially in our faith.

Bible study (specially Guyble study) is something that was affected negatively by the pandemic restrictions. We had to transition to Zoom, and we stopped doing it weekly after a while, unfortunately. We actually

to spark my passion for Christ. That spark was more or less hot coal slowly charring a piece of wood. Luckily, that coal was all that God needed. Somewhere in the darkness, God had called me to step up and lead the teens of our community closer to him. I sat down with one of my best friends and discussed the idea of putting on an entirely teen-lead retreat at St. Mark. On this retreat, I was able to give a talk about all of the things I lost in 2020. Whether or not it was enlightening for the teens, it helped me realize that even in the shadows, God remained in me. Through Covid restrictions, I felt like everything had been taken away from me, but in return, God gave me so much more.

*Nicholas Wilson is one of the Knights of Columbus #7613 Scholarship Recipients.*

haven’t done it since last September thanks to the pandemic. It was such a great way for us guys to grow closed together both as friends and as followers of Christ.

Another thing that was negatively affected by the pandemic restrictions was my being able to go play at Mass. I have played at 5 pm Mass at different churches over the course of 6 years,; St. Thomas More, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, San Fernando Cathedral, St. Francis of Assisi and of course St. Mark the Evangelist. Playing at Mass is how I connect with God and Christ. It was really hard not being able to go and play for 9 months, but I was strong and resilient in my Catholic faith, which is now stronger than ever!

*Matt Tobar of a recipient of the Knights of Columbus Scholarship #7613*



# Come Grow With Us!

By Melanie Rutkoski  
Valerie Cervantes

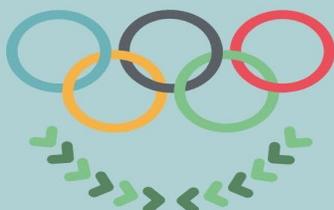
Since 1980, thousands of children and multiple generations have been part of the St. Mark Catholic Preschool family. The traditions of the preschool act in mission of the parish, intertwining Catholic values with the love of learning, exploration, and discovery. Our school day begins with prayer and is filled with fascinating lessons that support developmental milestones. As active participants in learning, children are intrigued by the weekly themes and daily activities of the Experience Early Learning Curriculum. Utilizing a hands-on, play-based approach to learning, we learn something new every day! With our low student to teacher ratios, we engage each

child through large and small group instruction while also allowing for individualized attention. When not in the classroom, children have outdoor playtime and transition into the gym twice a week for Movement and Music where we focus on gross motor development. As part of our active schedule, classes come together for Little Church in the Day Chapel where songs are sung and His word is shared. Elements of our day are captured through our parent app, Hi Mama, which provides the opportunity to share photographs with parents throughout the day highlighting the curriculum and other engagements such as seasonal parties and faithful gatherings. We are excited and thankful for the opportunity to begin year 42. We invite you to come grow with us and join the St. Mark Catholic Preschool family.



*Melanie Rutkoski is the Director of our St. Mark Catholic Preschool. Valerie Cervantes is the Administrative Assistant.*

# GOD'S OLYMPIANS



# VBS 2021



Those of us in ministry love this saying: God doesn't call the equipped. He equips the called.

We all know that sort of queasy feeling we get in the pit of our stomachs when it becomes clear what we're supposed to do, in any situation. It's that feeling of: Oh, no. Not me. Not now. I can't.

We've all got our list of reasons why not, don't we? We do it for everything, from big life problems to small everyday choices. I'm not going to invite my neighbor to church because I don't want to come across as pushy. I'm not going to make amends with my cousin because she'll just walk all over me again. I'm not going to say a Rosary tonight because I'm tired and it'll just stress me out.

However, even if we all put our lists of "reasons why we can't" together, I don't think any of us have reasons quite as valid as the apostles.

Their job was to convert the nations — and here they are, a bunch of fishermen who haven't been out of Judea, who speak only their own languages. Were they supposed to preach the Gospel via a particularly compelling game of charades?

But even that big, giant, stop-you-dead-in-your tracks Reason Why We Can't was nothing, because God had a plan. He didn't call a bunch of equipped men. He called them, and He equipped them. Cue the tongues of fire!

God doesn't call us to do His will because we have what it takes. He calls us because He's ready to give us what it takes. Being a good steward is to answer the call of Christ knowing he will provide.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS  
<https://4lpi.com/blog/you-dont-have-what-it-takes-but-you-will/>

## WELCOME

A warm welcome to our new members

Christopher Espinoza

Hector and April Esquivel

Pasha and Mitra Kermani

Larry and Marcia Caston

Christopher and Cristina Gamez

Michael and Theresa Mullen

Clarke Ehrlich

Charles and Adriana Campbell

Melanie Rutkoski - Director  
 Valerie Cervantes - Admin. Assistant

preschool@stmarkevangelist.com  
 (210) 494-9282



### OPEN ENROLLMENT

We are celebrating our 42nd year!  
 Serving children 18 months to 4 years, on or before September 1st  
 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Schedule Options Mon/Wed/Fri, Tues/Thurs, and Mon-Fri

#### 2021-2022 PROGRAM OFFERINGS

Low Student to Teacher Ratio, Experience Early Learning Curriculum, HiMama Parent App, Little Church, Movement & Music, Outdoor Play, Scheduled Special Events, Seasonal Parties, and so much more!

We look forward to hearing from you!  
 Employment opportunities are available.



Our Lady of Guadalupe, in these times of tribulation we turn to you, O Mother. See with compassion the suffering of your beloved sons and daughters affected by the Corona Virus Pandemic throughout the entire world. Ask your Son to have mercy on us bringing healing to those infected and protection to all your children.

Jesus Christ, Savior of all people, grant us courage to accompany and care for the entire world in the wake of sorrow and uncertainty. We seek refuge in you, and according to your promise, deliver us from this danger.

Amen



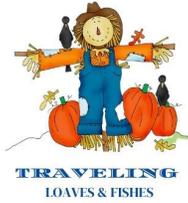
# Have Your Read The One About . . . . Pumpkins?

By Kathleen Meade

In the realm of great literature, pumpkins as subject matter lag far behind almost everything else. Charles Perrault tried his best in 1697 with his story of "Cinderella." Her fairy godmother turned an ordinary pumpkin into a carriage fit for a princess. Washington Irving followed up in 1820 with America's first ghost story, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." The Headless Horseman hurls a flaming pumpkin, his head's stand-in, at poor Ichabod Crane. And who can ever forget the lonely vigil of Charles Schultz' Linus as he awaits the coming of the Great Pumpkin?

Traveling Loaves & Fishes, not to be outdone, is proud to announce the return of its own pumpkin story, "The Pumpkin Patch!" The fields of the West Campus of St. Mark the

## PUMPKIN PATCH



Evangelist will once again be covered with the orange gourds during the month of October. The train will be back! The bounce houses will be back! Birthday parties will be back! The food truck will once again be filled with hot dogs, candy, chili, and sodas. Family Night will happen!

TLF is inviting everyone to become characters in the Pumpkin Patch story. Volunteers are needed to help unload the pumpkins the first week of October. Volunteers are

needed to help coordinate Family Night, the Food Truck, Trunk and Treat, birthday parties, pre-school days and more. Each October week-end, the Pumpkin Patch will need warm bodies to sell pumpkins and tickets. If you can see yourself in any of these roles, please contact board members:

LaVerne Dysart at (210)488-3514, [tlf.dysart@gmail.com](mailto:tlf.dysart@gmail.com), Kathleen Meade at (210)854-8223, [ksmeade@yahoo.com](mailto:ksmeade@yahoo.com) or Nancy Forget at (210) 410-8589, [i4get@satx.rr.com](mailto:i4get@satx.rr.com), Ed Bakunas and Chantal Horsey. "Sign up Genius" will be available to select your volunteer choices with date and times. Check TLF out on Facebook and the Web!

*Kathleen Meade is the Traveling Loaves and Fishes Pumpkin Patch Committee Member.*

## Creating an Atmosphere of fellowship and fun



By Virginia Cavazos

The St. Mark's Young at Heart Ministry is a group that for many years has brought fellowship, enjoyable times and a sense of value to its members of ages 50 and over. The ministry provides a friendly and fun-loving atmosphere. We get together twice a month to, not only enjoy and support each other's company, but also to have lunch, play various types of group games, and give encouragement / support when needed to each other. These gatherings are times to talk, and enjoy one another, with a start out of prayers, and a short agenda meeting. These meetings

are an opportunity for members from age 50 to our oldest seniors to come together and take part in our unique type of social, spiritual, and meaningful moments with fellow parishioners. In the meetings, members at times, share and offer years of their wisdom, and smiles. Caring, encouraging one another and having a most enjoyable time is a part of our mission. Another part of our mission is to "stay young at heart" by having our members enjoy life regardless of age.

Information of helpful programs, events of interest will be announced and shared at the meeting. Games being the major part of the gatherings in order to be "young at heart" makes us feel happy, lets us have fun, healthy humor brings laughter, and each one of us may have a funny story. Our reward is having a good time, feeling good about ourselves and by making others feel happy.

We consider Valentine's Day, Fiesta, 4th of July, Halloween and Christmas, main calendar events in celebrating and partying uniquely. Young at Heart meets on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month from 11:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Bring your own lunch and beverage.

**For more information,  
please call  
Virginia Cavazos**

**(210) 496-3788**

**Join us in September  
for our first meeting!**

*Virginia Cavazos is the Young at Heart Ministry Lead at St. Mark the Evangelist.*

## St. Mark Prayer Shawl Ministry

By Velma Spruel Williams

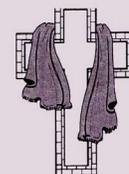
The St. Mark Prayer Shawl Ministry was established in August of 2016 at the request of Mrs. Dot Hamlin, St. Mark Pastoral Administrator, and at the suggestion of Mrs. Christ Font a parishioner. Mrs. Font had been part of a similar Ministry in Florida and was hoping to bring it to our Church. When I first met Mrs. Font in the Pastoral Office, she explained her experience in Florida and that this Ministry donated hand knitted-prayer shawls to nursing homes and other organizations. A few days later Mrs. Hamlin, Mrs. Font and I had a phone conference, and I agreed to meet with Mrs. Font and become the lead of this wonderful Ministry. After advertising to our church community, we started receiving calls of people showing interest in this venture. And so we began, picked a meeting date and secured a room in Christopher Hall for our meetings. With the help of wonderful donors, we purchased supplies and began working on a pattern that Mrs. Font shared with us. We want to thank all

the people that donated money, supplies, storage space, and to everyone that joined to make this "New to St. Mark Ministry" possible. My special thanks to Brenda Houchens and Pam Raines who were the first donors, Sharon Hanson for helping with my logo idea and making it better, and Father Kevin who graciously blesses our items.

We are now well established and over a hundred members strong!! We donate our prayer shawls and lapghans to our parishioners and their family and friends, community outreach projects, hospice care, and kidney dialysis facilities. All recipients appreciate our time, talent and treasure as well as the meaning these shawls provide to those who use them.

We invite you to join us. Be fulfilled as you use the gifts that God has given you by serving those in need of comfort.

*Velma Spruel Williams is the Prayer Shawl Ministry Lead at St. Mark.*



*Prayer Shawl  
Ministry*

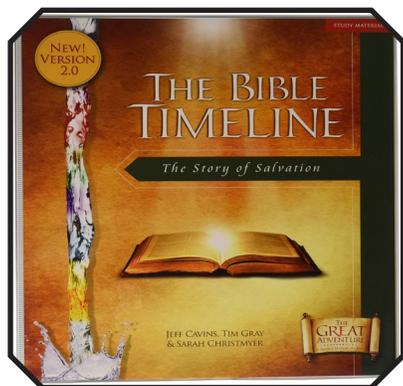
We are accepting prayer shawl requests for family and friends in need of comfort. Each item is blessed by Father Kevin prior to distributing.

If you would like to make a request or need more information about our ministry, please contact Velma Spruel Williams at (210) 416-5563.

We also invite you to join us! If you love to knit or crochet, we have a place for you to help.

Every Friday | 11 am - 1 pm  
West Campus, Room 109 Bldg. #14

## St. Mark Tuesday Bible Study is Back!



By Elaine Diaz

This coming September, we will be studying "The Bible Timeline: The Story of Salvation." The Bible Timeline is a fascinating

24-week study that takes you on a journey through the entire Bible. You will go deep into each period of salvation history and discover the amazing story woven throughout all of Scripture. Using the unique color-coded Bible Timeline system, you will learn the major people, places, and events of the Bible and see how they all come together to reveal the remarkable story of our Faith.

We are excited to invite you to join us in this study. If you have never taken a bible study before, this is a great first step. Even if you have taken many studies, the Bible Timeline will "bring it all together" for you.

If you registered previously and plan on attending, there is no need

to do anything further. If you are interested in taking the study, please watch for news of open registration in the bulletin. We will be offering both morning (9:00-11:00) and evening classes (6:45-8:45). Babysitting is provided upon request for children 1 year and older.

**For more information, please call Yvonne Griffith at 210-364-4987 with questions regarding the morning classes or Carolyn Hrcir at 210-422-2255 regarding evening classes.**

*Elaine Diaz is a Bible Study Core Team Member at St. Mark the Evangelist.*

# Young Hearts Restored at Steubenville Lone Star

By Madonna Gil and Blake Tamez

Every year, thousands of high school students gather to experience one of 25 Steubenville Youth Conferences held all over the country. Because of last year's global quarantine, Steubenville and Life Teen were unable to host the conference. This year, however, the youth of our parish were able to participate once again in this transformative weekend!

Parish staff traveled to Irving with 6 teens, 3 boys and 3 girls, for the conference themed "Restored," based on Psalm 80:3 "Restore us, O God; let thy face shine, that we may be saved." The excitement in the Irving convention center was tangible as everyone waited for the opening session of praise and worship to begin. As the drum began to beat and chords were struck on the guitar, the excitement continued to build into a beautiful song of praise. Nearly 2,000 teens began to clap and jump in unison, ecstatic to worship together again.

From Friday evening to Sunday afternoon, our teens heard heartfelt, encouraging (and often very funny) talks from Catholic speakers Jackie Francois Angel, Kris Frank, DJ Bernal (a San Antonio local), and host Ennie Hickman. Each presentation led the teens deeper into what it means to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ and pursue God's desire for wholeness and restoration in the lives of his people.



Music for the weekend was led by Andrew Laubacher, Sarah Kroger, and Ricky Vasquez. Fr. Joe Freedy, Vocations Director of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, celebrated Mass and led the assembled in a powerful time of Adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Our first evening prepared the tone for the whole weekend, prompting the youth to ask themselves "What two words would you use to describe your relationship with God right now?" The answers of our young people were humbling in their vulnerability and honesty, requiring the kind of prayerful self-reflection that many of us avoid. It was clear that God was already beginning to work, and, by the end of the weekend, the teens were articulating simple yet profound transformations in their understanding of God and the Catholic faith.

Another beautiful moment occurred near the end of the conference when the young men and

women present who were open to discerning a call to the priesthood or religious life were invited to approach the altar and receiving a blessing from the local bishop; dozens of teens responded to the invitation and approached the altar! It was inspiring to see so many young people, including one boy and one girl from our parish, leap up and present themselves for this moment of prayerful surrender to the will of God for their lives.

While these conferences pack a spiritual punch, the real transformation begins when the insights and graces of the weekend are translated into everyday discipleship back home. So please keep the youth in your prayers as they seek abundant life in Christ in the here and now! Youth discipleship requires a whole parish community that supports and empowers young people in the walk of faith, listening to their hopes, fears, and questions in the process. May our community continue to foster a culture of goodness, empathy, service and grace as we accompany our young people into mature Christian discipleship.

For more information on programs for youth and how you might join the community or participate in our mission as a volunteer, please visit [www.stmarkym.com](http://www.stmarkym.com) or call us at 210-494-1959.

Madonna Gil and Blake Tamez are Youth Directors at St. Mark the Evangelist.



ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST

**FAITH FORMATION**

ENROLLMENT IS OPEN  
FOR GRADES K-12!

VISIT [WWW.STMARKYM.COM/REGISTER](http://WWW.STMARKYM.COM/REGISTER)  
OR CALL 210.494.1959



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St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church

*The*  
**WINGED LION**

AUGUST 2021

Pastor: Rev. Msgr. Kevin E. Ryan | Pastoral Administrator: Dot Hamlin

### Mass Schedule

**Saturday** 5pm  
7:30am, 10am, 12 Noon  
2pm (Spanish) & 5pm

**Monday** 8:15

**Tuesday** 6:30am

**Wednesday** 8:15 am, 5:00 pm

**Thursday** 6:30am

**Friday** 8:15am

### Communion Services

**Monday** 8:30 a.m.

**Tuesday** 8:30 a.m.

**Friday** 6:30 a.m.

### Holy Days

8:15am & 7pm

### Eve of Holy Day

7pm

### Reconciliation

Saturday 3:30-5pm

### Adoration

Tuesday-Thursday, 9am-4:45pm

He said to them, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature...."

Mark 16:15



*Our mission:*  
TO SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS  
OF JESUS CHRIST TO ALL GOD'S  
PEOPLE BY WORD AND ACTION.



[www.stmarkevangelist.com](http://www.stmarkevangelist.com) | 210.494.1606