

# The WINGED LION

MAY 2023

## A Message from Fr. Dennis Aréchiga



*“Grant we beseech thee, O Lord God that we,  
your servants, may enjoy perpetual health of mind and body;  
and by the intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin,  
may be delivered from present sorrow, and obtain  
eternal joy, through Christ Our Lord.”*

*The conclusion of the Litany of Loreto*

It's amazing how the many peoples and cultures of our world relate to Our Blessed Mother Mary in their own, unique way. This past April 16th, one of our neighboring parishes, Vietnamese Martyrs Church on 14603 Santa Gertrudis St., near Stahl Road, dedicated a beautiful outdoor Shrine to “Our Lady of La Vang” that is worthy of a visit. This beautiful shrine commemorates Mary's believed apparition in Vietnam to Catholics who were undergoing persecution from the Emperor Canh Thinh in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. He issued an edict that was anti-Catholic in nature. Escaping to the rainforest of La Vang, located in central Vietnam, Mary is said to have appeared holding a child Jesus in her arms, acting as a source of comfort and refuge for those persecuted for their faith.

Whether in Vietnam, or in Mexico with the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe, or the several other sites of Marian apparitions, Mary often visits in time of conflict where hope is scarce. May is the traditional month in which we take extra time to reflect upon Mary's role in our life of faith. One of the most popular prayers to Mary is the Litany of Loreto. This litany highlights several titles of Mary that give insight into the nature of who she was:

### **Mother of the Church**

At the foot of the cross, Jesus gave his mother not only to his beloved disciple but to all of us as well.

### **Mother of Hope**

How often have we when in despair turned to her to take refuge in her maternal mantle in our time of need?

### **Virgin Most Faithful**

From the annunciation to flight to Egypt, from being present at her Son's Way of the Cross to Pentecost, Mary was ever present to her Son and to the Church.

### **Mystical Rose**

The intricate design of a rose's petals symbolizes the exquisite beauty and depth of Mary's many virtues

### **Queen Assumed into Heaven**

She, who had the singular privilege of being the mother of Jesus, was exalted on high despite her humility.

Whatever title we may invoke her by, may we imitate her virtues of fidelity, humility and perseverance as we seek to be open to God's will for us.

*Fr. Dennis*

## 40 Days for Life

By Cathy Nix

Saturday, March 18 was an extraordinary day for St. Mark parish. Twenty-two dedicated parishioners gave their most precious gift, prayer time, to help eliminate abortion in San Antonio.

Twice a year, spring and fall, 40 Days for Life Campaigns take place in our city and around the world. Since it's beginning in 2007, almost 23,000 lives have been saved from abortion that we know of. The no-show rate for abortions can go as high as 70% when people are outside praying at an abortion facility. Prayers and presence DO matter!!

At the time of this writing, 18 babies have been saved from abortion during this Lenten campaign from Ash Wednesday to Palm Sunday. And the good news is that we continue to pray after the campaign ends! We are a 40 Days for Life 365 location. This means that between

campaigns, our Sidewalk Interns are out on the sidewalk Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. covering almost all the open hours of Planned Parenthood. Since the intern program began 3 years ago, we have referred and saved over 400 babies!

We would LOVE to see more prayer participation during the year on the sidewalk. Often our interns are out there alone, and they would be safer with a prayer partner. YOU are invited to sign up for an hour to pray and support our interns during the week using this link: [40daysforlife.com/SanAntonio](https://40daysforlife.com/SanAntonio)

Here is some feedback from the participants that weekend. I sent them a note asking them to come even though we knew it was going to be raining. . . .

“Thank you for coordinating today’s event. It was my first time attending and I absolutely loved it. . .even in the rain. I look forward to the next



event. I appreciate your passion to do good!”

---Norma

“It was cold and rainy for those of us that were there at 7am this morning, but that made it more fulfilling.”

----Jonathan B.

Hey girl! I love the rain! I own an umbrella.

----Jane W.

Funnily quoting The Wizard of Oz. . . .”I’m melting!!” I will be there!!

----Matt T.

*Cathy Nix is the Program Director for San Antonio coalition for Life.*

## Habitat For Humanity

By Nancy Forget

St. Mark Habitat 2023 home build is in progress! Thank you to our “serving” parishioners who have given generous support with their labor and funding, sustenance for the workers providing food and drinks, and all the prayers for our safety and completion. Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio and Guadalupe County exists through blessings received from sisters and brothers in Christ who embrace the principles of our Catholic faith.

We have four more work days: age 14+ on May 6 and 20, June 10; and age 12+ on June 24- landscaping and home dedication day. Twenty-five workers are needed to fill our commitment for each day. There are openings for you to sign up at the SignUp Genius website: <https://www.signupgenius.com/>

[go/4090c49a8ab29a5f94-stmark3#/](https://go/4090c49a8ab29a5f94-stmark3#/) OR, point your cell phone camera and click at this QR code to take you to the website:



Although we were not able to provide full support for a home this year St. Mark parish deserves congratulations for our long running support.

*Nancy Forget is the Habitat for Humanity Lead at St. Mark the Evangelist.*



### WOMEN'S GUILD BAKE SALE

Sat. May 6 | after 5 pm Mass

Sun. May 7 | after morning Masses

Treats for everyone, desserts, pies, cakes cookies, brownies, cupcakes and more.

# SMCP 2022-2023 REVIEW

By Melanie Rutkoski

Time to stop, reflect, celebrate and prepare. Whether the 2022-2023 school year is the beginning, middle, or closer to the end of a family's time with us at St. Mark Catholic Preschool, we are thankful for the sweet memories and abundant blessings. Our school year started with all students ranging in age from 18 months to 4 years old and as of today, they are 28 months to 5 years old... amazing!

Each morning, St. Mark Catholic Preschool teachers and staff have welcomed families onto campus and the children into their classroom with smiles, high-fives, and hugs. It is truly amazing to see how far our friends have come in their independence and readiness to start each day. Over the past 9 months, the teachers have created an exciting learning environment for the children to explore the curriculum topics through engaging hands-on activities in both large and small groups. In addition to indoor and outdoor play, our children also enjoyed their time in Movement and Music with Mrs. Pizaña in the Gym. Here thematic concepts were set to music, team building activities were promoted, and laughter was shared through creative movement. When the children gather in the Day Chapel for Little Church, they see

that they too, are part of something great - our preschool family! Seeing peers and siblings waving to each other, hearing voices unified in songs and prayers, and their attentiveness to the Bible story and lesson is truly magnificent! Many times, our little friends have greeted church members with a smile, a wave, and on occasion a song! No matter where the children are on campus or the activity that they are enjoying, our faith and the mission of our church is present in every smile, teachable moment, shared prayers, and in the presence of a friend... sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ through word and action.

Taking time to reflect on the school year, we feel the joy the year has brought us. When our year concludes, we will have shared 10 classroom parties, 5 family gatherings, 4 picture days, the petting zoo, a visit from El Rey Feo and his Court, 4 parades, our Christmas program, Ash Wednesday and Foot Washing service, May Crowning, and the End of the Year Program and Graduation. As a staff we have a reflective thankfulness for the tokens of appreciation that have been gifted by our families from the delicious Thanksgiving pies to the thoughtful cards, one of a kind colorful pictures, and gifts from the heart.

On May the 17th the sanctuary will fill with families and friends

supporting and ready to see 117 children, from 9 classrooms, and 23 SMCP staff members as we celebrate the end of the year with a program and graduation. We will be led in prayer by Father Dennis followed by classes singing favorite songs from Little Church and our preschool curriculum as a prelude to 48 children graduating from St. Mark Catholic Preschool with confidence, pride, and faith - ready to let their light shine.

The preschool is also preparing for year 44 during this active enrollment season. Your continued prayers and support for this amazing ministry are evident. When visiting with new families making inquiry into the preschool program - there is nothing like being told that they knew about St. Mark Catholic Preschool because they attended school here or because they are a member of our church. Individuals continue to learn about the preschool from friends, co-workers, the banner, or searching online for a Catholic early childhood program.

May we all take time to stop, reflect, celebrate, and prepare as He has extended abundant blessings in our lives. Through our words and actions, we celebrate our children, our families, and our faith.

*Melanie Rutkoski is the St. Mark Catholic Preschool Director.*



**St. Mark Catholic Preschool**

**Now Enrolling**

18 months- 4 years old as of September 1st.

**(210) 494-9282**

**SMCP is the perfect fit!**



## Planned Giving

By Mary Anne Votion

Planned giving is a type of charitable donation that is made during a person's lifetime or as part of their estate plan. It involves a commitment to provide a gift to a charity or nonprofit organization at some point in the future, either upon the donor's death or after a specified time period has elapsed. Planned giving allows individuals to make a meaningful contribution to a cause they care about while also benefiting from tax advantages.

There are several types of planned giving vehicles, including bequests, charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, and charitable lead trusts. Bequests involve leaving a gift to a charity or nonprofit organization in a person's will, while charitable gift annuities provide donors with a stream of income for life in exchange

for a gift to the charity. Charitable remainder trusts allow donors to transfer assets to a trust, which then provides income to the donor or other designated beneficiaries for a specified period of time, after which the remaining assets are distributed to the charity. Charitable lead trusts are similar to charitable remainder trusts, but instead of providing income to the donor or beneficiaries, they provide income to the charity for a set period of time, after which the remaining assets are distributed to the donor or designated beneficiaries.

Planned giving is a powerful way for individuals to leave a lasting legacy and support the causes they care about. It allows donors to make a meaningful impact while also benefiting from tax advantages and providing for their loved ones. Nonprofit organizations often have

resources and staff dedicated to helping donors with planned giving, and can provide guidance and support throughout the process.

For more information about how you can set up a gift to benefit St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church contact Mary Anne Votion at 210-494-1606, ext. 345.

This article is information and educational in nature. It is not offering professional tax, legal, or accounting advice. For specific advice about the effect of any planning concept on your tax or financial situation or with your estate, please consult a qualified professional advisor.

*Mary Anne Votion is the Development Director at St. Mark the Evangelist.*

### Welcome to Our New Members

Timothy and Ellena Lee  
 Raymond and Cindy Wilson  
 Allie Garza  
 Wendy DeHoyos  
 Sara Alvarez  
 Ruby Casarez  
 William and Annamarie Espejo  
 James Whitmire  
 Eric and Kelly Valenzuela

Sandra Krause  
 Veronica Barrios and Travis Timbrook  
 Ramon and Christina Munguia  
 Barbetta Molinar and Julio Salazar  
 Christopher and Kasey Schaefer  
 Joe Garza  
 Julia Brummitt  
 Robert and Jessica Colunga  
 Matthew and Casey Klinger

# Spring has Sprung Luncheon

By Barbara James



On March 25, 2023 the St Mark Women's Guild hosted a Fundraiser Luncheon supporting the Annual Scholarships for Graduating High School students. There were 229 in attendance.

Thanks to the decorating committee the Community Center Gym was turned into a "Spring has Sprung" oasis. The entrance, room, stage and tables were filled with beautiful floral arrangements and live plants turning the gym into a vibrant and relaxing space.

Deacon Steve Marques enlightened us with a brief history of the Scholarship Committee procedures and then gave a beautiful Blessing before our meal.

Thank you to our Food Committee who went on numerous taste testings and chose a wonderful menu for our event. We all enjoyed a catered lunch by Little Muse Catering and Cakes. To top it off we had a wonderful Strawberry Lemonade Cake with Swiss Buttercream. The St. Mark Young Church Teens served the lunch and beverages and then went on to help the models and fashion show.

The Fashion Show Committee worked with Dillard's at Rolling

Oaks Mall to put on a fabulous Fashion Show with the latest in Spring Fashions. Our St. Mark Models looked beautiful walking the runway.

Many thanks and kudos go to the Silent Auction and Raffle Committees. There were 92 Silent Auction Items to bid on and 15 Bucket Raffles to place your ticket in. Fr. Dennis attended the Luncheon and

won the "Only in Texas" Silent Auction Basket! Congrats and thank you for joining in the festivities.

Three of our five scholarship winners and families were in attendance. The winning students each took home their \$1,000.00 Scholarship checks and were grateful to be chosen this year. Congratulations! They also helped pull the winning raffle tickets.

There are so many people to thank including the staff of St. Mark for all their help and support behind the scenes. This event could never have taken place without all your donations, support, purchases, smiles and generosity. This was truly a big undertaking since there have been no Spring Luncheons since before the pandemic. We hope to see more of our parishioners and community attend next year's event and if you decide to come you will be glad you did!

*Barbara James is the Women's Guild President at St. Mark the Evangelist.*



# Youth Summer Events

By Megan Byers

As the date for the Confirmation Mass approaches, please join me in praying for this group of Confirmandi. There are 47 teens preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation on June 1, 2023. We will conclude the semester discussing the life of St. Paul, his conversion, and the missionary work he did for the Early Church. May this group of young people be influenced by the life of St. Paul and continue to fall in love with Jesus, His Church, and the Sacraments. The Confirmation Mass begins at 7pm and all are welcome to celebrate with us.

Shortly after Confirmation, the youth, in collaboration with Children's Ministry, will begin preparing to welcome children for Vacation Bible School. VBS is June 26-30 and the theme is Roar, a Safari adventure that incorporates the stories of Exodus. Teens will be decorating the gym for VBS the week of June 19-23 as a way to grow in community and earn service hours. The last day to register for VBS as a participant or teen volunteer is June 1st.

Teen ACTS is July 13-16 directors are Allyson Nasis, Alexander Cadena, Karen Treu, and Roger McDonald. Team began meeting in April to prepare for the retreat, please keep them and all who will attend in your prayers. Registrations are now open for retreatants; the registration fee

is \$200 until June 11th and on June 12th the price goes up to \$215. Don't miss out on the early bird registration fee! Last day to register is July 3rd. The Teen ACTS Retreat is open for all rising 10th-12th graders, teens do not have to be Catholic to participate.

## Camp Covecrest and Hidden Lake

St. Mark Youth are returning to the mountains of Georgia for the last weekend of Life Teen summer camp, July 31-August 5! Once we arrive in Georgia, our middle school youth will go to Hidden Lake in Dahlonega, GA and high school youth will go to Covecrest in Tiger, GA. We are also excited to be traveling with a few teens from St. Andrew in Pleasanton, along with their Youth Minister and Fr. Ian Robbins! Please pray for the 5 middle schoolers and 7 high schoolers that will be participating in Life Teen summer camps this summer!

For more information on how to register for Teen ACTS or as a VBS Teen Volunteer, please visit [www.stmarkym.com/summer](http://www.stmarkym.com/summer) or contact the Youth Office 210-494-1959. For more information on VBS registration for elementary aged children, contact Rita Cabello 210-494-1606 ext. 320.

*Megan Byers is the Director of Youth Ministry at St. Mark the Evangelist.*



Congratulations to all of our St. Mark Graduating Seniors:

- Joseph Suarez
- Nathaniel Rotter
- Trent Rotter
- Maria Cochran
- Caroline Ellis
- David Quintana III
- Aiden Kelly
- Alexander Cadena
- Allyson Nasis
- Vitor Padilla
- Madeline Greer
- Marian Barragan
- Lukas Boudreau
- Marina Mangan
- Sophia Joachim
- Brady Rabel
- Ethan Vu
- James-Josef Mackbee
- Thomas "Chip" Loftus
- John "JJ" Loftus
- Tomas Espejo
- Victoria de la Garza

Please join us as our young church celebrates the


## SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

THURSDAY - JUNE 1 - 7:00PM

with Rev. Dennis Aréchiga  
and our local Auxiliary

### BISHOP GARY JANAK

All are welcome to witness this awesome sacrament!



## ST. Mark VBS

JUNE 26-30, 2023







For more information and to register please contact:  
Rita Cabello at (210) 494-1606 ext. 320

# Easter Vigil at St. Mark the Evangelist

By Anabel Farrell

Catholics worldwide have celebrated the Easter Vigil Mass from the Church's earliest days. The Easter Vigil Mass is the "most noble of all solemnities" and the climax of the Roman Catholic Church's Triduum (the core of the Paschal Mystery). The night celebrates Christ's victory- His passage from death to life. The Mass always begins after sunset with a roaring fire at the doorsteps of the Church. The Elect in their red robes and the Candidates are led out from the Day Chapel to the Easter fire, representing the victory in Christ of light and life over darkness and death, where they eagerly await this momentous occasion to begin. Father Dennis, the deacons, and the altar servers surround the fire and begin the celebration by blessing the new Easter Candle. Father Dennis lights the Paschal Candle from the blazing fire and sings: "May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds."

The newly blessed Paschal Candle, representing Christ, the Light of the World, is carried by the deacon in procession, followed by the priest and all the faithful into the darkened, empty Church. Once inside the Church, hundreds of hands hold a multitude of candles, eagerly waiting to receive the light of Christ from the Easter candle. Father Dennis addresses the entire congregation as the faithful prepare to celebrate in solidarity with the community of faith and those seeking full initiation into the Catholic faith. The Church Community, Elect, and Candidates now sit quietly in anticipation of the Liturgy of the Word, which recounts the history and truth of our creation, the journey of faith through Abraham, the journey to freedom through Exodus, and the prophets who urged the people to renew their covenant with God. Our present and past faith history—the History

of our Salvation connects us spiritually to God and one another. Jesus' death and resurrection are why all our brothers and sisters in Christ have new life and hope for eternal life with the Lord.

On the evening of the Easter Vigil, Christ's presence is everywhere. He is no longer absent from our midst. His presence is evident in the joyful smiles of all the newly baptized adults and children after Father Dennis proclaims, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Christ's presence is also noticeably present in the faces of the Candidates, already baptized, ready to enter into full communion with the Church through a profession of faith and reception of Confirmation and the Eucharist. St. Mark's parishioners also witnessed Christ's presence in the sponsors from the parish community who faithfully accompanied the Elect and Candidates every step on their journey to join the Catholic Church. The anticipation of the Easter Vigil did not disappoint all of those present. The Elect and Candidates experienced God's love and support from everyone gathered throughout the celebration. The Easter Vigil was indeed a synthesis of



what the entire Christian faith is all about. Christ is not unapproachable; he is alive and present amongst us!

The newly baptized Neophytes, anointed with aromatic oil, and infused with the light of Christ in the Easter Vigil, are now joined in Christ with Christians in their community and connected with every member of the Universal Church as they come to the table to partake of the sacred meal! During their spiritual journey, there was a growing awareness of Catholic teachings among the newly initiated Catholics. They have now collectively committed to living according to the Catholic faith. As the Neophytes continue on their spiritual journey, transformed by the resurrection of Christ, there is light where there was once darkness. Christ is Risen! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*Anabel Farrell is the RCIA Catechist at St. Mark the Evangelist.*

## We Welcome you into the Church

2023 Sacrament of Initiation

<p><b>NEOPHYTES</b></p> <p>Thomas Stacy Henry Tristin Ben Henry Krista Burnette Henderson William Chad Henderson Robert John King James Reuben McGuire</p>	<p><b>FULL COMMUNION</b></p> <p>Lisa Marie Garcia Donna Lee Cadena Alexander Oscar Cadena Summer Analyssa Trejo Rebekah Joy Pastrano Isabella Alena Alfaro Juan Esteban Jimenez Gabriel Luis Lopez Nicholas David Lopez</p>
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# ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Pastor: Rev. Dennis Aréchiga

*The*  
**WINGED LION**

MAY 2023

St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church

**Mass Schedule**  
Saturday 5:00 pm  
Sunday 8:00am,  
10:00 am, (livesreamed)

12 Noon  
2:00 pm (Spanish)  
5:00 pm

Monday 8:15 am  
Tuesday 8:15 am  
Wednesday 8:15 am,  
6:00 pm (Day Chapel)  
Thursday 8:15 am  
Friday 8:15 am

First Saturday Mass 9:30 am

**Holy Days**  
8:15am & 6pm  
Eve of Holy Day 6pm

**Reconciliation**  
Saturday 3:30-5pm  
Wednesday 4:30 - 5:50 pm

**Adoration**  
Tuesday-Thursday, 9am-4:45pm  
Wednesday 9:00 am - 8:45 pm

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

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

Mark 16:15



www.stmarkevangelist.com | 210.494.1606

