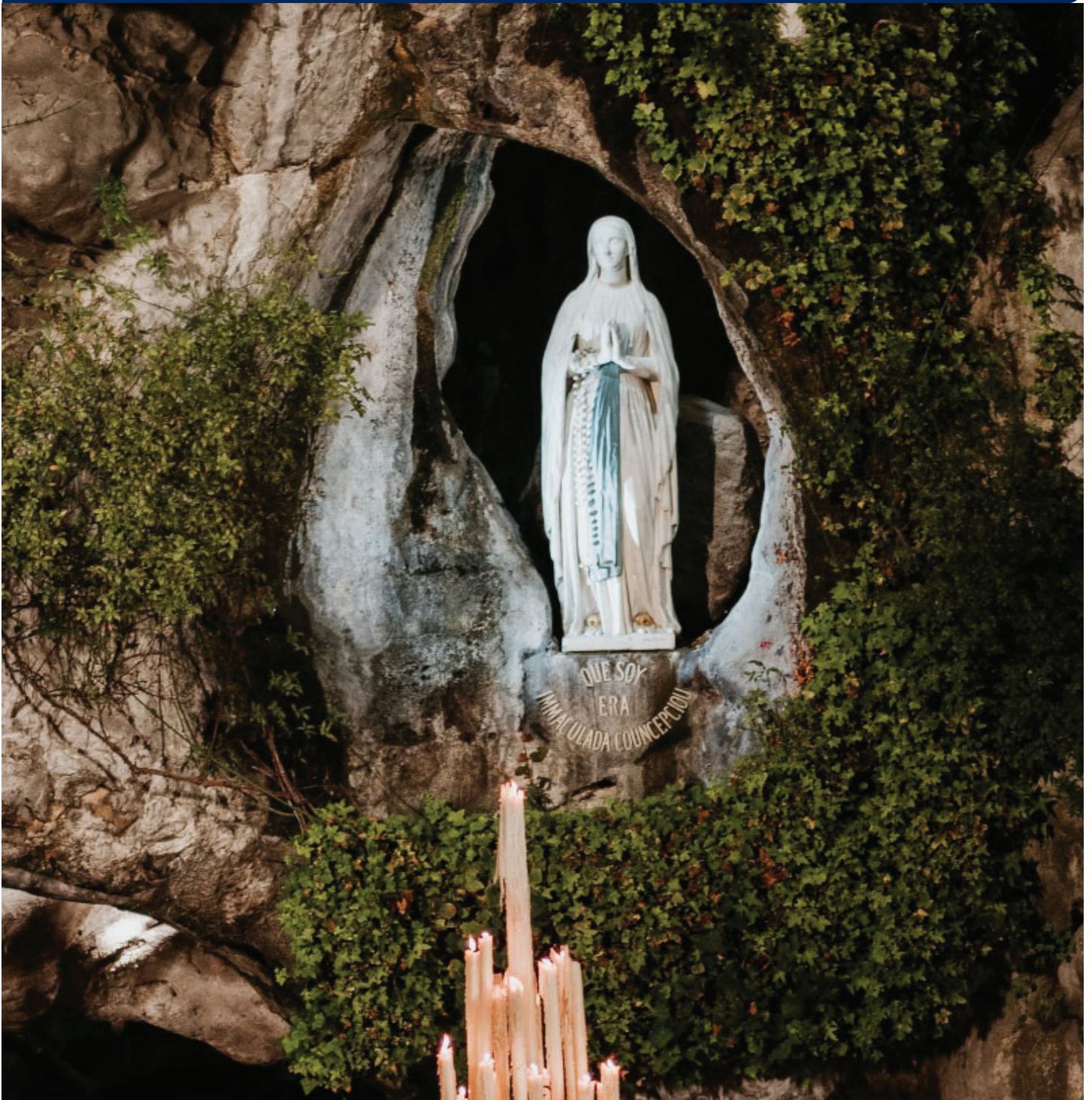


# *The* WINGED LION

St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church

FEBRUARY 2023



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## A Message from Fr. Dennis Aréchiga



As I reflect upon the first half of my new assignment at St. Mark, I would like to share some of the changes that have been instituted and some hopes for the future. First, I am grateful for the depth of faith and willingness to give of ourselves in service that is found in our community. It is interesting how although every parish has the same general mission of promoting faith and service in their community, each parish accomplishes it in their own unique way. Even how a parish staff is structured can vary greatly from one parish to another. I find that St. Mark places a great importance on providing quality liturgies especially with good musicians, both instrumentalists and singers, and providing the resources to support this.

The changes in staff positions have included: moving Mac McCarthy from Liturgy to being the Business Manager; moving Robert Martinez from Liturgy to being the Pastoral Associate (Robert still oversees Liturgy); promoting Megan Byers to Youth Ministry Director; including liturgy as part of Monica Frederick's responsibility in addition to being the Assistant in Development; hiring John Farrell as the new R.C.I.A. Director. Our Music Director Josh Frilling became part-time

due to additional teaching responsibilities outside of our parish, and José Gonzalez received additional hours in response to this. All of these changes took time to implement but are bearing great fruit for our parish. We are proud that our Pre-School topped 100 students, with 113, for the first time since the pandemic began. And of course, we were pleased to welcome Fr. José Luis Mejía as a Parochial Vicar to our parish. This semester, he will be taking intensive English classes at San Antonio College in the mornings and will be in the parish offices in the afternoon.

My focus this first year then has been on the staff and on the pastoral mission of our parish. Robert Martinez is now the first point of contact for weddings, annulments and funerals. Rita Cabello is now the point of contact for Quinceañeras; Maritza Shreffler, for Baptisms. We have several couples who have signed up to be married, and have included some of the deacons in the preparation of couples who are currently married in the civil court but are in need of a sacramental marriage or convalidation. We restarted a new Pastoral Council, ACTS Core and retreats, and a Liturgy Committee. As far as the schedule goes, the Wednesday evening daily Mass has moved from 5 to 6 p.m. to allow those working a better chance of attending. The Holy Day of Obligation Vigil and Evening Masses have also been moved from 7 p.m. to 6 p.m. The Sunday morning Mass was moved from 7:30 to 8 a.m. We introduced the ringing of the bells as a way to enhance the use of all of our senses in our liturgical worship. Also a new Mass on the First Saturday of the month at 9:30 a.m. This Lent, we will add the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Wednesdays from 4:30 p.m. to 5:50 p.m.

As I look forward to this New Year, I plan to look more closely at our buildings and their need for

maintenance and possible updating. Since the rectory needs some major structural changes to accommodate two priests in residence, such as enclosing the upstairs loft, combining two very small downstairs bedrooms into one larger bedroom, and adding an additional bathroom, we have petitioned the Archdiocese for permission for this renovation to take place. Fortunately, we will be able to use funds from our savings account and others graciously donated by the Women's Guild to fund this project; however, if you are interested in assisting with the funding, you may contact our Development Director, Mary Anne Votion, for more details. We still have our monthly debt payment, though the debt has dropped below \$900,000, we do not have much leeway in spending; therefore, we will have to prioritize our maintenance projects and updates carefully. Overall, we have seen an increase in attendance as we pray the effects of the pandemic are lessening, and we ask for your support and prayers as we seek to continue to offer more opportunities for evangelization, faith sharing and service in our parish.

*Father Dennis*

**February 22, 2023**

Please refer to our weekly bulletin for more information and schedule.

# St. Mark Habitat for Humanity

By Nancy Forget

Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio is an ecumenical Christian non-profit housing organization working in partnership with families in need to build modest, decent and affordable houses without interest or profit. Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.

St. Mark's Habitat for Humanity will participate in the April house construction for 2023 rather than beginning in February. We'll return to the Rancho Carloto neighborhood in Von Ormy. This year we'll return

to carpooling from the St. Mark west campus parking area. If you choose to donate your labor please know the following: drinks, breakfast snacks and lunch are provided by our team. Habitat of San Antonio provides all necessary tools and supplies for the build.

Those who stopped by the Habitat table at the October 30th Ministry Fair, and all prior volunteers, will be contacted in February as we plan for workers, meals, and fundraising. Donations toward this year's home can be given throughout the year by dropping your check made to "St Mark Habitat" in the weekend collection basket at masses. We also



have scheduled a second collection for March 5th and 6th; be sure to support our cause.

If you have questions please contact me, Nancy Forget, committee chair, by text- 210-410-8589 or email- i4get@satx.rr.com.

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

# Traveling Loaves and Fishes

By Nancy Forget

Traveling Loaves & Fishes works 364 days of the year to spread the good news of the gospel. What a productive year 2022 was for TLF! Volunteers continue to give time, foods and financial donations to serve those in need. Thank you all!

The 2022 Pumpkin Patch was an enormous success for all the happy faces that visited to play, eat and buy pumpkins. Every October St. Mark's oak grove magically becomes a beautiful park enjoyed by our community. We give thanksgiving to everyone for your support. Special blessings to the Knights of Columbus 7613 for giving sheer joy to little children riding our train.

Currently TLF needs cold weather clothing items for donation: adult

sized jackets, socks, gloves, warm knit caps & scarves. Please check your closets for any clean, gently used items that you can spare. New items are happily accepted! Volunteers give them out when serving meals.

We are also in need of volunteers to serve in our evening meal delivery from 5:00 pm - 7:30 pm. Please contact Jochelle Demmer at (210) 827-574, or email her at jochelledemmer@gmail.com to sign up. This service opportunity will make a difference in your life and the life of all you serve. The teams that need help are first Monday, fifth Monday, second Thursday, and fifth Tuesday.

Also we need a refresh of stock in our pantry for peanut butter and jelly.

Donated items can be dropped into the box marked "TLF" in the community center beside the front stairwell near the preschool office.

God bless everyone. Stay warm and remember to be Christ for one another as our winter weather will return.

*Nancy Forget is a Traveling Loaves and Fishes Core Member at St. Mark the Evangelist.*



ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST

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LIFE TEEN: GRADES 9-12

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By Tracy Earl Welliver

My mother died when I was thirty-one years old. My parents had been married for fifty-five years, and now my father had not only lost his wife, he had lost his identity. He had grown up with three siblings, but they were all deceased. He had been on disability for many years so he had no real job connections left. Yet the biggest part of this identity crisis was he had spent his life as an unbaptized believer.

His brothers and sister had been baptized, but he never knew why he had not. He lived his life feeling like a nobody, which led to drinking and other things lost people do. Whether he never felt good enough or at times didn't care, he never sought out baptism all those years. Maybe he came to Mass with us once at

Christmas. But now, he really felt the weight of his years of indecision. He was lost.

Eventually my father moved to be closer to me and began coming to church. After a year or so, he asked me about RCIA. So he began a process in which he probably only understood twenty-five percent of what he heard but he loved one hundred percent of the journey. At the age of seventy-five, Harold Welliver Jr., was baptized and fully initiated into the Catholic Church.

He said this to me, which I will remember and quote forever: "I was someone who didn't belong to anyone or anything, and now I belong" Jesus says in John's Gospel, "And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it on the last day." My father passed away three years ago. I miss him every day. He is gone from this world, but he is lost no more.

*Taken from Everyday Steward by Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS*

*Welcome!*

**A warm welcome to our new members**

**Kristina Vidaurri**

**Amanda Leonard**

**Kelly Van Winkle**

**Ana Marshburn**

**Rebekah Pastrano**

**Joseph Cortez**

## A Message from the Guadalupanas at Mission Espada

On behalf of the Guadalupanas at Mission Espada, I would like to thank your congregation for taking the time to buy gifts for our community. I know I am late with this letter, but we just finished delivering the last of the presents last week.

After Christmas we had a fire in our neighborhood and the family lost everything. There was a little six-year-old girl whose toys were all ruined. We were able to give her and her sisters more toys, a bike and clothes. There was also a ninety-year-old lady who lived in the house and was very happy to get a new coffee pot, because, according to her niece, that item was the "most important" gift. They were very grateful for everything they received.

We also had a neighbor lose her

son to suicide the following week. The mother received gift cards to buy some clothes for the funeral and for food. Please keep these people in your prayers. You never know what a blessing the gifts you donate will be for someone else.

Thank you to all who work so hard to separate these gifts to all the parishes you share with.

Sincerely,  
Margie Jimenez

P.S. A big THANK YOU to Rosemary for all her hard work and dedication. We enjoyed sharing our tamales and Christmas cookies with the volunteers when they delivered the toys.

*Well Done  
Rosemary.  
Thank you  
for all you  
do for our  
community!*

*Rosemary Bailey is the annual  
coordinator for  
The Angel Tree Ministry*

# Our Lady of Lourdes

By Megan Byers



Imagine this: daily mass at St. Mary's Catholic Center on October 1st. If that means about as much to you, as it did to me then, I'll provide more detail. . . Excitement was in the air as people exclaimed "Happy feast day!" Friends were hugging, crying tears of joy, pointing out their floral themed outfits, and passing out roses. As a freshman, new to the community of college students, I tried to play along, but was left feeling overwhelmed and confused. Later that night I took a deep dive into this "feast day" business and learned about St. Therese of Lisieux, "The Little Flower," a Doctor of the

Church, and the patroness of missionaries.

Over the years, I have learned more and more about the saints and developed certain devotions to a few Saints in particular. My senior year of college I lived with three other Catholic women and we chose St. Bernadette and Our Lady of Lourdes as our patrons. We called ourselves the "Grotto Girlies" because of the location of Our Lady's appearances to St. Bernadette. To live more fully into our devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes, my roommates and I consecrated ourselves to Jesus, through Mary's intercession ending on her feast day, February 11th. We threw a party at our house to celebrate with our friends. There was hugging, tears of joy, french themed outfits, and roses being laid at the feet of Our Lady. If only my younger self could see how four years could transform my life. I went from being confused about the saints, to throwing parties in their honor!

Our Lady of Lourdes appeared to St. Bernadette 18 times, from February 11th to July 16th in the year 1858. Her parents, community, the local clergy, and many others did not believe that her visions were genuine. However, following the instruction of Our Lady on February 24th, 1858, St. Bernadette dug up the ground near the grotto. The spring of water that began flowing from that site is

now used in the baths at Lourdes.

"Go and tell the priests that people are to come here in procession and to build a chapel here." Our Lady to St. Bernadette, 13th Apparition.

The Lourdes Sanctuary is now home to three Basilicas that welcome millions of pilgrims every year. I had the honor of being one of those pilgrims last May.

By the grace of God, I made it to Lourdes, France. I could see his hand in every moment of our trip. I traveled with my best friend, Laurie, one of the women I lived with during my senior year of college. We spent a day in prayer, reflection, and awe that we were there. At the grotto. Where Our Blessed Mother had appeared to St. Bernadette. It was so peaceful, truly holy ground. If only my younger self could see how four years could transform my life from confusion, to devotion, to procession.

This is one of the many things I love about being Catholic; there is always something more to learn about our faith. We can always go deeper in our understanding of the lives of the Saints, God Himself, and the teachings and traditions of His Church. Which Saint will you learn more about and celebrate this year?

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

## Join the Rosary Makers Ministry!

By Yolanda Underwood

The Rosary Makers Ministry makes rosaries that are available at the entrance of the church and entrance to the day chapel. We also provide rosaries to various groups upon request—children preparing for first communion, groups housed by Catholic Charities, etc.

Join us on Fridays after Mass in Bldg 9 on West Campus and we will

be happy to give lessons and provide the materials. We also welcome you if you already know how to make corded rosaries or rosaries with spacers.

We have various colored beads available. Contact Yolanda at 856-313-8888 or Veronica at 817-458-6743.

*Yolanda Underwood is the Rosary Making Ministry lead at St. Mark the Evangelist.*





# St. Vincent de Paul Society Year in Review

By Richard Miller

On September 30, 2022, St Mark St. Vincent de Paul Society Conference completed another year in support of needy families in our parish area. This fiscal year was again complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic. All of our procedures had to be changed to protect the health and safety of both our St. Vincent de Paul volunteers and those we serve. No visitors were allowed in the SVdP office and all of our food and financial support was done remotely, electronically and by telephone. Any personal contact was done by observing masking and social distancing. As in the last fiscal year, calls for help were reduced compared to FY 2020.

From October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022, St. Vincent de Paul received 719 calls for help, and provided food and/or financial assistance to 1,103 adults and children. The parishioner donation to St Mark St. Vincent de Paul Conference was \$111,440 for fiscal year 2022, which was an increase of 24% over fiscal year 2021. Our St. Vincent de Paul volunteers disbursed \$78,895 in utility, rent, medical, and other financial assistance to needy families. We provided approximately \$18,204 in non-perishable food distributed from the SVdP food pantry at St Mark and \$11,940 worth of HEB food cards to allow our clients to purchase perishable items such as dairy products, meat, and fresh fruit and vegetables. The table above compares our income and disbursement history for the past three fiscal years.

Food distribution continues as a basic feature of the St Vincent de Paul Ministry, and requires the hard work and dedication of many volunteers, referred to as "Pantry Partners." Each week the partners collect food donations brought to the church by many generous parishioners and ministries; we code the

**Interested in volunteering?  
Call Maria Rodriguez at  
(210) 858-0399**

*"What you did for the least of my  
brethren, you did for me."  
Matthew 25:40*

| REVENUE   | FY2020   | FY2021   | FY2022    |
|---|----------|----------|-----------|
| Parish financial donations  | \$98,344 | \$89,778 | \$111,440 |
| EXPENSES  | FY2020   | FY2021   | FY2022    |
| Disbursements to those we serve<br>(utility, rent, medication assistance) | \$65,989 | \$68,700 | \$78,895  |
| Food support to Haven for Hope  | \$10,368 | \$7,368  | \$7,368   |
| Pantry Food Purchases   | \$7,882  | \$10,291 | \$18,204  |
| HEB Food Card Purchases   | \$12,350 | \$9,960  | \$11,940  |
| Conference expenses (postage, ink, etc.)                                  | \$2,582  | \$1,959  | \$1,592   |
| ASSISTANCE PROVIDED   | FY2020   | FY2021   | FY2022    |
| Calls for Help to St. Mark's SVdP   | 904      | 519      | 719       |
| No. of people helped (adults + children)                                  | 2,736    | 1,454    | 1,967     |

food by expiration date, and organize and shelve the items in the pantry. Our large annual food drive is held during Thanksgiving each year, and provides the bulk of the food needed for the Christmas season. Because of the large client demand, however, the pantry stocks are quickly dispensed to needy families. Hence, we continue to need food donations throughout the year. Please refer to the weekly church bulletin for a list of the most critical food items needed to re-stock our pantry.

Because helping to meet basic human needs is a vital aspect of the St. Vincent de Paul mission, our principal focus is to provide person-to-person assistance to individuals and families in need, to meet their daily living requirements and help them to become self sufficient with a sense of hope, dignity, and well being. Our deep appreciation is extended to all of our generous parishioners who contribute to the St. Vincent de Paul Ministry via the monthly "blue-bag" collection. We also owe a hearty "thank you" to the many hard working Vincentian volunteers for making the St Mark SVdP Conference the great success that it is.

*Richard Miller is the St. Vincent de Paul Society Treasurer at St. Mark the Evangelist.*



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## Our Sins, His Suffering

By Jonathan Bassett

In our church calendar, the time from the celebration of the birth of Jesus to the time of His crucifixion is brief. So as a church, our preparation for Christ's suffering is well underway.

One of the ways St. Mark The Evangelist Catholic Church is preparing, is through Living Stations of The Cross. In fact, the preparations for this solemn liturgy began last September. They began with the discernment for the roles of Jesus and our Blessed Mother. This process begins with the recommendations of parishioners by the Living Stations Steering Committee members and the Holy Spirit takes it from there. Eventually we had these vital roles filled. Then the remaining cast is selected. Working in concert with Megan Byers in the youth department, the steering committee is able

to ensure that roughly half of the cast come from teens in our parish community.

As of the time of this publication, the cast orientation has taken place and several small group rehearsals have been completed. It is truly a beautiful thing to see our cast come together in this re-enactment of Jesus' journey to Golgotha.

What can our parish family expect to see on Good Friday, April 7, 2023 at 3:00pm? Our parishioners will have an encounter with the Holy Spirit working through our cast. Everyone will be working in collaboration with each other, not for themselves, but for the glorification of God. We will witness Jesus accepting the will of the Father in Gethsemane, His trial before Pilate and His journey to Golgotha. A journey filled with suffering and marked by an encounter with His mother, the help of Simon, the compassion of

Veronica, the regrets of the Women of Jerusalem and His arrival at "The Skull Place." Christ's ultimate sacrifice is then witnessed by our community of believers, followed by the most compassionate scene of the Pieta and the burial of Jesus.

All along the way the viewer is drawn into this journey of suffering. How can this be? The answer can be found in the "why?" Why did Jesus do this? As we know, He did all this for us, for the freedom from our sins. Every insult, every beating and every drop of blood shed; was for us.

Come, come witness this solemn liturgy. Come, come be a "part" of this solemn liturgy.

Living Stations of the Cross | Friday, April 7 at 3pm | St. Mark The Evangelist Catholic Church

*Jonathan Bassett is the Living Stations of the Cross Lead and St. Mark the Evangelist.*

## For the love of Austin

By Hilda Vargas

The Women in Recovery Group proudly announce that our annual event is coming on Sunday, March 5, 2023, at 5 pm in Guadalupe Hall on West Campus. This event raises money for scholarships for our Women in Recovery ACTS retreats.

Ours is the only ACTS retreat in the Archdiocese that is held specifically to support women who are suffering or have suffered with addiction of any type and for the women who are affected by addiction of a family member, friend, or work associate. Our retreat combines all the regular components of ACTS retreat with a twelve step program. It takes prayers from our St. Mark community to support our retreats and fundraising efforts.

This is the 10th fundraising event that has been held annually except

for COVID time. This event was named to honor Austin Whistler who died of an overdose on September 25, 2011. Austin was a member of our community and his mother, Lisa Aycock, continues to serve in the St. Mark community and is a big part of ACTS, especially with Women in Recovery. Money that was given to Lisa at the time of Austin's death was turned in and used to provide scholarships for women in need. This fundraiser was started to fulfill the needs of many women who had little funds and qualified for scholarships. Our event was originally a bunco night, but now includes a silent auction, 50/50 raffle, sponsorships and memorials to honor family members.

Sponsorships are available to people with businesses or services for \$50. (Your information will be

displayed by video slide show during the event.)

For those who have lost a family member, we offer a memorial for \$50. Their pictures will also be displayed by slide show.

With a \$20 ticket you can play bunco and possibly qualify for door prizes and/or cash prizes. In addition to bidding on silent auction items, you can participate in a 50/50 raffle where the winner splits the pot with the "house. Snacks are available thru the evening. Fun and fellowship are free!

Come out and join us on Sunday, March 5 at 5pm in Guadalupe Hall at St. Mark the Evangelist Church.

*Hilda Vargas is the WIR ACTS lead at St. Mark the Evangelist.*

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## The Winged Lion Publication Policy

St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church reserves the right to publish article submissions and edit all submissions for form and content.

### Mass Schedule

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Saturday  | 5:00 pm  |
| Sunday    | 8:00am,<br>10:00 am,(livesreamed)<br>12 Noon<br>2:00 pm (Spanish)<br>5:00 pm |
| Monday    | 8:15 am  |
| Tuesday   | 8:15 am  |
| Wednesday | 8:15 am,<br>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

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

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.



St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church

The  
**WINGED LION**



Pastor: Rev. Dennis Aréchiga

FEBRUARY 2023

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