



St. Mark Parish

St. Mark is a Catholic parish committed to fostering discipleship through the Word of God and the Sacraments. We are dedicated to providing Catholic education to our youth, to bringing a deeper relationship with Christ to our adults, and to supporting those in need through the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. We encourage all of our parishioners to participate in the shared responsibility of worship, prayer, study and service.



September 14, 2025

THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

Jesus said to Nicodemus:
“No one has gone up to
heaven except the one who
has come down from heaven,
the Son of Man.” For God
did not send his Son into the
world to condemn the world,
but that the world might be
saved through him.
- Jn 3:13, 17

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PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Adam Zajac
Pastor

Mrs. Christine Gunn
Principal

Mrs. Meaghan McCarthy-Silver
Pastoral Minister

Mrs. Julia Wallace
Music Ministry Director

Mr. Michael Kay
Youth Ministry Director

Mrs. Jeannette Puckett
Parish School of Religion
(PSR) Director

COMMUNITY & SACRAMENTS

New Parishioners: All are welcome to join the parish! Visit the website or call the parish office to arrange to meet a pastoral staff member.

Become Catholic: Interested in becoming Catholic? Call the parish office for an appointment with a pastoral staff member to learn more.

Infant Baptism: As you celebrate a new birth, make sure to arrange for the child's baptism. The third Sunday of the month is our regular schedule.

Reconciliation: Mercy and peace are here for you. Confession is available on Saturdays from 3:00pm to 3:45pm, or by appointment.

Marriage: Over six months we will prepare you to exchange vows before the altar. Whether engaged or civilly married, contact us to get started.

Anointing of the Sick: If you or a loved one is seriously sick, please call the parish office to arrange for a priest to visit and anoint.

Homebound: We are happy to bring Communion to you if you are unable to participate in the celebration of Mass.

LITURGY AND PRAYER INTENTIONS

Papal Intention

September: For our relationship with all of creation. Let us pray that, inspired by Saint Francis, we might experience our interdependence with all creatures who are loved by God and worthy of love and respect.

Liturgy Schedule

Scripture readings can be found online at:
bible.usccb.org

Monday, September 15-Our Lady of Sorrows

8:30am Mass Sue Ward

Tuesday, September 16-Sts. Cornelius & Cyprian

6:45am Mass @ St. Mel

8:30am Mass Sheila McGuire

Wednesday, September 17

Thursday, September 18

8:30am Mass Katie Burkhart

Friday, September 19

6:45am Mass @ St. Mel

Saturday, September 20-Sts. Andrew Kim Tae-gon & Paul Chong Ha-sang

3:00pm Confessions

3:00pm Confessions @ St. Mel

4:00pm Mass Anne Smith

4:30pm Mass @ St. Mel

Sunday, September 21-25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:00am Mass @ St. Mel

8:30am Mass Anna Vento

10:00am Mass @ St. Mel

11:30am Mass For the Parishioners of St. Mark Parish
and the Parishioners of St. Mel Parish

12:30pm Baptisms

Pray for the Sick

We commend to your personal prayers parishioners who have asked to be prayed for:

William Adams	David Kurth	Aimee Roscoe
Gianna Andolina	Tom Lembach	Nora Sudetic
Alex Brugh	Gerald McArthur	George Surovec
Henry Buehner	Jim McIlwee	Barbara Thiel
James Coyne	Judy McIntyre	Herb Tippie
Matthew Craven	Mary Miller	Michele Vollmer
Nicole Foerstner	Jack Mohar	Joe Wantz
Mary Frantz	Maisie Nowlin	Lillian Zahara
Theresa Fridrich	Sr. Josette Obodzinski	Lew Zahara Jr.
Amy Glazier	Mary Stark	Joseph Zavatchen Sr.
		Joseph Zavatchen Jr.

Other Intentions

Weekly Luke McGraw Memorial Candles Intention

Special Intention

Liturgical Ministers	emHCs	Lectors	Servers
Saturday, September 20 @ 4:00pm	Marian Lundeen Mary Price Gloria Morin	Lou Toth	William Lentz Kellen Lentz
Sunday, September 21 @ 8:30am	Michael Kay Shawn Wroten Mary Stamper	Agnes Butler Monica Svetz	Luke Meisterics Joe Svetz
Sunday, September 21 @ 11:30am	Lisa Ditzel Rosanne Kelley NOT FILLED	Ben Campbell Amanda Conklin	Kate Dillinger Emily Dillinger

NEWS AND EVENTS

Offertory Collections

In-Pew Collection (past weekend)\$ 3,055.00
Faith Direct (past month's weekly total)\$ 4,626.00
Thank you for your generosity!

Parish News

Children's Liturgy of the Word

Schedule for September-December

Children who are in PreK and above but have not yet received their First Communion will be invited to process into the sacristy during 8:30am Mass to hear the Gospel proclaimed in an accessible way. Children's Liturgy of the Word is meant to shed light on the Gospel when a passage is particularly challenging for children to understand, so it will only take place on Sundays when it has been determined to be useful and appropriate. We will publish a schedule of the chosen dates a few months at a time.

The upcoming Children's Liturgy dates are:

September 28
October 12
October 26
November 9
December 21
December 28

Faith Direct is Becoming ParishSOFT

Exciting Update:

We're excited to share that Faith Direct will soon be upgrading to ParishSOFT Giving - our new, secure giving platform. This upgrade will happen automatically and securely. No action is required from you - your gift schedules and payment details will carry over seamlessly.

What's new about ParishSOFT Giving?

- Weekly Giving: If you selected weekly giving, your gifts will now be deducted each week instead of in one monthly batch.
- More Flexibility: Adjust your giving schedule to any date that works for you - not just the 4th or 15th.
- More Ways to Give: Now you can donate using PayPal, Venmo, Apple Pay or Google Pay.

We're committed to making this a smooth transition. You'll receive more information as we get closer to launch.

Special Collection

September 13th & 14th

There will be a second collection to assist the Christians and other innocent victims of violence in Gaza and surrounding areas who are struggling to survive, protect their children and live with dignity in dire conditions. The Holy Father continues to call for a cease fire and for aid to enter the territory, noting with great sorrow that "Gaza is starving".



Share God's Love

St. Mark/St. Mel Faith Build

Neighborhood Spruce Up!

The 2025 St. Mark/ St. Mel Faith Build season is coming to a close, but it's not too late to participate. The Habitat Neighborhood Spruce Up day is scheduled for Saturday, September 27th. If yardwork or light maintenance is in your wheelhouse, consider giving some time to "spruce up" the Faith Build neighborhood. If you want to register or have questions, please contact:

Amy Asseff
aasseff@aol.com

Reminders and Regular Events

Donut & Coffee Social

Once a month after all masses in the Social Hall. Gather with fellow parishioners. For questions contact Michael Kay at mkay@stmarkcleveland.com

Upcoming Date: October 4 & 5

Holy Name Society Meetings

Fellowship, prayer, and service for all parishioners

All men and women of the parish ages 18 and older are welcome to join the St. Mark Holy Name Society. Meetings are the second Tuesday of the month at 6:00pm in either the Picnic Pavilion or Social Hall. At these gatherings, we dine together and discuss what event we will be doing next to help the community of St. Mark. If you would like to know more, contact Jim Cocita at: jimcocita@gmail.com

Young Family Gatherings

Connect with other young parents

Once a month after the 8:30am mass, young families are welcome to gather in the Social Hall (or Pavilion) for bagels, coffee, and community. Dates vary each month. For questions contact Briana David at: bciancibello@gmail.com

Upcoming Dates: September 14th, October 12

Sunday Rosary

A devotion to enrich your prayer life

Please come to pray with Mary, Our Blessed Mother, in this beautiful devotion. Parishioners gather in the church to pray the rosary after the 8:30am mass every Sunday. Contemplating the mysteries of the life of Christ, we pray for peace and grace in the world.

Military

Please pray for our military presently serving.

Josh Dunleavy, Nick Hupka, John Kazanowski, Randy Kloos, Sean O'Reilly, Nico Russo, Matthew Shirley

General Parish Calendar

Saturday, 10:00am-2:00pm	September 13 CYO Volleyball Games	G/FR
10:00 am	Faith Formation	CC
3:00 pm	Confessions	
4:00 pm	Mass	
5:00 pm	Markers/Mels 50+ Picnic	PP/CC
Sunday,	September 14 Catechetical Sunday	
8:30 am	Mass w/Teachers	
8:30 am	Sunday Preschool	CR
9:30 am	Rosary	
9:30 am	Young Families	SH/PP
11:30 am	Mass LS	
1:30 pm	CYO Volleyball Games	G/FR
Monday,	September 15	
8:30 am	Mass	
5:00 pm	Volleyball Prac.	G
5:30 pm	Football Mtg.	SH
5:30 pm	Baptism Class	CC
6:30 pm	PSR Class Gr. 1-8	CR
Tuesday,	September 16	
8:30 am	Mass w/All School	
3:00 pm	Faculty Mtg.	SH
4:15 pm	OCIA	CC
5:00 pm	Volleyball Prac.	G
5:30 pm	Cheerleading Prac.	PP
7:30 pm	Parent Club General Mtg.	CC
Wednesday,	September 17	
5:00 pm	Volleyball Prac.	G
7:00 pm	Bible Timeline	CC
Thursday,	September 18	
8:30 am	Mass	
6:00 pm	Scout Pack #268	SH
5:00 pm	Volleyball Prac.	G
7:00 pm	Troop #293	SH/PP
Friday,	September 19	
6:00 pm	Volleyball Prac.	G
Saturday, 10:00am-2:00pm	September 20 CYO Volleyball Games	G/FR
3:00 pm	Confessions	
4:00 pm	Mass	
Sunday,	September 21	
8:30 am	Mass	
8:30 am	Sunday Preschool	CR
9:30 am	Rosary	
11:30 am	Mass LS	
1:30 pm	CYO Volleyball Games	G/FR
6:00 pm	Youth Group	CC

Jubilee Audience of Pope Leo XIV, on 3 September 2025

Cycle of Catechesis – Jubilee 2025. Jesus Christ our Hope. III. The Passover of Jesus. 5. *The Crucifixion. «I thirst» (Jn 19:28)*

Dear brothers and sisters,

At the heart of the account of the Passion, in the most luminous and at the same time darkest moment of Jesus' life, the Gospel of John gives us two words that contain an immense mystery: "I thirst" (19:28), and immediately afterwards: "It is finished" (19:30). These are his last words, but they are filled with a whole lifetime, revealing the meaning of the entire existence of the Son of God. On the cross, Jesus does not appear as a victorious hero, but as a suppliant for love. He does not proclaim, condemn or defend himself. He humbly asks for what he, alone, cannot give to himself in any way.

The thirst of the Crucified Lord is not only the physiological need of a tortured body. It is also, and above all, the expression of a profound desire: that of love, of relationship, of communion. It is the silent cry of a God who, having wished to share everything of our human condition, also lets himself be overcome by this thirst. A God who is not ashamed to beg for a sip, because in that gesture he tells us that love, in order to be true, must also learn to ask and not only to give.

I thirst, says Jesus, and in this way he manifests his humanity and also ours. None of us can be self-sufficient. No-one can save themselves. Life is "fulfilled" not when we are strong, but when we learn how to receive. It is precisely at that moment, after receiving from unknown hands a sponge soaked in vinegar, that Jesus proclaims: *It is finished*. Love has made itself needy, and precisely for this reason it has accomplished its work.

This is the Christian paradox: God saves not by doing, but by letting himself do. Not by defeating evil with force, but by accepting the weakness of love to the very end. On the cross, Jesus teaches us that man does not realize himself in power, but in trustful openness to others, even when they are hostile and enemies. Salvation is not found in autonomy, but in humbly recognizing one's own need and in being able to express it freely.

The fulfilment of our humanity in God's plan is not an act of strength, but a gesture of trust. Jesus does not save with a dramatic twist, but by asking for something that he cannot give himself. And it is here that the door to true hope opens: if even the Son of God chose not to be self-sufficient, then our thirst too – for love, for meaning, for justice – is a sign not of failure, but of truth.

This truth, seemingly so simple, is difficult to accept. We live in a time that rewards self-sufficiency, efficiency, performance. And yet the Gospel shows us that the measure of our humanity is not given by what we can achieve, but by

our ability to let ourselves be loved and, when necessary, even helped.

Jesus saves us by showing us that asking is not unworthy, but liberating. It is the way out of the hiddenness of sin, so as to re-enter the space of communion. Ever since the beginning, sin has begotten shame. But forgiveness – real forgiveness – is born when we can face up to our need and no longer fear rejection.

Jesus' thirst on the cross is therefore ours too. It is the cry of a wounded humanity that seeks living water. And this thirst does not lead us away from God, but rather unites us with him. If we have the courage to acknowledge it, we can discover that even our fragility is a bridge towards heaven. It is precisely in asking – not in possessing – that a way of freedom opens up, because we cease to pretend to be self-sufficient.

In fraternity, in the simple life, in the art of asking without shame and offering without ulterior motives, a joy is born that the world does not know. A joy that restores us to the original truth of our being: we are creatures made to give and receive love.

Dear brothers and sisters, in Christ's thirst we can recognize all of our own thirst. And to learn that there is nothing more human, nothing more divine, than being able to say: *I need*. Let us not be afraid to ask, especially when it seems to us that we do not deserve. Let us not be ashamed to reach out our hand. It is right there, in that humble gesture, that salvation hides.

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

"We have sinned in complaining against the LORD and you.

Pray the LORD to take the serpents from us." (Nm 21:7)

Psalm:

Do not forget the works of the Lord! (Ps 78)

Second Reading:

He humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. (Phil 2:8)

Gospel:

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. (Jn 3:16)

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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

God did not send his son into the world to condemn it. The cross is not a symbol of judgment — the cross is what mercy looks like when it is lived out. How will we bring the cross into our lives this week? How will we live the mercy which has saved us?

Observances for the week of September 14, 2025

Sunday:	The Exaltation of the Holy Cross
Monday:	Our Lady of Sorrows
Tuesday:	Sts. Cornelius, Pope, and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyrs
Wednesday:	St. Robert Bellarmine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church; St. Hildegard of Bingen, Virgin and Doctor
Friday:	St. Januarius, Bishop and Martyr
Saturday:	Sts. Andrew Kim Tae-gõn, Priest, and Paul Chõng Ha-sang, and Companions, Martyrs [M]
Next Sunday:	25th Sunday in Ordinary Time; Catechetical Sunday



Devotions, Explained!

A litany is an ancient form of prayer incorporating repetitive refrains (often “hear our prayer” or “pray for us”). Litanies are used in a variety of liturgical settings and in both private and public acts of devotion.

Prayer of Love

Dear God,
Expand my heart in new ways today,
to understand the love You have for me,
to take that love deeply into myself,
and to act from that love.
Amen.

©LPi SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2025 | THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

It's with great joy that we recently welcomed our newest members of the St. Mark School community, our Pre-K students! Starting school for the very first time is an exciting milestone, and we are thrilled to share these first steps in learning and faith with our Little Lions and their families.

At St. Mark, our preschool program is built on the belief that children learn best through play. Our outstanding Pre-K staff, director/teacher, Mrs. Melvin-Marko and aide, Mrs. Grueloch, create an engaging, developmentally appropriate environment where children grow socially, emotionally, spiritually, cognitively, and physically. Through guided play and discovery, our students actively participate in learning while developing confidence, independence, and respect for others.

Our goal is to help each child grow in their faith, foster kindness toward others, and become well-prepared for the transition into Kindergarten. We also recognize that a child's education is a partnership between teachers, parents, and families, and we deeply value the collaboration and shared responsibility that make our program so special.

Please keep our Pre-K students, their families, and their teachers in your prayers as they begin this exciting journey. May this year be filled with growth, discovery, and joy in learning.

Living out our school-wide ROAR theme, **Respect Others, Own Your Actions, Act Safely and Rise to the Challenge**, our junior high students recently had the chance to put their faith into action in a meaningful way. Working with our partners at the McKeon Education Group, our 7th and 8th grade classes collaborated on a service-learning project, assembling school supply kits, including handmade cards, for children in need at a nearby Catholic school. This project not only provided much-needed support for local families, but also gave our students the opportunity to grow in compassion, teamwork, and stewardship. In a special way, their efforts highlighted the "R" in ROAR, **Respect Others**, as they showed care and concern for their peers in the wider Catholic school community, living out the Gospel call to serve.

We are blessed to offer these types of experiences to our students, as they provide meaningful opportunities to put our faith into action in real and practical ways. Service learning is an integral part of who we are as a school community, and projects like this remind us that faith grows strongest when it is lived out through service. We are grateful to the St. Mark parish community for the prayers and encouragement that support our students in living out ROAR this year. May these experiences continue to shape our young people into compassionate disciples who joyfully serve others.

Have a great week!

Mrs. Gunn

