



# ST. MARY'S, ST. MICHAEL'S & ST. AGNES

Roman Catholic Church

## Administration

Pastor.....Fr. Greg Staudinger  
Business Mngr.....Renee Riehl  
Secretary.....Marilyn Fugere

### St. Mary's & St. Michael's

Parish Office Phone/Fax ~406-322-5541

### St. Agnes

Parish Office Phone ~ 406-446-1237

Church Available Mon-Fri 9am - 1pm

### Director of Religious Education

Mandy O'Connor ~ 406-322-5541

406-860-8318

~moconnor@stmarycolumbus.org

Parish Websites: [www.mystmary.com](http://www.mystmary.com)

[www.mystmichaels.com](http://www.mystmichaels.com)

[www.stagnesrl.com](http://www.stagnesrl.com)

Questions: [inquiry@stmarycolumbus.org](mailto:inquiry@stmarycolumbus.org)

Father's Cellphone - 406-489-6666

St. Mary's - 240 N. 4th St. ~ Columbus

St. Michael's - 307 S. Woodard St ~ Absarokee

St. Agnes - 1 Word Ave N ~ Red Lodge

P.O. Box 956 Columbus, MT 59019

"the church must have open doors so that all might enter."

New to the Parish? We would like to extend a warm welcome! Please Fill out a registration card at the back of the bulletin put it in the collection plate, and we will get you registration and welcome materials.

\*\*\*If you are moving out of the Parish or need to update your address information please contact the office.\*\*\*

"And we must go out of those doors and proclaim the Gospel."  
~Pope Francis

IF YOU

*Love*

JOHN 14:15

**ME,**  
YOU WILL KEEP  
**MY**  
COMMANDMENTS.

**SIXTH SUNDAY//ASCENSION SUNDAY**

May 20th & 21st // 27th & 28th 2017

## What's Going on in the Parish....



### St. Mary's & St. Michael's



#### Graduation Breakfast!

Congratulations to Dalton Marjerison Class of 2017! Please join us downstairs for breakfast on May 21st after Mass.

#### YOUTH GROUP

**YARD SALE**

The youth group is having a yard sale in June. Clean out your excess stuff and bring it to the church by June 17! This yard sale is to benefit the youth program. Any questions call Marsha Olson 689-4390

Altar Society



#### St. Mary's Altar Society

The new officers are as follows  
President--Mary Blankenship,  
Vice-president--Katy Matovich,  
Secretary--Pat Heard  
Treasurer--Debbie Jacobs.

### Ultreya

On May 31st the speaker will be Heidi Harsha and the meeting will be held at her house on Shane Creek Rd. Call Jeanne Harsha for directions.



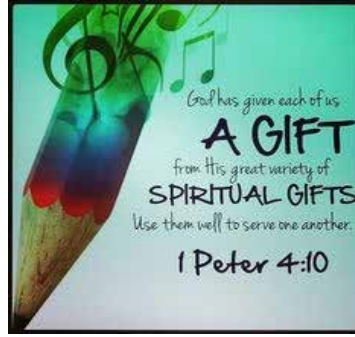
Please do not water the flowers in the sanctuary. They have been over watered and are starting to die. If you would like to serve our parish in taking care

of the flowers please inquire at the office. Thank you for all who donate their talents as green thumbs!

We have free wifi available at St. Mary's password is saintmary



## What Are Your God-Given Talents



In the first letter of St. Peter he reminds us, "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace." Throughout Holy Scripture there are constant reminders that we are called to be stewards of all of God's gifts....Our time, our talents, our financial

resources, our communities, the earth we live on with its natural resources, and our relationships with family and others. We must truly recognize that everything belongs to God, and we are stewards or caretakers who are expected to use the gifts in service to one another. Simply put, stewardship is about how we use those gifts. Stewardship is based on the spiritual principles of the old Testament and the teachings of Christ. Stewardship is a way of life. It is a way of thanking God for all His blessings by returning a portion of the Time, Talent and Treasure allotted to us. We are asking all of you to spend the next two weeks praying and thinking about what stewardship is and how it can affect our lives. For individuals, it means thinking about stewardship and the commitments we make. For others, it means having a discussion with family members about the family's total stewardship commitment. In either case, we are asked to look at stewardship as the joyful return to God of the first fruits of what He has bestowed upon us. In Stewardship of Time and Talent, we are called on to give of ourselves and our time to the church and to our community. In Stewardship of Treasure, we give back to God by giving of our financial resources to our Church, to the diocese and to charitable organizations in this community. We look to Jesus for help in understanding what stewardship is and what it means. Jesus points out that we reveal our values by our actions just as a tree reveals what kind of tree it is by the kind of fruit it bears. This is very similar to what Our Lord says in the Gospel of St. Luke about the things we value, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Stewardship will make a difference. The difference is seen in several areas of our lives. First, the difference is in the focus of giving. Instead of focusing on the needs of the group to whom we're giving financial support or helping with time and talent, the focus is primarily on God and our relationship with Him. And, the focus is on us and our need to give back out of gratitude. Second, the difference is in the motivation for giving. Stewardship is an integral part of our spiritual life and we give because we are grateful to God for what He has given us. We give freely because we want to, not because we have to. Third, the difference is in the result of the giving. As we practice stewardship, we find we grow spiritually and that our faith is deepened. In fact, we find that our lives are changed for the good.

# What's Going on in the Parish....

# Beyond Our Walls



## St. Agnes

### Volunteers Needed!

St Agnes's Vacation Bible School Cool Kingdom Party "Mary Leads Me Closer to Jesus" has been scheduled for June 12-16, 2017. Volunteers will be needed to help keep this amazing week running smoothly. Forms are in the back of church, and you can call Marilyn at the parish office to volunteers!



### Eucharistic Ministers

If there are any week-ends in July, August, September that you know you will be gone, please contact Marilyn in the office 446-1237.



### PRAYER CHAIN



If you would like to be part of the St. Agnes Prayer Chain, please give your email to Marilyn at [stagnesrl.com](mailto:stagnesrl.com) (if you do not have an email, you can call 446-1237 and give us your phone number). When a prayer request comes up, you will be sent an email (or called) asking for your prayers. If there are no requests for that day, please pray for all the people of St. Agnes.

### CROCHET PLASTIC MATS



Please save your plastic shopping/grocery bags for the ladies at St. Agne church in Red Lodge. We are using them to crochet sleeping mats for the homeless. It takes 700-1000 bags to make each mat!!!

### Friday Adoration

There is Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on Friday afternoons from 2-3pm followed by the Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3pm.



### ALTAR LINENS

HELP NEEDED!!! IF YOU ARE ABLE TO TAKE HOME AND WASH THE ALTAR LINENS FROM MASS EACH WEEK, please call the office 446-1237.



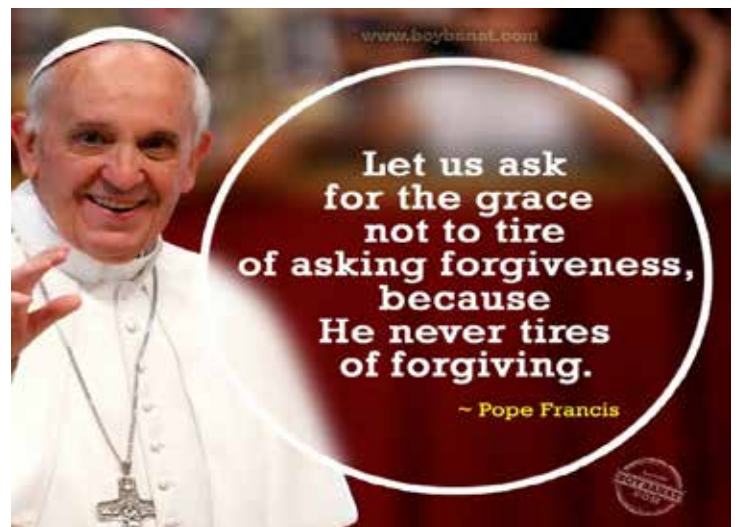
We have free wifi available at St. Agnes the password is peach00



Beyond the boundaries of our parish, Stewardship teaches us that we are responsible for the whole Church, not just our parish or diocese. We are to care for the Church throughout the world that has been entrusted to us. In today's culture we have learned to see time in very small pieces. Drive-through convenience, technological advances and new ideas of customer service have all taught us to expect things



quickly. Rarely do we have to wait more than a day for anything. In centuries past, time was seen in much bigger blocks. Most people never saw a clock much less one with a quartz accurate second hand. This larger concept of time affected how people saw their world and their role within it. Many projects, especially something like a great Gothic cathedral, were only accomplished through several lifetimes. Those who started the project never saw its completion. Those who prayed within a Cathedral's walls rarely had been there when the cornerstone was laid. Yet everyone pitched in to make these monuments to God a reality. The Cathedral reminded each generation that they were part of a larger whole. That Church of which they were a part spanned many places and many times. Often people would labor on a Cathedral with only the notion that they were part of a purpose beyond themselves. This is Stewardship at its best.



### St Agnes's Vacation Bible School

Cool Kingdom Party "Mary Leads Me Closer to Jesus" has been scheduled for June 12-16, 2017.

Your kids will spend a week learning about how MARY LEADS us CLOSER TO JESUS and the importance of making JESUS KING OF OUR LIVES through powerful teachings, great new music, fun games, creative crafts & yummy snacks!



# Ministry Schedules

## St. Agnes May 21st

Mass		10:30am
Ministers		
Lector 1		Mathes, MaryAnn
Lector 2		Kane, Shirley
Cup 1		Schilz, CarolAnn
Cup 2		Palmer, Marilyn
Cup 3		Petersen, Joe
Cup 4		Olds, Lucille
Ciborium		Martens, Kim
Plate		Fugere, Marilyn
Altar Server		Oley, Grayson
Altar Server		Oley, Will
Hospitality		Erkins, Carol
Hospitality		Erkins, Jim
Money Counters		Debats, David

## St. Agnes May 28th

Mass		10:30am
Ministers		
Lector 1		Erkins, Carol
Lector 2		Morg
Cup 1		Cook, Paul
Cup 2		Hodges, Gregg
Cup 3		Hodges, Pat
Cup 4		Klessens, Ed
Ciborium		Gallagher, Diane
Plate		Niemann, Ted
Altar Server		Kroll, Kaleb
Altar Server		Lytton, Stran
Hospitality		Lytton, Chanda
Hospitality		Lytton, Hoke
Money Counters		Sommerfeld, Kathy

## St. Mary's May 21st

Mass		8:00am
Ministers		
Lector 1		Chamberline, Mary
Eucharistic Min		Kovanda, Bev
Eucharistic Min		Kovanda, Kevin
Eucharistic Min		Roeslein, Deb
Cross Bearer		Worden, George
Greeter		McGowan, Marla
Gift Bearer		Smith Family
Altar Server		Beach, Jesse
Altar Server		Jacobs, Jefferson
Usher		Acciani, Joe
Usher		Bernard, Boyd

## St. Mary's May 28th

Mass		8:00am
Ministers		
Lector 1		Powell, Nicole
Eucharistic Min		O'Connor, Mandy
Eucharistic Min		Davey, Maureen
Eucharistic Min		Binstock, Alice
Cross Bearer		O'Connor, Gavin
Greeter		Worden, Anita
Gift Bearer		Riehl Family
Altar Server		Powell, Kyra
Altar Server		Beach, Jacob
Usher		Kane, David
Usher		Marjerison, John

## St. Michael's May 20th

Mass		5:00pm
Ministers		
Lector 1		Livingston, Alan
Eucharistic Min		Culbertson, Dave
Eucharistic Min		Garvin, Jamie
Greeter		Stampfel Family
Greeter		
Altar Server		

## St. Michael's May 27th

Mass		5:00pm
Ministers		
Lector 1		Culbertson, Dave
Eucharistic Min		Ross, Pat
Eucharistic Min		Joki, Peggy
Greeter		Sartori, Olivia
Greeter		Livingston, Arlene
Altar Server		Culbertson, Sean

# Parish Calendar and Schedule of Events



**May**  
 -16th - KC Meeting 6:30pm Absarokee  
 -21st - Graduation Breakfast St. Mary's  
 -31st - 8th Grade Graduation Breakfast St. Agnes

**June**  
 -12th//16th VBS Red Lodge

**July**  
 -14th No Mass  
 -23rd Mountain Mass 11:00am-  
 Absarokee at Joki Ranch

**August**

## Masses for the Week of May 21st

Tuesday St. Agnes	23rd	+Matthew Mahady By St. Agnes Parish
Tuesday St. Mary's	23rd	Ruth Olsen By Norma & Roy Deganhart
Wednesday St. Mary's	24th	Ann Ballek By St. Mary's Parish
Thursday St. Agnes	25th	+Charles "Chuck" Stevenson By St. Agnes Parish
Thursday St. Michael's	25th	+Sharon Olson by St. Mary's Parish
Friday St. Mary's	26th	Wilbur & Linda Phillips By Norma & Roy Deganhart
Saturday St. Michael's	27th	Mary Phenneg By Christine Rose- Hill
Sunday St. Mary's	28th	Mary Blankenship By Barb Evans
Sunday St. Agnes	28th	+Sharon Coffman By Susan Peurson & Hank Pressing

**I am the Lorax.  
 I speak for the trees.  
 So use my parish app,  
 you will find it has  
 all your thneeds!**

## Masses for the Week of May 28th

Tuesday St. Agnes	30th	+Doris Jones By JOSS
Tuesday St. Mary's	30th	+Sharon Olson By St. Mary's Parish
Wednesday St. Mary's	31st	+Pam Patterson By Fr. Greg
Thursday St. Agnes	1st	+Charles "Chuck" Stevenson By St. Agnes Parish
Thursday St. Michael's	1st	The Parish by St. Michael's Parish
Friday St. Mary's	2nd	+Pam Patterson By Fr. Greg
Saturday St. Michael's	3rd	+John Kuncheff By The Parishes
Sunday St. Mary's	4th	+Pam Patterson By St. Mary's Parish
Sunday St. Agnes	4th	+Frank Cole By Joe & Mary Allen & Family

# SAINT THOMAS

## CATHOLIC CAMP

This summer we are offering 6 weeks of summer camp:

- + (June 25//30) (July 16//21) High School (youth entering 9-12 grade in the fall of 2017)
- + (July 9//14) (July 23-28) Middle School (youth entering 6-9 grade in the fall of 2017)
- + July 30- August 4 5th & 6th grade boys (entering 5 & 6 grade in the fall of 2017)
- + August 6-11 5th & 6th grade girls (entering 5 & 6 grade in the fall of 2017)

The cost is \$350.00 per youth.  
 To register go to [saintthomascamp.com/register](http://saintthomascamp.com/register)  
 Please inquire at the Parish office about scholarship opportunities

**Bulletin Deadline**  
 Monday, 9am

Email: [bulletin@stmarycolumbus.org](mailto:bulletin@stmarycolumbus.org)  
 Visit our Website:  
[www.stmarycolumbus.org](http://www.stmarycolumbus.org)  
[www.stagnesrl.com](http://www.stagnesrl.com)

**KJCR Radio**  
**Station**  
 CHECK OUT WHAT'S ON THE  
 AIR... 1240 AM & 97.5 FM

## In the Area

### Job Opportunity

Job Seeking 3 full-time Temporary/Seasonal Grounds Maint Person for Mount Olivet Cemetery and other Diocesan properties within Great Falls. Duties include all aspects of lawn care as well as assisting in activities related to burials. Requires heavy lifting and strenuous physical work.

**NOW  
HIRING**  
APPLY TODAY

Operation of a variety of lawn care equipment such as mowers and weed eaters. Operation of tractor equipment is a plus but not required. Position is open immediately through Sept to Mid Oct. Must be 21 years of age with a clean driving record and able to pass a background check. Pay 10.00 per hour. Apply online through the Diocese website [www.diocesegfb.org](http://www.diocesegfb.org) or pick up an application at 121 23 St. So.



## The Hidden Connection Between Mary and Divine Mercy



"I don't deny that the Immaculate receives the mercy from the Lord God, but she is the personification of this 'divine mercy' and that is why a soul is converted and sanctified if it turns to her." —St. Maximilian Kolbe

Carrie Gress For many years I've marveled about the "coincidence" of three highly influential saints living in Krakow at roughly the same moment in history: St. Faustina Kowalska, St. Maximilian Kolbe, and Pope St. John Paul II. George Weigel has pointed out in the book we co-authored, *City of Saints*, that Poland was the place where the 20th century happened — the place where Nazism and Communism would run their violent course, one after the other. The antidote to these, Weigel added, was also found in Poland, particularly in the work, prayer, and sacrifices of these three related but marvelously different saints. Although there is little evidence that Wojtyla knew either of the other future-saints personally despite the close proximity in which they all lived, the more direct connections between them came about posthumously. As pope, John Paul II was a promoter of Fr. Maximilian the Mariologist and Martyr — canonizing him in 1982 and calling him an "apostle of a new Marian era." The Polish Pope was also the promulgator of St. Faustina's Diaries and the Divine Mercy devotion, adding the Divine Mercy Feast to the Church calendar. Their relationship seemed to come full circle when Pope John Paul II was canonized on Divine Mercy Sunday, 2014. While working on

my book, *The Marian Option*, it occurred to me that there does seem to be a missing link, however, between Sts. Faustina and Maximilian. What is the connection between Divine Mercy and Mary? I was intrigued by this seemingly missing piece and thought there might be something worth investigating. I had a hunch that there had to be a deeper link between Mercy and Mary somewhere in the mix. I first stumbled upon a little book by Fr. Donald Calloway called *Purest of All Lilies: The Virgin Mary in the Spirituality of St. Faustina*. Fr. Calloway makes it abundantly clear that Mary played a significant role in St. Faustina's life — starting early with the family Rosary, and later blossoming into a true relationship of deep spiritual motherhood. As we see in *Faustina's Diaries*, Mary spoke to her, guided her, and consoled her. But there is more. Fr. Calloway writes: On the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy in 1935, Mary revealed to St. Faustina the link between her spiritual motherhood and The Divine Mercy: "I am Mother to you all, thanks to the unfathomable mercy of God." St. Faustina, indeed, understood Mary to be the "mother of Mercy" and, thus, greatly associated in both the message and devotions to Jesus, The Divine Mercy. (Lilies, 63-64) Next, I spoke with film producer Daniel diSilva about his movie *The Original Image of Divine Mercy*, which features the first painting of Jesus as depicted by then-Sister Faustina when she was living in Vilnius, Lithuania. Centuries before, diSilva explained, Vilnius had acquired the name "City of Mercy" and was surrounded by a protective wall call the Ostra Brama, or "The Gate of Dawn." Within the gate was a small chapel that housed an image of Our Lady of the Dawn. During a Swedish campaign to overtake the city in 1702, a heavy iron gate fell unexpectedly, instantly killing four enemy soldiers, which turned the tide of the battle and led to a Lithuanian victory. Credit was given to the miraculous image of Mary in the wall. Devotion to the miraculous image of Our Lady of the Dawn swelled. In 1927, the image was renamed Mother of Mercy, roughly eight years before the Divine Mercy apparitions started. Then, after the first Divine Mercy painting was finished, the first place it was displayed was at the same Ostra Brama chapel in Vilnius. DiSilva pointed out that, "like Bethlehem, Our Lady was there (in Vilnius) first, followed by Jesus." Eventually, my journey led me back to St. Maximilian Kolbe, who spoke of Mary's relationship to mercy in his writings. Fr. Kolbe wrote: "St. Bernard says that the Lord God kept for Himself justice, but gave mercy to the Mother of God. I don't deny that the Immaculate receives the mercy from the Lord God, but she is the personification of this divine mercy and that is why a soul is converted and sanctified if it turns to her." What is astounding about this is that St. Maximilian wrote this without knowing of St. Faustina's Diaries and yet he is connecting Mary directly to it. And finally, I found this little gem by Shane Kapler that brings the spiritual strings together: Marrying the Rosary to the Divine Mercy Chaplet. Kapler braids the two devotions together into one fruitful prayer. Instead of saying a Rosary followed by the Chaplet (or vice versa), Kapler suggests praying one decade of the Rosary followed by the first chaplet decade and so on. From his experience of praying the prayers together, Kapler writes, I "realized that when I brought the Chaplet into the Rosary, I invited Mary to pray the Chaplet with me. We stood together at the foot of the Cross, the Chaplet allowing me to voice her prayer, 'Eternal Father, I offer you...' Together we joined ourselves to Jesus' offering and, through it, interceded that the fruits of his sacrifice to be generously poured out upon the Church and world." While the answer to my original question about the relationship between these remarkable saints may not be fully answered on earth, digging deeper has certainly merited the effort. The link is what one might expect — that Mary, as the Mother of God, the Mother of Christ, is also the Mother of Mercy. But as St. Maximilian Kolbe made clear, she is also the personification of divine mercy — transforming and sanctifying all who come to her. We can certainly see that witnessed in the lives of these three remarkable Krakowian saints.

## Parish Altar Society Groups & Adult Faith

### Divine Mercy & *The Writings of Sister Faustina*

#### Group at St. Mary's ~

Please join us at 8:30am on Monday's in the Church Hall for a wonderful discussion of Sr. Faustina's writings.



#### Group at St. Michael's~

The Divine Mercy Study Group meets in the Church Hall at 10am on Thursdays for study of the diary of Sister Faustina. Everyone is welcome to attend.

### Ultreya

~ St. Mary's on the last Wednesday  
of the month at 6:30pm.



### Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

If you are interested in joining the Church.  
Please see Fr. Greg or Nicole Powell  
to inquire about our program.



### Gift Shop

Please contact Jeanne Harsha if you would be interested in purchasing some coffee. Current coffee price is \$10 per bag, 5 lb. bags available by order only at \$48 per bag



### LIGHTHOUSE CATHOLIC MEDIA

We are so fortunate to have our Lighthouse Catholic Media available to give us good, edifying Catholic talks on all the subjects we need. Marriage and family, The Church, The Sacraments and for our Teens we have 'No Imitations, saying yes to authentic love' by Chris Stefanick. Feel free to browse the new CD's!



## Youth Group Adventure & Adoration

We will be meeting through the summer. Watch the bulletin for special events. This is a really fun group of kids. So come join the fun and bring a friend.  
Grades 5th-12th



### Knights of Columbus ~

Fr. Michael Kelly Round Table

Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month, alternating between St. Mary's and St. Michael's. All men in the parish are invited to join us to help build the Church. Questions - call Jason O'Connor 860-8317, Ken Joki



### ~ PCCW ~

### Catholic Women

#### St. Mary's ~

~ Next PCCW meeting is the second Sunday of the month.

~ The mission of the St. Mary's Altar Society is to build and support our parish and community spiritually, emotionally and financially.

~ Reminder Project Hope Food Bank Donations every First Sunday in the basket in the back of the church

~ New items for the display case downstairs, talk to Jeanne Harsha to purchase and order.



## St. Agnes Centering Prayer

Centering Prayer is a silent prayer allowing the Peace of Christ to be experienced, the still, small Voice to be heard.

BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM  
Psalm 46:10

Centering Prayer meets at St. Agnes Church at 7:30am Wednesday mornings. All are invited to join in this powerful prayer. Call or email Cynthia with any questions: 425-1226, [cynthiamarble@gmail.com](mailto:cynthiamarble@gmail.com)



# Stewardship ~ "All people are God's stewards, because everything that exists belongs to God"

## Finance Council

St. Mary's  
 John Patterson.....445-2332  
 Jason O'Conner.....633-2954  
 Scott Olson.....698-2586

St. Michael's  
 Diane Signoracci.....328-4321  
 Tom Osborne.....328-9020  
 Joe Cobas .....321-1861

St. Agnes  
 Mark Brajcich.....855-8710

## Parish Council

St. Mary's  
 Susan Morse.....Secretary.....740-1330  
 Pat Heard.....322-5511  
 Katy Matovich.....322-5546  
 Kurt Riehl.....Chairperson.....860-9547

St. Michael's  
 Pat Ross.....  
 Rosie Reynolds.....Chairperson.....328-4798  
 Andrea Stampfel.....322-4180  
 Marni Ferster.....328-6537  
 Mary Ann Brooks.....

St. Agnes  
 Mary Cook .....Chairperson.....839-1889  
 Cynthia Marble.....Vice Chairperson.....452-1226

## Weekly Contributions

### St. Mary's May 13 & 14th

\*Needed for collection to make St. Mary's Weekly  
 Budget ~ ..... \$1,860.00  
 Collection..... \$2,565.00  
  
 Surplus~ ..... \$705.00

### St. Michael's

\*Needed for collection to make St. Michael's Weekly  
 Budget ~ ..... \$1,581.00  
 Collection..... \$1,261.00  
  
 Shortfall~ ..... -\$153.00

### St. Agnes

\*Needed for collection to make St. Agnes's Weekly  
 Budget~ ..... \$2,550.00  
 Collection..... \$1,428.00  
  
 Shortfall~ ..... -\$1,121.00

## Stewardship from the Gospel

**May 28, 2017 - 7th Sunday of Easter**

"I am praying for them..." JOHN 17: 9

Prayer is the foundation of our Faith and the foundation of Stewardship. Pray in good times and in bad. Prayer is always the first best option in any situation, not just the last resort. Pray for friends and family and for those that don't treat you very well. Pray to give praise, to thank and to ask God for help. Pray to see what God wants you to do with the gifts He has given you.



## Seek Light and Strength

### Meditation:

When the confessor started talking to me, I did not understand a single word. Then I saw Jesus Crucified and He said to me, It is in My Passion that you must seek light and strength (Diary, 654).

### My Prayer Response with St. Faustina:

After the confession, I meditated on Jesus' terrible Passion, and I understood that what I was suffering was nothing compared to the Savior's Passion, and that even the smallest imperfection was the cause of this terrible suffering. Then my soul was filled with very great contrition, and only then I sensed that I was in the sea of the unfathomable mercy of God. Oh, how few words I have to express what I am experiencing! I feel I am like a drop of dew engulfed in the depths of the bottomless ocean of divine mercy (Diary, 654).

## Sacraments

### First Communion & Confirmation ~

Please Contact Mandy O'Connor for more information 406-860-8318 or the parish office. 406-322-5541

### RCIA ~ How to join the Catholic faith ~

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is a process of faith sharing and liturgical celebrations for those who are seeking full initiation into the Catholic faith. Please contact Fr. Greg for More information.

### Mass Intentions ~

Please call the parish office 322-5541 St. Mary's  
 Please call the parish office 446-1237 St. Agnes

### Reconciliation ~

Please see Mass Schedule or by appointment 322-5541

### Marriage ~

Please contact Fr. Greg 6 months prior to the proposed date of marriage.

### Baptism ~

Please contact Fr. Greg for an Appointment.



# Ten ways to deepen our relationship with God

By Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap. • Posted February 12, 2014



Over the years I've heard from many good people who want a closer relationship with God. But they're stymied by what they perceive as God's silence. What they often mean, without knowing it, is that they'd like God to do something dramatic in their lives; something with a hint of Mt. Sinai that proves his credentials. But God typically doesn't work that way. He's not in the theater business. God wants to be loved and even in a sense "courted" – which means that we can't be passive partners in the relationship. We need to pursue God as we would the persons we love. So as we make our way through these last weeks of ordinary time before Lent, here a few steps – in no particular order – that can help us draw closer to God. First, start by listening to him. Faith isn't a 12-step action program. Nor is it an algebra problem that needs to be "solved." It's a love affair. As with a spouse, the most important thing we can do is to be present and listen. This requires the investment of time and focus. If a spirit of impatience or pretending to listen doesn't work with your spouse, why would it work with God? Second, cultivate silence. We can't listen when our world is filled with noise and toys. C.S. Lewis is often said that noise is the music of hell. Our toys – those things we choose to distract us – keep us diverted from focusing on the main questions of life: Why are we here? What does my life mean? Is there a God, and if so, who is he, and what does he ask of me? Third, seek humility. Humility is to the spirit what material poverty is to the senses: the great purifier. Humility is the beginning of sanity. We

can't really see – much less love – anyone or anything else when the self is in the way. When we finally, really believe in our own sinfulness and unimportance, many other things become possible: repentance; mercy, patience, forgiveness of others. These virtues are the foundation stones of that other great Christian virtue: justice. No justice is ever possible in a spider's web of mutual anger, recrimination and hurt pride. Fourth, cultivate honesty. Complete honesty is only possible for a humble person. The reason is simple. The most painful but important honesty is telling the truth to ourselves about our own motives and our own actions. The reason honesty is such a powerful magnet is because it's so rare. Modern life is too often built on the marketing of half-truths and lies about who we are and what we deserve. Many of the lies are well-intentioned and not even very harmful — but they're still lies. Scripture praises the honest woman and man because they're like clean air in a room full of smoke. Honesty allows the mind to breathe and think clearly. Fifth, seek to be holy. Holy does not mean nice or even good, although truly holy people are always good and often – though not always — nice. Holiness means "other than." It's what Scripture means when it tells us to be "in the world, but not of the world." And this doesn't just miraculously happen. We need to choose and seek holiness. God's ways are not our ways. Holiness is the habit of seeking to conform all of our thoughts and actions to God's ways. There's no cookie-cutter model of holiness, just as piety can't be reduced to one particular kind of prayer or posture. What's important is to love the world because God loves it and sent his Son to redeem it, but not to be captured by its habits and values, which are not godly. Sixth, pray. Prayer is more than just that portion of the day when we advise God about what we need and what he should do. Real prayer is much closer to listening, and it's intimately tied to obedience. God certainly wants to hear what we need and love and fear, because these things are part of our daily lives, and he loves us. But if we're doing the talking, we can't listen. Note too, that we can't really pray without humility. Why? Because prayer requires us to lift up who we are and everything we experience and possess to God. Pride is too heavy to lift. Seventh, read. Scripture is the living Word of God. When we read God's Word, we encounter God himself. But there's more: J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Georges Bernanos and so many others – these were deeply intelligent and powerful writers whose work nourishes the Christian mind and soul, while also inspiring the imagination. Reading also serves another, simpler purpose: It shuts out the noise that distracts us from fertile reflection. We can't read *The Screwtape Letters* and take network television seriously at the same time. And that's a very good thing.

By the way, if you do nothing else in 2014, read Tolkien's wonderful short story, *Leaf by Niggle*. It will take you less than an hour, but it will stay with you for a lifetime. And then read C.S. Lewis' great religious science-fiction trilogy – *Out of the Silent Planet*, *Perelandra* and *That Hideous Strength*. You'll never look at our world in quite the same way again. Eighth, believe and act. Nobody "earns" faith. It's a free gift from God. But we do need to be willing and ready to receive it. We can discipline ourselves to be prepared. If we sincerely seek truth; if we desire things greater than this life has to offer; and if we leave our hearts open to the possibility of God — then one day we will believe, just as when we choose to love someone more deeply, and turn our hearts sincerely to the task, then sooner or later we usually will. Feelings are fickle. They're often misleading. They're not the substance of our faith. We need to be grateful for our emotions as God's gifts, but we also need to judge them in the light of common sense. Falling in love is only the first taste of love. Real love is both more beautiful and more demanding than the early days of a romance. In like manner, a dramatic "road to Damascus" style conversion doesn't happen to most people, and not even St. Paul stayed on the road very long. Why? Because in revealing himself to Paul, Jesus immediately gave him something to do. We know and more deeply love Jesus Christ by doing what he tells us to do. In the real world, feelings that endure follow actions that have substance. The more sincere we are in our discipleship, the closer we will come to Jesus Christ. This is why the Emmaus disciples only recognized Jesus in "the breaking of the bread." Only in acting in and on our faith, does our faith become fully real. Ninth, nobody makes it to heaven alone. We all need friendship and community. A friend of mine who's been married more than 40 years likes to say that the heart of a good marriage is friendship. Every successful marriage is finally about a deep and particular kind of friendship that involves honesty, intimacy, fidelity, mutual sacrifice, hope and shared beliefs. Every successful marriage is also a form of community. Even Jesus needed these two things: friendship and community. The Apostles were not simply Christ's followers; they were also his brothers and friends, people who knew and supported him in an intimate way. All of us as Christians need the same two things. It doesn't matter whether we're a religious, layperson, deacon or priest, single or married. Friends are vital. Community is vital. Our friends both express and shape who we are. Good friends sustain us. Bad friends undermine us. And that's why they're so decisive to the success or failure of a Christian life. Tenth and finally, nothing is more powerful than the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist in leading us to the God we seek. God makes himself available to us every week in the confessional, and every day in the sacrifice of the Mass. It makes little sense to talk about the "silence of God" when our churches are made silent by our own absence and indifference. We're the ones with the cold hearts – not God. He's never outdone in his generosity. He waits for us in the quiet of the tabernacle. And he loves us and wants to be loved wholeheartedly in return. If we're willing to give that love, these steps will lead us to him.

# Churches

## Mass Schedule

Tuesday (Red Lodge) ~ ...First Tuesday at 6:30pm...Mass - 8:30am  
 (Columbus) ~ .....Confession - 4:30pm  
 First Tuesday 9am Nursing Home.....Mass - 5:30pm  
 Wednesday (Columbus) ~ .....Mass - 9:00am  
 Thursday (Red Lodge) ~ .....Mass - 8:30am  
 (Absarokee) ~ .....Confession - 5:30pm  
 .....Mass - 6:30pm  
 Friday (Columbus) ~ .....Mass - 9:00am  
 Saturday (Absarokee) ~ .....Mass - 5:00pm  
 Sunday (Columbus) ~ .....Mass - 8:00am  
 (Red Lodge) ~ .....Mass - 10:30am

(First Tuesday of the Month at the Nursing Home in Columbus at 9am)  
 First Tuesday of the Month at St. Agnes at 6:30pm

### St. Mary's Facilities Manager

Scott Olson Contact Information: Cellphone: 406-698-2586  
 Email: cmtolsons@gmail.com

### Marriage Tribunal Advocates

Please call: Rosie Reynolds 328-4797 or Mary Pfennig 328-4988

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St. Mary's & St. Michael's  
 St. Agnes Red Lodge



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St. Mary's



St. Michael's



St. Agnes

## ARE YOU NEW TO OUR PARISH

Please take a moment to fill out this form below and return it to the office or put in the offering basket and we will contact you about registering.

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to receive envelopes? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_