

# SECOND Sunday of Lent

## Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish

3516 E. Monroe Rd.  
Midland, MI 48642-8824

March 16, 2025

### Weekend Liturgical Schedule

**Saturday: 4:30 p.m.**

**Sunday: 9:30 a.m.**

**Exposition/Reconciliation:**  
Wednesdays 7:15-8:15 p.m.

**Mass from Assumption** is LIVE streamed at our SUNDAY Mass, so keep an eye out for our Flocknote; you can also check out our Facebook page and website for a link.

See inside the bulletin for the weekday schedule of worship services.

### How To Contact Us

**Office Hours:** Mon - Thurs / 8:30 a.m.—4 p.m.,

Fridays / 8:30 a.m.—noon

**Parish Office:** 989-631-4447

**Fax:** 989-835-9722

**Email:** [Assumption@AssumptionMidland.org](mailto:Assumption@AssumptionMidland.org)

**Website:** [www.AssumptionMary.org](http://www.AssumptionMary.org)

### Parish Staff

**Director of Parish Life:** John Graveline,  
Email: [john@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:john@assumptionmidland.org)

**Sacramental Minister:** Fr. Rick Filary,  
Email: [rfilary@diosag.org](mailto:rfilary@diosag.org)

**Office Manager:** Sandy Martinski,  
Email: [sandym@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:sandym@assumptionmidland.org)

**Director of Youth Ministry:** Kathy Russell,  
Email: [kathyr@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:kathyr@assumptionmidland.org)

**Children's Faith Formation:**

Wendy Graveline,

Email: [cff@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:cff@assumptionmidland.org)

**Music & Liturgy:** Jim Renfer,

Email: [jim@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:jim@assumptionmidland.org)

**Office Professionals:**

Val Rossi,

Email: [val@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:val@assumptionmidland.org)

Sharon Worthington,

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Rachelle Boyer,

Email: [rachelle@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:rachelle@assumptionmidland.org)

**Evangelization Liaison:** Anna Martin,

Email: [anna@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:anna@assumptionmidland.org)

**Maintenance Specialist:** Brad Hill,

Email: [bradh@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:bradh@assumptionmidland.org)

"THIS IS MY BELOVED  
SON. LISTEN TO HIM."



#### MINISTRY TO THE SICK

Those wishing to celebrate the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick prior to surgeries, hospitalizations, or because of health concerns are asked to please contact the parish office. Otherwise, please notify the parish office if you or a family member is ill, homebound or hospitalized.

#### ALL ARE WELCOME!

Please know that the church doors will be opened from 8:00am — 3:30pm, Mon thru Thurs if anyone is in need of a quiet place to pray and/or meditate.

**BULLETIN DEADLINE:** MONDAY at noon



[www.assumptionmary.org](http://www.assumptionmary.org)



[@assumption.midland](https://www.facebook.com/assumptionmidland)



[@assumptionmidland](https://www.instagram.com/assumptionmidland)



[@assumptionmidland](https://www.youtube.com/assumptionmidland)



*"Those who are learned will be as radiant as the sky in all its beauty; those who instruct the people in goodness will shine like the stars for all eternity." —Daniel 12:3*

As we continue the Jubilee Year of Hope, last weekend we celebrated the **Jubilee of Volunteers**. In the midst of taking joy in the generous gifts of time and talents shared by our volunteers, God called home one of our most vital volunteers. As I write this, I'm still kind of numb from the death of our fellow parishioner Anne Marie Graham.

Anne Marie was such a life-giving presence in the Midland Area Catholic Community. You would see her at the greeting table of the St. Brigid fish fry, and the next evening she would be proclaiming the Word of God at Saturday Mass at Assumption, with her distinctive arm sling and English accent. She would be back at Assumption on Sunday morning, taking pictures for our directory, website, and social media and Breaking Open the Word with our catechumens preparing for the Sacraments of Initiation. She loved her Catholic faith. She read the Bible and all kinds of books on Catholic subjects and was a regular participant in adult faith formation classes (both as participant and catechist), small group discussions, and formation for Christian Initiation (OCIA), a ministry that was especially dear to her heart. She was one of our volunteers who compose the Universal Prayer for our weekend Masses. She was also a member of our Christian Service Commission, looking for ways to connect parishioners with each other and with the ministries our parish and the other local churches. She would attend an ecumenical meeting of Midland area churches each month to keep Assumption Parish informed and connected to the charitable work of all Midland churches and non-profits.

As you can see, Anne Marie's loss leaves a big hole in our parish community. This is the multiplying power that Jesus can do when we offer our humble gifts and place them in his hands. And Anne Marie's story is repeated in many of you, volunteers sharing your gifts throughout our parish and community.

*"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?' 'Here I am,' I said; 'send me!'" —Isaiah 6:8*

In my prayer and discernment recently, I have been sensing that God is

asking me to shift my duties somewhat here at Assumption, to focus more on long-range planning and to focus a little less personally on catechesis, to empower more of you for the ministry of teaching and faith formation. I would still be doing some of that evangelization and formation ministry. I find it energizing and meaningful, but I think that the Lord is calling me now to invite, raise up, and form new catechetical leaders in our parish.

So I am asking you to prayerfully consider volunteering for one of the following roles. You do not need to be a "Catholic expert." Training and formation will be provided for you. All that you need is a willing heart:

- 1 or 2 volunteers who have the gifts of prayer and writing to help compose the Universal Prayer for the weekend Masses. Volunteers usually compose the prayers for an entire month then have a month or two off. Training will be provided.

- A volunteer to attend the local meeting of churches on the second Thursday morning of each month at Trinity Lutheran Church. The meeting concerns the charitable work of Midland churches and non-profits. This volunteer would then report back to the Christian Service Commission on the second Tuesday evening of each month.

- A few volunteers to create an OCIA team to aid in the formation of adults seeking the baptism or full communion in the Catholic Church. The formation protocols are set. You will be trained over a period of time.

- 1 or 2 volunteers to help lead baptism formation sessions for parents seeking baptism for their young children. We will provide the format and background education needed to lead the sessions.

- 2 or 3 married couples to create a team to help lead pre-Cana sessions for our engaged couples. The format and lesson plans are set. After a period of formation, you can lead the sessions yourself or as teams.

- 1 or 2 volunteers to be trained as catechists for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, our formation program for children age 3-5<sup>th</sup> grade. This is an amazing catechetical methodology. You are guaranteed to grow in your understanding of the Catholic faith and

how to form young people in it.

- A few volunteers to serve as small group facilitators for our youth, 6<sup>th</sup> grade-12<sup>th</sup> grade. Our youth ministry meets on Sunday evenings, September-March. Our new Confirmation preparation program for Jr. High schoolers will be beginning next school year. All class plans and training will be provided.

- A few volunteers to assist with Communion and prayer visits to our homebound parishioners and those in nursing homes and rehab facilities. Training will be provided.



**Please call (989-631-4447) or email ([john@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:john@assumptionmidland.org)) for more information on these volunteer needs.**

Anne Marie and I were both participants in this winter's Monday night book discussion group, led by parishioner Mary Smith, on the book everyone received this Christmas, *Behold, Believe, Become* by Timothy O'Malley. In our last session, less than a week before Anne Marie's death, we discussed the following passage from the book, "Now we probably don't want to think about it, but it may be beneficial to recognize upon our leaving the church building that this could be our last Mass. It could be the final time we celebrate the Eucharist. Before we come back next Sunday, we may embark upon our final leave . . . as you're leaving Mass, the task at hand is to wonder how you're going to live differently." This could be our last Mass, our last Lent, our last Easter, or our last Christmas. What will we do with this opportunity? Anne Marie left a legacy of faith here at Assumption Parish, as did Camille VanSickle, whose funeral we celebrated in January and who left a legacy on our parish music ministry. Many of you are leaving a legacy of faith here at Assumption Parish as well. But as time moves on and God calls his faithful ones to receive their reward, a new generation is called upon to create a legacy of their own. How will we "make a return to the Lord for all the good he has done for me?" (Psalm 116:12)

*John*

*"May your faithful be strengthened, O God, by your blessing: in grief, may you be their consolation, in tribulation, their power to endure, and in peril, their protection. Through Christ our Lord." —Roman Missal, Prayer over the People for Tuesday of the First Week of Lent*



	
Worship Schedule	
ASSUMPTION	
<b>MON, March 17</b> Dn 9:4b-10 Lk 6:36-38	
<b>TUES, March 18</b> Is 1:10, 16-20 Mt 23:1-12	<b>8:00a Mass</b> <b>8:30a Rosary</b> <i>Followed by Meditation</i>
<b>WED, March 19</b> 2 Sam 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16 Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24a	<b>6:30p Mass</b> <i>Followed by Exposition and Reconciliation (7:15-8:15)</i>
<b>THUR, March 20</b> Jer 17:5-10 Lk 16:19-31	<b>8:00a Mass</b> <b>8:30a Rosary</b> <i>Followed by Scripture</i>
<b>FRI, March 21</b> Gen 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a Mt 21:33-43, 45-46	<b>8:00a Mass</b> <b>8:30a Rosary</b> <b>3:30p Stations of the Cross</b>
<b>SAT, March 22</b> Mi 7:14-15, 18-20 Lk 15:1-3, 11-32	<b>4:30p Mass</b> <i>People of the Parish</i>
<b>SUN, March 23</b> Ex 17:3-7 Rm 5:1-2, 5-8 Jn 4:5-42	<b>THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT</b> <b>9:30a Mass</b> <i>Bill Noel</i>
Please note that if the Midland Public Schools are closed or on delay, weekday morning Mass is cancelled!	

## V is for Vocation: Fr. Stephen Blaxton



We give thanks for Fr. Stephen Blaxton currently serving as Pastor of St. Brigid of Kildare here in Midland. We pray for Fr. Stephen as he ministers to the parish as well as the children of St. Brigid Catholic School. Ordained in 2019 and assigned to St. Brigid of Kildare in 2024, Fr. Stephen also serves as the diocesan chaplain for the Knights of Columbus.

Learn more about the vocation of priesthood:  
<https://saginaw.org/god-calling-you-become-priest>

*Loving and Generous God, it is You who call us by name and ask us to follow You. Help us to grow in the Love and Service of our Church as we experience it today. Give us the energy and courage of Your Spirit to shape its future. Grant us faith-filled leaders who will embrace Christ's Mission of love and justice. Bless our Church by raising up dedicated and generous leaders from our families and friends who will serve Your people as Sisters, Priests, Brothers, Deacons and Lay Ministers. Inspire us to know You better and open our hearts to hear Your call. We ask this through our Lord. Amen.*

## Stations of the Cross

Friday afternoons at ABVM 3:30 p.m.

All are invited to enter more deeply into Lenten prayer through the communal praying of the Stations of the Cross and other Lenten devotionals.

*Please join us for prayer, reflection and song.*



**March 21: Reflections on the Seven Last Words of Jesus**

**March 28:** Mary's Way of the Cross

**April 4:** Visual Way of the Cross

**April 11:** Scriptural Way of the Cross according to Pope St. John Paul II

### On March 21, Reflections on the Seven Last Words of Jesus

In place of the traditional Stations of the Cross, this week we will offer brief meditations on the Seven Last Words (or sayings) of Jesus as he hung upon the Cross. This prayer will help us connect our Lord's passion to the challenges we face in taking up our crosses and following Jesus. These meditations will also prepare us spiritually for our parish Concert on March 23.



### Knights of Columbus

Join your fellow parishioners in the Knights of Columbus and keep our parish strong!

### K of C Exemplification Ceremony

**Wednesday, March 19**  
**at 7:30pm**  
**in DuRussel Hall**

For more info, contact Matt Glaccum  
(989-430-8622/md2141@mikofc.org)

**Fr. Henry P. DuRussel Council 2141 –**  
**Over One Hundred Years of Service**

### Olive Wood Sale

Next weekend, a representative of the **Holy Land Family** will be selling beautiful hand carved religious artwork made from olive wood and mosaics to help Christian families in the Holy Land who rely on the selling of their religious work to make a living. These families' livelihoods have been severely affected by the political conflict in the region. The Christian population in Bethlehem is decreasing. When we support these families to continue their work, we will help maintain their employment so that they stay in their homeland.

### - This Week -

**Sunday, March 16**  
**2ND SUNDAY OF LENT**

**9:30 am Mass**  
**O.C.I.A., C.L.O.W., CFF, YM**



**Monday, March 17**  
**HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY**  
**1:30-6 pm Blood Drive**

**Tuesday, March 18**

**8:00 am Mass**  
**8:30 am Rosary followed by meditation**  
**3:30 pm Millions of Monicas**  
**5:30 pm Faith Form Comm Meeting**  
**7:00 pm Admin/Finance Meeting**

**Wednesday, March 19**

**6:00 pm Choir Practice**  
**6:30 pm Mass followed by Exposition and Reconciliation (7:15-8:15)**  
**6:30 pm CFF**  
**7:30 pm K of C Exemplification**

**Thursday, March 20**

**8:00 am Mass**  
**8:30 am Rosary followed by scripture**  
**7:00 pm Choir Practice**

**Friday, March 21**

**8:00 am Mass**  
**8:30 am Rosary**  
**9:00 am SafeTALK Training**  
**3:30 pm Stations of the Cross**

**Saturday, March 22**

**Wedding: Lauren Guentert and John Fattal**

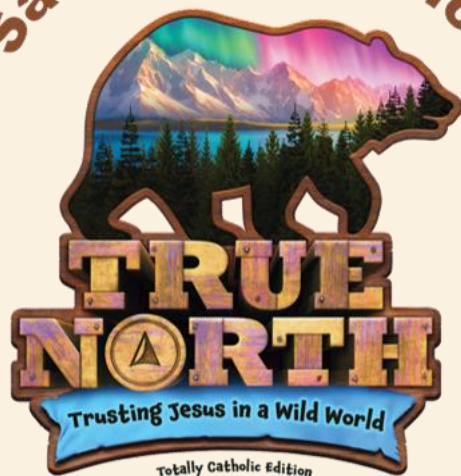
**4:30 pm Mass**

**Sunday, March 23**  
**3RD SUNDAY OF LENT**

**9:30 am Mass**  
**O.C.I.A., C.L.O.W., CFF, Last YM class**

**The Seven Last Words of Christ Concert / 3pm**

Save the Date for



**Vacation Bible School**  
**June 9-12, 2025**

Calling all high school students....

**Youth 2 Youth Retreat**

**April 26-27, Camp Rotary**

**Cost: \$70**

A weekend retreat designed *by teens, for teens!* Step away from the stress of school and home, and discover a space where you can truly be yourself. Bring a friend or come ready to make new ones—it's going to be a weekend you'll never forget! Let the journey begin at the **Youth 2 Youth Retreat**—we can't wait to see you there!

Scan the QR code  
to register online!

Questions....

contact Kathy Russell



## Children's Faith Formation & Youth Ministry

### CHILDREN

Mar. 16, 23	CFF and CLOW
19, 26	Wednesday CFF
30	No CFF & No CLOW— <i>Spring Break</i>
Apr. 2	No Wednesday CFF
6, 13	CFF and CLOW
9	Wednesday CFF
12	<b>Reconciliation Retreat (10:00-5:30)</b>



If you have any questions about Children's Faith Formation or Children's Liturgy of the Word, please contact Wendy Graveline at [cff@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:cff@assumptionmidland.org)

### YOUTH MINISTRY

Both Middle School and High School YM meets at Blessed Sacrament on Sunday evenings from 6-8 pm! **ALL ARE WELCOME!!!**

Mar. 16	YM meets
23	<b>YM Final Session</b>
Apr. 26-27	Y2Y Retreat (HS)
June 1	<b>Graduation Mass</b>
9-12	VBS—MS & HS volunteers needed
16-21	YES (Youth Encounter Service) HS
23-27	ND Vision (9th-12th grade)
July 7-11	ND Vision (9th-12th grade)
Nov. 20-23	NCYC (HS— <i>Save the Date</i> )



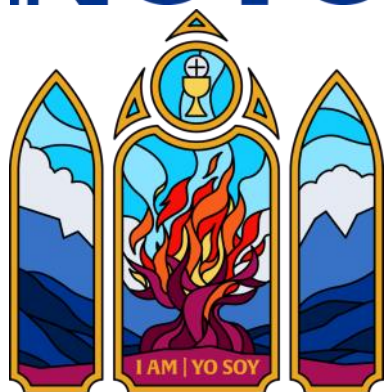
*Have questions about YM or events,  
please contact: Kathy Russell ([kathyr@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:kathyr@assumptionmidland.org))*

### Thank You!

We continue to collect cans and bottles for Youth Ministry events. There is a container by the doors to the DuRussel Hall on the south side of the building. **Thank you all for your continued support of our youth!! ~Kathy**



# NCYC



**NOVEMBER 20-22, 2025**  
**INDIANAPOLIS, IN**

What is NCYC? NCYC (National Catholic Youth Conference) is a powerfully unique three-day experience of prayer, community, evangelization, catechesis, service, and empowerment for Catholic teenagers, of high school age. It is the premier Catholic youth event on a national scale that gathers people from all across America for a life-changing encounter with Christ.

The 2025 theme, *I Am | Yo Soy*, will reflect on the time God appeared to Moses through the burning bush and explore how the Sacraments are the living story of God's love, uniting us with Him through Jesus and the Church. Through the Sacraments, we encounter the fullness of salvation and the tangible presence of Immanuel—God with us.

**Cost: \$350 for registered families**

**(\$150 with registration by April 13th, balance of \$200 due Sept. 30th)**

See the weekly *Flocknote* for registration or forms can be found in the gathering space.

For questions, contact Kathy Russell @ [kathyr@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:kathyr@assumptionmidland.org).



In Loving Memory of  
**Anne Marie Graham**  
 and  
**Wilbur Siebert**

Lord, we remember in our prayers Wilbur and Anne Marie whom you have recently called to be with you. May the calming peace of your love be with their families.

*"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die." ~John 11:25-26*



**Holy Hours for Vocations  
 with Bishop Gruss  
 All are welcome!**

Bishop Gruss has **designated Pilgrimage Churches** throughout the Diocese of Saginaw for the Jubilee Year of Hope which may be visited by many who wish to make a confession and attend Mass to receive the Plenary Indulgence. The

location of these churches are where he will offer a Holy Hour for Vocations each month and may be found below. The Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Hope began in the Diocese of Saginaw on December 29, 2024 on the Feast of the Holy Family and ends December 28, 2025 on the Feast of the Holy Family.

The faithful are encouraged to join Bishop Gruss when he visits their parish and/or make a pilgrimage to other parishes.

**All Holy Hours are from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

**Tuesday, March 25, 2025**

Corpus Christi Parish, Holy Trinity Church, Bay City

**Wednesday, April 9, 2025**

Our Lady of Hope Parish, St. Cecilia Church, Clare

**Thursday, April 24, 2025**

**Assumption of the BVM Parish, Midland**



**PILGRIMAGE TO  
 GREECE**

Fr. Marcel Portelli invites you to join him on a prayerful 11-day pilgrimage to Greece in the footsteps of St. Paul. We'll visit Philippi where Paul the Apostle delivered his first sermon and established the

first church in Europe, Mars Hill in Athens where he spoke to the philosophers, Corinth and the site of St. Paul's trial. We'll visit the House of the Virgin Mary in Ephesus in Turkey where she lived until her Assumption. On our 3-day cruise we'll discover the captivating Greek islands of Mykonos, Crete, Santorini, and even pray in the grotto on Patmos Island where St. John wrote the Book of Revelation. Full info <https://bit.ly/4bkUKAu> or (989) 426-7154.

**SafeTALK Training**

**Suicide Alertness Training** prepares anyone, regardless of their experience or training, to become suicide alert. In this half day training, you will learn how to assist someone who may have thoughts of suicide by recognizing signs, engaging someone, and connecting them to an intervention resource for support. Join us on:

**This Friday, March 21<sup>st</sup> from**

**9 am – 1 pm at Assumption Parish's Holy Grounds**

for this workshop that will help break down the stigma around suicide, teach people to recognize when others are struggling, and lead them to further help. Seating is limited. Continental breakfast and a light lunch will be served.

Cost: \$20 for materials. For questions, please contact Kathy Russell @ [kathyr@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:kathyr@assumptionmidland.org).



**DONATE BLOOD**

**Monday, March 17  
 1:30-6pm**

**Assumption Knights of Columbus  
 Council #2141**

Blood Drive Location: Holy Grounds  
 3516 E. Monroe Rd.  
 Midland, MI

Schedule your appointment today:

-Scan the QR Code OR  
 -Call 866-642-5663



\*Walk ins welcome, as schedule allows.\*

Help achieve hospital needs goal of 15+ donations while impacting 45 lives in Michigan Hospitals!

For eligibility questions call 866-642-5663



Helpful tip:  
 Make sure to eat a healthy meal and drink plenty of water before donating.



ASSUMPTION PARISH  
PRESENTS

# THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST

BY THEODORE DUBOIS

**SUNDAY, MARCH 23**  
**3:00 PM**

Encounter Jesus' powerful words from the cross through the music of this poignant work for orchestra, choir, and soloists.

**NO CHARGE**

*Free will offerings welcome*

*Are you interested in financially supporting our upcoming spring concert? Or are you interested in sponsoring an instrument for our concert series?*

Please reach out to Jim for questions and/or more information.



REMEMBER YOUR LOVED ONE WITH AN

# Easter Lily

**Please fill out an envelope indicating:**

- Your name
- The name of the person you wish to honor (to be printed in the bulletin)
- Whether you would like to take a lily home

**We are requesting donations of \$30**

RETURN ENVELOPES TO THE PARISH OFFICE OR TO THE DONATION TABLE AT WEEKEND MASSES BY MARCH 23

Questions? Contact Jim Renfer at [jim@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:jim@assumptionmidland.org)



## SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

*"... I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land as a possession." – Genesis 15:7*

From the very beginning, God gifted His people what they needed – and they thanked Him by offering sacrifices. God still gifts His people – you, your family, your friends, your coworkers, fellow parishioners – everyone – to fulfill their needs. But do we make sacrifices to God for His gifts? While we certainly are not called to make such sacrifices as Abraham did, but we are called to show our gratitude for God's gifts through our giving of our resources, talents and time.



**Sunday,  
March 23rd**  
**Communal  
Reconciliation  
2pm at Blessed  
Sacrament**

## LENTEN BLACK BOOKS

You can receive the daily reflections through email by signing up on Flocknote. Go to <https://midlandabvm.flocknote.com/BlackBook> to sign-up or click the button in the weekly Flocknote.



**Saint Brigid**  
Catholic School  
*A community fully alive in Christ*

# FISH FRY

130 W Larkin Street, Downtown Midland

## 4 Fridays During Lent

4:30 to 7:00 p.m. March 7, 14, 21, 28

**TAKE OUT AVAILABLE**  
Please Call Ahead 989-835-9481 ext. 64  
4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Proceeds benefit Saint Brigid Catholic School.





# Called to Conversion— Through the Word

*"Then they said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning [within us] while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?'" (Luke 24:32).*



With these words, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus share their joy and excitement. The Risen Jesus was in their midst! They had walked with him and shared their perplexities and sadness with him. But they did not perceive the truth of who he was, until he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. Then, their hearts burning with what this mysterious stranger had revealed to them, they did see. They recognized him in the breaking of the bread. They announced to others that Jesus is risen. They became witnesses, set on fire by what they had seen and heard.

In this powerful story from the Gospel according to Luke, we see the pattern that has been lived out in the Eucharist, from the earliest times. Hearing the Word is important. And it is no passive, ho-hum business. It sets our hearts on fire. The Word holds the answers to our most passionate and pressing questions. It provides direction for us when we are lost. It feeds us when we are close to starving. It brings news of such surpassing importance that our hearts burn within us as we listen, and our lives are forever changed.

## A LIFE-CHANGING WORD

There are numerous stories of holy men and women whose lives were changed by encountering God's Word. The Word changed the life of Lydia, the first European convert to

Christianity, who listened to Paul and Barnabas preaching by the banks of the river in Philippi (Acts 16:11–15). She was baptized with her whole household, and thereafter supported the spread of the Gospel. It changed the life of Augustine of Hippo (354–430) in North Africa, who at a crucial moment in his conversion heard a child's voice saying *Tolle, lege* ("Take, read"). He took up the Bible and read a passage from the Letter to the Romans that *spoke directly to him*, and showed him the way out of his despair. It changed the life of Kateri Tekakwitha (1656–1680) in North America, who heard the Jesuit missionaries preaching in her Mohawk village and desired to become a Christian, going against the grain of her family but opening the way to a devout and joyful life. It changed the life of Maximilian Kolbe (1894–1941) in Poland, who volunteered to die in place of a fellow prisoner who had been condemned in a concentration camp. He helped his fellow prisoners prepare for death by meditating on Christ's Passion and reading the psalms.

The Word of God is powerful. By his Word, the heavens and earth were made. The sea was split in two in the Exodus, by the power of God's Word. The prophets, announcing God's Word, kept the faith of the people alive during national disaster and exile. God's Word has the power to do God's will. It is no wonder, then, that the Word today continues to open hearts and bring forth new life.

## ONGOING CONVERSION

It would be a mistake to look for the power of God's Word only in dramatic changes and extraordinary circumstances, however. Its power to change us is not discovered only in the movement from unbelief to belief or in acts of heroic virtue, but also in the day-to-day movements of the heart that we call "ongoing conversion." Most people experience the transforming power of God's Word as a gradual process. Our conversion to Christ and his gospel way of life takes place little by little, over time.

Each Sunday, if we listen to the Word with a receptive heart, it subtly affects us. It stretches our imagination, challenges us, and calls us to be true to our best selves. The Word invites us, bit by bit, to enter into the world of God, and to see things as God sees them. The reign of God, like a seed that grows in secret, takes hold in the good soil of our life and is watered by the Scriptures we hear at Mass.

Our ongoing conversion may include a gradual awakening to the world's goodness, our own giftedness, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our midst. It may mean loosening the bonds of sin and gaining freedom to act in new ways by God's grace. It may be experienced in a growing love for the Church, a passion for justice, and a sense of deep inner peace. Are these movements "conversions"? They do not change us abruptly. But they do signal the turning of our heart to God ever more completely.

The Shaker song "Simple Gifts" sums it up well: "When true simplicity is gained, to bow and bend we shan't be ashamed; to turn, turn, will be our delight, 'til by turning, turning, we come round right."

## WE RECOGNIZE HIM

Just as the disciples on the road to Emmaus knew the Risen Lord in the breaking of the bread, so does our celebration of the Eucharist crown the experience of hearing the Word

at Mass. As we are touched and changed by the Word of God, the Eucharist itself becomes the confirmation of all that has taken place. Full participation in the Eucharist is our goal in this life as we are nourished on our pilgrimage to eternal life. We hasten on to the sharing of that meal with joy, as we realize—Jesus is with us at the table. He is alive. He is here.

## REFLECT

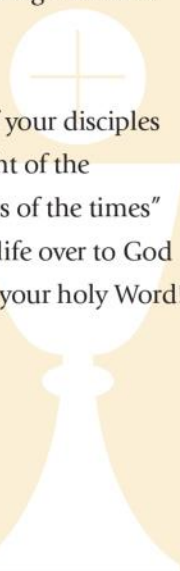
What sort of conversion do I hope for this Lent? A conversion of mind, heart, action? Where in my own life do I sense a need for "more light" to break forth from God's Word?

## ACT

Conversion in action means following through on our good intentions and inspirations, without hesitation or undue delay. Don't put off doing something good that you've thought of doing. Act now!

## PRAY

Lord Jesus, you opened the minds of your disciples to understand their experience in light of the Scriptures. Help me to read "the signs of the times" in my own life. Holy Spirit, turn my life over to God more fully. Set my heart on fire with your holy Word!



**AUTHOR** ■ Rita Ferrone is an award-winning writer and speaker in the areas of liturgy, catechesis, and renewal in the Roman Catholic Church.

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# Feeding Our Faith

Mar./Apr. Issue 2025

A newsletter brought to you by the Catholic COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF MID-MICHIGAN

## Our Mission, Your Legacy

For nearly 20 years, the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan has been serving the region by responsibly managing the gifts of the faithful. Our mission is to financially support the spiritual, educational, and social needs of our Catholic community. By stewarding the resources of Catholic individuals, families, parishes, and institutions, we strive to enlighten Catholics of the joy that comes from expressing faith through giving. Together with our donors and partners, we hold an unshakable belief in the future of a thriving Catholic community in the Diocese of Saginaw.

The Catholic Community Foundation is truly a philanthropic ministry made up of individuals dedicated to serving others. Our Board of Trustees and staff have seen the impact we make in our community. In 2024 alone, the Catholic Community Foundation disbursed \$1.7 million in grants to parishes, schools, and ministries in the Diocese of Saginaw. More than 120 students received almost \$100,000 in scholarships for Catholic education and post-secondary education. Endowments, grants, and scholarships managed by the Catholic Community Foundation help donors support the greatest needs in our community. Allocating critical funds transforms our schools, parishes, and community organizations. This impact would not be possible without donors like you.

**\$1.7M**  
**granted**  
**in 2024**

Kristin Smith,  
Executive Director since 2020



The Catholic Community Foundation offers options for individuals and families in every financial situation. From making one-time donations to establishing a permanent endowment, the Catholic Community Foundation grows funds through socially responsible investment principles. “Your generosity enhances our mission and empowers the Catholic Community Foundation to meet the needs of God’s people,” says Kristin Smith, executive director. “It also serves as a testament to your faith and our shared Catholic mission to serve others.”

If you’re interested in donating stocks, bonds, or real estate, or listing the Catholic Community Foundation as a beneficiary in your will, we can help you build a giving plan aligned with your Catholic values—one that ultimately ensures your intentions will be honored for generations to come.

For more information, please contact us at 989.303.9200 or at [ccfmm@ccfmm.org](mailto:ccfmm@ccfmm.org).

**Catholic**  
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Financially supporting the spiritual, educational, and social needs of our Catholic community.





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# Catholic COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF MID-MICHIGAN

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## Investment Forum 2025

Are you interested in understanding the Catholic Community Foundation's financial strategies? **Join us for our Investment Forum at Horizons Conference Center from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 30, 2025.**

The Catholic Community Foundation's annual Investment Forum is an opportunity to learn more about how your financial gifts are invested. Our nationally-renowned advisors from CAPTRUST will present their market trend projections for 2025, their financial strategies for the year, and their recommendations as the Foundation's financial advisors. This presentation from CAPTRUST will help the Catholic Community Foundation grow its assets under management—which currently total \$41 million.

The 2025 Investment Forum is also an opportunity to ask questions about setting up an endowment, managing an existing endowment, or donating to a donor advised fund. By understanding our investment strategy, you can better understand how your donation makes a significant impact in your community—both now and in the future.

This event is free and open to the public.



Registration for this event is required.  
**Please scan the QR code or call  
989.303.9200 to RSVP by April 23, 2025.**

## 2025 Quarter-At-A-Glance

### April 1

Grant Applications Open

### April 30

Investment Forum at  
Horizons Conference Center

### June 30

Grant Applications Close

## **Our next event: *End-of-Life Seminar at Good Shepherd Parish of Ubly!***

Conversations about dying are never easy. The Catholic Community Foundation is here to help! Join us for a free seminar which will include an overview of pastoral care for the dying, legal considerations, and charitable legacy planning.

**Saturday, March 29, 2025**

11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., with a provided lunch

RSVP at **989.658.8824** or at **office@goodshepherd.diosag.org**.



# Christ's Mission APPEAL

## Christ's Mission Appeal 2024-25

We are getting closer to our goal. Please give careful consideration about how you will respond. Fill out the pledge card and return it to the Diocese of Saginaw or put it in the collection basket. **Remember, checks should be made payable to the Diocese of Saginaw, not our parish.**

You can also give online on the Diocese website at [www.saginaw.org/appeal](http://www.saginaw.org/appeal), through the weekly Flocknote or scan the QR Code.



## Weekend Offerings

### March 8/9, 2025

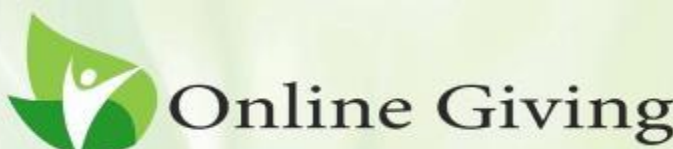
Weekly Envelopes .....	\$5,786
Online Giving (3/3-3/9) .....	\$2,037
Donations .....	\$250
Weekend Total .....	\$8,073
Weekly Goal .....	\$9,231
Overage/(Shortfall) .....	(\$1,158)

### March 1-9, 2025

Weekly Envelopes .....	\$10,377
Online Giving .....	\$5,799
Donations .....	\$2,250
Weekend Total .....	\$18,426
Goal .....	\$18,462
Overage/(Shortfall) .....	(\$36)

**THANK YOU** so much for your continued support in getting your contributions into the office.

*Please make out a separate check for the special collections.*



It is easy to sign up, just go to our website at:

**[AssumptionMary.org](http://AssumptionMary.org)**

If you have any questions: email Sandy at [sandym@assumptionmidland.org](mailto:sandym@assumptionmidland.org) or call the parish office at 989-631-4447.

Looking for a Treasure?  
**Come to Our Lady of Grace  
Annual Rummage/Bake Sale**

**Thurs, April 3....9am – 5pm**  
**Fri, April 4....9am – 5pm**  
**Sat, April 5....8:30am – 12noon**



*No early sales...*  
*Our Lady of Grace Parish Hall, Sanford*

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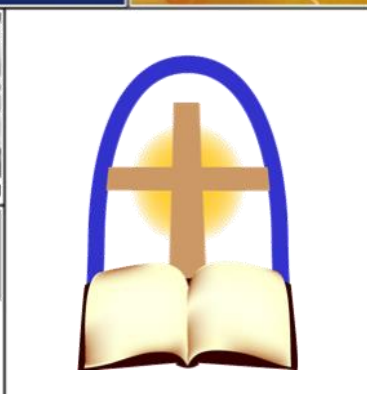
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