

Dear Friends,

Praised be Jesus Christ! Happy New Year!

I pray that you had a very blessed and merry Christmas spent with family and friends. Being of Polish descent, just about every tradition involves good food and lots of it. From kielbasa to cabbage rolls and homemade pizza my family has enjoyed our traditions and I hope that you have too!

With each new beginning comes renewed hope and excitement. I remember reflecting a few weeks ago, at the beginning of Advent, about how the new Church year affords a new sense of hope. Perhaps we feel that once again with a new calendar year. Maybe we have our resolutions or goals for 2024. If you do, that's wonderful! Might I suggest some spiritual goals? Ultimately, we are all looking to be holier and to be a better disciple. So how can we do that? Are we someone that needs to add more prayer time? Maybe we have not been to Confession in a long time. Perhaps we only attend Mass sporadically. For some people this might be the year that we explore some new ways of praying like Lectio Divina, Eucharistic Adoration, the Rosary, or some form of meditation. Either way, I invite you to think about what your hopes are for your spiritual life in 2024 and then share them with God. I promise you, God will never turn down a request to be closer to Him!

Did you know St. Mary Parish has an Endowment Fund? We do! And there is a committee of faithful members who oversee this fund which has helped our parish and school for over 20 years.

If you are looking for an opportunity to volunteer your time and share your talents, the Endowment Advisory Board is recruiting new committee members. We are looking for parishioners that are passionate about St. Mary and feel compelled to carry on the amazing work of prior committee members, especially the founding members, that built an endowment fund of approximately \$2 million. The goal of the St. Mary Endowment Fund is to ensure that current and future generations of families will have the same opportunities for the exceptional Catholic education St. Mary provides through its school and discipleship programs, and various ministries and outreach efforts. To date, the Endowment Fund has contributed over \$1 million back to St. Mary Parish and School.

The Endowment Advisory Board has identified a new opportunity to continue to grow the Endowment Fund. The opportunity is a Planned Giving Campaign that will reach out to parish members encouraging them to include St. Mary in their legacy gift planning. Our hope is to recruit multiple parish members, including parents of children attending St. Mary School, to become a member of the Endowment Advisory Board.

If you possess any of the skills below please consider sharing your talents with St. Mary by joining the Advisory Board and helping to launch the new campaign:

- Sales or Marketing background
- Fundraising background
- Graphic Design background
- Knowledge of wills, trusts, gifting, etc.
- Well connected with school parents
- Well connected with new and longtime parishioners
- Good communication skills

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Aaron R. Laskiewicz
Pastor