

# ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH



**Rev. Rory T. Conley, Pastor**

frconley@comcast.net

**Deacon Jeffrey R. Johnson**

deacon@bryantown.org

## New Parishioners

We welcome you to our faith community. Registration forms are available in the vestibule of the church. Also you can call the rectory office or email [smboffice@stmarysbryantown.com](mailto:smboffice@stmarysbryantown.com) to have a form mailed to you.

Established 1793

13715 Notre Dame Place • Bryantown, Maryland • 20617

## MASSES FOR SUNDAY

Saturday Vigil Masses: 4 pm and 6 pm

Sunday: 8 am, 10 am, and 12 pm

## WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday – Thursday 8 am

Friday 9:30 am

## CONFESSION SCHEDULE

Sundays: 9:30 – 9:45 am

Monday-Thursday 7:30 – 7:50 am / Friday 9:00 – 9:20 am

Saturdays: 3:00 – 3:45 pm

## PARISH OFFICE

Hours of Operation: 9:00 am – 3:30 pm, Monday – Friday

Phone: 301-870-2220 or 301-274-3187 / Fax: 301-274-0253

Visit Our Parish Web Site: [www.stmarysbryantown.com](http://www.stmarysbryantown.com)

## Secretary

Lauren Balderson – [smbassist@comcast.net](mailto:smbassist@comcast.net)

## Administrative Assistant

Terri Cantor – [smcasst@comcast.net](mailto:smcasst@comcast.net)

## Bookkeeper

Lisa Shumaker – [smcacct@comcast.net](mailto:smcacct@comcast.net)

## Ministry to the Sick, Homebound & Bereaved

Sister Theresa Frere, IHM - [SRTHERESA@comcast.net](mailto:SRTHERESA@comcast.net)

## ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

Address: 13735 Notre Dame Place, Bryantown, MD 20617-2110

Phone: 301-932-6883 or 301-843-3387 / Fax: 301-274-0626

School Web Site: [www.bryantown.org](http://www.bryantown.org)

## Principal

Catherine C. Silverstone – [silverstone@bryantown.org](mailto:silverstone@bryantown.org)

## Administrative Assistant

Penny Bailey – [office@bryantown.org](mailto:office@bryantown.org)

## OFFICE FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Director Of Religious Education

Sue Wolfe – [smcffp@comcast.net](mailto:smcffp@comcast.net)

Phone for Office of Religious Education: 301-274-3800



## Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

This program involves preparation for and celebration of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist for the Christian initiation of unbaptized adults, unbaptized children of catechetical age, as well as for welcoming baptized Catholics and non-Catholics into full communion with the Church. Please contact Father Conley for more information.

## The Sacrament of Baptism

Baptisms are normally celebrated on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. Parents seeking to have a child baptized at St. Mary's should contact the rectory office to make the necessary arrangements.

## The Sacrament of Matrimony

Couples seeking to be married at St. Mary's are to call the rectory to make arrangements at least six months in advance of their intended wedding date. This should be done prior to any other reception or invitation arrangements so that the parish may suitably serve the couple.

## The Sacrament of Anointing

Any Catholic who is facing serious illness or surgery is encouraged to receive the Anointing of the Sick. Please call Father Conley at the rectory office to arrange to receive this sacrament for yourself or for a family member.

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Parishioners,

Our second reading this Sunday is from chapter 13 of St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. It includes his reflection on the nature of love. It is a reading that is often heard at marriage ceremonies. In the reflection below by Father Jeremiah Shryock, from his book *Amid Passing Things*, he offers a beautiful perspective on what St. Paul's definition of love looks like in practice.

With my prayers,  
Fr. Conley

*Heroic Love* by Fr. Jeremiah Shryock from the book *Amid Passing Things*

My mother spent the last fifteen years of her life in a nursing home suffering from Alzheimer's disease. I would be a liar if I said that her disease had not caused my family much suffering or that we accepted it perfectly as part of God's mysterious will. The reality is, we all suffered and we all questioned how God could allow this to happen to somebody each one of us desperately needed.

An unfortunate consequence of Alzheimer's is that a person's brain actually shrinks. As the years went by, my mother's mental state became similar to that of a child. The hardworking, intelligent, and nurturing woman I knew as a boy had disappeared. Physically she looked the same, but when I looked into her eyes I saw a little girl who appeared lost and was trying to find her way home.

When I arrived at the nursing home for a visit all she talked about was going outside to smoke a cigarette. As soon as we were outside, all she talked about was going back inside, and vice versa for the whole duration of the visit, which for me never exceeded three hours, but for my father was often all afternoon. After a few months, I gave up hope of hearing her say she was glad to see me, because, I realized, my mother was no longer present.

On certain days, she would yell and curse and call the nurses names. In the beginning they would laugh and approach her with a friendly smile, but as the months dragged on and the insults continued, they became tired, annoyed, and then avoided her as best they could. After

only a month or two of working at the nursing home, a new employee quickly learned that my mother was considered one of the "difficult" patients.

Despite all this, my father continued to visit her every day. He walked into her room, gave her a kiss, and brought her outside in her wheelchair to smoke. Once outside he would face the same barrage of questions he answered the day before. "How long have we been married?" "Is Fr. Jeremiah married?" "How much money did I make last year?" "When are they going to feed me?" "What is Tammy's husband's name again?" After listening to these questions for hours my father would wheel her back inside her room, kiss her again, and return to his home, alone.

Occasionally, my father got mad and expressed his frustration in words that would have been better left unspoken. These words, I believe, came from a place of mourning and frustration, as he was forced to watch the woman he loved deteriorate in front of him and not be able to do anything about it. Not only had my mother become helpless because of her disease, but also now my father was experiencing his own poverty, as he stood before my mom helpless.

Thirty years ago, my father promised to love my mother "for better or for worse, in sickness and in health, and to love and cherish her until death do us part." Could he ever have imagined what those vows would ask of him? Would he still have made them, knowing what he knows now? Rather than spending his days entertaining abstract questions, my father did something I consider heroic: he was obedient to reality. By choosing to live in reality and not escape through endless speculations of "what if," "why me," or worse, he proved his love for his wife.

Watching my father through all of this revealed to me an essential component of love: it is utterly selfless. So often we reduce love to a feeling or an experience of pleasure, yet St. Paul reminds us, "Love does not insist on its own way" (1 Corinthians 13:5). When my father would slip and allow his frustrations to control his actions, he would begin again the next day where he left off, at my mother's side.

If I or anybody else would ever tell my dad that his fidelity to his wife was heroic, he would

probably look at you as if you were speaking a foreign language. "It's what love does," he would probably say. "I had no other choice." The reality is, he did have a choice. He could have chosen one of many escape paths: despair, resignation, anger, or any number of ways that the world tells us to dull our pain or distract us for a few moments. Despite the allure they may have possessed, my father chose none of them. At my mother's funeral, I read these words of Jesus in the Gospel: "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). When I heard those words at Mass a deep sense of peace and gratitude came over me. I was peaceful because I believe in the depths of my heart that Jesus's love, selfless and sacrificial, conquered death. I was grateful because it was my father who showed me what this looked like.

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**THIS FRIDAY IS FIRST FRIDAY – ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT FROM 10-6PM for the hours from 2 PM until 6PM. The sign-up sheet is in the church foyer. Thank you**

**THE CHOSEN SEASON TWO BEGINS THIS THURSDAY, FEB 3<sup>RD</sup>. The in person session begins at 6:30pm with dinner.** Please sign up in the foyer so we can have an accurate headcount for the meal. For those participating on zoom, the link will be sent out along with discussion questions, on Thursday.

**CHOSEN Season One DVDs on sale for only \$10. Chosen** is the best dramatization of the life of Christ ever made. Buy copies for yourselves and your families at our religious goods store.

**2022-2023 Open Enrollment for St. Mary's Bryantown School** Open Enrollment for the 2022-2023 school year begins on February 1st. Do you know a family looking for a quality education for their child(ren)? Have them give us a call. We are scheduling in-person tours after school hours. Limited space is available in some grades. Email [crozier@bryantown.org](mailto:crozier@bryantown.org) for any questions regarding enrollment.

### **Foster's Grille Spirit Week**

Save the date for another Foster's Grille Spirit Week. From January 31st- February 3rd, stop by Foster's Grille in LaPlata. Eat at Foster's or carry out (240) 349-2479 any day or evening during that time frame and Foster's will give us 20% of their sales. Don't forget to mention you're with St. Mary's Bryantown.

### **Synod 2021 – 2023**

**The entire Catholic Church is called to participate in the upcoming Synod of Bishops.** This Synod is entitled: "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission." Pope Francis has called the entire People of God to journey together. This Synod is a process of journeying together by listening, dialoguing, praying, discerning and making decisions together for the purpose of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Listening to each other is the basis of dialogue, friendship and community life. This Synod is not about changing doctrine or church structures, but rather encountering each other as brothers and sisters in Christ in post-pandemic world.

For more information, contact [synod@adw.org](mailto:synod@adw.org). To provide your feedback to the synod go to <https://adw.org/about-us/resources/synod-surveys/>

**MASS INTENTIONS FOR Jan 29 – Feb 5**  
**SAT: 4pm Regina Kijeski SAT : 6pm Thomas Hughes SUN: 8am Parishioners**  
**SUN 10am: Leroy Young SUN 12Noon Regina Kijeski MON: 8am Linda Svane TUES: 8am Kelly Beitz WED: 8am Jim Middleton**  
**THURS 8am Yvonne Moore FRI: 9:30am Jack O'Neill**

### **PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY**

**PRAYERS:** Eunice Amey, Deacon Gene Burroughs, Quint Burroughs, Brenda Callahan, Dottie Chick, Lorraine Cook, Kendall Farrell, James Gibson, Carol Herskovitz, Marie Knobel, Lillian Komar, Susie Logan, John Nichols, John Reeves, Mary Reeves, Melissa Rollins, Beth Weise, Billie Whittington.

### **OFFERTORY COLLECTION LAST**

**WEEKEND:** \$10,876 .30. \$2,154.00 was from bank-mailed checks. The unidentified donations totaled \$687.00. We received \$30.00 for our School Support.



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ISAIAH 41:10  
 SO DO NOT FEAR, FOR I AM WITH YOU,  
 DO NOT BE DEFEATED, FOR I AM YOUR GOD.  
 I WILL STRENGTHEN YOU AND HELP YOU.  
 I WILL UPHOLD YOU WITH MY  
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