



WINTER 2019 AND SPRING 2020 ISSUE



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In light of the extenuating circumstances due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it is with great sadness and difficulty that our Winter 2019 and Spring 2020 Hand in Hand newsletters are to be combined. As to be expected, several articles (such as the one by Mr. Mark Hansen) that were planned to be in both of these newsletters had to be postponed, etc. as many of us have had

to deal with the unexpected changes and make adaptations for a different lifestyle due to the pandemic. I ask you for your flexibility, understanding, and patience. Overall, I feel that this newsletter will be a worthwhile read for you as it includes many wonderful articles for you. I hope you enjoy this newsletter and may God accompany you in your journey.

# FR. CK'S CORNER



### WELCOME! By Fr. Christopher

Klusman Happy Easter! Welcome to this unique newsletter, in which we had to combine the Winter 2019

and Spring 2020 Newsletters. Extraordinary events lead to extraordinary circumstances. While we look back to December 31, 2019, and January 1, 2020, celebrating the arrival of the new year of 2020, who would've thought we would be going through this Covid-19 pandemic? This truly stands out as one of the unforgettable moments in history. While we had family members or dear friends share their past experiences about the World Wars, or even the day when they remembered when John F. Kennedy was unexpectedly shot. You or others may remember the day of the space shuttle Challenger disaster. Many of us also could not forget the day of 9/11.

Please know that I've been thinking and

praying for you every day. I hope that you have been staying home as much as possible and following the rules to stay safe and healthy, such as washing your hands often, keeping a distance of 6 feet from others, etc.

I pray that, even in the middle of this pandemic, that we all come to realize the many things we take for granted and how we are to appreciate them more from now on... Things like, being able to shake hands or hug another person, being able to go to any store, going to a meeting or party with more than 10 people, and the list goes on... But, what cut to the heart very deeply is not being able to attend Masses with our other brothers and sisters in Christ. Most especially, that we had to wait at a later date to receive the Most Precious Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The other Sacraments, such as Confession, Confirmation, etc. have been postponed. We look forward to the day when we all can safely return together to truly cherish the greatest gift of being able to receive the

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### **MISSION STATEMENT - DEAF APOSTOLATE**

The Deaf Apostolate in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee exists to enable all Catholic Deaf and Hard of Hearing people to participate fully in the liturgical, educational, pastoral, spiritual, and human concerns ministries in the Church.

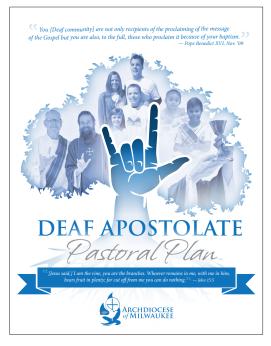
# OUR NEW DEAF APOSTOLATE PASTORAL PLAN

#### By Fr. Christopher Klusman

The Office of the Deaf Apostolate is pleased to announce our new *Deaf Apostolate Pastoral Plan*. It will go into effect this year, 2020, and will guide us into the next three years. This Pastoral Plan is the fruit of many, many years of feedback and work, having gone through several and major revisions to come to its final and concise form. For all who have assisted with the development of this Pastoral Plan, please know of my gratitude. A special note of recognition of the astoundingly beautiful idea for our front cover layout and verse from the Gospel of John goes to Tricia Condon. Many thanks!

*The Deaf Apostolate Pastoral Plan's* overall structure is designed to correspond with the Synod Initiatives set forth from our archdiocesan Synod in 2014, as well as several non-synodal priorities. This is to ensure the consistency of guiding our communities to the vision set forth from our archdiocese.

When it is ready, the Pastoral Plan will be available on the archdiocesan website under the Deaf Apostolate (which can be found when clicking on "Ministries & Offices" and scrolling down). Please keep us in your continued prayers for its successful implementation for the next three years and onwards. To all of our patron saints for the Deaf, pray for us!



### **THE 14 HOLY HELPERS**

#### By Office of the Deaf Apostolate

During the Covid-19 Pandemic, we were blessed with several online vlogs, most especially Jennifer Paul's vlogs, on the 14 Holy Helpers. The 14 Holy Helpers may be something we have heard of or a completely new group for us. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, Jennifer Paul introduced us to a new Holy Helper. She explained who



that person was, the period s/he lived in, and why that person is a saint. She then explained why that person would be a valuable intercessor for us during the Covid-19 pandemic, as they were during the Black Death.

On behalf of the Office of the Deaf Apostolate, I want to express our utmost gratitude for her hard work. Her hours of research and putting together her videos with pictures are impressive. People agree that we have learned so much!

Here is the list of the 14 Holy Helpers and their feast days: St. Blaise (Feb. 3), St. George (Apr. 23), St. Acacius (May 8), St. Erasmus (Elmo) (June 2), St. Vitus (June 15), St. Margaret (July 20), St. Christopher (July 25), St. Pantaleon (July 27), St. Cyriacus (Aug. 8), St. Aegidius (Giles) (Sep. 1), St. Eustace (Sep. 20), St. Denis (Oct. 9), St. Catherine (Nov. 25), and St. Barbara (Dec. 4).

May the 14 Holy Helpers protect Jennifer Paul and her family, as well as all of us. The 14 Holy Helpers, pray for us!



#### FR. CK'S CORNER - Continued from page 1.

Eucharist and other Sacraments together. I hope you will enjoy reading two articles about what it means to have a Spiritual Communion, which I'm sure was new for many of you, as well as a Blessed person, a step short of becoming a canonized saint who longed and was so hungry to receive the Holy Eucharist. Her name is Blessed Imelda Lambertini.

One big surprise is how the gift of technology has helped us to stay connected. I have to admit how deeply touched I was to be able to see all the online, live-streaming Masses, as well as the Our Daily Hope by the Deaf Apostolate in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia which gave us hope daily. The online Adoration, rosaries, Bible Studies, presentations, and the list goes on... A true blessing from God for all of us!

I have to mention how wonderful Jennifer Paul has been to give us her Vlogs on the 14 Holy Helpers! I'm sure that we all learned so much about them, as I truly did. I thank her for her time in sharing this with us and the reminder to depend on the intercessions of the 14 Holy Helpers during this time of need!

With this being the Easter season, I hope we can find comfort in the Easter passage of John 20:11-18.

Mary Magdalene stayed outside the tomb weeping. And as she wept, she bent over into the tomb and saw two angels in white sitting there, one at the head and one at the feet where the Body of Jesus had been. And they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken my Lord, and I don't know where they laid him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" She thought it was the gardener and said to him, "Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni," which means Teacher. Jesus said to her, "Stop holding on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them, 'I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Mary went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and then reported what he had told her.

St. Mary Magdalene weeps at being separated from Jesus, as many of us are from receiving Jesus in Holy Communion. And while St. Mary Magdalene realized it was Jesus who appeared to her, she tried to hold on to Him, but Jesus said, "Stop holding on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father." With the order to stay home, we want to go and hold on to Jesus but this passage reminds us to pray for the gift of patience. One day, St. Mary Magdalene will be able to grab onto Jesus and hold on to Him, as we all will too eventually. The other beautiful thing about Jesus' appearance is that He will be appearing to many people until His Ascension, which we will celebrate during the weekend of May 23 and 24th. With us staying in our homes, Jesus can come to you in spirit through Spiritual Communion and prayer.

Jesus also said, "Do not be afraid." Trust and abide with Him. Know of my prayers with you to stay safe and healthy. I look forward to the days in the future when we all can be back together again. But, for now, we are united in spirit. God bless you always during this Easter season!

# CATHOLIC QUIZ

- 1. Which prophet said, "A virgin will conceive and bear a son..."?
  - (a) Isaiah (b) Amos(c) Jeremiah (d) Zephaniah
- 2. Which of these women found in Scripture are not in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew?
  - (a) Tamar (b) Ruth(c) Rahab (d) Rebecca

# 3. What phrase is written in a book to declare publication inoffensive to the Catholic faith or morals?

- (a) Nihil obstat (b) est imprimatur
- (c) regulatum se (d) nobis pacem

# 4. The miracle of the sun occurred during which Marian apparition?

- (a) Fatima, Portugal (b) Lourdes, France
- (c) Guadalupe, Mexico (d) Champion, Wisconsin

# 5. Who was pope when the Universal Catechism was written?

- (a) John XXIII (b) Paul VI
- (c) John Paul I (d) John Paul II

(Answers on page 16.)





# St. Andrew Parish DEAF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MINISTRY SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

# FROM THE DELAVAN CORNER: "THE WAY WE ARE SUPPOSED TO UNDERSTAND"



By Jennifer Paul, Coordinator Deaf Religious Education & Deaf Ministry St. Andrew Parish, Delavan

Is it possible for hearing people to be completely deaf and for deaf people to hear perfectly well?

I say, "Yes, it is possible!" When we see the word *hear*, we think of the noise/sound sensation to the ears and the ears as the reception

of information. Not being able to receive noise, sound and/or information through the ears means that the person is 'deaf'. But, does it mean they cannot *understand*?

No, it does not mean that. There are other ways to understand. We need to peel back the references to hear and realize that it is not about the ears.

Jesus cured a deaf man so that he can hear again:

And they brought him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they asked him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside to be by themselves, away from the crowd, put his fingers into the man's ears and touched his tongue with spittle. Then looking up to heaven he sighed; and he said to him, 'Ephphatha,' that is, 'Be opened.' And his ears were opened, and at once the impediment of his tongue was loosened and he spoke clearly (Mark 7:31-37).

For me, the miracle has two messages. One is that no one can take away deafness but God. We are all made in God's image and deaf people are here on Earth for a reason. We are designed to be the way we are, with our talents and gifts for His purpose. God is the potter and we are the clay: *"Yet, LORD, you are our father;* 

we are the clay and you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand." (Isaiah 64:7). So, we must learn to love ourselves as the way God created us. Not loving ourselves – and especially not loving 'different' people around us - is an insult to God. We must not allow ourselves to fall prey to the worldly view of what is ideal and what we should be.

Secondly, Jesus said "Ephphatha" which means "Be opened." It does not mean being able to hear with our ears but to be able to understand. Hearing people could hear everything through their ears but their minds and hearts could be sealed shut

> against God's love. They are deaf in that way. Jesus urges them to "be opened" in their minds and hearts. Meanwhile, deaf people might not be able to hear anything through their ears but their minds and hearts could hear the music of God's love. Deaf people can and do hear – understand - God's love in a way that is openly accessible to us – we have the beautiful signed languages all over the world.

We need to think spiritually about our bodies. Our earthly experiences are very powerful and if we are not careful, we could find our spirit chained and bound to the earthly limits. We would miss out on the spiritual openness that is possible only by understanding God's love.

With spiritual openness, we can <u>understand</u> God's love. We read the Holy Bible; we receive the Sacraments; we meet with other people whose minds and hearts are open. We pray in our language and in our way to God. We try to learn of God's teachings on how to live our lives the way God needs us to.

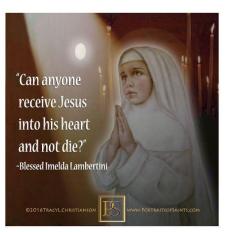
Deaf or hearing, we need to be open in our minds and hearts to God's love, to love ourselves and to do the work on Earth we are uniquely created to do.



### **BLESSED IMELDA LAMBERTINI**

#### By Fr. Christopher Klusman

I am blessed with knowing a wonderful family that has two children. The oldest is a boy who had received his First Communion, while the younger sibling is a daughter of about age six. Since she will receive her First Holy Communion years later, but she



often tells her mother that she really wants to receive Holy Communion. She never failed to remind her mother again and again of her longing for the precious Holy Communion. The wait is agony for her. What a precious child who pleases the Lord so much by her great desire for His Body and Blood. May she serve as a reminder for us to never take for granted and for lack of appreciation at being able to receive His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity in the Holy Eucharist. This special girl truly reminded me of Blessed Imelda Lambertini, who would be a wonderful companion for us now as we await with the desire to one day receive the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist at Mass.

Blessed Imelda, already at the age of 5 during the year 1327, desired greatly to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. Her request couldn't be provided because children at that time were not allowed to receive their First Holy Communion until they were at least 12 years old. Who was Blessed Imelda? Taken from the website (https://www.nashvilledominican. org/community/our-dominican-heritage/our-saints-and-blesseds/bl-imelda-lambertini-2/), I hope you will be inspired by her amazing life.

"Dominican tradition tells us that Imelda Lambertini was born of a noble family in Bologna, Italy in 1322. Her parents raised her to love her Catholic faith, and through their influence she developed a love for prayer, especially for the Mass. Often she would attend Mass and Compline (Night Prayer of the Divine Office) at a nearby Dominican Church. Her mother also taught Imelda to cook and sew for the poor and cultivated in her child an eagerness to perform the corporal works of mercy. Even so, her mother and father, both of whom were getting on in years, were surprised when Imelda asked permission at the tender age of nine to go to live with the Dominican nuns at a neighboring monastery. As difficult a decision as this was, her parents evidently sensed the depth of their child's desire and entrusted her spiritual formation to the Dominicans at Val di Pietra.

At this distance of centuries and culture it is not easy to determine precisely what little Imelda's status was at the convent. It seems she was well loved by the sisters, who allowed her to wear the Dominican habit, to pray with them, and to follow their way of life to the extent that a little girl would be able to do

while still remaining a child. Imelda, we are told, longed (and intensely, it seems) to be allowed to receive Holy Communion with the nuns, but in that day such a thing would have been unheard of for a child her age. Her pleading was again and again gently refused, with the explanation that she would need to wait until she was older and more prepared. For a time Imelda had



to be content with this answer, meanwhile learning to chant Office from hearing the nuns in choir and developing her own interior prayer life in simple childlike ways. The saints, whose stories she had learned from her parents and from the nuns, became her 'secret companions,' and probably had a hand in nurturing the longing she felt to receive Jesus intimately in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. In her private conversations with Jesus, with whom she was developing a deep friendship, we can imagine that she made known often her desire to be allowed to go to Communion. There is no evidence that He put up any opposition to the proposal-but neither did the sisters relent. And so Imelda continued, with the intensity of a child, to get to know Jesus more deeply, and to desire Him all the more.

▶ BLESSED IMELDA LAMBERTINI - Continued from page 5.

As spring approached, the sisters, who perhaps thought that they had succeeded in diverting Imelda's 'childish fancy' to go to Communion with the grownups, were a bit startled when she



asked again, shortly before the feast of the Ascension, to receive her First Holy Communion. ('Asked,' in fact, is not the word. She begged them insistently, it seems.) When the chaplain was consulted, he agreed with the sisters and responded with no hesitation that Imelda was much too young. On the Vigil of the Ascension Imelda was in her place in the chapel, quietly praying as the sisters received Communion. Then Jesus did a little 'insisting' of His own. After Mass, as one of the nuns was clearing the altar, she heard a noise and looked up to the choir to see Imelda, a glowing light shining above her head, with the Sacred Host suspended in the light. The chaplain was called at once, and he understood that Jesus Himself was making his desire known. 'Let the little children come to Me and do not stop them.' The priest gave Imelda her First Holy Communion.

We can well imagine that the nuns were amazed and thrilled both at the great blessing to their little one, and to their convent. The prioress allowed Imelda to remain for some time in thanksgiving, and then sent for her to come and have her breakfast. Imelda was still kneeling as they had left her, a smile on her face. Yet when called for, Imelda's body was still. She had died of pure joy. Her thanksgiving had been well completed, and she had nothing left to desire.

Bl. Imelda's story is so well entrenched in the collective memory of her Dominican brothers and sisters that it has remained firmly in the Order's history. She continues to offer the witness of a child with mature desires, and a faith unspoiled in its intensity.

Imelda understood instinctively what many of us have forgotten: that it is the single-hearted who are blessed and that unless we become like children we cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

Blessed Imelda passed away at the age of 11 on May 12,

1333, in Bologna, Italy. She became Blessed (a step short of becoming a canonized saint) by Pope Leo XII during the year 1826. Sadly, some calendars say her feast day is on May 12, while others say May 13. She is the patron saint for First Holy Communicants. A great contribution from Blessed Imelda is that, in 1910, Pope Pius X began to allow children to receive their First Holy Communion earlier at around the age of seven, which is the beginning of the age of reason. Let's close with a prayer from the Order of Preachers:

Lord Jesus Christ, you received into heaven Blessed Imelda who loved you in the Eucharistic banquet. By her prayers may we learn to approach your holy table with that same fervent love and so fulfill our longing to be with you, who live and reign with the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

As you can see with the pictures with this article, Blessed Imelda's body is incorrupt. Her body is kept in Bologna, Italy, at the Church of San Sigismondo, beneath a wax

covering of her likeness. What a beautiful example from her for all of us (both young and old) on what it means to desire Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. May we be joined in her during this time and forever her great desire for Our Lord. Blessed Imelda, pray for us to love Jesus in the Holy Eucharist as much as vou did.





#### HAND IN HAND | WINTER 2019 AND SPRING 2020

### **ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON**



#### By Tom Meitner

Hello! I hope everyone had a great start in 2020! Actually, our Church year started on the first Sunday in Advent, which was December 1, 2019. We held our Christmas Mass and

Luncheon on December 15 at Meyer's Restaurant. The event, attended by 50 people helped us prepare for the Birth of Jesus. After lunch, we had a short presentation "Who is Mary - Mother of Jesus." For fun, we played the Catholic version of Jeopardy – and it was a blast! We all learned more about our Catholic Faith, about Mary (like, "What's the name of Mary that appears in Mexico?" "Our Lady of Guadalupe"). We also swore in the new officers: President Karen, Vice President Tom, Treasurer Todd. Terri, the new secretary was not present. Santa and Mrs. Claus surprised us and brought their joy of Christmas to us. They also know sign language! We ended with Fr. Christopher doing the Gentle Woman song – a beautiful way to end the festivities.



▲ *Fr. Christopher signs the Gentle Woman song for our closing prayer.* 



▲ Surprise! Santa and Mrs. Claus knows sign language!



May 2020 bring you great tidings!



▲ Santa Claus greets the children.



▲ Tom presented on "Who is Mary - Mother of Jesus."

▲ Our Christmas Luncheon crowd participating in Catholic Jeopardy!



Fr. Bill Key sworn in our new officers.



▲ New Officers (L to R): President Karen, Vice President Tom, Treasurer Todd, Moderator Fr. Christopher, and Asst. Moderator Dcn. David. Not present: Secretary Terri.

## WHAT IS SPIRITUAL COMMUNION?

#### By Fr. Christopher Klusman

We have not been able to attend public Masses since March 2020. However, we are so thankful that we were able to have televised and online Masses for us to stay connected and participate in the Mass. Thus came the introduction of a "spiritual communion prayer," which was new to many people. Many people had questions, such as "What is spiritual communion?"

I purchased an e-Book called, "The Handy Little Guide: Spiritual Communion" by Michael R. Heinlein. This book helped me to

write this article for you with the hope that you will understand better the purpose and reasons behind praying the "spiritual communion prayer."

While we are expected to go to all Sunday Masses and Masses of Holy Obligation, God understands that there are times when we are not able to go to Mass, for a very good reason. Not being able to go to Mass may be a result of two things: (1) our actions or choices and/or (2) an emergency.

First, we may not be able to receive sacramental Holy Communion due to our actions or choices. For example, if I committed a mortal sin and was not able to go to Confession before Mass, or that I didn't fast one hour before receiving Holy Communion (that doesn't include people who have to drink and/ or eat due to health reasons, due to medicine, etc.). Instead of receiving sacramentally, I can make a spiritual communion.

Second, if I want to go to Mass, but I am unable to do so because of an emergency, I can also make a spiritual communion. Several examples include my car breaking down, illness, hospitalization, and/or being homebound with no means of transportation. There are some areas in the world that access to a priest (and Mass) is severely limited to a few times a year (like the Amazon regions of South America). Other times, there is a war or even an infectious disease like the Covid-19 pandemic (like what we are going through right now) that prohibits us from attending Mass. Even when these situations arise, we are reminded that God is with us and that His grace is made available to us. What we can do instead is to do the spiritual communion prayer.

There are three requirements to make a spiritual communion. But before we go further, spiritual communion prayers are for any baptized Catholics. The first requirement is that we must express a belief that Jesus Christ is truly present in the Eucharist, meaning that through the Mass, the bread and wine becomes the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ. The second requirement is for us to express a real desire for communion with Jesus Christ.



The third requirement is that we must also express a desire to stay united with Jesus Christ and to enjoy the fruits made available through the sacramental reception of Holy Communion.

Let's look at the letter from the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith from 1983:

Through [individual faithful or communities] desire for the sacrament in union with the Church, no matter how distant they may be physically, they are intimately and really united to her and therefore receive the fruits of the sacrament.

It is the tradition of our Church that if we feel lukewarm or flat about receiving the Holy Eucharist, we should practice spiritual communion prayers to fast from receiving the actual Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Our Lord. This fasting helps to rekindle in us (hopefully) a desire to truly value and cherish the most precious Holy Eucharist. It can help us reprioritize the Holy Eucharist that it becomes (again) the most important desire of our daily lives to achieve fuller unity with Christ in Holy Communion. Many saints have done this which was of huge benefit for them. Even if we have a great love for the Eucharist, it is highly recommended that we pray the spiritual communion prayer daily for our spiritual growth.

Whenever you are watching an online or televised Mass and it is time for Holy Communion, you are to pray whichever versions you feel fits you.

(1) A Spiritual Communion Prayer written by St. Alphonsus Ligouri:

"My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there

#### SPIRITUAL COMMUNION - Continued from Page 8.

*and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.*"

- (2) A simple version of the Spiritual Communion Prayer: "My Jesus, I believe that You are real in Eucharist. I love You & want you in my soul. I cannot receive Jesus in Eucharist, please come spiritually into my heart. Please stay with me. Amen."
- (3) A Child's Spiritual Communion Prayer (borrowed from the Diocese in Portland):*"Jesus, I love you with my whole heart.*

Be with me all the time just as you promised. Amen!"

Surprisingly, there are other spiritual communion prayers too. While it is an honor to receive Holy Communion, but if there are any reasons that a spiritual communion prayer has to be done instead, please ask God for the virtue of humility that you pray this to receive at the proper time in the future Holy Communion. May your desire for holy Communion grow and grow more with each passing day. God bless you!





#### **Renewal Prayer for Deaf Catholic Church**

Father, we ask you to look with mercy at us, your Deaf Catholic Church. We ask you to bless us, inspire us to always love you above all things and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

We pray to you for our bishops, our spiritual leaders. Please bless them and give them the strength and wisdom to guide us, their people. Help them to recognize, understand, and respond to our unique needs.

Please bless the priests, deacons, religious, and lay people who serve our community. Inspire them so that they may then inspire all hearts of deaf people to know, love, and serve you and your Catholic Church.

Father, we pray to you for our baptized Deaf Catholic brothers and sisters. Please send your Holy Spirit to enkindle and renew their hearts so that they may continue to grow spiritually through making time for prayers, receiving sacraments, and serving other people.

Our young baptized Deaf Catholics are growing up in a challenging and confused world. Almighty God, please help them understand that the way of the world does not give life; your way alone gives true life. Please touch their hearts and guide them to find your love. Bring them back to the Church. Put in them the desire to pray, to receive the sacraments and to serve other people.

Holy Spirit, come and transform each of us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Holy Mary, our Mother, pray for us. Amen.

# HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC OFFICE FOR THE DEAF



#### By Arvilla Rank

The National Catholic Office for the Deaf (NCOD) was founded during the International Catholic Deaf Association Convention in Baltimore, Maryland in July 1971. The Priest Moderators raised the need for a Catholic Deaf Ministry to serve

as a national voice that could express the spiritual needs of the Catholic Deaf Community. They also felt there was a need for a national organization to update the knowledge and skills of pastoral workers with Deaf persons and provide a support group for pastoral workers. Originally there was hope that the NCOD could be affiliated with the United States Catholic Conference (USCC). However, the USCC (now USCCB, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) wanted an organization that served all disabilities. The National Catholic Partnership for Disabilities (NCPD) has this connection to the USCCB. Fr. David Walsh, CSSR was elected Executive Director of NCOD. The sisters in attendance at the conference voted to support the decisions of the moderators.

By 1973, a year and a half after the establishment of NCOD, a national steering committee consisting of priests, sisters, and lay pastoral workers, had been elected. They held several national meetings to prepare the NCOD Constitution and By-Laws. The Loyal Christian Benefit Association (LCBA) with headquarters in Erie, Pennsylvania provided strong support for NCOD enabling NCOD to set up an office in Washington, DC. Space was obtained

at Trinity College. Fr. Walsh served as Executive Director until 1980.

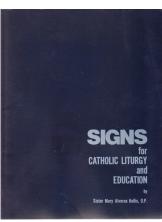
Sr. Alverna Hollis, O.P. became Executive Director in 1980. Besides the regular duties of her office, grant monies were obtained to support the development of religious education materials for Deaf children. A book was published on *Signs for Catholic Liturgy and Education*. Two small booklets on Sacraments and the Sacrament of Reconciliation were



▲ Sr. Mary Alverna Hollis, OP

also published. The national office was a resource for Diocesan ministries with Deaf people, and more laypeople, especially Deaf persons began to become pastoral workers. The office moved to the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) building in 1981.

Nora Letourneau, Ph.D. succeeded Sister Alverna in 1988. In 1992 the office published the results of a five-year study of the spirituality of Deaf persons titled, *"Eye Centered—A Study of the Spirituality of Deaf Persons with Implications for Pastoral* 



▲ Signs for Catholic Liturgy and Education by Sr. Mary Alverna Hollis, OP

Maryland in September 1995.

*Ministry*". The book reflects the insights, hard work and faith journeys of many people and gives some practical suggestions for making the church's ministry with Deaf Ministry more meaningful. In 1995, the office published a policy statement on working with Sign Language interpreters in Catholic Religious settings. The National Catholic Office for the Deaf moved to its present site at the Washington, DC Archdiocesan Catholic Deaf Center in Landover Hills,

In October 1997, I, Arvilla Rank, became the first Deaf Executive Director of NCOD. Under my leadership in 1999, the office completed a video project, My First Eucharist to aid in preparing Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children for this sacrament. A Spanish translation of My First Eucharist was completed in 2002. Also, in 1999, "A Workshop on Religious Interpreting" became available with videotapes and printed materials. Funds were obtained for a similar project on Reconciliation and a project coordinator was hired in 2001. The Reconciliation project became available in 2009. In 2002 a booklet, Principles for Understanding Deaf Ministry and Guidelines for Hiring Pastoral Ministers for the Deaf Community was completed and printed. Funds were obtained to develop Liturgical Responses to Mass Prayers in American Sign Language (completed 2013) and a program for preparing Deaf and Hard of Hearing Catholics for the Sacrament of Confirmation (completed 2013).



▲ Fr. David Thomas Walsh, C.SS.R.

Since June 2000, NCOD has been sponsoring a breakfast and presentation at the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops semiannual meetings to raise awareness of the special needs of the Deaf and Hard of

### **INTERVIEW WITH SR. MARTHA ANN**

Begun in the previous Fall 2019 Newsletter, an article is chosen from an older Hand in Hand newsletter to revisit important people, events, and places of our rich history. We hope you will enjoy this selection from the November/December 1999 Newsletter written by Katey Nielsen.



#### By Katey Nielsen

Sister Martha Ann Czarnyska grinned and her eyes sparkled as I asked her questions about the last 50 years of her life working with

the Catholic Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. Listening to her experiences, challenges and achievements made me wonder how she can still have so much energy.



▲ Sister Martha Ann Czarnyska

the seventh grade, Martha Ann mentioned that she might be interested in becoming a nun, but she never talked about it again. One fall day, her seventh-grade teacher approached her after Mass and said that if she still wanted to go to the convent, it had to be that day because classes started at St. Mary's Academy the very next day. Martha Ann entered the community of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi at age 13.

A true "south-

sider," she grew

up near 12th and

Oklahoma. Her

family belonged to St. Gerard

Parish. All seven children in her

family attended

St. Gerard grade

school. While in

▲ *Sr. Martha Ann Spends time with "her" children, prior to putting them to bed at St. John's School for the Deaf in Milwaukee. (1970s)* 

Her decision to enter a religious community was, indeed, strongly influenced by her seventh-grade teacher, Sr. Laurita Hahn. But Martha Ann had a cumulative love and awe for all of her teachers. While in the fifth grade, the school was visited by two

#### ► INTERVIEW- Continued on Page 12.

#### ► HISTORY - Continued from Page 10.

Hearing community. Currently, the breakfasts are provided at one of the Bishop's biannual meetings. To further promote awareness, exhibits are also regularly held at Church-related and Deafness related conferences. I retired as Executive Director in 2006 but continued part-time as project coordinator until the projects were completed in 2013.

On October 1, 2006, Consuelo Wild became the second Deaf Executive Director of NCOD and fifth Executive Director. Since 2008, the Board of Directors is the managing body for NCOD as funding has become difficult.

This nonprofit membership organization has been a great benefit to the Milwaukee Archdiocese. Milwaukee has and continues to use many of the resources available through NCOD. Members of this Archdiocese have participated in a variety of ways. Father Bill Key served on the Board of Directors for six years in the 1990s and was the Chairperson of the Board the entire time. He led the De Sales Project and the resulting development of *"Eye Centered—A Study of the Spirituality of Deaf Persons with Implications for Pastoral Ministry"*. I, Arvilla Rank, served as Executive Director for nine years and Project Coordinator for seven years. Father Key and Fr. Christopher Klusman have given presentations at the annual conference. Fr. Klusman was the opening keynote speaker at the January 2020 Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. Terri Matenaer is the International Catholic Deaf Association-United States (ICDA-US) representative to the NCOD Board of Directors. I had served as the first ICDA representative to NCOD Board of Directors for two years and was the representative to the priests' meetings at ICDA Conventions in the early years when priests held meetings there.

Today more than ever this National Voice is needed. Working together with the ICDA-US and with ecumenical groups, it is hoped that more and more Deaf persons will become pastoral workers.

The Mission of NCOD continues to be *"Spread God's message through the support of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Pastoral Ministry so that we may all be one in Christ!"* To promote this mission, the NCOD continues to:

- Raise the national consciousness concerning Deaf and Hard of Hearing people's position within the Catholic Church;
- Encourage Deaf and Hard of Hearing persons be active in ministry;
- Provide pastoral training opportunities;
- Share communication, religious education and pastoral training resources;
- Develop and disseminate religious education materials;
- Provide an annual pastoral conference;
- Collaborate with other organizations with a similar mission;
- Publish a national magazine, VISION;
- Support the national Deaf Cursillo Movement;

So that we may all be one in Christ!

#### ▶ INTERVIEW - Continued from Page 11.

Franciscan Missionaries from China and that became her dream. Unfortunately, that goal was not to be reached because of World War II. She took her first vows in 1950 and on July 30, 2000, Sr. Martha Ann will celebrate a golden anniversary.

She attended Cardinal Stritch College in September of 1949, pursuing a major in music. She was unable to pursue a music degree because of a health condition. That change was to lead her to the community she would grow with and love to this very day. Although she did not realize it at the time, this would become one of the greatest blessings in her life.

Her first experience working at St. John's School for the Deaf was frightening because of her lack of experience. Communication was difficult. Oralism was encouraged and sign language was not allowed. She was fascinated with sign language and was determined to learn. Sr. Lucina, who was deaf, taught Sr. Martha Ann. The first two signs she communicated were "same" and "sister."



▲ Rose Goeb and Sr. Martha Ann at Christmas Party (1995).

She lived and worked at St. John's

School for the Deaf for 34 years. Sr. Martha Ann was a child care worker for 25 years and a receptionist for nine years. Those years were filled with joys and sorrows, but "our family spirit brought us through." When asked, "Who was the person you admired most?" There was no doubt when Sr. Martha Ann responded, "Sr. Thomasilla, who was the Superior of the Sisters and principal of St. John's School. She was a holy, motherly, and fun-loving person." When the school closed, the students, teachers, and families were devastated. Sister recalled that time as being very challenging for the community.

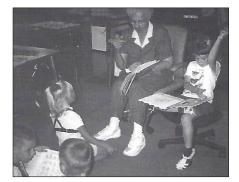
The next path led her to St. Joseph's Hospital for one year as a Clinical Pastoral Educator. During the next four years, she worked at St. Ann Health Center. Her current vocation is interpreting at the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) for mainstream students. She has been working at MPS for nine years.

One of the gifts she received from the Knights of Columbus was a lifetime membership to the International Catholic Deaf Association. ICDA and the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Deaf/Hard of Hearing Ministry, are two of the organizations she is actively involved in. We are grateful she started the religious education program for deaf and hard of hearing children in Milwaukee in 1985. The program is currently active at St. Matthias parish in Milwaukee.

Summarizing a lifetime of hard work, dedication and enthusiasm in a short article is impossible. Sr. Martha Ann Czarnyska's 50

years of service to the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Catholic community deserves tremendous respect and many thanks. We are grateful for the various blessings she has given us and for the ways she has touched our lives.

Thank you, Sr. Martha Ann!





First Communion class at

St. Matthias Parish (1997).

Sr. Martha's current position is working with "her kids" in the Milwaukee Public School system.

St. Lawrence religious education teachers, David Sommers, June Fischer, Susan Sommers, and Sr. Martha Ann. (1995-96).





First Communion class at St. Lawrence Parish (1993).

First Communion class at St. Andrew Parish, Delavan (1995).



# "JESUS: SPOUSE OF MY HEART" LENTEN 2020 WEEKEND RETREAT

#### By Fr. Christopher Klusman

The Deaf Apostolate Lenten Weekend Retreat 2020 took place from Friday, March 6, to Sunday, March 8, at St. Benedict's Abbey in Benet Lake, WI. It was an amazing weekend! I felt so blessed to have had so much help from many people who made the weekend so successful. I'd like to mention and thank Tom Meitner who helped with so many things for the technology part of the retreat. The responses were that it was so spiritually uplifting and that we all had learned so much! It was a retreat that went way beyond our expectations. Many thanks to the wonderful presenter, Fr. Seán Loomis. So who is he?

Fr. Seán Loomis is the Chaplain to the Deaf Apostolate in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. A convert to the faith, Fr. Seán completed his seminary studies at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary. After years of studying American Sign Language (ASL) and engaging in Deaf culture, Archbishop Charles J. Chaput ordained Fr. Loomis to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in 2013. He currently serves there as the chaplain to the Deaf Apostolate. As an advocate for the Deaf community, Fr. Loomis works to ensure full access to the riches of the Catholic faith for all Deaf individuals and families with the hope that all will come to know the joy of the Gospel, which he discovered himself as an adult.

We were so grateful for the time spent together to grow during the Lenten season. We had the opportunity to pray together using different devotions, participate in the Masses, learn about why Jesus is the Bridegroom and we are the Bride, share in groups, and more. We are so grateful that we were able to have this experience right before many cancellations due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Fr. Seán Loomis will definitely be in our continued prayers for his exemplary service to the Catholic Deaf community! It was an honor to have him with us! God bless, dear Fr. Seán Loomis.



We had so many fun opportunities, including being able to make our own rosaries!



▲ Group Picture of the Deaf Apostolate Lenten 2020 Weekend Retreat.



▲ Fr. Christopher and everyone agreed that the retreat was one of the best that we thanked Fr. Seán wholeheartedly!



▲ *Fr. Seán Loomis' presentations on explaining how Jesus is our Spouse.* 



We were able to borrow a beautiful banner from Patriica Flannery Slisz that perfectly showed our weekend's theme.



▲ We felt so blessed to have this opportunity to grow as Jesus' Bride during the Lenten season.



▲ Fr. Seán Loomis presided both Masses on Saturday and Sunday with Deacon David Sommers, while Fr. Christopher Klusman concelebrated.



▲ It was great to be able to share conversations together during meals.



◀Deacon David Sommers and Tim Gall helped to lead the rosary during Adoration.

## **DEAF APOSTOLATE INTERVIEWS TIM GALL**



**Tell me a little about yourself.** I was born Catholic in Waukesha, WI and still practice my Catholic faith to this day. My favorite devotion is Eucharistic Adoration, which I go to often.

Tim Gall

You attended the National Catholic Office for the Deaf (NCOD) Conference. When and where did you go? I was fortunate to

attend the most recent Conference in Kansas City, Missouri last January 9 to 13, 2020.

Was this your first NCOD? No, NCOD 2020 was my second one. My first NCOD was in Las Vegas, Nevada in January 2014. I remember the reason why I wanted to go because it was like "two birds with one stone." I had always wanted to go to NCOD, as many people told me about it, and to visit Las Vegas.

What were your overall impressions of NCOD 2020? Overall, NCOD was really good. The location was nice and the hotel treated us well. The schedule was good, and I didn't feel rushed; it flowed well. It was wonderful for two main reasons. First, I enjoyed socializing with the people that attended NCOD. It was a gift to be able to learn about their lives, especially their experiences in the Catholic faith and ministry. This is so beneficial in many ways as it is also something that I can bring home with me. Second, but no less important, I enjoyed the workshops. The workshops give us access (in Sign Language) to things that would normally not be available to us. The one workshop that hit me was the Teaching Mass with Fr. Shawn Carey and Dr. Mike Scherschligt. I had thought first that it was not an actual Mass, but when



▲ Bishop Steven J. Raica



▲ Bishop Raica communicating with the people at NCOD in American Sign Language (ASL)!

I found out it was, I was thrilled. Not only that, but I also loved it when they paused throughout the many parts of the Mass to explain its significance and the important role it had with the whole Mass. It made it so meaningful. I saw what an impact it had on many people at NCOD. I'm excited that they filmed the Teaching Mass and I hope you all will watch and learn from it on NCOD's website. The only thing was they had two sessions where you can attend one of 3 workshops, meaning you can see two of three workshops. The third workshop was canceled due to inclement weather. But, Monsignor Glenn Nelson's workshop ended up being Part One and Part Two, which meant that I had to

miss Part Two since I attended Jeannine Adkin's workshop on Eucharistic Miracles. It was hard to miss Monsignor Nelson's



▲ Deacon Patrick Graybill giving the homily at our Sunday Mass.



▲ *Lunch together during the NCOD Conference.* 

workshop as I truly enjoy them.

I noticed that the NCOD Conference is different from the ICDA-US Conference. I attended the ICDA-US Conferences in Cleveland in 2015 and St. Louis in 2017.

**Tell us more about NCOD. What else does it provide?** NCOD is not just workshops; it also provides daily Mass. Again, I truly enjoy meeting and socializing with the others that you wouldn't get on your own and in your church. Through these encounters, I truly feel I become a better person myself. One morning, we signed the rosary together. Another morning, we had a prayer service about meditation on several saints. It was wonderful because I learned more saints as there are so many that we don't even know about. You can find one that relates to you, such as maybe an illness or a saint that has gone through a family problem. You can ask that saint to pray for you and other people that need them. I'd like to add that before the Conference

started, I went with a few other NCOD attendees to a nearby art museum. I was amazed to find an art piece of the Beheading



▲ The Sunday lunch in the basement was truly an uplifting experience.

#### ► TIM GALL- Continued from Page 14.

of St. John the Baptist. It was a cool opportunity to learn more about its meaning and importance. Another morning, we had a prayer service about praying with icons and what icons mean. We were guided on how to pray during



▲ The prayer services in the mornings were very spiritual, informative, and helpful.

each icon. What was powerful was that the icons displayed on the screen were icons written by a Deaf woman in Baltimore, Maryland. Beautiful!

On Sunday, we went to Kansas to St. Joseph's Catholic Church to join their parishioners for their Sunday Mass. The Church's pastor is also the Chaplain for the Deaf in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas. It was inspiring to see Deacon Patrick Graybill's homily as it was his church growing up. After Mass, they invited us to lunch in their parish hall. The food was great, but the social was the best as it felt so special! It was all of us at NCOD gathering together. I just can't explain it in words. Also, when we left to go on the buses, it was such a humble honor to assist a Deaf senior citizen (Ann Pudlowski from St. Louis) to the bus as it was a bit icy and snowy outside.

They also had a nice prayer room. My hope in the future is that they can have Adoration, even if it is just for one evening or one day.

My only frustration with NCOD is that there isn't enough time as there were more people that I wanted to chat with but ran out of time.

I truly enjoyed our banquet experience together. They had a



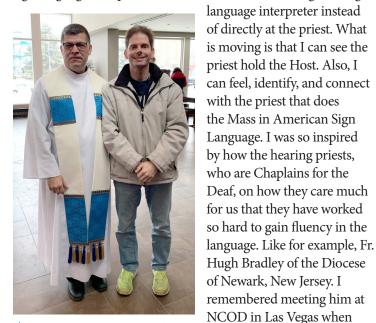
really humble person who did a great show on his painting three massive paintings in a unique, spontaneous, and perfect way. He painted the face of Jesus and another on Mary. Another painting was the Heart of Christ, which was the theme of this year's NCOD Conference. It was so awesome that he can share his God-given gifts with us and it seems he was local talent. I was glad that he joined us for our banquet.



Tim with NCOD Representative, Stephen Eubanks, and Anne.

I noticed that there were hearing priests that celebrated

**Mass. How did that affect you?** When I go to Masses with a sign language interpreter, I have to see the Mass through the sign



▲ Tim with Fr. Hugh Bradley of New Jersey

how to sign. Now, 6 years later, he signed so smoothly at the daily Mass! I understood him so clearly! He did it so well at a great pace and all. It brought so much meaning to the Mass. I was so proud of him!

**Do you think that people should go to NCOD? Why?** Yes! I felt it is an inspiring experience. You truly feel God's glory! NCOD is indeed costly, but you can make it work through creative ways, such as finding a roommate to cut down the costs. Just trust in God that He does make it work for you, as He did for me. Try to go at least once just to get a great experience out of it!

► TIM GALL- Continued on Page 16.

he was new. At the time, he

seemed shy and tried to learn

#### TIM GALL- Continued from Page 15.

Did you see any Catholic Deaf Young Adults? What impact did

**it have on you?** Yes, I did! Meeting people like Stephen, Anne, Hannah, and Katie. It was wonderful to see the young generation that they are visible and present to be able to carry on to the next generation. Often I struggle to imagine another Deaf person out there that is Catholic and Young like me out there somewhere that I can relate with. People my age don't talk about the Catholic faith much. Being able to interact with the Catholic Deaf Young Adults here made me realize that I'm not the only one. What is awesome is that I became friends with Stephen, a Catholic Deaf Young Adult, who became one of the representatives of NCOD. It is truly uplifting to see another one like me doing great service for God, His Catholic Church, and NCOD!

#### There was a bishop at NCOD. Can you tell us about that?

Bishop Steven J. Raica (Episcopal Representative) from the Diocese of Gaylord, Michigan joined us. At first, when he came, I was so shocked because I thought he was one of the signing priests. But, then I discovered that he was a bishop!? I had never seen a bishop sign before. It was great to see our Catholic Church have a bishop that signs and loves the Catholic Deaf community. He truly impressed me and it was such a great thing to see!

While at NCOD, what concerns did you have that were in your thoughts and heart? I know the Deaf numbers are serious, as only one percent of the Deaf community attend any church. That

is scary. So many people are missing the greatness of the Catholic Church. I know that access can be very difficult. We have to keep trying. We have to remember that God gave us everything so we always have to thank Him! We can't forget God, no matter what! I try to spread that joy to others, even to a Catholic Deaf friend of mine. What is puzzling is that he isn't even interested, even though we have a Deaf priest!

Now that you have attended NCOD, what do you hope to bring back to your archdiocese? I realize that everything I learned is not for me to hold on to selfishly. I want to share this with everyone I can, even back home in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. It was such a grace-filled experience that, through my growth at NCOD, that I feel better equipped and understand better more things that I will do what God wants me to do. Please pray for me that we can help other Deaf come back home to the Church. NCOD gave me hope, such as through my interactions with other Catholic Deaf Young Adults, like Stephen, Anne, Hannah, and Katie. We should never despair for we have to trust God, no matter what and do what we can.

What will happen for NCOD next year? NCOD will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year from January 7 to 11, 2021, in Irvine, California (Orange County). I hope you go because they say it is going to be a very special one! I plan to attend NCOD 2021.

Thank you so much, Tim, for sharing your valuable experiences with us and for attending the NCOD 2020 Conference! God bless you in all you do!

### SAINT MOVIE NIGHT

#### By Office of the Deaf Apostolate

For many years, Deacon David Sommers hosted a movie night. It is a community activity that is loved by many in the Deaf community. The movie night is hosted once a month in the meeting room of St. Matthias' Parish Center, except during the summer season, and Deacon David shows movies about the lives of various saints and important teachings of our Catholic faith. The one thing about the movies is that they are captioned/ subtitled. "I enjoy going to Movie Night. [The movies] being closed-captioned is very important and very valuable to me, especially to get to know more about the saints... what their lives were like... and how to apply that to mine," says a long-time attendee, Sue Koehn. Sue has been a strong advocate about the importance of movies about our Catholic faith to be accessible (especially on EWTN) through captioning and subtitles so that it is accessible to a wider audience who would otherwise miss out on these valuable resources. An additional benefit of Movie Night is the availability of Deacon David, in which he becomes another invaluable resource for their many questions about needed



clarifications, observations, and curiosities raised by these movies. A thank you to Deacon David for providing these opportunities for all of us!

# INTERPRETED & ASL *Masses* Throughout the Archdiocese of Milwaukee

#### - ASL SUNDAY MASS -

#### St. Matthias Parish

9306 W. Beloit Rd, Milwaukee, WI 53227 Time: 9:00 a.m. E-Mail: info@stmatthias-milw.org Website: stmatthias-milw.org Note: If no ASL Mass, then will have an interpreted Mass in the main church.

#### - INTERPRETED SUNDAY MASS -

#### St. Andrew Parish

714 E. Walworth Ave, Delavan, WI 53115 Time: 9:00 a.m. E-Mail: deafministry@saspcatholics.org Website: standrews-delavan.org

#### St. Joseph Parish

1619 Washington St, Grafton, WI 53024 1st & 4th Saturdays at 4:00 p.m. / and 3rd Sunday at 10:30 a.m. E-Mail: parish@stjosephgrafton.org Website: stjosephgrafton.org

#### St. Mary's Immaculate Conception

1610 Monroe St, West Bend, WI 53090 2nd Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Email: rprim@wbparishes.org Website: stmaryparishwb.org

#### St. Paul the Apostle Parish

6400 Spring St, Racine, WI 53406 Time: 10:00 a.m. E-Mail: svrana@stpaulracine.org Website: stpaulracine.org

#### St. Peter Parish

2224 30th Ave, Kenosha, WI 53144 Time: 10:30 a.m. E-Mail: stpeterskenosha@gmail.com Website: stpeterskenosha.com

#### Shepherd of the Hills Parish

W1562 County Road B, Eden, WI 53019 1st & 3rd Sundays at 8:15 a.m. E-Mail: sgitter@sothparish.org Website: sothparish.org

#### - CLOSED CAPTIONED MASS -

#### St. Clare Parish

7616 Fritz St, Wind Lake, WI 53185 2nd Saturdays at 4:00 p.m. E-Mail: bulletins@tds.net Website: stclarewindlake.org

\*Times Listed Are Subject to Change\* As of March 1, 2019



▲ St. Francis de Sales, patron saint of the Deaf, signs "Church" with Martin, a deaf person.





## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Office Hours: : Tuesdays to Fridays (Fr. Christopher is off on Sunday early evenings & Mondays)

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