

# Saint Mary Magdalen Church

Building a family of faith in Jesus Christ through Catholic Worship, Formation & Charity.

16 FEBRUARY 2025

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



Dear Friends in Christ,

As we bask in the glow of an Eagles' Superbowl victory, I want to give a few reminders and an appeal for assistance. First, remember our parish's First Friday devotions, which begin at 5:30 p.m. on the first Friday of each month with a Eucharistic Holy Hour. We have beautiful music accompanying the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, along with an opportunity for the Sacrament of Penance, concluding with Vespers. Then, at 6:30 p.m., we have Mass, followed by a pizza reception. Please join us as you can for these prayerful and contemplative evenings.

In addition, we have a solid group who gather every Monday through Friday at 7:15 a.m. in the chapel to pray Morning Prayer. Praying the Psalms really helps us start our days off well. I encourage you to give it a try, especially if you are looking to pray more as we approach the Season of Lent.

I recently spoke to a former parishioner from West Philadelphia who informed me of a growing family in that community in need of a minivan such as a Toyota Sienna or Honda Odyssey. If anyone has or knows of a used version of these minivans and would be willing to part with it, please let me know, as the family is not in the position to purchase a new car at this time.

The holy season of Lent begins in just a few weeks. I would like to offer some meditations on some of the spiritual practices that people traditionally undertake during that season, in the hopes that they will inspire you as you begin to think about this central part of the Christian life.

May the Lord grant you peace!

—Father Eric Banecker

"This is the time of fulfillment. The Kingdom of heaven is at hand. Repent, and believe in the Gospel." These words, an echo of the preaching of John the Baptist, are the first words of preaching we hear from Jesus in the *Gospel of Mark*. They are the words usually spoken by the minister who imposes ashes on our heads at the beginning of Lent: "Repent, and believe in the Gospel."

*continued on page 3*

## CLERGY

610-566-8821  
stmarymagdalen.net

Rev. Eric J. Banecker  
*Pastor*  
freric@stmarymagdalen.net  
Extension 110

Rev. Msgr. Ralph J. Chieffo  
*Pastor Emeritus*  
frralph@stmarymagdalen.net

Rev. Robert A. Pesarchick  
*Parochial Vicar*  
frbob@stmarymagdalen.net  
Extension 123

*Sacramental assistance  
is provided by*

The Legionaries of Christ  
Rev. Msgr. Francis Beach  
Rev. Richard Maisano  
Rev. Philip Lowe

Deacon James DiFerdinand, M.A.  
*Permanent Deacon*  
jamesdiferdinand@gmail.com

Deacon Joseph Boyle, M.Th.  
*Pastoral Associate*  
deaconjoe@stmarymagdalen.net  
Extension 126

Deacon Bob Szipszky, M.Th.  
*Permanent Deacon*  
*OCIA Program*  
deaconbob@stmarymagdalen.net

Deacon E. Peter Zurbach, Ph.D.  
*Permanent Deacon, Retired*



## PARISH MASS & CONFESSION SCHEDULE

### Sunday

7:30 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM & 7 PM

### Weekday

Monday thru Friday  
6:30 AM & 8:30 AM

### Saturday

8:30 AM & 4:30 PM Vigil

**Confessions from 9 to 10 AM on Saturdays,  
and 6:15 to 6:45 PM on Sundays.**

For a private confession time, please call the parish office.

## PARISH DEVOTIONAL SCHEDULE

Adoration Chapel: Monday from 7 AM to Friday until 1 PM.

Morning Prayer: 7:15 AM from Monday to Friday in the Chapel.

First Friday Holy Hour: 5:30 PM Adoration & Confessions,  
followed by Mass at 6:30 PM.

Legion of Mary: 9:30 AM on Tuesdays in the Gathering Room.

Rosary: 7:15 PM on Tuesdays in the Chapel.

Flame of Love Devotions: Noon on Fridays in the Chapel.

See ministries and parish services on our website.



## ELECTRONIC PARISH GIVING

Visit our website's 'Giving' page to make a one time gift or sign up for recurring electronic donations using the 'Parish Giving' secure link or scan the QR code.

It can be easy for us to think of the word "repent" as merely confessing major sins and receiving forgiveness from God. And while that is an important aspect, it only captures one dimension of that word. Repentance is not something we can permanently accomplish in this life. It is a continual, Spirit-led movement out of the darkness of sin, suffering, and death and into the life of the Triune God, a life which must, of necessity, imbue every aspect of our lives. That's the problem with that reductionist view of repentance: it sometimes fools us into thinking that repentance is something those people have to do. Actually, it is something all of us must do.

In the *Book of Genesis*, God creates the whole universe out of nothing, in a gratuitous act of love. He placed the man and the woman at the pinnacle of creation and settled them in the garden—in other words, they had everything they needed to be happy. But with that covenant came a command not to eat of the fruit of one of the trees, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This command, because of the effects of original sin in us, strikes us as irksome and arbitrary. But the man and the woman—created free from sin—would have experienced it as a gift by which they came to know how to live in the image and likeness of God. And how was that life to be lived? In the first place, by fasting—not from everything, but simply from that one fruit on that one tree. In learning to say no to themselves, they learn to trust God. They were being taught their dependence on him and his love for them. God will give us what we need, and he will not give us what we don't need; not everything that appears good to us will actually make us happy, at least at that moment.

But in their rebellion, they decided that they knew better than God. They chose not to serve, not to receive, but to have whatever they wanted whenever they wanted it. But they discovered that such a life turns us in upon ourselves. Their choice not to fast leads to their estrangement from God and division right at the heart of the human family. Man becomes a mystery unto himself, no longer capable of the easy delight in God that he possessed in the beginning. In that small act of grasping at the apple lies the pattern of all our human sins: we grasp at what we want, what appears good for us. But often enough, it leaves us empty and alone. Only the redeeming power of Christ can free us from this prison. In the Sacrament of Baptism, the light of faith pierces through the darkness of our self-assertion and places us back in a filial relationship with God our Creator, who in

Christ Jesus we dare to call "Our Father." Made one in Christ through Baptism, we are filled with the Holy Spirit, who undertakes the amazing work of making us like God himself. This process of deification culminates in the glory of heaven, but it is present to us now while we are on pilgrimage on earth. But it involves, as it did for Christ himself, a willingness to suffer and to love one another in his sacrificial manner.

The Church has always taken it as a divine mandate that all the faithful are obligated to do penance. Priests and those in the vowed life of poverty, chastity, and obedience are called to this in a particular way, but the obligation nevertheless extends to all.

As you know, the Church sets aside every Friday as a day of penance. The universal law of the Church sets a minimum for this day: abstinence from meat. Now, in the United States, the bishops decided sixty years ago that abstinence from meat was only mandatory on Fridays of Lent, and that another form of penance could be chosen outside of Lent if necessary. But what matters—as with everything in the life of grace—is both our hearts' exterior actions and interior disposition. The point of external penance is to be united interiorly with Christ in his suffering and through him all those who suffer. In the Middle Ages, people would fast and give the food they would usually have eaten to the poor. I think we should do the same thing. Fasting from food or drink or *Netflix* or whatever doesn't just unite us to Christ and make us more spiritually attuned: it places more money in our pockets that we can use to help those who are poor. If everyone in our parish skipped one meal a week and gave the money to the poor, what a profound impact that would have on our community and ourselves, whom Christ wishes to mold more perfectly into himself.



**SMM Parishioner Feedback**  
Scan to share your thoughts



## PARISH

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Extension: 109

Mrs. Shelly Zeller  
Mrs. Jessica Savko  
Mrs. Mary Lou Mayer  
Office Administrators  
Extension: 107

## SCHOOL

610-565-1822  
stmarymagdalenschool.net

Mrs. Amy Crawford Bauer  
Principal  
abauer@stmarymagdalen.net

Dcn. Joseph P. Boyle, Jr.  
President  
deaconjoe@stmarymagdalen.net

# 40 HOURS

St. Mary Magdalen

*with* Fr. Alex Gibbs

*at* 6:30 PM

*on*

March 11

Searching Love

March 12

Doubting Love

March 13

Burning Love

Adoration  
All Day



Celebrate the glorious gift of Jesus in the Eucharist  
in adoration, liturgy, and discipleship.



The **Department of Humanities** and the  
**School of Theological Studies** invite you to  
join us for an insightful lecture with  
renowned art historian Dr. Elizabeth Lev as  
she leads us on a captivating journey  
through the intersections of art, history, and  
culture.



Thursday February 20, 2025  
7:00PM

Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary  
Auditorium

1400 Evans Road, Ambler, PA 19002

**THE PATRON SAINT OF SACRED SPACE:  
ST. CHARLES BORROMEO AND  
BUILDING CHURCHES AMID  
CONFUSION AND DOUBT**



## DR. ELIZABETH LEV

Dr. Liz Lev is a prominent art historian and lecturer,  
recognized for her deep knowledge of Italian  
Renaissance and Baroque art, and her captivating  
storytelling that brings art history to life

Event is free and open to the public  
Refreshments to follow

# PARENTS' NIGHT OUT

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22 AT 6 PM IN ST. FRANCIS HALL**

Join us for an adults-only evening with fellow SMM parents and young adults as we discuss ***"The Young Adult Playbook"***.

Meet with authors **Anna Moreland & Tom Smith**, from Villanova University, as they address the challenges of today's rough terrain.

**The evening includes dinner & drinks.**

**GET IN THE GAME! - REGISTER BY FEB. 18**



## The Drs. John J. and Margaret T. Clark Memorial Scholarship

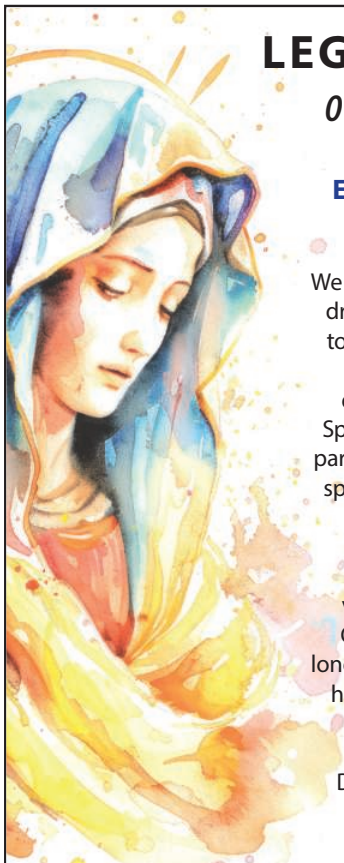
**The 2025 Scholarship Deadline is March 15, 2025.**

Dr. John J. and Dr. Margaret T. Clark were devoted members of St. Mary Magdalen Parish. The Clarks directed that a gift be made through their estate to endow scholarships for students who are members of Saint Mary Magdalen parish toward their post-secondary education.

Annually, one eligible student will be selected by the St. Mary Magdalen Scholarship Committee to receive a scholarship toward the first two (2) years of undergraduate tuition for their chosen college, university, or trade school. The annual scholarship amount is \$5,000 for up to two years. Eligible students must be active St. Mary Magdalen parish members and current high school seniors graduating in May or June of 2025.

The 2025 Application and information are available on the parish website under 'Clark Scholarship' or scan the QR code. Send questions to the scholarship committee at [clarkscholarship@stmarymagdalen.net](mailto:clarkscholarship@stmarymagdalen.net).





## LEGION OF MARY

*Our Lady, Queen of Angels*

**Every Tuesday at 9:30 AM  
in the Gathering Room**

We invite Catholics who would like to draw closer to Jesus through Mary to give Legion a try. Our members meet weekly to pray, plan, and discuss as a group. We perform Spiritual Works of Mercy within the parish and local community with our spiritual director Father Pesarchick.

The Legion of Mary is an international association of volunteers serving the Catholic Church. Our Legion goes to the lonely and isolated in nursing homes, hospitals, and prisons to befriend and pray for them.

Discover more by visiting one of our weekly Tuesday meetings.

*Mary, Our Lady, Queen of Angels, Pray for Us!*

## NEW! VIRTUE=STRENGTH LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

This month, students in our school and PREP will practice the virtue of love of neighbor, or charity. This divinely infused virtue gives us the strength to love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God. Students will practice the virtue of unselfish care and concern for others. We know Jesus calls us to love one another as He loves us, which means showing kindness, forgiveness, and compassion to everyone, even our enemies.

*How can we embody this virtue in our family and community daily?*

**Practice Kindness:** Always look for ways to help others, such as opening doors, sharing, and offering comforting words. **Forgiveness:** If someone hurts you, instead of holding a grudge, try to forgive them just as Jesus forgives you. **Empathy:** Try to understand how others feel by imagining yourself in their shoes. If someone is sad, what could you do to cheer them up? **Pray for Others:** Pray for your friends and those who might be challenging to love.

Ask God to help you love them. **Avoiding Malice:** When you are angry or upset, take a moment to calm down before speaking or acting. Think of how you can respond with love instead of hurtful words or actions.

To learn more, visit [virtuestrength.org](http://virtuestrength.org)



## NEW! THE HONOR ROLLS CARDINAL O'HARA HIGH SCHOOL

The following students in our parish community demonstrated academic excellence for the 2nd quarter of the first trimester:

First Honors: **Kara Hoy '25, Keara Mangan '25, Jane McAnally '25, Abigail Adolph '26, Connor Bray '26, Matthew Chin '26, Gianna Mariano '26, Avery Murphy-Costanzo '26, Jim Smith '26, Penelope Miller '27, Kathleen Rayfield '27, Isabella Tillilie '27, Colette Breen '28, Ella Eusebio '28, Alex Foster '28, Gwenn Mangan '28, Sienna Randazzo '28, & Kylie Sobel '28.**

Second Honors: **Kira Carroll '25, Chiara Mersch '25, Marina Mersch '25, Ryan Crowley '26, Ben Kalinchak '26, Molly Carroll '27, Alanna Phillips '27, Griffin Saleski '27, Harry Bastian '28, & Fiona Gribbin '28.**

We congratulate these students for their diligent efforts and wish them continued success.



*Young Adults*

## BIBLE STUDY

Mondays from 7 to 8 PM

Join us weekly at St. Mary Magdalen for faith and fellowship on the lower level of the church in St. Francis Hall with other young adults.

## MASS & SOCIAL

Sundays at 7 PM

Come for Mass with music by Gus DeSimone and Sarah Thomas. Then stay afterward for food and fellowship in St. Francis Hall, or in nearby Media.

## WELCOME NEW FAMILIES

Are you interested in joining our parish? Visit our website or stop by our parish office to register. We welcome new members weekly.

Kristin McGoldrick & family, Kenneth & Laura Clark and family

## CALLED HOME TO GOD

Our sympathy and prayers are extended to the families of **Genevieve Giangiulio**, those souls who have died due to wars or conflicts including the Holy Land, Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, those recently lost to natural disasters or acts of violence, those souls lost in the recent airline crashes, and the 4,000+ babies aborted daily.

## A TIME TO HEAL

Please pray for our sick. Call the Parish Office if you or a loved one is ill.

Carol Austin, Charles Bastian, Danielle Bastian, Kevin Boylan, Bill Boylan, Joe Cahill, Anthony Carbo, Tricia Carmen, Christine Cavaliere, Mary Cichanowsky, Jim Clark, Jean Cotter, Joseph DeFabio, Kieran Doran, Rosemary Dougherty, Michelle Okon, Theresa D'Orazio, Phil Franco, Kevin Gallagher, Katie Garwood, Jacquelyn Gibbons, Bob Gentile, Rodie Henson, Mary Ellen Hoffman, Francis Iacovone, Cole Keith, Ray Kenney, Rita Klauder, Gregory Lewis, Leonard Lombardi, Shellz Mangan, Joe Malloy, Floyd Marvin, Robin Marvin, Marion McCarthy, Mary Jane & Pat McCloskey, Mary Theresa McDevitt, Michael McFadden, Dorothy Milliner, Dorothy Moerman, James Moerman, Joan Murphy, Mike Murphy, Carol Ortner, Bill Pace, John Pollera, Nicholas Quercetti, Sr., George Rodgers, Naomi Rouse, Daught Ryan, Peter Salemo, Angelina Scarpa, Brendan Shain, Lisa Innaurato Shaine, Bill Snyder, Susan Sowa, Amerigo Tomassi, Mark Torregosa, Roseann Yannacone, and Ernie Zappacosta.

## BAPTISMS

Congratulations to our newly baptized! For baptismal information, visit our website for an intake form, call or email [baptisms@stmarymagdalen.net](mailto:baptisms@stmarymagdalen.net).

Brooks Michael Murphy



Last week, 4th Graders earned a "Phanatic About Reading" assembly and a very special visit from the Phillie Phanatic for their diligent reading efforts.

## MASS INTENTIONS

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16

7:30 AM - Patricia Gonzalez

9:30 AM - William Joseph Bricker

11:30 AM - Clotilde & Giovanni Liberatore, and Silva Salera

7 PM - The People of the Parish

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17

6:30 AM - Charles Foster

8:30 AM - Patrick Hennessy

### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18

6:30 AM - Ints. of Monica & Tom Grzeczowski

8:30 AM - Luciano Spennato

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19

6:30 AM - Ints. of Steve Wigmore

8:30 AM - Ints. of Peter Lerro

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20

6:30 AM - Virginia Lott

8:30 AM - Vincent Zeller

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21

6:30 AM - Dr. Emilio Valdes

8:30 AM - Irene Byrne

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22

8:30 AM - Martin Sarkees

4:30 PM - Jennifer Vinci

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23

7:30 AM - Restituta Magnarelli

9:30 AM - Paul Franco

11:30 AM - Frances Maria Iannucci

7 PM - The People of the Parish

## FLOWERS

In memory of Genevieve Giangiulio

## BREAD & WINE

In memory of deceased parishioners

## CANDLE

In memory of deceased clergy

## 8 Tithing News & Passing Notes

### THAT MAN IS YOU THURSDAY AT 6:25 AM

Join us in St. Francis Hall for *Apostles in Springtime*.

### NEW! MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT DAY SATURDAY, MARCH 29

*Marriages of Grace*, part of the Archdiocese, offers a day for Engaged and Married Couples of all ages to renew, strengthen, and enhance their relationship and marital bond. Come with your spouse or fiancé and listen to nationally acclaimed Catholic speakers who will inspire you to live out your marriage with greater fervor, love, and joy. The enrichment day runs from 9 AM to 4 PM. The event includes breakfast and lunch, followed by the Saturday Vigil Mass at St. Helena's Church, located at 1489 Dekalb Pike in Blue Bell. **To register, visit [PhillyCatholicLife.org](http://PhillyCatholicLife.org) or pick up a flyer in our narthex.**

### TODAY! BETHESDA CASSEROLE COLLECTION

Our weekend collection is on February 15 & 16.

### SIGN UP! SENIOR SOCIAL CLUB RETREAT TUESDAY, MARCH 25

All are welcome to join the Seniors' Social Club for their **Lenten Day of Reflection** on Tuesday, March 25 from 9:30 AM to 2 PM at the IHM Conference Center at 401 Bryn Mawr Avenue in Bryn Mawr, PA. The cost is \$45 per guest. If interested, email Bill and Pat Moore at [patbillbr4@comcast.net](mailto:patbillbr4@comcast.net).



### PRAY FOR PRIESTLY VOCATIONS

Please encourage and pray for priest vocations. To aid us in our prayers, we have a blessed traveling Chalice from the Holy Land to enthrone in your home for a week. **To host our Blessed Chalice, please contact Deacon Joseph.**

TODAY'S READINGS BEGIN ON  
PAGE 98 IN THE HERITAGE MISSAL

### STEWARDSHIP & TITHING

January 2025	\$145,832
Collection:	\$33,443
Mail-in:	\$54,205
EFT:	\$58,184
January 2024	\$142,337
Collection:	\$45,036
Mail-in:	\$44,082
EFT:	\$53,219
Christmas 2024	\$113,675
2023:	\$108,217
Parish Appeal 2024	\$ 52,880
2023:	\$71,155
Sound System	\$ 36,700

We are grateful for your generous spirit!



Scan our QR Code for a secure link to our 'Parish Giving' link for Weekly & Special Collections, Annual School Fund, In Memory, Single Gifts, Stewardship, School Fund, and more.



### An Invitation from Archbishop Pérez

Your voice and presence are essential  
as we plan a new way forward

In January, Archbishop Pérez published an Pastoral Letter. This important letter outlines his hopes for the Church of Philadelphia over the coming years. He invites us to participate in a conversation about the trail we will blaze together for our Church.

Learn more about the vision to unite and to build the best possible Church of Philadelphia, please visit [trustandhope.org](http://trustandhope.org) or scan the QR code below to access his letter and video.

Then, he asks you to sign up for a session near you to share your thoughts.

We will host a session at SMM  
on Friday, March 7, at 10 AM  
and Thursday, April 3, at 6:30 PM.







# *Giving Hope* TO ALL

Did you know 1 in 5 people in the Philadelphia area count on the Catholic Charities Appeal for help and hope throughout the New Year?

THIS IS HOW YOUR DONATIONS ARE SUPPORTING CCA BENEFICIARIES, OF OUR \$10 MILLION GOAL...



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**12%** SPECIAL EDUCATION



**11%** MISSION PARISHES



**10%** SICK & RETIRED PRIESTS

This February, CCA kicks off its annual campaign. All around the archdiocese many benefit from its mission. CCA effects the lives of those in every county, town, parish, and neighborhood. Catholic Charities Appeal impacts nearly one million lives annually. However, they cannot do this vital work without you. Your gift, no matter the amount—matters more than you know.



We thank you for making a difference in the lives of so many, let's continue to bring hope throughout 2025!

To give, scan the QR Code, visit [catholiccharitiesappeal.org](http://catholiccharitiesappeal.org), or pick-up an envelope in the church narthex. CCA thanks you!

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