

# Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 5, 2017



## Reflection on the “March for Life”

Last Friday was the annual “March for Life,” gathering tens of thousands of believers on the Capital Mall to mark the 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a very important and tragic decision of our nation’s highest court - the 1973 ruling that made abortion legal in our country. Not moral, not ethical, just legal. The decision called *Roe v. Wade*.

The “March for Life” is primarily an act of faith, not a political gathering. It’s a gathering of people who believe that life is a gift breathed into us from God—the God we worship at Mass. Faith makes the difference. You and I know that life is a gift to be cherished and protected in a world where it is so often attacked and destroyed.

Of course, we realize at the same time, that there are many who do not share our faith. For them, life is not a gift from God. When life has no connection to God, it becomes a possession, something we have the right to control, manipulate, or choose to terminate. Not only in terms of the beginning of life but also in terms of its end.

If, however, we believe that life is a God-given gift, and we do, then it is not our possession, to be controlled or manipulated by ourselves or terminated by our own choice. Our decisions and choices must flow from our faith and must be deeply rooted in its rich soil. If life is a gift, then we must treat it as a gift and a sacred gift from our loving God. And we must respect it as a gift. How we understand human life, determines our attitude toward life and our treatment of the living, born and unborn.

In today’s world, there is a broad spectrum of life issues – from abortion, euthanasia, war and peace, the environment, genetic manipulation, and stem cell research, just to name a few.

The rally in Washington helped us to keep in the forefront of our minds the fact that human life is sacred from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death. Let us do everything we can to convince the culture and society in which we live that life is indeed a gift of God and its care and protection a responsibility of every follower of Jesus Christ. His Gospel, after all, is a Gospel of Life. Our God, the God we worship, is a life-giving God. The life God gives us is not ours to possess, control and manipulate.

Please take a moment to pray for our national, state and local legislators, judges at every level, and certainly all health care professionals, in solidarity with those who marched in Washington. And pray, for the countless number of human beings in our nation and in the world whose innocent lives have been threatened or terminated.

Msgr. Larry Bronkiewicz

Pastor



### MASS READINGS & INTENTIONS

**MONDAY, February 6**

Gn 1:1-19/Mk 6:53-56

7:00 AM Dec. Members of the Regan Family

12:00 PM Lina Montarro

**TUESDAY, February 7**

Gn 1:20—2:4a/Mk 7:1-13

7:00 AM Maria & Mariana Grassia

12:00 PM Lucille Tarantino

**WEDNESDAY, February 8**

Gn 2:4b-9, 15-17/Mk 7:14-23

7:00 AM Thomas Joyce

12:00 PM Robert Featherstone

**THURSDAY, February 9**

Gn 2:18-25/Mk 7:24-30

7:00 AM In Thanksgiving for St. Christopher

12:00 PM Lina Montarro

**FRIDAY, February 10**

Gn 3:1-8/Mk 7:31-37

7:00 AM Mary P. Culhane

12:00 PM Mary Rowella

**SATURDAY, February 11**

Gn 3:9-24/Mk 8:1-10

8:00 AM Robert Anderson

4:30 PM Margaret Anne Keane

**SUNDAY, February 12**

Sir 15:15-20/1 Cor 2:6-10/Mt 5:17-37 or 5:20-22a, 27-28, 33-34a, 37

**Church**

7:30 AM Parishioners of the Parish

9:15 AM Trudy Helen Dougherty

11:15 AM Catherine & Denis Sullivan

**Hall**

10:30 AM Jim, Samuel and Dick Gueci

12:00 PM Dec. Members of the Kremelberg Family

5:00 PM Dec. Members of the Rusinak Family



**PARKING REMINDER**

We remind those who park behind the Church to use only designated regular or handicapped spaces. Please be sure that your car does not prevent access for emergency vehicles.

**Birthing Needs Volunteers**

Birthing is an emergency pregnancy service offering free pregnancy tests, friendship counseling and practical support. If you would like to help, please call 1-800-550-4900 for the Birthing nearest you. Training is provided. Thank you.



**GOD'S PLAN FOR GIVING**

	<u>WEEKLY</u>	<u>YEAR-TO-DATE</u>
January 29, 2017	\$22,529	\$112,163
January 31, 2016	\$26,494	\$115,673
<b>Church Latin America</b>		
2017	\$4,315	
2016	\$3,332	
January 22, 2017	\$26,596	
January 24, 2016	\$19,747	

*This week's 2nd collection is for Facilities Repair  
Next week's 2nd collection is for Immaculate High School.*

**Prayers for the Sick**



Please remember our sick in your prayers, especially **Thersa Avento, Mary Jo Calamai, Patti Capilli, Bill Casey, Pat Gotimer, Jeanne Mastandrea, Pat Ruhl and Jim Tornello.** For the sake of privacy, only immediate family members may add someone to our prayer list. Individuals will be removed monthly unless we are otherwise notified.



**Altar Decorating Help Needed**

Do you like flowers and plants? Anita Barrios needs help with the week-to-week altar flowers as well as with planning and ordering for Easter. Can you help? Call Anita for more details at 203-431-6705.

**NEW PARISH OFFICE HOURS**

Please note, our new Parish Office hours are 10:00am-4:00pm, Monday - Friday.



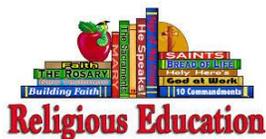
**You Can Play an Important Role in Our Ministry**

Do you know someone going through a difficult time who could benefit from the focused care, encouragement and support of a Stephen Minister? If you know of someone who is hurting, talk to one of our Stephen Ministry Leaders, Mary Ann O'Grady – 203-438-5610 or Jack Hughes – 203-665-0054. They can talk with you about how we can connect the person you know with one of our Stephen Ministers. It's a great way to show how much you care!

**DIVORCED & SEPARATED UPDATE**

Our Divorced & Separated support group is taking a short break and will relaunch in March or April. Keep an eye out in the Bulletin for updates. For more information, contact Jim Orkin, 914-420-7564, [jamesorkin@gmail.com](mailto:jamesorkin@gmail.com).





20th ANNIVERSARY



Saint Mary School  
RIDGEFIELD

Father Daughter Dance

Girls in Preschool 4's through Eighth Grade and their fathers or special guests enjoyed themselves at the annual SMS Father Daughter Dance! This beloved event is greatly anticipated. Each year, SMS Alumni return to help with this magical evening. The girls and their guests danced the night away in the hall which was transformed into an "Ooh-la-la Paris" experience. A special thanks to SMS Parents Stephanie Prezioso and Shannon Dickson who co-chaired the event, and their army of volunteers who transformed the Hall and gave everyone a night to remember!

*We invite you to come take a closer look. Saint Mary School will be holding a Kindergarten – Grade 8 Open House on Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup> from 9-10 am, and a Preschool Open House on Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup> from 9:30-10:30 am. Meet with other parents, speak with faculty and staff, and see classes in session. To register, for more information about SMS, or to set up a tour, please contact Anna O'Rourke at 203-438-7288 or visit [www.smsridgfield.org](http://www.smsridgfield.org).*

PILGRIM VIRGIN



*To honor the Mother of Jesus, consider inviting the Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Fatima to your home to pray the Rosary daily, a wonderful Marian devotion. The message from heaven for us is more urgent than ever to pray for world peace and the conversion of sinners. To invite the Pilgrim Virgin to your home contact Elma Stoveken at 203-894-1341.*

FAITH FORMATION CORNER  
Teaching Children about Abortion



Abortion builds on the lie that the smallest and weakest among us have less value and can even be discarded. Teaching children about abortion is not as difficult as many think. Children are particularly receptive to the message of equality of all people, and to the truth that might does not make right. They have a keen sense of justice and fairness. They know what it means to need protection from dangers they can neither withstand nor understand. They know what a baby is, and they know it is wrong to kill a baby.

Furthermore, they have not been around long enough to practice the mental gymnastics of denial that are necessary for developing and maintaining a pro-choice position.

It is not necessary to teach children the details of reproduction before they learn that abortion is a bad thing. The basis for teaching about abortion is not the reproductive system, but the dignity and worth of every human person, whether that person is big or small, young or old, healthy or sick, wanted or unwanted, convenient or inconvenient.

The basis for teaching young people about abortion is the same basis on which we teach that the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" applies to any other category of people. –Father Frank Pavone; full article from *Priests for Life* on our website.

**GIFTS FOR ALL: Liturgy of the Word for Children with Special Needs** is next scheduled for February 12<sup>th</sup> at our 10:30am Mass in our Parish Hall. All school age children with special needs are invited to join us for a wonderful sharing of God's love and Word.

**Reconciliation:** Our Grade 2 children have begun preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Retreat is on February 7th, 8th or 9th. Reception of the Sacrament will be on March 7th, 8th or 9th. Please call our Rel Ed Office, 203-438-7335 for more information.

**Drives:** Please drop off scarves (until 2/8); gently used handbags & totes, make-up, and full-size toiletries (until 2/7); and blankets (until 2/28) at RE office. Thank you!

RESPECT LIFE COMMITTEE



President Donald Trump, in one of his first Executive Orders, reissued and expanded the Mexico City Policy (MCP) which prevents foreign non-governmental organizations that perform or promote abortion from receiving funds from the population account of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) unless they pledge to stop performing or promoting abortion as a method of family planning, regardless of the funding source.

The policy was first enacted by President Ronald Reagan in 1984 following a population conference in Mexico City and was reaffirmed by Presidents George H. Bush and George W. Bush but repealed by Presidents Clinton and Obama. **Full report on our Parish website.**

[www.smcr.org/respect-life](http://www.smcr.org/respect-life)

DEFENDING OUR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY



The Catholic Church invests in the common good. It runs and operates schools, hospitals, universities, charities and social services. Our government and society have

long relied on them for help and taken advantage of the vast network that churches and religious institutions provide to aid people in need and to help form good citizens. But, when we are told we've got to stop being who we are, to put aside our beliefs, or plainly go against our conscience in order to be allowed to contribute to the common good, we must speak out.

If you haven't done so already, please voice your opposition to the federal health care mandate by calling U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia Mathews Burwell at 202-205-5445, and your elected representatives. Let them know that the mandate is in violation of our First Amendment right to religious freedom.

**CATHOLIC ACTION**

**Volunteers Needed**



Elders in our community need YOUR help. We need the following at Congregate Housing, Prospect Ridge:

1. **BINGO CALLERS** - 1 (or 2) needed. Wednesdays 1-2:30pm, once a month.
2. **LUNCH SERVERS** - 3 or 4 needed. Weekdays 11:45am-1:00pm, 2x/month. You can choose the days to volunteer.

CONTACT: Suzanne MacAvoy for info and to volunteer, [sdmacavoy@hotmail.com](mailto:sdmacavoy@hotmail.com) H 203 438-7056

**DONATE: Food Pantries**

During the month of February, collected food goes to the St. Joseph Parenting Center, whose mission is to strengthen families that are at risk of child abuse and neglect by providing free parenting education and support. Collection bins are in the Church and Hall.

**Important Notice - Cemetery Clean-up**

The period from February 1st through March 1st, weather-permitting, is traditionally used by the Cemetery to clean up the grounds for the coming spring. All fall and winter decorations will be removed during this period. If at all possible, we request that you refrain from placing any new decorations during this clean up period. If you wish to save your decorations, please remove them before February 1st.

**World Day of Prayer for the Sick & Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes**

All, especially the sick, the frail and the handicapped are invited to celebrate. Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:30pm. Mass and Sacrament of the Sick will be offered. Refreshments will follow. Welcome begins at 1:30pm; Mass celebrated at 2pm. St. Aloysius Church, Cherry Street, New Canaan. Info: Margie Doran 203-966-9873.



**MARQUETTE COUNCIL OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**

Don't you want to be the best role model for your child? The easiest way is to share the faith with your children by spending time with them and "walking the talk." Connect the words to action! Join the Knights of Columbus for the opportunity to serve our church and community together WITH your children. We are looking for Dads and their kids to help us throughout the year. Contact John McNicholas at [jmpmcnich@yahoo.com](mailto:jmpmcnich@yahoo.com) or visit [www.kofc245.org](http://www.kofc245.org) for more info.

**Save the Date**



St. Mary Parish Retreat

March 24 - 26, 2017

Seton-Neumann Center Danbury, CT



LUKE 5:1-11

Give your sweetheart a gift certificate for the D4L Retreat for Valentines' Day! Go to [www.smcr.org](http://www.smcr.org) for details.

**EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION**

O = permanent or substitute adorer urgently needed.  
X = 1 additional adorer needed.  
Empty boxes = there are 2 or more adorers.

	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
12M-1am	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
1am-2am	X	O	O	X	O	X	X
2am-3am	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
3am-4am	O	X	X	X	X	O	X
4am-5am	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
5am-6am	X	X			X		X
6am-7am	X		X	X	X		X
7am-8am	X		X	X	X	X	X
8am-9am	X	O	X		X	O	X
9am-10am	X	X		X	X	X	X
10am-11am	X			X		X	X
11am-12N	X						X
12N-1pm	X				X	X	X
1pm-2pm	O	O	X	O	X	X	X
2pm-3pm	X	X	X	X		X	X
3pm-4pm		X	X	X	X	X	X
4pm-5pm	X		X	X	X		X
5pm-6pm	X		X	X	X		X
6pm-7pm	X			X	X	X	X
7pm-8pm	X						X
8pm-9pm						X	X
9pm-10pm	X	X			X	X	X
10pm-11pm			X	X	O	X	X
11pm-12M	X		X		X	X	X

These past 22 years our Parish have been blessed with the exposition of the Eucharist presence of Jesus 24/7, in our Adoration Chapel. The following hours are empty. We pray more Adorers will fill these times presently being covered by substitutes. Sun: 2-3am, 3-4am, 4-5am, 1-2pm; Mon: 1-2am, 8-9am, 1-2pm; Tues: 1-2am; Wed: 1-2pm; Thurs: 1-2am, 10-11pm; Fri: 3-4am, 8-9am. With Lent approaching, consider taking one of these hours either by yourself or as an alternate with another person. Please sign up for an hour by calling Bill or Monica @ 914-533-2832. God bless us all.

EVERY Thursday evening, 7-9pm, in our Adoration Chapel, the Chaplet of Mercy, 7 Sorrows of Our Blessed Mother and 15 decades of the Rosary are sung and prayed. Please join us!



**ST. MARY PARISH MEN'S MINISTRY**

Here is a resolution which is sure to bring you joy. How many of you men have made New Year's resolutions? How many of you are (like me) still looking for meaningful resolutions or have already broken your resolutions? Why not make a resolution to join us once a week or once a month or whenever you feel in need of a pick me up. Christ "jump-started" his public life with His Baptism. Why not jump-start your year with God by joining us for coffee, OJ, and bagels, and learn strategies to meet life's challenges joyfully. Come get to know some other fathers, grandfathers, sons and like-minded men of St. Mary Parish. STMMM meets on Saturdays at 6:30am.

**Homily Survey**

Your feedback is valued and appreciated!  
The survey link is on our website, [www.smcr.org](http://www.smcr.org)