

Mass Intentions ~ November 18-24, 2019

Monday @ 7:30 am — Joan Millington (RIP)

Tuesday @ 7:30 am — U.S. Armed Forces

Wednesday @ 6:00 pm — Pat Hurley (RIP)

*Thursday @ 6:00 pm — Mass of Remembrance

Friday @ 7:30 am — Rita McDonald (RIP)

Saturday @ 5:30 pm — Carl Rainey

Sunday @ 8:00 am — Rose P. & Nicholas A. Valentine

Sunday @ 10:30 am — Joan Millington

Contact the Church office to schedule Mass intentions and to add names to our prayer list.



Altar Flowers & Blessed Mother Flowers this week are placed in honor of the People of the Parish.

Sacrament of Reconciliation — Saturday @ 4:30-5:00 pm (or by appointment — call the Church office)

Adoration this week: Monday — Friday, 8 am — 12 pm

New Prayer Requests

Special Intentions:

Kevin Smith

Angela Phillips

Stacy Harkins, daughter of Ron Guillot

Rest of the Soul:

Donna Jeane Norris, mother of Dennie Norris

Rita McDonald, sister of Eileen Lawson

Allen Cockrell, Philip Jabour's brother-in-law



Our mission is to invite everyone into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

November 17, 2019 ~ Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

DECISIONS.....DECISIONS.....DECISIONS.....

During the three Masses last weekend, we asked everyone to fill out a yellow Decision Card with their vote — which plan will you support?

Option 1: Build a new church!

Option 2: Repair the existing church, no new construction!

We also asked for direction regarding your Capital Campaign pledge.

....and, the results, so far.....

- 425 parishioners responded last weekend
- 333 (78.4 %) responded with a vote for Option 1
- 92 (21.6%) responded with a vote Option 2

- 38 parishioners committed to a new Capital Campaign pledge.
- 21 parishioners committed to increase their current Capital Campaign pledge.

- 87 parishioners opted for the Church to retain their Capital Campaign donations in order to repair the existing structure.
- 5 parishioners opted to have their Capital Campaign donations refunded.

Decision Cards were mailed to all who had made a Capital Campaign Pledge, but did not turn in a Decision Card. More cards will be distributed this weekend at all three Masses, for those who have not yet turned in their decision. An update of the results will be provided. We invite everyone to continue to prayerfully seek the Lord's guidance in the questions:

- ◆ **Where is God leading us?**
- ◆ **What is His plan for St. Paul Parish?**
- ◆ **Do our facilities meet the needs of our Parish, both now and for future generations?**
- ◆ **How can we best serve all members of our St. Paul family and bring everyone to a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ?**

—Fr Gerry

ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ EVENTS ~ INFORMATION

Mass of Remembrance, November 21st — All are welcome to attend this Mass. If you lost a family member within the course of the year but did not receive a letter from Fr. Gerry regarding this celebration, please call the Church office by Tuesday.

Book of Life — We ask everyone to update your family card in the Book of Life as we remember our deceased throughout the month of November. Blank cards are next to the book for new families. Please keep them in alphabetical order by last name.

Religious Ed classes will be out for Thanksgiving Break. Please note CGS will not meet on Sunday, Nov 24th & Dec 1st. Big Deal will not meet on Wednesday Nov. 27th. CGS resumes Dec 8th. The Big Deal resumes Dec 4th.

Women's Guild Fundraisers:

— **Comedy Dinner Theatre "All I Want for Christmas"** will be held Saturday, Dec 7th in the Family Life Center. Professional entertainment by The Detectives. Tickets are \$35 each. Appetizers start at 6:30 pm; dinner and entertainment at 7 pm. There will also be an Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest. 50% of all net proceeds will go to local charities that support women, children and families in our community. Tickets on sale before and after the weekend Masses at the Information Desk, or by contacting a Women's Guild Board member. No childcare will be available.

— **Win a Spirit Basket** Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. Drawing on December 7, 2019. You do not have to be present to win. Tickets on sale before or after Masses at the Information Desk, or by contacting a Women's Guild Board member.

Parish Advent Reconciliation Service — Monday, December 16th @ 6:00 pm

The Armed Forces Support Ministry extends a big "thank you" for the outpouring of generosity during our collection last weekend. We received close to \$1,500.00. This money will be used to send greeting cards and care packages to our deployed service members who are parishioners and family of parishioners. Thank you!!!

Remember to join us the 1st Saturday of every month at 4:45 pm in the Chapel to pray the Rosary for our nation and for all who are serving in our U.S. Armed Forces.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Offertory Collection for November 9/10:

- **Regular collection \$27,035.63**
- **Capital Campaign Collection \$9,037.18**
- **Diocesan Missions Second Collection \$615.00**

Advent is coming!

December 1st is the First Sunday of Advent
Sign up on the back counter
to present the Offertory Gifts!

Alpha is a place to explore the Christian Faith with others. It is a low pressure environment to discuss the big questions in life. Take one evening to enjoy food, a short video, and discussion. Come once. We will not ask for a commitment. It's not about joining a church or becoming Catholic. It's about asking questions with no judgment. Alpha is designed for anyone who has questions about faith.

What exactly is Alpha? Who is it for?

Mission: As Christians, we, the Church, are called to share the Gospel. Registration is now open on our website.

When we started talking about running an Alpha course here at St. Paul, a common thing I heard was that Alpha is for people who have "fallen away" from the Church — maybe not from the Catholic Church, but from Christianity altogether. Many of us have traveled that road...you turn 18, you have a blast in college, you're away from home, you decide you don't have a need for Church, you may decide you don't have a need for God at all. Birthdays pass, you marry, you have kids, you make mistakes, and you realize...maybe I DO believe in God, and maybe I DO have need for Church. What do you do? How do you make your way back?

I am the parent of a 25-year old daughter who, you could say, has "fallen away." She's an adult now. She is a beautiful person with two beautiful children. When we talk, I have sensed that *maybe* she is recognizing her need for a Savior. *Maybe* she would accept an invitation to attend a program where she would be accepted in spite of her circumstances, in spite of her questioning God and religion. *Maybe* she would be open to a place where she would be loved, accepted, welcomed and taught that God is real. *Maybe* she will come to know that He never stopped loving her, and that there is more to life than living in regrets.

I approached her about attending the Alpha course with me in January. She said, "so...a Bible study, huh?" I said, "no, not a Bible study." She asked, "Well, then what?" I told her to just come one week...come as you are...give it a try. Alpha is for people who may just be unsure of their faith. This will be a chance to bring your doubts and your questions, and not be ridiculed. You can bring your kids — we will watch them and feed them. We will feed you supper. You will watch a 30-minute video and have discussion time. I assured her, "There is no 'Ask' and no one is going to pressure you if you decide you don't want to come back."

And...much to this mama's surprise, she said, "Sure, I will go!" I know she could change her mind between now and then. But, then again, she may not!
—Kelly McBride

How do I invite someone to Alpha?

We are all called as Christians to spread the Good News of Christ, and go forth to make disciples. That is a lot easier said than done for many of us. We want our loved ones to experience the love, joy, and peace of Christ in their hearts, and we want them to have purpose and meaning in their lives. The Alpha Program is a great tool to help bring this about. Extending an invitation to Alpha is a non-threatening way to help bring others closer to Christ. It's that simple — prayerfully extend the invitation, and the Holy Spirit will take care of the rest.
— Gretchen Ware

Talking about faith is often difficult. How to pray? Why read the Bible? Alpha is a chance to have an easy, guided conversation about doubts, and to ask questions without being judged, truly. If you know someone who is open to having a conversation about God; invite them to Alpha. Do we want to help you become a believer? Jesus loves you and wants to have a relationship with you. If you are struggling with understanding who He is; come to Alpha. Yes. Jesus saves. I know, wholeheartedly, that I am deeply loved and known by God, my creator, the Father. He helps me in so many ways. The Holy Spirit speaks to me when I struggle with a difficult student in my classroom. But, my faith has not always been so strong so I understand questioning. At Alpha, there is no pressure, we only want to give you the opportunity to hear about what Jesus has done for you. Come share a meal and true fellowship. I hope to meet you there.
— Rachel Mathias

Reality: It often feels awkward to open the discussion. It can be difficult to share our faith with others, even close family, friends, and neighbors. Alpha is a great tool for this.

Power: The majority of guests attend Alpha because they were personally invited by someone they know.

Who: For most of us, at least 3 people come to mind when you are asked to think of someone who doesn't belong to a Church, or someone who questions the existence of God, or someone who doesn't know Jesus.

How: Ask a person to join you for one night. Share the link on Social Media #tryAlpha. Send a simple text. Give them a postcard invite (these will be provided to you during Advent.) What better Christmas gift could you give?

What does anyone have to gain by trying Alpha?

I didn't know what to expect from Alpha, but having never experienced ChristLife or Discovering Christ, I felt like I was exploring new territory.

At the Alpha Retreat I did what was asked of me, and opened myself to the Holy Spirit, not knowing what to expect because something of this magnitude has never happened to me before. I felt the Holy Spirit riffle through my memories as I watched the light play on the water outside the window, and suddenly my left side of my body felt the Holy Spirit as He engulfed me. He told me to keep doing what I'm doing and to trust in Him. It took 3 days before I realized that I had no more regrets. Before Alpha, I had a mountain of regrets. The Holy Spirit burned all of my regrets and shame from me. I have them no more. I have since tried to have regrets, to revive my shame and regret, but He won't let me. — Sam Hamburg

As we age in our faith, we don't always mature. We become complacent in our knowledge. We take it for granted. Alpha allows us to examine the "why" and "how." — Meredith Boston

Alpha refocused my sights & heart on the importance of Christian community, and the love of our Church. This provided me the opportunity to invite people to Christ.
— Karen Giordano

Alpha inspired me to reach outside of my comfort zone and talk to others about Jesus. I want them to know Him like I do. — Jessica Fons

It is a great program. I was able to witness a great change in people's relationship with the Holy Spirit. — Chris Cox

Alpha helped renew my passion to share Jesus. — Joanna King

When I received the invitation, I was reluctant about going. I felt I had nothing to offer considering I don't read my Bible every day, but what I do have is a good, loving relationship with God. I want to learn more to be able to give the gift of God to someone who doesn't know Him. On the initial night when I opened the door, I was greeted with such warmth from people I've only seen at church giving me a sense of calmness. After watching the first video, I was filled with passion to jump right in with no doubts, no second thoughts, sign me up! I knew the Holy Spirit had a hold on me and wasn't gonna let me go Amen to that! I found the videos each week to be informative and inspirational, leading to excellent table discussions. I left each night with the desire to come back and learn more. The love and compassion our parish has needs to be shared! Come, experience Alpha. I promise you will NOT be disappointed!
— Donna Gorline

My Church family continues to grow, thanks to Alpha. It was such a wonderful way to reflect and deepen my faith. I've absolutely loved this journey!
— CarlyMarie Harkins

No matter how much you think you know about God, there is ALWAYS room for expansion of knowledge and broadening one's perspective on how to evangelize others. — Tony Schmidt