



FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE

Members of the CoSM SPRED community will be part of the 5:00pm Mass this Saturday, April 20. Special Religious Education (SPRED) ministry has been part of parishes across the Archdiocese for many decades. SPRED has been offered at St. Mary's for over thirty years. You are welcome to pray with us and SPRED on April 20. In addition to friends and catechists of St. Mary's SPRED program, we will also welcome catechists and friends from other programs in Lake County. CoSM SPRED catechists would welcome a conversation with you letting you know ways you can volunteer and join them in their ministry here at our parish. I am very grateful to the SPRED leadership at St. Mary's for their dedication, commitment, and faithful ministry as catechists to our SPRED friends.

I carry around a notebook with a beautiful phrase on the cover; *"Working Together to Make A Difference."* An activity or project that is a burden to an individual can be joyously managed when others join together. This Sunday, April 21, the Parish Council is hosting a Ministry Fair. They offer this to the entire parish so that in ministry, in service, and in caring for one another, parishioners of St. Mary's will continue to make a difference, working together, and sharing Easter joy in parish ministries. Please stop by Donut Sunday in the Upper Grade Center cafeteria, speak with others in ministry in the school atrium, and enjoy sharing fellowship on the fourth Sunday of the Easter season.

You may know that Deacon Bob and Marietta Thomas, Fr. Mark Augustine, parishioners and friends of St. Mary's are soon to embark on a Camino de Santiago de Compostela: *The Way of St. James* later this month.



They will travel the "Way" that pilgrims have walked for over 1,100 years to visit the tomb of St. James the Greater, one of Jesus' 12 Apostles, at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, Spain. They will be walking The Portuguese Route, from Vigo, Portugal to Santiago, Spain. They technically begin their "Camino" from their homes in America but formally begin their journey with the first steps they take in Vigo, Portugal on May 2. They will walk for a week, across beautiful countryside, seeing beautiful vistas of the Atlantic Ocean as they travel north into Spain. Their prayer is to arrive at the Cathedral of St. James on May 8 where they will meet many other pilgrims completing the "Camino" on one of nine recognized routes.

We will not be with them in Portugal or in Spain, but we can spiritually support them on their "Camino". If you are a walker, taking in the beauty of the bike trails and paths in Open Lands in the area, from May 2 - May 8, offer a prayer for their safe journey, no wrong turns, no major health issues, and spiritual renewal on their "Camino". I had the good fortune of walking the Camino in September 2023 from Sarria to Santiago, Spain. I pray Deacon Bob, Marietta, Fr. Mark, and companions will have an equally wonderful experience.

Recently friends shared some quotes that brought lively discussion to them and others as they were discussing the Gospels of the Easter Season. Thomas Merton was quoted from his book *"He Is Risen"*: "True encounter with Christ liberates something in us, a power we did not know we had, a hope, a capacity for life, a resilience, an ability to bounce back when we thought we were completely defeated, a capacity to grow and change, a power of creative transformation."

Fr. Ron Rolheiser was quoted: "When we cannot help ourselves, we can still be helped. When we are powerless to reach out, grace can still come through the walls of our resistance and breathe peace into us. We need to cling to this whenever we experience irretrievable brokenness in our lives, when we feel helpless inside our wounds and fears, when we feel spiritually inept, and when we grieve loved ones lost to addictions or suicide. The resurrected Christ can come through locked doors and roll back any stone that entombs us, no matter how hopeless the task is for us."

And the ever popular, Unknown Author was quoted: "Live in such a way so that those who know you but don't know God will come to know God because they know you."

May God bless us with prayerful, compassionate and joyous hearts this Easter season,

Fr. Mike Nacur