



What's Happening
at St. Mary's
Spring 2018 edition
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Here we are past the middle of April. Easter has come and gone. The IRS is beginning its busy season, but most of all, Mother Nature, again, has shown us resurrection. Trees, that a few days ago looked dead, are alive with a variety of different colored, gorgeous buds. Golden forsythia and daffodils are in abundance. Birds we haven't seen for months are at the bird feeder and in the garden. It's no wonder many people find God in nature. Even we humans have a spring in our gait. Sorry about that!

Spring is notorious for getting rid of things and St. Mary's This n' That Thrift Shop will be trying to do just that. An outdoor fundraiser is planned for Saturday, April 28 from 10 to 3pm to benefit The Branches. In addition to selling items from the shop, there will also be a Bake Sale. Bring your "goodies" to The Branches by Saturday, April 28.

Speaking of The Branches, it has been a hard winter for some of the clients and the volunteers. I think they might have set a record for the number of Code Blue nights. However, in spite of the challenges that the weather brought, new and exciting programs are evolving. Updating resumes at the computer station has enabled a client to find a job. He started on April 5. Four volunteers are acting as advocates for our guests. The advocates help to navigate the guests through Social Services, housing issues, job placement and other obstacles. A chiropractor, yoga instructor, and two hair stylists volunteer each month. Father Peter leads a Bible study on Mondays. He recently baptized two guests. The Branches is making an impact on our community. The Angelus Chorus has decided St. Mary's primary outreach project will be the recipient of the proceeds from their concert at The Middle Township Performing Arts Center on Sunday, May 6 at 4 PM. The tickets are only \$5 and can be purchased at The Branches or through the church office. Feel free to stop in at The Branches and The Thrift Shop any day, Monday through Saturday to see what's happening.

The committee of Service, Worship, Education, Evangelism, Pastoral Care, known as SWEEP met in April. Our numbers were so great, we had to move from the chapel to the parish hall. St. Mary's was the host church to Family Promise for the week of March 18. We were informed of the Angelus Chorus Benefit for The Branches on May 6. The group then moved on to Worship. In March we discussed the possibility of a Saturday night service at St. Mary's. The Vestry also discussed the issue and decided we should pursue the idea. SWEEP suggested we start in June, move to the beach service during July and August, and based on what happens in June decide if a Saturday night service is viable. There was a

discussion on the need for Eucharistic Ministers, Ushers, and Greeters at both Sunday services. Father Gorman introduced what he called, "conTexts." conTexts would be a weekly discussion group open to everyone, parishioners, friends, and the community to discuss a current event, an event that happened in the last couple of weeks. Participants would have the opportunity to share faith-informed views and opinions on a current happening. The event would be chosen to promote positive discussion. Father Gorman would choose the event to be discussed and he would like to begin in May. Day and time to be determined. Stay tuned. The need for providing nursery care during the 10 o'clock service was discussed. Attracting young families with young children without nursery care could be a challenge. SWEEP is trying to plan ahead. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 9 at 6:30 PM. After "Old Business," we'll focus on Pentecost Sunday, May 20, Strawberry Festival in June, and getting ready for summer. The parish hall can accommodate a lot of people, so if you want to help shape what's happening at St. Mary's, please join us.

The Adult Forum, which meets between services in the chapel, completed reading and discussing "The Last Week" and is now determining our next course of study. If you enjoy open and frank discussions, this is the place for you.

St. Mary's Senior Luncheon had a fun Game Day in April. If you're interested in knowing how the new tax law could affect you, join us on May 10 at 11 AM in the parish hall. A representative from the accounting firm which did St. Mary's audit will be with us to discuss the law. We meet from 11 to 1 PM and lunch will be provided. Our last get together will be at the Emlen Physic Estate in Cape May in June for lunch, tour of the house, wine tasting, and a Bach concert performed by members of the Bay Atlantic Symphony Orchestra. The cost is \$30 per person and we're restricted to thirty people. The last time I looked at the sign-up sheet in the parish hall there were eight openings available.

If you use an accountant to file your taxes, they usually suggest this is a good time to review your finances. I am not a financial advisor, however I offer free advice. If you own anything, you have an estate. If you don't have a **Will**, you just made the State an heir to your estate. If you don't have a **Power of Attorney** you just put undue stress and financial burden on your family. No **Living Will**, someone else will determine your end of life wishes. Regardless of age or financial status, if you don't have these three documents, someone else is in charge of your life.



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