

The WINGED LION

SUMMER 2024

The Gift of the Eucharist

BY FR. DENNIS ARECHIGA

This summer something special happens within our lectionary cycle of Sunday readings that only takes place once every three years: five Sundays in which we hear gospels from the sixth chapter of John.

Being in Year B, the Gospel of Mark, we realize that Mark is the shortest of all four gospels. Thus, it is supplemented several Sundays by John's Gospel, which does not have its own liturgical year; Year A covers Matthew and Year C, Luke. Starting July 28th and including all four Sundays of August, we hear from this section of John's Gospel that focuses on Jesus as being the bread of life. The grouped verses within the chapter focus on different topics: the Multiplication of Loaves (6:1-14), the first week; Walking on Water (6:16-24), the second week; The Discourse (6:26-59) which covers parts of the second, third and fourth Sundays; the Epilogue (6:60-71) used on the last Sunday, August 25th.

Also this summer, a National Eucharistic Congress is taking place in Indianapolis as our Church seeks a deeper renewal and focus on the gift of the Eucharist. So, what a good time to reflect this summer upon the power and significance of the Eucharist. The Collegeville Bible Commentary stresses that there is only



“Grant, I beg of You, that I may receive not only the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord, but also its full grace and power.”

Give me the grace, most merciful God, to receive the Body of your only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, in such a manner that I may deserve to be intimately united with His mystical Body and to be numbered among His members.”

- St. Thomas Aquinas' Prayer before receiving Communion

one miracle narrated by all four evangelists: The multiplication of loaves “found by Mark twice, in 6:31-44 and 8:1-10; by Matthew twice, in 14:13-21 and 15:32-38; by Luke in 9:10-17” and in the section of John listed above. Theologian Neal M. Flanagan, O.S.M. states that “indeed, what Jesus does with the bread sounds like the rubrics for what the Christian minister continually did in the celebration of the Eucharist. In the accounts of Mark, Matthew, and Luke, Jesus took the bread and blessed and broke and gave. So would the Christian minister. John's description is equally ceremonial, but with one even more Christian peculiarity. In 6:11, Jesus took, gave thanks, and distributed. The Greek for “give thanks” is eucharisteo, which gives us our word for Christian Eucharist.” [Page 990, The Collegeville Bible Commentary] In other words, the scriptures are putting into words what was already being celebrated by the Christian community in the celebration of the Eucharist.

The fact that the story of the Multiplication of the Loaves occurs in all four Gospels, and even twice in two of the gospels, reveals how pivotal this miracle is. It reminds us that we are called to trust in God's providence. When the disciples saw the vast crowds compared to their few resources to feed them, they were dismayed. But Jesus was not. He knew God would feed the hunger of the many present.

In the breaking of the bread, the loaves and fish were multiplied and all were fed. In this most important chapter of John's Gospel, Chapter Six, we hear Jesus tell us that unless we eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, we will not have life within us. Those who partake of the real presence in the Eucharist, Christ's own body and blood, soul and divinity, unite themselves to the life-giving presence of our God. In turn, our union with Christ should be manifested by the love we show towards our neighbor in building up the Body of Christ.

As we continue to reflect upon the importance of the Eucharist in our lives, we are called to have a great sense of reverence when approach-

ing the reception of this sacrament. We are also called to have a greater trust that God will provide for all of our needs if we place our hope in the Lord. If we have not done so, why not spend time in our Adoration Chapel during this year in which we highlight the gift of the Eucharist in our Church?

Fr. Dennis

JOHN'S FIVE SUNDAY GOSPELS WITHIN YEAR B

7-28-2024	17TH SUNDAY IN O.T.	JOHN 6:1-15
8-04-2024	18TH SUNDAY IN O.T.	JOHN 6:24-36
8-11-2024	19TH SUNDAY IN O.T.	JOHN 6:41-51
8-18-2024	20TH SUNDAY IN O.T.	JOHN 6:51-58
8-25-2024	21ST SUNDAY IN O.T.	JOHN 6:60-69

"The Greatest Love Story"

We were created out of God's sheer goodness.

We once experienced a state of total harmony.

But we allowed our trust in Our Creator to die.

We rejected the infallible goodness of God and sold ourselves into slavery.

In rejecting the Infinite One, we created an infinite gap between ourselves and God.

But God didn't abandon us.

Though we didn't deserve His mercy, God loved us to the very end.

Jesus handed over His infinitely rich body to be scourged and crucified for our sake.

He poured out His infinitely valuable blood to restore our sonship and daughterhood of the Father.

And He didn't stop there.

He established a Kingdom, a Church, in which we can continue being nourished with His body and blood.

He established a means by which we can be transformed to become like Him.

He established a means by which He would never leave us.

And the crazy thing is, we're even better off now because of that great gift than if we had never abandoned God to begin with.

This is life-changing news.

And it requires your response.

From National Eucharistic Revival



60,000 Catholics gathered in Indianapolis for the first National Eucharistic Congress in nearly a century. July 17-24, 2024 (Photos from National Eucharistic Revival)



Our Apostolic Mission

BY MEGAN BYERS

"I want to be an apostle!" I exclaimed after Mass. "Cool" replied my dad, "where is Jesus sending you?"

Almost five years have passed since that revelation and I find myself in the exact same place: at St. Mark the Evangelist in San Antonio, Texas. The only difference is that I am now employed as the Youth Minister. In the eyes of an eager girl in her early twenties that is the complete opposite of "sent." Let's give God some credit though, He knows me quite well. While I firmly believe God gave me the heart of an apostle, He did not have foreign mission in mind as he knit me together in my mother's womb.

My desire to be an Apostle as I live and serve in my "native place" confused me when I moved back home and watched friends from high school youth group serve as missionaries in really cool places like Ireland and Oklahoma!!! Prior to and during the pandemic, I applied to work for parishes anywhere but here. I've never faced more rejection. . .

In prayer, the one thing God would say to me when I brought up my desire to be an apostle was "stay." I created many scenarios to help wrap my head

around what He meant by that - never thinking He took that word quite literally.

Do not misunderstand me; it is a joy to work at St. Mark and minister to the young people of our parish as I grow in my desire to be an apostle. I have experienced our parish go through numerous changes in the last three years, but there remains a sense of peace that I "stay" and boundless hope for the future of our parish community.

As I reflect on my job and my desire to be an apostle, I have become aware that times have changed. What I experienced as a teen is very different from what teens face today. Some might blame the pandemic, but I've found that it's actually due to a cultural shift that was occurring prior to Covid. You may be aware that our society is no longer influenced by Christianity. Whether this angers you or not, the reality is that we are no longer living in an age of "Christendom."

The book "From Christendom to Apostolic Mission" from the University of Mary has been instrumental in my own discernment as it describes this shift and outlines how the Church should respond. Something this book helped me understand was being aware of a cultural shift is not enough to keep Christ's Church alive and well!

Brothers and Sisters, we are called to an "Apostolic Age" inspired by the lives of the Apostles and early Christians whose

lives were radically different from the Romans. The early Christians worshiped a God who loved them and died for them and they shared stories of His miraculous healings during His time on earth.

It makes sense for our lives to be radically different from those who do not believe in Christ. As Christians, our lives should reflect the love of Jesus. He asked us to "make disciples of all nations" - it is our responsibility to share with others the Salvation that Jesus won for us. How we live this out this call will look different for each of us, but I encourage you to be aware of the ways the Lord is calling you to step out with courage into this Apostolic Age.

If ministering to teens has taught me anything, it's that my personal relationship with Christ or knowledge of the faith isn't something that makes me better or holier. I am not given permission to judge the state of their hearts. I am called to share my experiences, preach the Truth, and humbly guide them closer to the Lord.

I invite you to reflect on how the Lord has set you apart. How is God asking you to be a light in the world that grows increasingly darker? How is He sending you as a messenger to the people around you?

Megan Byers is the Director of Youth Ministry at St. Mark the Evangelist.



**ST. MARK
YOUNG CHURCH**

IS LOOKING FOR ADULT VOLUNTEERS FOR
THE 2024 - 2025 SCHOOL YEAR!

LIFE TEEN (9TH - 12TH)
EDGE (6TH - 8TH)
CONFIRMATION YEAR 1 & YEAR 2

FOR MORE INFO VISIT: WWW.STMARKYM.COM/JOIN_CORE

2024 Annual Fall Book Sale

The Women's Guild

Fri. -Sept. 6 – 9am to 3:30pm

Sat. - Sept. 7 – 9am to 5pm

Sun., Sept. 8 – 9am to 2pm

Event Center – Building #14

1602 Thousand Oaks – SA, TX 78232



Books, CDs, DVDs

Sorted for easy searching

Hardcover, CD/DVDs = \$1+

Paperback = 50 Cents +



Sunday Blue Bag Sale

1st Bag - \$10.00

Additional Bags

\$5.00 each

VBS 2024

BY RITA CABELLO

On behalf of Fr. Dennis, and Children's Ministry, We would like to thank our St. Mark Community for all the snacks, decorations, monetary donations and prayers. We felt all your prayers and we had a beautiful VBS week! The children had a great time learning about controlling their emotions through God's help.

Our core team of adult volunteers worked so hard to make this a beautiful week for the children. Our teen volunteers worked hard in putting together all the decorations and props that brought the VBS theme alive for the children. Our decorating adult team, led by Maritza Shreffler and Alejandra Ceballos, were instrumental in implementing the teen's ideas.

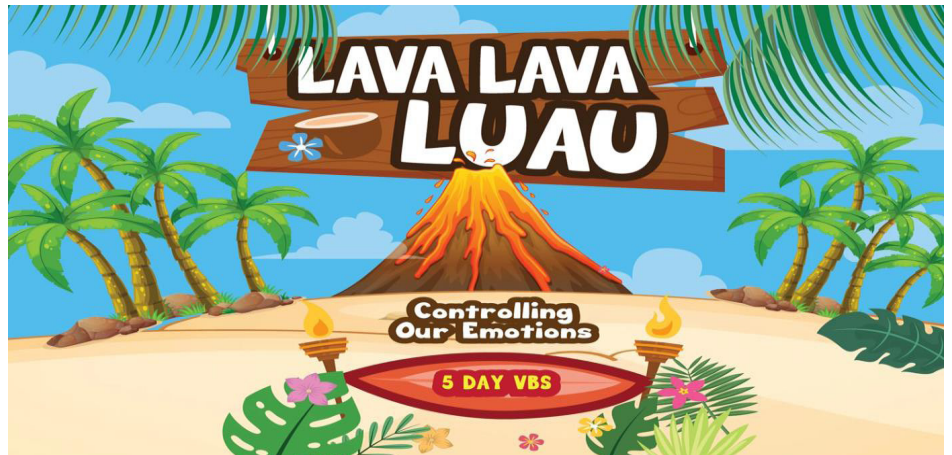
Adult volunteers were: Allen Shreffler, Thao Mangan, Nicholas Mangan, Marina Mangan, Kay Kay Bossaller, Kara Bossaller, Dora Camero, Adriana Zak, and Diane Maes.

Our 2024 Habitat for Humanity House

BY NANCY FORGET

April 13 saw completion for our 2024 home with a glorious Mariachi celebration and dedication. As you can see, this happy family is so proud of their daughter to have worked her 300 hours of 'sweat equity', held a good job for three years, completed classes to take care of a house, and met all other qualifications.

Bobby Alvarez and son, Noah, joyfully toiled on landscape day spreading soil and sod, excited that Noah soon have a safe neighborhood and yard to play.



The rest of our VBS Adult team were: Megan Byers, for organizing teen volunteers into their different duties; storytelling, Rachel Lorenzana and Lori Martinez; Music, Sarah Greer; Crafts, Kay Kay Bossaller, Kara Bossaller, Dora Guardia, and Dora Camero, Games; Clarisa Bossaller, Jade Dexter, and Angela Glance, Kitchen crew; Ida Solano, Hilary Eyhorn, Adriana Zak, Alma Cooley and family. Sarah Lynn, who did a tremendous job as our MC. Nurse for the week was Kristin Casiano. We also want to thank Sal and Donna Scalia, Pete and Mardi Gonzales for setting up and grilling burgers for the appreciation lunch for our volunteers.

Thank you, Core Team, and all for a great job! May God continue to bless you all always!

Rita Cabello is the Children's Ministry Coordinator at St. Mark the Evangelist.

Check out the highlights from our Vacation Bible School by scanning the QR below:



We, the communicants of St Mark, have contributed financially, prayerfully, and with powerful loving labor to answer God's call to serve His people. This was a fantastic community building opportunity for our volunteers, the home-



owners, and the Habitat employees, between ours and sponsors of other homes. Until next January, please keep supporting Habitat. Our 2025 Habitat Home will honor our St. Mark Habitat hero, Sam Szalwinski.

Nancy Forget leads St. Mark the Evangelist's Habitat for Humanity Projects.

Spiritual Hugs

BY VELMA SPRUEL WILLIAMS

Greetings, St. Mark Community! We offer a “Spiritual Hug” from us to you. Amazingly, it has been 8 years since I was asked to start our Prayer Shawl Ministry at St. Mark. I give thanks to God for the wonderfully generous and talented ladies (and supportive gentlemen) who have become members of our Ministry.

We hand crochet or knit our prayer shawls, and lapghans (which you may refer to as throws or blankets) for families who have ill relatives; Veterans; Hospice Care Facilities; tiny Caps for babies in NICU hospital wards; winter scarves for the homeless through Traveling Loaves and Fishes; and many other items, all using acrylic yarns to avoid allergic reactions.

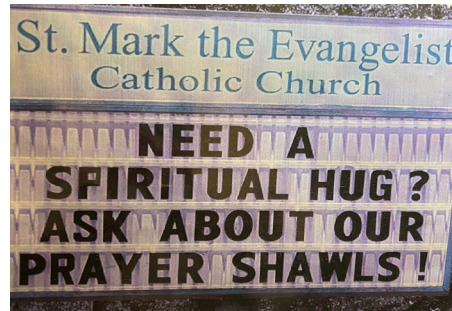


Photo of St. Mark Marquee introducing our Prayer Shawl Ministry in 2016.

From the beginning, we participated in the Ministry Fair and ran articles in the Winged Lion, asking persons to contact me if they were interested in joining us in starting this ministry. The response was amazing! And so, we began. We have been assigned several different meeting rooms along the way. Now, some members gather and work in our latest and larger meeting room. Additionally many of our members still sign out yarn, work from home,

and deliver their finished projects. We have had generous donors help us buy yarn and other supplies along the way. Thank you!!

Since our initial year we have produced over three thousand items and counting. We have distributed many of them locally, throughout other states, and even other countries! Father Kevin, and now, Father Dennis, have graciously blessed all of our items, individually, in the name of the person who will receive them.

Come join us!!! You can help us make a difference in the lives of someone we may know, or someone we may never meet. If you are interested, please contact me at 210-416-5563.

Velma Spruel Williams is the Prayer Shawl Ministry Lead at St. Mark the Evangelist.



Do you wish you had more peace of mind? Could you use more wisdom in your decision-making? Do you ever wonder how to grow in wisdom? You may not realize that Scripture offers us wisdom that actually relates to our daily lives. Through the wisdom literature of the Bible, God shows us how to walk in his vision for our happiness and well-being, as he created us to do. The wisdom literature—Proverbs, Wisdom, Sirach, and Ecclesiastes—shows us that God has showered us in livable wisdom. *Wisdom: God's Vision for Life* is your guide to learning how to gather, gain, and grow in wisdom in your daily life.

If you want to know what it means to live with God's wisdom and are ready to dive deeper into applying Scripture to your life, I invite you to join us for *Wisdom*, beginning on 12 September.

You will not only benefit personally from being part of this study; you will also help us to grow in fellowship as a parish as we grow closer to Christ together.

Wisdom invites you to experience the transforming power of taking time to apply God's wisdom to your own life. You will learn to see with his vision. You will experience the peace of knowing God cares for you, and you will see how God—and only God—can show you a path through any circumstance. Participants of *Wisdom* will receive a journal and will meet every week to view an engaging video presentation followed by a time of lively group discussion and fellowship.

The eight 30-minute videos, presented by Jeff Cavins, will guide you through a variety of themes drawn from the wisdom literature of Scripture. Jeff will

explain Scripture's wisdom on decision-making, finances, relationships, peace of mind, and speaking to one another, will look at the beauty of wisdom gained through age, and at how Christ himself is the embodiment and fulfillment of all wisdom.

We will begin this study of *Wisdom* on September 12th at 6:30pm. For more information or to register for the study, contact Don Cosgrove at cosgrovedon@msn.com or 210-710-0722. I hope you can join us. You will love it.

Don Cosgrove leads Thursday Night Bible Study at St. Mark the Evangelist.



Easter Vigil Reflection

BY ANABEL FARRELL

The Easter Vigil Mass joyfully celebrates Christ's victory-His passage from death to life. The Mass begins after sunset with a roaring fire at the doorsteps of the Church surrounded by the Elect in their red robes, the Candidates dressed in their finest, sponsors, family, friends, and parish community all in attendance eagerly awaiting the beginning of this momentous occasion. Father Dennis, the deacons, and the altar servers surround the flames and begin the celebration by blessing the new Easter candle. He then lights the paschal candle from the blazing fire and sings: "May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds."



The priest then leads the people gathered there with him inside the Church, all holding unlit candles in their hands as the deacons carry the light of Christ into the darkened, mostly empty sanctuary. Once inside the Church, hundreds of hands holding their unlit candles await to receive Christ's light from the Easter candle. Father Dennis addresses the entire community as they prepare to celebrate in unity with the Elect and Candidates seeking full initiation into the Catholic faith.

The Church Community, Elect, and Candidates now sit quietly in anticipation of the Liturgy of the Word, which tells the history and truth of our creation, the journey of faith through



Abraham, the journey of freedom through Exodus, and the prophets who urged the people to renew their covenant with God. Our present and past faith history- the History of our salvation that culminates in Christ connects us spiritually to God and one another. Jesus' death and resurrection are why all our brothers and sisters in Christ have new life and hope for eternal life with the Lord.

The celebration of baptism is the center and high point of baptismal washing and the invocation of the Holy Trinity. (RCIA 209) But first, "the blessing of water, then the renunciation of sin by the elect, and their profession of faith." (RCIA209) The Elect die to sin, rise with Christ as new creations, and begin to live a new life with God through the waters of the baptismal font. After their journeys of conversion have brought them to this point, you can see God's presence in the joyful smiles of all the newly baptized adults and children after Father Dennis proclaims, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Equally joyful are the Candidates, some baptized from other faiths, some baptized Catholic, all seeking to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church through a profession of faith and reception of Confirmation and Eucharist.

The Easter Vigil Mass is the "most noble of all solemnities," the "Feast of feasts," and the climax of the Roman Catholic Church's Triduum. The heightened anticipation of the Easter Vigil did not disappoint all those present. From start to finish, the Elect and Candidates encountered God's love and the sup-

port of their sponsors, and everyone gathered throughout the celebration. The Easter Vigil was indeed a synthesis of what the entire Christian faith is all about. Christ is not unapproachable. He is present in the Sacraments and is alive and present amongst us!

The newly baptized, anointed with Chrism oil and infused with the light of Christ, and Candidates confirmed as Catholic are joined in Christ with Christians in their community along with every member of the Universal Church as they come to the table to partake of the sacred meal. Jesus' words in John's Gospel come to mind as they receive the Eucharist for the first time, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh."



Throughout their spiritual journey, there has been a growing awareness of Catholic teachings, which has evolved into wisdom and understanding of the many mysteries of our Catholic faith. They are committed to believing in all that the Catholic Church teaches. As they continue discovering and acting on their faith as members of the Body of Christ transfigured by the Sacraments of Initiation, there is light where there once was darkness.

Anabel Farrell helps lead the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults at St. Mark the Evangelist.

Women's Guild Year in Review

BY BARBARA JAMES

The St. Mark Women's Guild will be celebrating another wonderful and fulfilling year at our June 9, 2024, General Meeting. We come together to Congratulate and Install our new Executive Board. Afterward we enjoy a delicious meal and reminisce about this past year and look forward to the upcoming year supporting the St. Mark community.

Most of the members of the Women's Guild are members of various other Ministries at St. Mark. The Women's Guild is always ready to lend a helping hand, donate items or make monetary contributions to the St. Mark Ministries. Recently, I became aware of how many members are involved with ACTS, Caring & Sharing, Eucharistic Adoration, Choir, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, First Saturday Prayer Group,

Habitat for Humanity, Lectors (English & Spanish), Liturgy committee, Manna to your Door, Traveling Loaves & Fishes, Pastoral Council, Prayer Shawl Ministry, Quilters, Right to Life, Sanctuary Care, Society of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Special Needs Faith Formation, Ushers and Young at Heart. I may have missed a few! I think you get the idea, when you join the Women's Guild you join a group of women who share our faith and love for one another and the St. Mark Community.

Lunch Bunch meets monthly on the first Wednesday of each month. We have a committee who chooses a local restaurant and then everyone is invited to enjoy a relaxing afternoon with one another. Our annual Women's Guild Retreat is in May each year and all women of the church are welcome. It is a day of faith enrichment ending with a Mass. The Rosary is led by the Women's Guild on the third Saturday of each month before the 5pm Mass. Our Blessed Mother is our Patroness Saint. To honor Mother Mary and all her titles

we pray a decade to end our meetings.

Each Spring we have a Women's Luncheon to support five, one-thousand-dollar scholarships for graduating seniors. All women of the Parish are invited to the luncheon where we enjoy a Silent Auction, Bucket Raffle and Fashion Show. Our Fundraising events support the St. Mark Parish. We could not do this without the support of the parish community donating items and coming to our Bake Sales, Book Sale, and Trash & Treasure Sales. Thank you to all our St. Mark parishioners for supporting these events.

If you are interested in joining the St. Mark Women's Guild look for our Membership Drive coming in August or give me a call at 210-269-5918.

All women 18 years and older are welcome. Sisterhood is Ageless! Have a wonderful summer.

Barbara James is the St. Mark Women's Guild President.

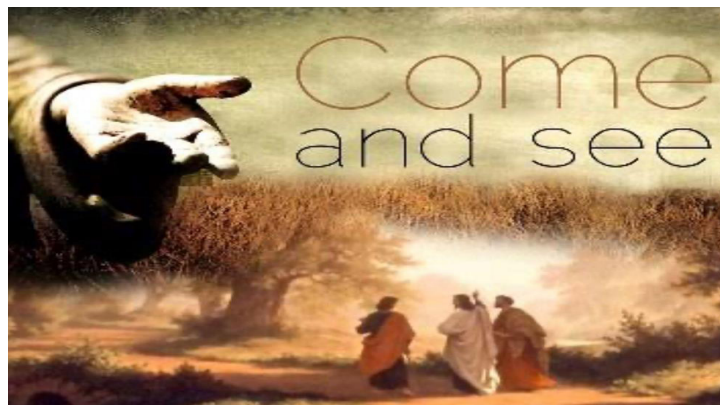
What are You Looking For?

Interested in a 9-week faith journey through the **Gospel of John** that encounters sacrament, theology, and ministry?

Come and see, and accompany those adults seeking Confirmation in our Church as we, too, seek out where the Lord is staying.

Take this Adult Faith Formation opportunity to explore the Bible, the Trinity, sacraments, grace, sin, and reconciliation.

These interactive and theologically stimulating classes are presented by Paul Vance, DMin. and Deacon Jorge Cabello, and a special appearance by Fr. Dennis.



Join us as we prepare for Advent by engaging Theology, Sacraments, and Ministry.

Where: Holy Family Room

When: Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:30 pm beginning October 8, 2024.

How: Register by calling Rita Cabello at 210-494-1606 Ext. 320

Prerequisites: An open mind, an open heart, and a thirst to learn.

Limited Seating! No Fee!

ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST CATHOLIC CHURCH

1602 THOUSAND OAKS DR
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78232

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
PERMIT NO. 3235

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PLACE ADDRESS LABEL HERE



E-NEWSLETTER
COMING SOON

PLEASE STAY TUNED
FOR THE OPTION TO
RECEIVE OUR
NEWSLETTER
ELECTRONICALLY.

The Winged Lion Publication Policy

St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church reserves the right to publish article submissions and edit all submissions for form and content.



St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church

SUMMER 2024

Pastor: Rev. Dennis Aréchiga

Mass Schedule

Saturday 5:00 pm
Sunday 8:00am,
10:00 am, (livesreamed)
12 Noon 2:00 pm (Spanish)
5:00 pm

Monday 8:15 am
Tuesday 8:15 am
Wednesday 8:15 am,
6:00 pm (Day Chapel)
Thursday 8:15 am
Friday 8:15 am

First Saturday Mass 9:30 am
Holy Days 8:15am, 12pm & 6pm

Eve of Holy Day 6pm

Reconciliation
Wednesday 5pm - 5:50pm
Saturday 3:30-5pm
or by appointment

Adoration
Tuesday-Thursday, 9am-4:45pm

Our mission:
TO SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS
OF JESUS CHRIST TO ALL GOD'S
PEOPLE BY WORD AND ACTION.



He said to them, "Go into the whole world and
proclaim the gospel to every creature..."

Mark 16:15



www.stmarkevangelist.com | 210.494.1606