



Liturgy Schedule

Saturday Vigil:

5:00 p.m.,
7:00 p.m. (Spanish)

Sunday:

7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m.,
11:30 a.m.,
4:00 p.m. (Lifeteen)

Daily Mass:

Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, 7:30 a.m.;
Wed, 12 p.m. (noon)

Adoration:

Mon, Tue, 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.;
Wed, 8:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.;
Fri, 8:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Confessions:

Sat, 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Standridge Family Bonding Together Over Diaconate



Bringing his talents to St. Mark as a member of the clergy, Deacon Joe Standridge has brought the love and faith of his family along too. (Standing, from left) daughters Dawn and Jennifer, son-in-law Charlie, grandson Joe IV, granddaughter Marielle, son Joe III and his wife, Tiffani, with dog Coco; (seated, from left) granddaughter Adeline, Rea Standridge, Deacon Joe with dogs Zeke and Lucky, and granddaughter, Lotti.

The role of the deacon is a special one within the Catholic Church. It allows men who have wives or families the chance to serve as clergy, sharing their gifts with others in the parish in a unique way, and bringing all that they have experienced in life along with it.

Deacon Joe Standridge and his wife, Rea, are the proud parents of three adult children and grandparents to four grandchildren. In their 47-year marriage, they lived in Louisiana, Sugar Land and Stephenville, before moving just a few blocks from St. Mark's. While pursuing

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Standridge Family Bonding Together Over Diaconate

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his master's degree in business administration and working as Associate Vice President for Physical Facilities at Tarleton State University, Deacon Joe felt led to discover what it would mean to become a deacon within the Catholic Church.

"The diocese had offered the Light of Christ Institute and going along, I found out what the requirements were for the diaconate,"

'yes, but the kids are young,' 'yes, but we just moved.'

"We went to the inquiry program, and we were talking about it on the way home — I went to pull out my 'yes, but' and there was no 'but,'" she adds. "No one was more surprised than me, because you get used to making those choice. But even with him in graduate school, I couldn't see a reason for him not to do it."

Deacon Joe now serves the diocese in two capacities — he is the weekend deacon at St. Philip the Apostle in Lewisville, and heads up the RCIA program, Marriage Preparation and Stephen Ministry here at St. Mark.

"People don't see me on weekends that often because I have a foot in both parishes, but it's neat to be involved with both and see people on both sides," he says.

Though retired from professional life, Deacon Joe has also been able to continue lending his talents — this time in the field of engineering, as St. Philip builds its new church.

"I'm a licensed professional engineer for State of Texas," he says "Learning what I can do at St. Philip, I hope I can help when we start on St. Mark's new church.

"My whole thrust is that the people of St. Mark know it is a wonderful place to come to Mass. Fr. George cares deeply for everyone who is there."

Being a deacon has had a major impact on the Standridge family. Deacon Joe served as a witness at one of his daughter's wedding and baptized two of his granddaughters.

"One thing that's been a blessing for me is that everyone in our family has stayed connected to the Church and attends Mass," he says. "My main hope is when we get to heaven and we all meet up there and say, 'we made it' — that's what I consider to be the biggest goal."

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Deacon Joe says. "We went to the inquiry meeting with about 100 other couples. It whittled down from there, and there were less and less couples because to go into the diaconate, the wife has to give approval."

"My dad was a deacon in the Houston diocese, so we knew some about what deacons did," Rea says. "Joe and I had talked about it on and off since we'd been in Sugar Land. There was never a right time, there was always a 'yes, but' — you know,

Following a year of discernment, during which husband and wife are expected to attend events and retreats together, Rea says she embraced the opportunity to grow spiritually alongside Deacon Joe as he was ordained in 2003.

"My understanding of the Church grew and, had it been voluntary, I probably wouldn't have attended," she says. "But now when he talks about things, I can recall that information even after all these years. I felt it helped me ask him questions."

Where Are Our Priorities?

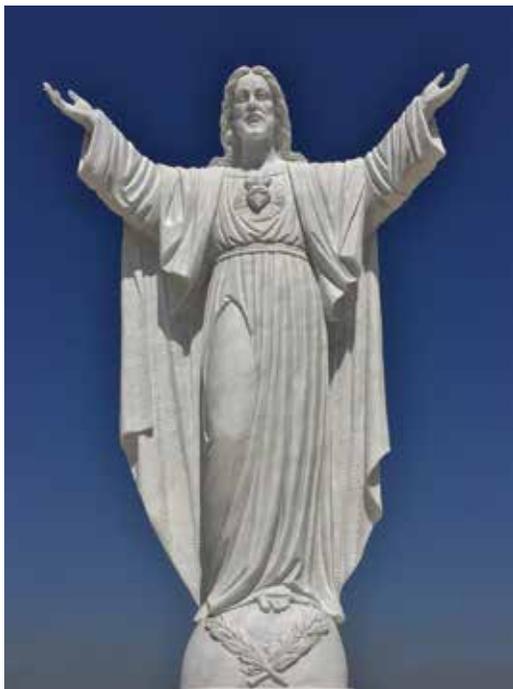
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am in hopes that you are aware that we are completing and will continue to celebrate the holiest time of the year in our Church. Easter Sunday, April 1, is the high point of the year for us as Catholics. We will, of course, continue to celebrate this holy time until Pentecost Sunday, which is May 20 this year. That is correct — our Easter season continues until then.

St. Paul provided some sage advice. He said, “think of what is above, not of what is on earth” (Colossians 3:2). Regardless of your opinions on what happens after resurrection, we can agree that it will be something “above” this life. Paul might be asking us if we put God first in all things. Life can become very encumbered with possessions, money, power, and even our egos.

Our goal should be to put God at the top of our lists. If that is not what we do, we may need to adjust our priorities. If we have not moved in that direction during Lent or in the past, now is the time to do it. We must constantly strive to not allow earthly things to become our gods.

It was St. Gregory the Great who said, “God made us to be the gardeners of paradise.” Some stewardship people have maintained that God has given each of us a garden — and when we are judged, we only hear one question,



“What have you done with the garden I gave you?”

What have we done? What are we doing? First, we must recognize and acknowledge that we are all gifted, admittedly in different and varied ways. Despite what we see as our gifts or how we measure them, we need to ensure that we are using them in ways that serve God and others — ways that show good discipleship and stewardship on our parts.

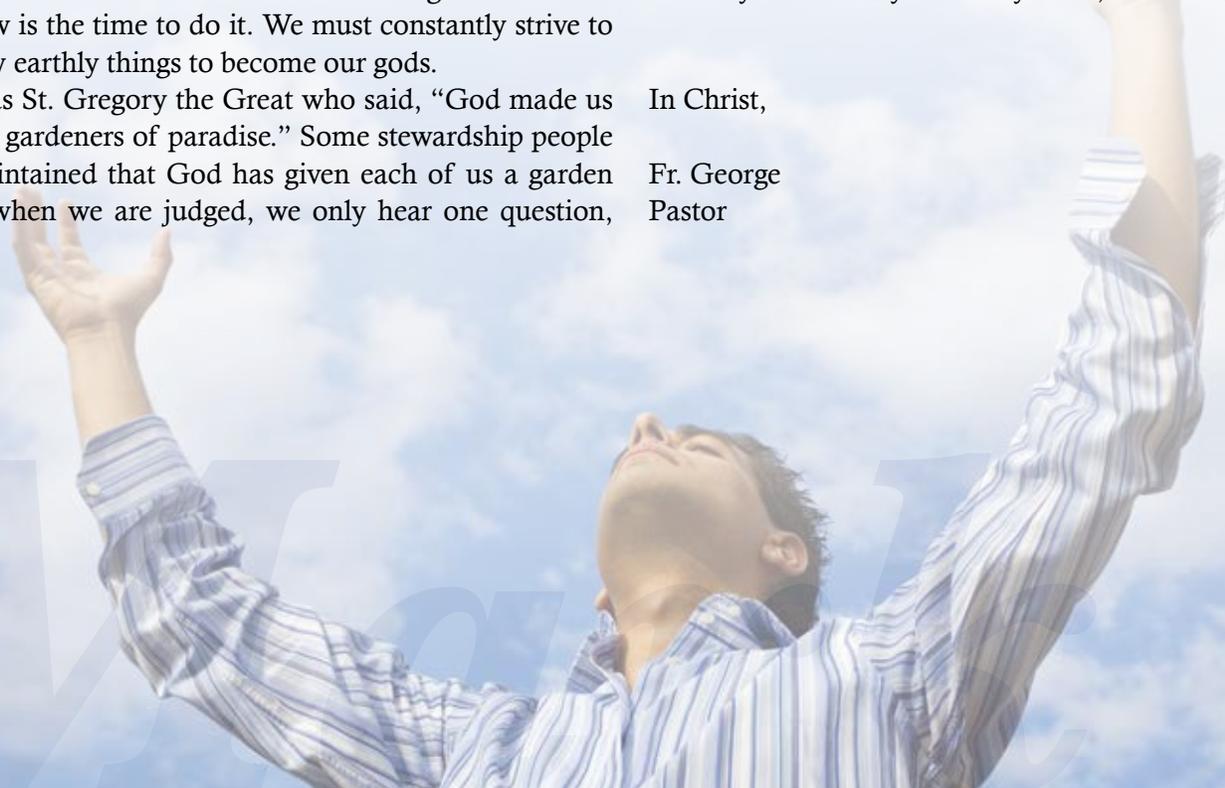
Were you aware that the month of April is dedicated to the Holy Spirit in the Church? The term “spirit” translates from the Hebrew word *ruah*, which means “breath.” Truly, as Catholics, the Holy Spirit has been breathed into each of us, and is part

of the garden we have received. Do we turn to Him? Do we rely on Him for strength? Do we even grant that He is part of our very being? We should. We need to, as St. Paul advised, “think of what is above, not of what is on earth.”

May God bless you in all you do, and strive to do!

In Christ,

Fr. George
Pastor

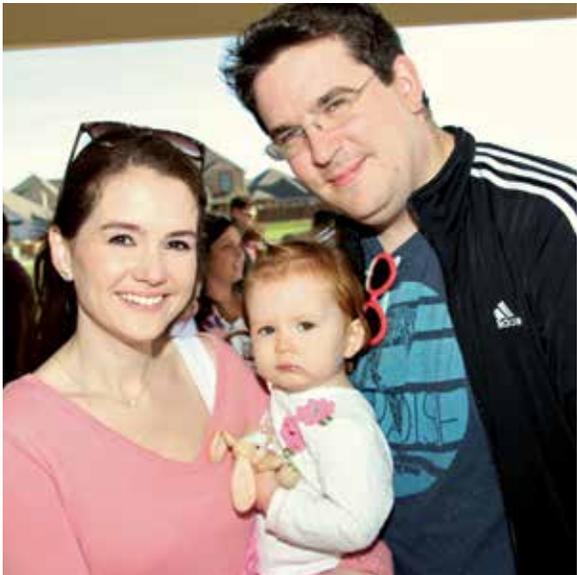


A Look Back on *Holy W*

During the last week of March, we observed Holy Week, with Easter Sunday on April 1. We hope all of our parishioners have had a most joyous Easter season!



Week and Easter 2018



RCIC *Guiding Children on Their Faith Journey*

No matter your age, there is always something new to learn about our faith! It's never too early to start building a strong faith foundation — and it's never too late, either. Here at St. Mark, our RCIC — Rites of Christian Initiation for Children — process welcomes children of all ages into the church, and guides them through their individual faith journeys.

RCIC is designed for children who, for various reasons, are receiving their Sacraments of Initiation at different ages or in a different order than what is usually done in our diocese. This includes children above the age of reason, around the age of 7, up through 18 years old. The class meets at



“When the catechists explain concepts, they make it appropriate for all ages. Then, when the children take it to conversation with their parents, they can address it in a specific context for their child. We often have siblings in the classes, so it gives them the opportunity to have a family talk. Our classes plant seeds, but unless that seed is nurtured in the home, it can’t grow.”

— Andrea Woolums

10:15 a.m. every Sunday morning, and is taught by Daniel and Rosalva Heredia.

“I think one of the greatest factors is the personal witness of our catechists,” says RCIC director Andrea Woolums. “They are stunning in their spirituality and marriage, and I think the families can feel Rosa and Dan’s faith lives. I think it’s critical to have catechists that really embody the beauty of being a disciple to Christ. They have such joy when they speak about the Church, and speak about the sacraments.”

RCIC covers similar phases as RCIA — Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults — starting with a time of evangelization and the Precatechumenate. They then enter the Catechumenate level, where they focus on the sacraments and how to grow closer to God through being a part of the Church. During Lent, they go through the Rite of Election. After they receive their sacraments at Easter, they also receive a month of classes for the Mystagogia phase, where they learn how to continue their faith journey throughout their lives.

RCIC classes are taught to both the children and their parents, and give a well-rounded picture of our faith and the Church.

“The children who participate in RCIC are usually from families who have been away from the Church, and something has moved in these families that has brought them back, seeking something,” Andrea says. “So when parents attend classes with their children, we are able to help the Holy Spirit along as they learn what their children are learning. We try to engage the parents in the classes as much as possible. We have the parent and child talk about the class’s topic together before the class, so that they are really working together and informing themselves as a family.”

The classes focus on Scripture and on real-world examples of Catholics living their faith. While the classes are taught in an age-appropriate way, catechists ensure that both parents and children can relate.

“We place Scripture before them, where they can meet Christ again and again, and teach then about the saints, showing them that they were normal people who lived holy lives, but struggled as we do,” Andrea says. “I think that these are some of the most important elements — once they understand this, the doctrines and dogmas of the Church will follow out of love for Jesus.

“It is vital to have the parents as part of the process,” she adds. “When a parent comes in and really meets the person

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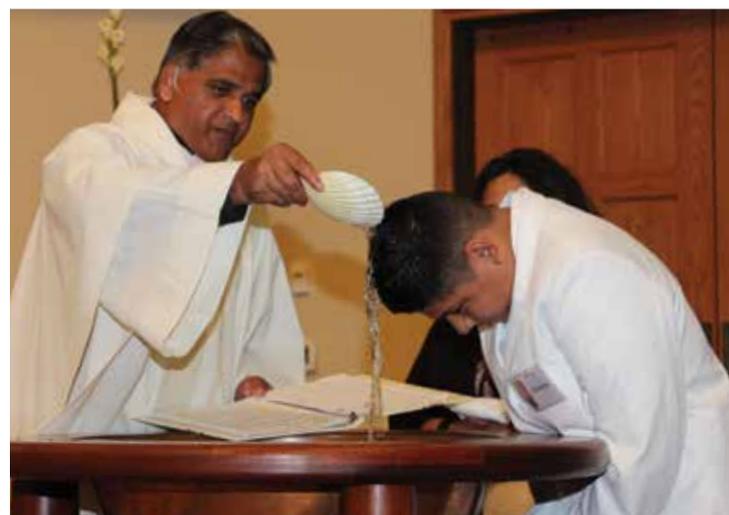
of Jesus Christ through the catechists, stories of the saints, Scriptures and liturgical rites, it truly touches them in a way that evangelizes the whole family. When the catechists explain concepts, they make it appropriate for all ages. Then, when the children take it to conversation with their parents, they can address it in a specific context for their child. We often have siblings in the classes, so it gives them the opportunity to have a family talk. Our classes plant seeds, but unless that seed is nurtured in the home, it can't grow."

Through RCIC, Andrea hopes to give their students a strong faith foundation that can carry them throughout the rest of their lives. Indeed, she has seen firsthand how the Holy Spirit has worked in the lives of these families.

"My favorite part about this whole experience is how it made me value Mass more, and see it in a whole new way, with the songs, prayers and Gospels taking on new meanings for me," says high school senior JJ Melendez.

"I got to grow my faith and grow closer to God," said an anonymous student.

"There is a sixth-grader in our class this year, and he and his mom first came to our church when he was younger," Andrea says. "It was too late for them to start the class that year, but I gave them a whole bunch of home materials, and then I didn't see them for a while. Then, this past year, they walked in. I greeted the young man by name, and his eyes just lit up. The mother told me later how much it meant to him that I recognized him by name, and how he read all the materials I gave them. He had been studying it all, and had been longing for it all. Every time I see him now, he is so excited to be baptized. He is the epitome of what it means to be converted — to know that he is longing for the sacraments with all his heart. To see him reach that place has been such a joy."



If you would like more information about RCIC, please contact Andrea Woolums at 940-222-8081 or awoolums@stmarkdenton.org.

Saint Mark

6500 Crawford Road | Argyle, TX 76226
(940) 387-6223 | www.stmarkdenton.org

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Steadfast in Faith and Devotion: *St. Catherine of Siena*

As stewards in our fast-paced, highly technical world, we can always look to the life and example of St. Catherine of Siena — whose feast day is April 29 — and strive to remain steadfast in our faith while facing our own modern-day challenges.

Born in mid 14th century Italy to a large family, and in the midst of a plague outbreak, St. Catherine of Siena was her parents' 25th child, although half of her siblings did not survive through childhood. Young Catherine resisted her family's desire for her to marry. Such was Catherine's desire to remain in service to her own family that instead of entering a convent, she joined the Third Order of St. Dominic at age 18. This enabled her to continue serving her family at home, even as she was part of a religious society.

Continuing with her faithful devotion as part of the Third Order of St. Dominic, Catherine developed a following of her own, as she wrote letters offering spiritual encouragement and instruction.

In the midst of these spiritual developments, at age 21, Catherine underwent a profound change, as she experienced what she called her "mystical marriage to Christ." Through this experience, she was directed to help the poor and the sick.

Catherine began serving those in need in hospitals and homes, which inspired followers to assist in these important missions of service, love and mercy. Furthermore, her writings continually focused on public matters, petitioning for peace in the midst of political fracture and strife. This continued through the Great Schism, beginning in 1378, as Catherine spent two years in Rome, praying and pleading for unity in the Church, and for the cause of Pope Urban VI.

By January 1380, Catherine was gravely ill, unable to eat or drink. At only 33 years old, she would pass away on April 29, 1380. She was canonized nearly a century later, in 1461.