

S a i n t A g n e s



St. Agnes is an inclusive Catholic community dedicated to the love of God and service to others. We rejoice in the Gospel, the celebration of the Liturgy, and the Sacraments. We welcome the opportunity to share God's message and to bring all into the life of Christ.

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Pastor: Rev. T. Mathew Rowgh

Deacon: Rev. Mr. Anthony Maciorowski

Coordinator of Faith Formation: Brigitte Schmidt

Director of Music: Elaine Rendler-McQueeney

Director of Liturgy: Rodica Stoicoiu

Parish Secretary: Beth Yates

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St. Agnes Church

200 South Duke Street, Shepherdstown

St. Agnes Parish Office

106 South Duke Street, Shepherdstown

P.O. Box 1603, Shepherdstown, WV 25443

Telephone 304-876-6436

Office@StAgnesShepherdstown.org

www.StAgnesShepherdstown.org

St. Agnes Chapel

204 South Church Street, Shepherdstown

Sunday Readings

1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a

Psalm 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6

Ephesians 5:8-14

John 9:1-41

Until Further Notice

There will be no Masses or gatherings of any kind within the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston per order of Bishop Brennan.

Our Parish Office will be staffed on Mondays and Fridays, 9am-12noon.

However, the office phone will be monitored remotely at all times as will the office email, so please continue to keep in touch and let us know if we can help with any needs.

Father Mat remains available for any emergencies. Please call his home phone, 304-876-8086.

Homebound Ministry

During this time of the Covid19 Pandemic, if there are parishioners, or if you know of a parishioners, who have needs such as groceries, rides to doctors or pharmacies, or other types of support, our **HOMEBOUND MINISTRY** is willing to help meet these reasonably requested needs. Please call Claire Williamson (304-876-1357), or Judy Lilga (301-432-2276) if there is a need in our parish for this type of support.

Dispensation from Bishop Brennan

Dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass:

“While no member of the Faithful is bound to attend Mass where impossibility arises, West Virginia borders a number of dioceses in which Masses are still being publicly celebrated, and many of our Faithful are easily able to attend those Masses. Owing to the grave nature of the current public health crisis, and not wishing that any of our flock be compelled to place themselves unnecessarily at risk, I hereby dispense all those who reside within the territory of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston from their obligation to attend Mass. The intention of this dispensation, along with the suspension of public liturgies in the Diocese, is to encourage the Faithful to practice ‘social distancing’ and ‘self-quarantine’ to the extent that their state of life permits, by which we hope to contribute to the containment and end of the current pandemic.”

Remember in Prayer

Please pray daily for those serving in the Military, our veterans in recovery, and those recently ill especially Pat & Larry Merhaut, James & Carolyn Vigil, Mike Vojtasko, Bob Rizzo, and Emily De Biasi. Names are placed in the bulletin for approximately one month and then placed on the sick list near the baptismal font. Together we pray as a community for all who are listed in the prayer book in addition to those listed above. Your personal prayer requests may be added to the prayer book at any time.

Pandemic Safety Measures

Everyone is urged to take very seriously and to strictly adhere to the recommendations and precautions set forth by the CDC as well as our federal, state, and local governments.

We have links on the St Agnes website (<https://stagnesshepherdstown.org/>) that you may find helpful, or simply check out the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>. You can sign up for alerts from the Jefferson County Health Department at <https://www.ichdvw.org/threat-preparedness/threat-preparedness-news-and-alerts/>.

Free Tax Preparation Shutdown

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) has been shut down. If you already have an appointment scheduled, please call Mountain Heart Community Services, Inc by phone 304-262-1584 or email kdidden@mountainheartwv.org.

Book Discussion

Eileen Dooley: 304-876-3320
dooleywoods@comcast.net

The book discussion group is canceled till further notice. When we return, we will discuss the O'Malley book. In the meantime, members are encouraged to read our April selection, *Gods of the Upper Air: How a Circle of Renegade Anthropologists Reinvented Race, Sex, and Gender in the Twentieth Century* by Charles King. We hope everyone is staying home and staying healthy!

Father O'Malley Lecture Canceled

Sadly, Fr O'Malley has had to cancel his March 29 presentation. The Jesuit community at Georgetown is staying in place. Given Fr O'Malley's age (92) and the current uncertainties, we will not be able to reschedule this presentation.

Dear Parishioners,

I am sure you all agree, that coming together is more important now, when one another's health and well-being is so much at risk. Coming together is a huge part of being a community and now that we cannot gather for Sunday Mass, for a meeting, or simply to be with one another, this puts a real strain on our identity as a church community. This is more than a challenging moment, rather it is a test of our endurance and an opportunity to be creative. I have been told that so many of our young folks have the advantage because they are good at social media. We often criticize those who are always on their cell phone, texting one another. Now they are out there ahead of us who have been slow to catch on. We all need to use what ever means possible to remain in touch with one another, make a phone call, send a text, set up a facebook page or what ever it takes!

I have no idea when we will be able to gather for Sunday Mass. I am afraid we may not be able to celebrate Holy Week and Easter Sunday. And so, we will not be able to celebrate the initiation of our catechumens, Colin Hayden and Jules Gamaleu, nor will we be able to complete the initiation of our candidates, Chelsy Erickson and Joshua Mitchell during the Easter Vigil. My hope is that we will be able to gather and celebrate these wonderful events as soon as possible in the spring. There are also quite a number of new babies to be baptized during the Easter Season and what about our celebration of First Eucharist. At the moment we can only wait and pray for one another's safety and the safety of all the health care professionals. We will schedule these celebrations once we have been given the green light from our diocesan office in Wheeling.

In the mean time, let us be mindful of the directives to remain close to home and staying as healthy as possible. Let us keep in touch by phone or social media and check on the elderly and those living alone. Please share with me any information you might have that you think I need to know regarding fellow parishioners. I am here to help and to minister to the needs of our parish. Again I ask that you keep the parish and one another in your prayers, especially our parish member who has been diagnosed with the Coronavirus. May the Lord restore him to full health, keep his wife and family safe from any further harm!

Since we cannot gather for Mass I urge you to keep up with your Lenten practices as much as possible. Use your Little Black Booklet for daily reflection or At Home with the Word to keep in touch with the Sunday Scripture lessons. You can also find the scripture readings and a brief reflection for each day at the website, usccb.org/bible/readings. May the Lord keep us safe, keep us calm, and help us to trust that *all will be well!*

My hope is that we will be able to stream the Sunday Mass, that you can be able to at least see and hear and pray the Mass with me. If at all possible I hope to begin this on Sunday, March 29. I will keep you posted on the link.

Love and prayers to everyone!

Fr. Mat

Parish Financial Activity

Collections – Last Week

Offertory Collections	\$2,710
Monthly Mortgage Assistance	\$835
Total (Offertory + Monthly Mortgage Assistance)	\$3,545
Weekly Target (Offertory + Monthly Mortgage Assistance)	\$12,000
Total Collections Compared to Target	↓ -\$8,455

Tithe to help those in need \$271
(St. Agnes tithes 10% of all offertory donations)

Electronic Giving

As is clear from the chart to the left, our St Agnes finances are in jeopardy during the necessary social distancing. We are doing all we can to reduce our expenses as much as possible, but some expenses will have to be met. We will go into our reserved fund only if absolutely necessary. Please consider electronic giving if you can.

Some of our staff members have already agreed to take a cut in their salary. I am grateful for this effort to help us remain afloat.

Thank you,
Fr Mat

CFF at Home

All children's CFF books and Gospel Weeklies are laid out in their classrooms for parents to pick up. The office will be open Mondays and Fridays from 9am-12noon. Please call the office if you would need to pick up at a different time. If you do not have your children's books, all learning can be completed on-line.

For home instruction, access to weekly video and a weekly review template to complete.

For the Pflaum gospel weeklies (K-7), parents should go to: <https://www.pflaumweeklies.com/family/> .

For Decision Point, our Confirmation program teens should go to <https://dynamiccatholic.com/confirmation/program-view>.

For our First Eucharist student book, Blessed, parents should go to: <https://dynamiccatholic.com/blessed/program-view/>. All students have their Blessed books and should read one Chapter a week with their parents.

Please check our FaceBook closed page, St. Agnes CFF/ Youth, for weekly updates. You all are in my prayers and if you have any questions, please email me.

World Water Day

World Water Day is an annual event celebrated on 22 March. The day focuses attention on the importance of universal access to clean water and the need to advocate for the sustainable management of freshwater resources. World Water Day is also used to highlight the need for improved access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities in developing countries. The first International World Water Day, designated by the United Nations, was commemorated in 1993. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Water_Day

Oscar Romero Anniversary

On 21 December 2010, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 24 March as the International Day for the Right to the Truth concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims, which recognizes, in particular, the important work and values of Archbishop Óscar Arnulfo Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador (El Salvador), assassinated on 22 Mar 1980.

Updating Contact Information

Does St Agnes have your correct contact information? If your address, phone number, or email address has changed, please let us know either by email office@stagnesshepherdstown.org or by calling the office at 304-876-6436.

St Agnes Virtual Learning

St. Agnes Virtual Learning Community! Let's pray and learn together - even with social distancing!!

We are just getting started so watch the website and the parish Facebook page for regular updates!

Starting **Monday, March 23, from 1-3 pm**, we will begin a three week **seminar on the Eucharist**. We will explore the scriptural roots, the historical development and the theology of this most important of our sacraments!

This is a Zoom seminar led by Rodica Stoicoiu, you will need a computer/laptop/tablet and access to the internet. We will send instructions on Zoom to participants, if interested please send an email

to liturgy@stagnesshepherdstown.org to register.

Please email if you are interested in an evening version of this class and we will set something up

March 28, 10-12 Zoom event

Praying with St. Ignatius of Loyola, An Introduction with Sr. Mary Kate Birge, SSJ.

Ignatian Prayer is grounded in the principle that God is active in our daily lives and is always present to us. Ignatian Spirituality helps us recognize the presence of God in our lives so that we may "love him more and follow him more closely." This is accomplished through a daily Examen, the Spiritual Exercises and through spiritual direction. Through prayer we come to understand the Love of God and live it out in our lives.

"Sr. Mary Kate Birge, SSJ, a Sister of St. Joseph from Springfield, MA, holds a PhD in Biblical Studies from The Catholic University of America, an MA in Classics from Tufts, an MA in Theology from St. Johns University Collegeville, and a graduate certificate in Spiritual Direction and Directed Retreats from Creighton University. She is an associate professor of theology where she holds the Fr. James Forker Chair of Catholic Social Teaching," has studied Christian Spirituality at Creighton University and is a Spiritual Director in Ignatian Spirituality. She is an Associate Professor of Theology at Mount St. Mary's University.

Please send an email

to liturgy@stagnesshepherdstown.org.

What we are working on now:

The Last Words of Christ, A Prayer Reflection Experience with Dr. Julie Wilberding - watch for more information

Other opportunities for prayer:

Every day at 3 pm Fr. James Martin, SJ leads scripture study live on Facebook (you can also view past videos on his Facebook page). Just search for his name, click follow and make sure your notification bell is on and you will be notified when his live session begins.

Do you have suggestions for other events? Book club, scripture sharing, etc. please send your ideas to Rodica at liturgy@stagnesshepherdstown.org.

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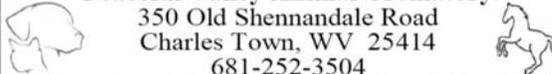
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