

The Basilica of Saint Mary of the Assumption



PARISH OFFICE: 506 Fourth Street, Marietta OH 45750 PHONE: 740-373-3643
WEBSITE: www.stmarysmarietta.org  www.facebook.com/stmarysmarietta EMAIL: info@stmarysmarietta.org



March 27, 2022
Fourth Sunday of Lent

MASSES FOR THE WEEK

SAT	5:30 PM - Kathrine Binegar, 23 rd Anniv. 7:00 PM - Spanish Mass
SUN	8:00 AM - Gertrude Baker 10:00 AM - Vincent Lang, 7 th Anniv. 12:00 PM - People of the Parish
MON	7:45 AM - John Arnold, 1 st Anniv. 12:05 PM - Clarence Roesch
TUE	7:45 AM - Special Intention of the Stapleton Family 12:05 PM - Mel Baumgard 6:30 PM - Byzantine Divine Liturgy
WED	7:45 AM - Norman Baker, 11 th Anniv. 12:05 PM - Richard Schaad 6:30 PM - Helen Miller
THU	7:45 AM - Sally Jean Antill 12:05 PM - Helen Newsad, 9 th Anniv.
FRI	7:45 AM - George Stokes 11:00 AM - Anne Gruber - Memorial Mass 12:05 PM - John Arnold
SAT	9:00 AM - Bob Lamb 11:15 AM - Mass (Bishop Monforton) For Ladies Day of Spirituality 5:30 PM - Ralph Schott
SUN	8:00 AM - People of the Parish 10:00 AM - Richard Crum 12:00 PM - Marie Murgare, 60 th Anniv.

SUNDAY MASSES - Saturday 5:30 PM; Sunday 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM
CONFESSIONS - Saturday 3:30-5:00 PM (or anytime by appointment)
BAPTISMS - Contact Parish Office
WEDDINGS - Contact Parish Office *six months* in advance

Rector - Rev. Msgr. John Michael Campbell (fatherjmike@gmail.com)
Parochial Vicar - Rev. Jeremiah Hahn, 740-373-3643 Ext. 11,
(jhahn@diosteub.org)
Permanent Deacon - Rev. Mr. Lee Weisend
Music Director - Mr. John Ontko (740-350-4224, ontkotb@suddenlink.net)
St. Mary School - 320 Marion St, 740-374-8181 (www.stmaryscatholic.org)
School Principal - Elizabeth Tokodi (elizabethtokodi@stmaryscatholic.org)
DRE - Cecelia Cottrill (ceceliacottrill@stmaryscatholic.org)
Parish Council Chairman - Dennis Blatt
K of C Grand Knight - Mr. Pete Saliba (304-494-6170)
CWC President - Jenn Tinkler
Hibernians - Mr. Tom Binegar, President (740-374-4559)
Prayer Line - & Eucharistic Adoration, Mrs. Shelly Medley (740-525-6360)
Pregnancy Assistance - Women's Care Center (304-485-7113)
Health Ministry - Mrs. Janet Jaeger (740-374-6768)
Daily Bread Kitchen - Mrs. Carol Henshaw (740-885-1181)
St. Vincent De Paul - Help Line (740-376-1334)
Welcoming Committee - Jim Naylor (740) 350-5510

I will get up and go to my Father and shall say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY:

Is 43:16-21; Phil 3:8-14; Jn 8:1-11.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEWLY BAPTIZED:

Brielle Gwendolyn Black and Josephine Myrna Marshall.

PRAY FOR OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN:

Please pray for all those serving our country in the military. We especially remember those from our parish and friends and relatives of our parishioners. May God watch over them and keep them safe.

EASTER MEMORIALS:

Easter Flower Memorial envelopes are available in your monthly packet. Please PRINT the names of those you wish to remember on the back of the envelope. Names will be listed in our Easter Sunday bulletin. If you contribute online, please send us your Easter Flower Memorials as we do not get them online. Memorials are \$10.00 and names must be in by Monday, April 11th in order to be included in the Easter Sunday bulletin.

VISITORS WELCOME! We welcome any visitors who are joining us for Mass this weekend. We hope your stay in Marietta is enjoyable. Any new parishioners at the Basilica are asked to please register with the parish office.

PARISH OFFICES are open from 1:00 PM until 4:00 PM on Mondays and from 9:00 AM until 4:00 PM Tuesday through Friday, with a lunch break from Noon until 1:00 PM each day.

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

TODAY	5:30 PM	-	Youth Group Meeting in the Basilica Social Hall.
MON	6:15 PM	-	Our Lady of Perpetual Help Devotions. See announcement.
	7:00 PM	-	RCIA in the Basilica Social Hall.
WED	8:20 AM	-	7:00 PM – Eucharistic Adoration in the Chapel of the English Martyrs.
	6:00 PM	-	Basilica Book Club in the Social Hall. See announcement.
THU	8:30 AM	-	Cleaning the Basilica. See announcement.
FRI	8:20AM	-	7:00 PM – Eucharistic Adoration in the Chapel of the English Martyrs.
	5:00 PM	-	Fish Fry at Saint Mary Catholic School.
	7:00 PM	-	Stations of the Cross, Benediction, Confessions. See announcement.
SAT	8:30 AM	-	Lenten Day of Spirituality for Women of the Diocese. See announcement.

**The Lord Will Never Be Outdone
In Generosity!**

Total collection last weekend : \$12,967.00

Amount needed each week to
meet the Basilica budget: \$14,225.00

God bless those who support our Basilica Parish!

SECOND COLLECTION

On the first weekend of each month there is a second collection for the maintenance of our Basilica. This collection will be taken up at all Masses next weekend, April 2 & 3.

ONLINE GIVING

Online giving is available at the Basilica. For more information, please visit this website: <http://www.stmarysmarietta.org> and go to the left side of the web page. Click on the GIVE ON LINE button to see more information or to sign up.

BASILICA FOUNDATION

A fund has been established by the Marietta Community Foundation for the maintenance and repairs of our Basilica. This fund is separate from the monthly maintenance collection. Our goal is to have at least One Million in the fund before using it. To donate, contact the Community Foundation.

GROUNDS CLEAN-UP

Knights will clean the grounds around the Basilica for Easter on Monday, April 4th, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Mulching, parking lot cleanup, etc. will be done that evening. All parishioners are welcome to help- just show up. For more information, call - 740-525-0053.

ST. MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL NEWS

Easter Candy Fundraiser: St. Mary Catholic Home & School Organization is holding a fundraiser from now until April 10, 2022 with the popular Sarris Candies Company out of Pennsylvania. Ordering is completely online and every order ships directly to you within 72 hours of ordering for only \$5 per address. Our organization will profit 25% of all sales.

The Home & School Organization sponsors many things at our school, including treats for students and staff during Catholic Schools Week, prizes during Right to Read Week, traveling museums, field trips, fees for academic competitions, purchasing special school supplies such as a new laminator and so much more! Visit SarrisCandiesFundraising.com. and be sure to use the group code **10-3985**. (Entering a seller name is not necessary). Any questions, please contact brimoore@stmaryscatholic.org

St. Mary Catholic School is registering for the 2022-2023 Academic year. We offer classes in Preschool 3, Preschool 4 (1/2 day or full day options 3 to 5 days per week), Prekindergarten through 8th grade. To learn more about our wonderful, and academically challenging school, please call the school office at 740-374-8181 or email Mrs. Bradley to schedule your personal tour at tammibradley@stmaryscatholic.org

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bulletin announcements must be in by Wednesday morning in order to be included in the following weekend's bulletin. They must be in writing, we cannot accept bulletin announcements by phone. Thank you for your cooperation.

MY DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS

I want to express my personal gratitude to those of you who responded to the 2022 Diocesan/Parish Share Campaign – either through your financial support or through your prayers. Our parishes and ministries throughout the Diocese of Steubenville rely on your generosity to continue the Mission of the Church. Your generosity is a sign of your love for your Church and for one another.

For those who were unable to complete their pledge for the DPSC last weekend, additional pledge cards are available. Please take a moment to complete a card. You can drop it in the collection basket or mail it directly to the diocese. You can also contribute to the campaign online at give.diosteub.org.

May the Lord continue to bless you and our beloved Diocese of Steubenville.

Yours in Christ,
Most Reverend Jeffrey M. Monforton
Bishop of Steubenville

VISIT FROM THE EASTER BUNNY TO YOUR HOME

Sunday, April 10th. Schedule a Personal Visit from the Easter Bunny to your home. (Our hopes are to be back to an amazing egg hunt next Spring). Submit the form at stmarysmarietta.org/bunnyvisit and the Easter Bunny will drive throughout the area delivering pre-packaged candy and a personal visit to your home (outside or on your porch). Visits are limited to children and grandchildren of the Basilica within the Marietta area. For those outside Marietta, there will be two stops at the Basilica parking lot and Saint Mary Catholic School parking lot. Times will be announced once we have a schedule of homes to visit. We are accepting donations of small wrapped candy at baskets at all entrances. Questions? Call Lora Offenberger at 740-374-2126.

BASILICA BOOK CLUB

Our next meeting will be March 30th at 6:00 PM in the Social Hall. All are welcome, bring a friend. The March Book is **The Stranger in the Lifeboat** by Mitch Albom. If you are not able to read the book, a summary will be presented. If you have questions, call Debbie Lazorik at 740-434-3769.

FOOD FOR FAMILIES

At the Saturday and Sunday Masses on April 2 & 3 the Knights of Columbus will be holding a food drive to benefit the Daily Bread Kitchen. The most important items needed include: spaghetti sauce, green beans, peaches, applesauce, pineapple, pears, fruit cocktail, chicken broth, cream of chicken soup, cream of mushroom soup, and cream of celery soup. All parishioners are invited to participate. Collection bins for donations will be located on each of the side entrances of the Basilica.

LENTEN DAY OF SPIRITUALITY FOR WOMEN

A Lenten Day of Spirituality for all women of the Steubenville Diocese will be held here at the Basilica on Saturday, April 2. Registration will be from 8:30 -9:45 AM.

Opening and Introduction will begin at 10:00 AM and the First Session will be at 10:15 AM. Bishop Monforton will celebrate Mass at 11:15 AM, followed by Lunch at Noon. The Second and Third Sessions will be at 1:15 and 2:15 PM. All sessions will be presented by Kimberly Hahn.

The fee of \$25 per person includes lunch. Make reservations through our CWC President, Jen Tinkler or by contacting DeDe Kidder, P.O. Box 31, Toronto, OH. The fee of \$25 is payable in advance.

CWC 3 QUILT RAFFLE

To continue our effort to provide clean, safe and reliable water to a community in an impoverished country, CWC is holding a quilt raffle. We are halfway to our goal of raising \$6,000. Quilts are on display at the parking lot side entrance. Tickets are \$5.00 each or 9 for \$40.00. You need only fill out the form below, along with the number of entry tickets you wish. We will fill the rest out for you. place in an envelope marked "Quilt". Checks made payable to CWC.

Quilt Raffle Entry

Name _____ Phone _____

of Entry Tickets _____
(we will fill entry blanks for you)

Amount Enclosed \$ _____
(\$5 each or 9 for \$40)



THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

March 27, 2022

Notes on the Gospel

All the tax collectors and sinners there crowded around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and scribes grumbled, "This man hangs around with sinners. He regularly dines with them." So, Jesus told them a parable.

"There was a man with two sons, the younger of the two said to his father, 'Give me the money you've saved for me.' Not much later, the younger son gathered what he had, and traveled to a distant country. There, he wasted his money as fast as he could. After he spent all his money, there was a great famine where he lived. He became very poor. So he went into the countryside and got hired by one of the local citizens to tend pigs in the fields. The hungry younger son yearned to eat the pig slop, but no one offered him any. Then he came to his senses. 'How many of my father's workers have more than enough to eat,' he thought. I'll get up, go home to my father, and say to him, 'I've sinned against God. I don't deserve to be called your son. Just hire me as one of your workers.' So, he got up and went home to his father.

While he was still in the distance, his father saw in and was filled with love for his son. He ran up to his son and kissed him. The son tried to say, "Father, I've sinned against God, and against you. I don't deserve to be called your son.' The father turned to his servant. "Quick! Go get the best robe we have. Clothe him with it. Put the family ring on his finger and put sandals on his feet. Prepare the calf we have raised for special occasions. We're going to have a celebration for my son was dead, for my son has come back to life. He lost his way, but now he's found it again!"

The older son was working in the fields, and returned home. He heard music and dancing, and asked what is going on? "Your brother has come home,' the servant replied. 'Your father slaughtered the specially-raised calf, because he accepted your brother back into the family, safe and sound.' The brother became very angry and refused to enter the house. He turned to his father and said: 'Listen, Father! For years, I have slaved for you and have never once disobeyed you. However, you have never given me anything to share with my friends. Yet, after your son wasted his money on wild living and then came back, you throw him a coming home party!' 'My son,' the father replied, 'you're always with me. Everything I have is yours. However, we must celebrate. Your brother was dead. Now he lives. He was lost. Now he's found.'"

In the parable of the Prodigal Son, the early followers of Jesus could see themselves at the celebration; the ritual was baptism itself, the sign of repentance, rebirth, and new life with the Father. The older son represented the Pharisees. Pharisees could not understand the Christian point of view; sinners who did not keep the Law could please God by repenting. The Pharisees could not understand the impact of repentance.

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Adoration of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament takes place in the Basilica's Chapel of the English Martyrs on Wednesday and Friday of each week. For Lent, we ask all adorers to invite at least one other parishioner to join them in Adoration during Lent and hopefully every week after Lent. We invite all parishioners to visit the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Jesus stays with us in the Blessed Sacrament to refresh us in mind, in heart and in spirit. Take advantage of Eucharistic Adoration.

Special Events & Scheduled Pilgrimages at the Basilica:

- Apr. - 2, - Diocesan Women Lenten Day of Spirituality with Mass at 11:00 am.
- Apr. - 6, - Parish Penance Service
- Apr. - 12 - Diocesan Chrism Mass (Bishop)
- Apr. - 24, - Confirmation
- May - 1, - First Communion – St Mary's
- May - 15, - First Communion – St. Henry's
- May - 20, - St. Mary School Graduation



Perpetual Help Devotions This Monday Evening

Perpetual Help Devotions are celebrated on Monday evening at 6:15 pm. All parishioners are encouraged to participate in this beautiful devotion celebrated in our Basilica. We ask Our Lady to guide and protect our Basilica and each one of us. Jesus Christ Himself invites us to a personal visit with Him in our basilica.

LENTEN FASTING AND ABSTINANCE

Good Friday is an obligatory day of fasting and abstinence for Catholics. In addition, Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence. For members of the Latin Catholic Church, the norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 until age 59. When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal. The norms concerning abstinence from meat are binding upon members of the Latin Catholic Church from age 14 onwards.



Deceased Priests of the Diocese

On Thursday, we remember the 31st anniversary of the death of Fr. William Hilliker. On Saturday, we remember the 17th anniversary of the death of Saint John Paul II. Pope John Paul was an example of faith and suffering for the Church. May these two priests rest in the peace of the Risen Lord.

PRAY FOR THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE!

PILGRIMAGES TO OUR BASILICA



The Basilica of Saint Mary of the Assumption welcomes all visitors encouraging them to come, pray, and enjoy our beautiful church. If you are a member of a group who would like to tour our Basilica or make a spiritual pilgrimage, please let us know how we can be of assistance. We are honored to host visitors and pilgrims to our Basilica.

EVENTS AND MASSES FOR THE WEEK

Monday, March 28,

7:45 am. - Mass
12:05 pm. - Mass
6:15 pm. - Perpetual Help Devotions
12:05 pm. - Mass
7:00 pm. - RCIA

Tuesday, March 29,

7:45 am. - Mass
12:05 pm. - Mass
6:30 pm. - Byzantine Diving Liturgy (Mass)

Wednesday, March 30,

7:45 am. - Mass
8:20 am. - Adoration of the Eucharist
12:05 pm. - Mass
6:30 pm. - Mass
7:00 pm. - Reposition of the Eucharist

Thursday, March 31,

7:45 am. - Mass
12:05 pm. - Mass

Friday, April 1,

7:45 am. - Mass
8:20 am. - Adoration of the Eucharist
9:15 am. - School Mass
10:00 am. - Funeral Mass – Ann Gruber
12:05 pm. - Mass
6:30 pm. - Reposition of the Eucharist
7:00 pm. - Stations of the Cross
8:00 pm. - Confessions

Saturday, April 2,

9:00 am. - Mass
3:30 pm. - Confessions
5:30 pm. - Mass

Sunday, April 3,

8:00 am. - Mass,
9:30 am. - Mass – Saint Henry Church
10:00 am. - Mass
12:00 pm. - Mass

LITURGICAL FEASTS OF THE WEEK.

Saturday, _____ April 2, _____ Saint Francis of Paola (Hermit)

Francis founded (1435) the Order of Minims, a congregation of hermits – today numbering 115 religious.

Cemetery - There will be a Cemetery Clean Up Day this Monday March 28 with a back-up date for Wednesday March 30. The project will be from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. Al Lang estimates the cleanup spread mulch time will take approximately 2 hours. Thank you in advance to all who will help.



**THE BASILICA OF
SAINT MARY
OF THE ASSUMPTION**

506 4TH STREET • MARIETTA OH 45750 • 740-373-3643



March 27 2022

Dear Parishioners,

The Sacrament of Reconciliation or Penance is a sacrament of second chances. Also known as the sacrament of conversion, confession, or penance, the Sacrament of Reconciliation forgives sins committed after Baptism. Sin denies God's honor and love, and denies our dignity as sons and daughters of God.

In spite of sin, God continually calls us back. He leads us back to Himself and to the Church through his grace. This movement is called repentance or conversion; it consists of sorrow for past sins committed and a firm promise not to sin in the future.

The sacrament of reconciliation consists of a penitent's actions and the priest's absolution. The sacrament allows the penitent the chance for self-honesty, spiritual counseling, and the opportunity to right past wrongs. In the absolution, the priest recognizes the process of conversion in the penitent, and declares it complete. Indeed, sin has been forgiven.

The story of the Prodigal Son was as much a story of transition as it was of second chances. Let us remember that second chances are invitations to transition. Consider the importance of celebrating second chances. Christianity is a lifelong celebration of second chances, not a presumption of God's mercy. That is why we have the Sacrament of Reconciliation, a chance to wipe the spiritual slate clean, a chance to start anew as a child of the Father. If you haven't been to Confession in a while, the Catholic Church wants to welcome you back, and invites you to participate in this beautiful sacrament of healing. Take a step in faith. You'll be surprised about how free you feel after taking part in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. So many Catholics describe incredible feelings of peace, joy, relief, and love that they never expected. Jesus is calling you to experience His mercy in this way too. Be prepared to celebrate Easter.

How long has it been since you received the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

Sincerely in His Sacred Passion,

**Rev. Msgr. John M. Campbell
(Rector)**

The Stations of the Cross

Stations of the Cross take place in our Basilica every Friday evening of Lent followed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and the distribution of Holy Communion. Families are encouraged to bring their families and attend this traditional devotion. These Devotions are an attempt to live the events of Jesus' march to His death of Calvary, and to teach our children some of our beautiful traditions and devotions of our Faith.

Priests bear heaven's promises, cardinal says, at ordination of former Anglican bishop

Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster reflected on the priesthood on Saturday, preaching at the Mass of the priestly ordination of Jonathan Goodall, a former Church of England bishop. In September 2021 Goodall, the Anglican Bishop of Ebbsfleet, announced he was stepping down from that role "in order to be received into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church."

Cardinal Nichols noted that "We come to this ordination at the end of the first week of Lent, seeking 'the one thing necessary', to do the will of God. Lent is the season of the promise of heaven, in which we prepare our hearts to receive afresh the gift of our redemption."

He preached that the priest "is to break open the Word of God, diffusing its light into everyday circumstances, setting before his people the first and best fruits of the heavenly kingdom, the sacred Body and Blood of Christ, a foretaste of the heavenly banquet itself."

A priest is who "lays bare the gifts of heaven, leading the pilgrimage on its heavenly journey, nurturing the assembled people, disclosing the joy and promise of what lies ahead," the cardinal preached. "The priest is to be the effective sign and standard-bearer of those glimpses of heaven. He is to constantly hold before us the promise of the fullness for which we are created, the perfection to which we are summoned, by the words of Jesus himself, to seek above all else. We thank God for the gift of such a priesthood."

Remarking that "every man approaching Catholic priesthood does so in his own particular circumstances," Cardinal Nichols stated that "today we recognize, and rejoice in, this next defining step being made by Jonathan and, indeed, by his family. It's quite a journey, yet I know that it is driven by one sole quest, the desire for that one necessary thing: to live in conformity to the will of God."

We recognize the fruitfulness of Jonathan's ministry in the Anglican Communion as 'truly engendering a life of grace.' We give thanks to God for that ministry, and, therefore, for the continuing ministry of his former friends and colleagues so many of whom hold him in their love and prayers even in this moment of leaving and receiving."

"We pray that Jonathan's ministry is now incorporated into the fullness of the priesthood as understood and lived in the Catholic Church. For us this is a gift, and a moment in which we give thanks to all who have fashioned and enriched Jonathan's life and ministry over so many years," the cardinal remarked.

The homily ended with a prayer for unity among Christians, "a unity which can only be achieved in as much as we are purified by the Lord himself. As Cardinal Hume often said, our unity will only be achieved when we are on our knees." Goodall is one of four Anglican bishops received into the Catholic Church in 2021.

CHANGES COMING TO THE BASILICA

As of June 1, Fr. Jeremiah will be assigned to Fr. Mark Moore in the parishes of Athens. Fr. Edward Maxfield (Director of Liturgy in the Diocese of Steubenville) will be assigned to the Basilica. Fr. Maxfield was ordained to the priesthood on May 16, 2014. He is presently assigned to Fr. Mark Moore and the parishes he serves. We welcome Fr. Ed to our Basilica parish.



'Ukraine is fighting,' says Catholic leader after war enters 4th week



Despite continued attacks by Russian forces, Ukraine is fighting, the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church said on Friday. "Again this night bombs and rockets fell on the heads of peaceful inhabitants," Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk said in a March 18 video message. "But Ukraine cannot be scared off," he said. "Ukraine is fighting. Ukraine is fighting for its right to freedom and independence. Ukraine is standing."

He said that Ukrainians continued to pray for their soldiers, who are standing up to the larger Russian army and have stopped it from entering further into Ukraine. The major archbishop also drew attention to the sacrifices of Ukrainian medical workers. "Today we would like to thank the Lord God for our medics, because we turn to them for help, as if to the first witnesses of human pain," he said, asking for prayers particularly for medical workers, doctors, nurses, and paramedics. He stressed that "medical workers are today perhaps the main targets of various attacks and strikes of the enemy against the peaceful population."

Shevchuk cited information from Ukraine's Ministry of Health, which reported that 117 hospitals and medical buildings have been directly attacked in Ukraine in the last three weeks. Of these, seven have been completely destroyed, he said, adding that 43 emergency service vehicles have been shot at and a number of doctors and medical workers killed.

"Today we would like to thank the Lord God for their heroic service to their people," he said. "Our medics, our doctors continue to save human life in Ukraine. Today we would like to particularly give thanks in prayer for them, for the medics who deliver babies in cold hospitals without electricity, in Chernihiv, in Mariupol, in Kharkiv, and in other besieged cities in Ukraine."

The major archbishop also appealed to the World Health Organization, Doctors Without Borders, and other international health organizations to speak out in defense of life in Ukraine. "I thank you for the support you are giving to our medics. But speak your word to the whole world, so that the murder of people in Ukraine ceases immediately," he urged. "Today we ask our Lord, the Healer of our souls and bodies: Bless our medics and doctors, rescue the injured, children, soldiers, elderly. Heal the wounds of Your people. O God, rescue Ukraine."

I pray to St. John Paul II every day': How a Ukrainian refugee found shelter at the pope's former residence

In the month since the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, more than two million people have crossed the border with Poland seeking refuge.

In the Polish city of Kraków, the local Archbishop Marek Jędraszewski has shown his support for Ukraine's battered population, first by welcoming new arrivals at the main train station and then by personally welcoming refugees in his residence. Jędraszewski lives in the Bishop's Palace, in the center of the city regarded as Poland's cultural capital. It was there that the future St. John Paul II lived in the 1960s and 70s before his election to the papacy.

Eleanor Petritschenko, a 55-year-old from Rivne, a city in western Ukraine, is one of four refugees currently staying in the palace, which also houses Kraków archdiocese's Metropolitan Curia. Eleanor resigned herself to leaving her home when drones began flying over her neighborhood at the end of February. She took her 92-year-old mother, Catharine Shimonovitsch, with her. Their departure was all the more difficult because they had to leave behind the men in their family, who were obliged to stay and defend the country. Their ordeal, which echoes that of the other 3.6 million Ukrainians forced to flee the country since Feb. 24, was nonetheless alleviated by the helping hand of Archbishop Jędraszewski. The two women arrived in Kraków on March 3 after a long and difficult journey that took them out of Ukraine, into neighboring Slovakia, and then to Poland. Their initial challenge was to find a shelter suitable for an elderly woman. They sought assistance from a parish priest in Kraków.

"This good priest put us in touch with the diocesan curia, and he told us that the Arch-bishop had personally offered to welcome us in his residence," Eleanor said. She was joined shortly afterward by her son's mother-in-law and her five-year-old child.

For Eleanor, a practicing Catholic with a devotion to St. John Paul II, this help came straight from heaven. "I pray to St. John Paul II every day," she said, "and I have done so with even greater intensity as the need to leave my home has become more and more evident, asking him to guide me where I was meant to go."

The church that she used to attend in Rivne was dedicated to the Polish saint in 2015, in accordance with the wishes of the Neocatechumenal Way, which runs the parish. Eleanor's mother-in-law, who has been involved with the Neocatechumenal community for some 20 years as a missionary, received John Paul II's blessing in Rome in the early 2000s.

"We wanted to be in his town," Eleanor said. "There were many obstacles and difficulties on the road from Rivne to Kraków, and we overcame them each time miraculously. Through the intercession of St. John Paul II, God led us to this residence, and he is now acting through all the great people around us, starting with the archbishop and his chaplain to protect us. "We now have everything our body and soul need, and we give thanks for that."