

Rejoicing in Faith

A Pilgrimage with Mary

Infant Jesus of Prague

2 In the early 1600's, Princess
3 Polyxenia of Lobkowitz received
4 as a wedding gift a small statue of
4 infant Jesus dressed in royal robes
and wearing a king's crown. It was
only nineteen inches tall and was
made of wood and wax.

pile of rubbish and found the
statue. He placed the statue in the
oratory and began to pray. He was
in awe of the Incarnation. He was
in wonder at God, who because of
his love for us, became a child.

As he prayed, the statue began to
speak. He heard these words;

*"Have Mercy on me and I will
have mercy on you. Give me hands
and I will give you peace. The more
you Honor me, the more I will bless
you."*

After hearing the words, Father
inspected the statue. He found that
both hands had been broken off. He
prayed to Our Lady for the funds to
repair the statue since no one at the
monastery had the talents to do the
repair. The statue spoke once again,
saying:

*"Place me near the entrance of the
sacristy and you will receive aid."*

Father Cyril did as he was told. A
man came to the sacristy a few days
later. He repaired the statue.

After her husband died, the princess
devoted herself to works of charity,
especially to the Carmalites of
Prague. The princess gave the
Carmelites the statue in 1628. The
monastery was reduced to poverty
because of the war. Upon giving the
statue, Princess Polyxenia said, "I
give you what I prize most highly in
the world; honor and respect the
Child Jesus and you shall never be
in want."

Shortly after receiving the statue,
the Carmelites had to flee from
Prague. They were unable to take
the statue with them. Invaders took
it and threw it in a pile of rubbish.

Peace finally returned to Prague in
1635. When the Carmelites
returned, Father Cyril dug in the



After the repair of the hands, many
miracles were reported to have
happened because of the Divine
Child statue. This caused a large
amount of pilgrims to visit the
statue. In 1641, an altar was built
and in 1654, a chapel was
completed in his honor.

The statue was moved in 1741 to its
present day location, a shrine at the
Church of Our Lady of Victory in
Prague.

Inside this issue:

Restoration 2016

Ways to Help

New Monument

Exciting News

Holiday and Holy Day Schedule

- December
 - 8th-Immaculate Conception
St. Mary-Mio-8:30am
St. Francis-Lewiston-11:00am
 - 13th-Penitential Service
St. Francis-Lewiston-7:00pm
 - 24th-Christmas Eve
St. Francis-Lewiston-4:00pm
 - 25th-Christmas
St. Mary-Mio-8:30am
St. Francis-Lewiston-11:00am
- January
 - 1st-Solemnity of Mary
St. Mary-Mio-8:30am
St. Francis-Lewiston-11:00am

Family of Faith

Paul and Dawn Downey had no way of knowing what God had planned for them when they said, "I do!" at St. Mary's church on August 9, 2008. They never imagined how God would use them to bless children in need or bless them in return with 4 beautiful children to call their own.

Dawn and Paul began their journey as foster parents in November of 2008 when they took in Dawn's niece and nephew. From there they continued to care for children in need of a safe place to call home.

In May of 2010, Dawn and Paul opened their home to Phoebe and Aiden. They stayed only a few weeks, but returned in May of 2011. After nearly 3 years in foster care, Phoebe and Aiden legally became members of the Downey family when they were adopted by Dawn and Paul on March 19, 2013.

Later that year, the Downeys welcomed Acelynn into their home and hearts. Acelynn was only 7 months old when she came to Dawn and Paul in December of 2013. Paul and Dawn wanted to adopt Acelynn, but they would have to wait. It

was 2 ¾ years before Acelynn was finally adopted on September 22, 2016.

Meanwhile, Caden came to live with the Downeys in August of 2014. And after almost 2 years in foster care, Dawn and Paul adopted Caden on July 25, 2016.

Dawn and Paul Downey gave up their foster care license in October of 2016 after parenting 22 children as foster parents. Their hearts and home blessed by God complete with 4 children to call their own.



Paul and Dawn
Aiden, Caden, Phoebe, and Acelynn

Restoration 2016

Since the start of the Restoration Project in 2015, until now, we have raised a considerable amount of money, nearly \$100,000, through a variety of means. Fundraisers have included quarterly parish envelopes, raffles, a dinner, Adopt a Statue Program and, finally, Legacy Bricks Program.

First, we would like to review the work begun in 2016. After we completed the rear roof area in 2015, we contacted Mike Kirk, architect from Neumann Smith, to evaluate the rear of the monument structure to determine what was needed. Mr. Kirk completed this task and gave us the report. Local stone masons were approached for their opinion and to see if they would be willing to do the work. Some masons were intimidated by the work and said "No," right away. But others said they would do it if they could do one section at a time, so they could fulfill their work commitment to contractors who supply them work year after year. This was verbally agreed upon, and we waited for spring.

In January, the Fund Development Sub Committee continued to put together a program to raise funds and write grants. The first of the many recommendations was a \$20.00 raffle that was initiated and got underway in February. A dinner with entertainment and several breakfasts and programs raised money. A total of 33 grant requests to foundations were prepared and mailed out. In September, we were notified to make a presentation to the Serra Foundation in Clarkston. November 6, a check was received from the Serra Foundation for \$2,000.00 for future work on the Shrine. Thank You!

In the spring, it was decided to update the billboard appropriately. MDOT was contacted for the rules and regulations to complete this task. Shortly after the call to MDOT, we received notification that our two billboards on M-33 were improper and would have to be changed or taken down. We

went so far as to schedule a court hearing in Lansing since these billboards have been in place since 2000 and 2002. To make a long story short, in July, we lost our court appeal and were advised to take the billboards down. In early September, the billboard face boards were taken down and are now in the process of being re-done to comply with MDOT regulations.

Another issue which needed to be dealt with was the amount of work that was required for paper organization and filing. With the full time secretary having too much work to assist, we found Dawn Downey to come in and volunteer 4 hours on Friday morning. Eventually, with the amount of work Dawn was doing on her own time, a decision by the Finance Committee and Father San was made to pay her for the 4 hours a week starting in July.

A Vision Committee of parish members was also formed, and their goal was to schedule and organize events, as well as develop ways to promote the Shrine. This group of concerned members of the parish met every three weeks to schedule the year's events. All eight events turned out to be very well attended. The Committee re-designed the brochures that have been distributed through-out the southern portion of the state and sent letters to other shrines in Michigan and Ohio. This Committee also revised the booklet for visitors, which has received many compliments.

The initial steps have been taken to develop the Shrine as a National Shrine. This is a long process and requires a lot of paperwork to be completed.

A quarterly newsletter has been put in place with the fourth and last one for 2016 going out in December. This is free to all parish members and is being mailed to visitors of the Shrine. A question often asked is, "How much does this cost?" To which we will simply answer the donations received by people who

have received this newsletter bring in more than the cost. The newsletter letting people know about the Shrine has a value in and of itself.

Monument structure repair was put on hold in March, April and early May when the stone masons said they had to fulfill commitments to the contractors who give them yearly jobs so could not begin on the Shrine. This was an education on our part because we did not make them sign a contract to commit them to the Shrine. This won't happen again. So with the stone masons not available, our attention moved to statue restoration.

Moran Art Studio came and undertook Christ the King and Our Lady of Guadalupe statue repair. This was done during a three week period in June. When Christ the King work began, it opened an unexpected problem. It was discovered that the foundation holding the statue was unstable and eventually the statue would have fallen to the ground if it was not restored. So, Christ the King was moved approximately 25 feet to a new foundation. Since Christ the King weighs 2000 pounds, a crane truck had to be called in to make the move, an expense that had not been figured. When the repair was complete, the Oscoda County Herald newspaper put a nice front page article in the local newspaper. Our Lady of Guadalupe was also repaired along with the metal rays behind the statue.

On August 15, the Feast of the Assumption outdoor Mass was moved to a more shady area near Our Lady of Czestochowa and went extremely well. This event had over 30 Parishioners who volunteered over the course of August 12 to August 16 to setup, prepare, and take down. 295 people attended the event, and 210 attended the brunch afterwards. The K of C color guard led the rosary, stations of the Cross and displayed their white crosses on the west side of the monument.

The Fatima Statues and Bernadette were cleaned and restored by Restorations Plus from St. Louis at the end of summer. The statues were placed back in their locations in mid September.

The busy year ended with Bishop Raica coming to say a Marian Jubilee celebration Mass on October 9. Originally scheduled for outdoors, the Mass was moved in-doors when the temperature lowered to the high 30's.

A granite stone with the Ten Commandments was donated and added in October. This stone was placed in front of the white tubular cross on the top section of this display. The stone is easily available for all to see and read. The entire cost of this project was donated by a parishioner of St. Mary and the Knights of Columbus and was not a function or cost of the Restoration Project. Thank You!

On November 2, the full Shrine Committee met to decide how to move forward. After much conversation, it was determined to repair the peak which was in the master plan and the request to the Bishop. Presently, we are searching to locate stone masons. Neumann Smith has been contacted to assist in our search to get good, qualified stone masons that have done this work in the past. We are attempting to find people who will sign a contract so work can begin in early spring 2017.

Lastly, all the repairs done on the restoration have been paid in full. All the money was raised and independent of the church funds, which have not been touched for the restoration.

To all the parishioners, guests, and visitors who contributed to the Restoration Project in way or another, **THANK YOU!!!!** We feel extremely blessed and are greatly appreciative. However, more work and money are needed to reach total restoration!!

Ways to Help the Restoration Project

Today, the Shrine continues to be a place of prayer, reflection, and spiritual renewal. However, sixty years of time and Northern Michigan weather have made repairs to the Shrine and to the surrounding statues a necessity. St. Mary Parish is committed to the ongoing Shrine maintenance and restoration to preserve this amazing and beautiful structure.

Your contributions to this restoration project are extremely appreciated.

There are many ways you can help with the restoration!

1-Make a donation by filling out and return the form to the right.

2-Make a donation thru our **Go Fund Me Page:**
<http://www.gofundme.com/restoreshrinemio>

3-Family Fare Receipts

Save and turn in all your receipts from shopping at your local Family Fare grocery store. For every \$150,000 in receipts we turn in, we receive \$1,000!!

4-Amazon Smile

Do your online shopping thru Amazon Smile. Amazon will us .5% of all qualifying purchases. You will always have to begin your shopping at the Amazon Smile website.:
smile.amazon.com

Our organization is listed under "United States Catholic Conference."

You will use the same login information you would use for The regular Amazon website.

Yes, I want to help in the Shrine Restoration!

I am interested in volunteer my time and energy.


I am committing to an annual pledge of:
 \$150 \$600 \$1200 Other _____

I am making a one time gift.
 \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 Other _____

NAME: _____ CONTACT: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____

Phone: 989 826-5509 website: www.ourladyofthewoods Shrine.org
 mail: P.O. Box 189 Mio, MI 48647-0988



5-Legacy Pavers

Purchase a Legacy Paver to commemorate your past, present, and future at the Shrine. These pavers will surround the perimeter of the sidewalk of the Shrine structure. To be a part of this project, start by choosing your paver size and then, you will personalize it with your name, family name, a dedication to a deceased loved one or anyone close to your heart. Please contact us regarding ordering a paver. The cost is \$100 for a 4"X8" paver which will accommodate 3 lines of text. There is also an 8"X8" paver for \$200 which has 5 lines for your message.

ADOPT A STATUE SPONSOR

Name of Statue _____

Sponsor Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____

Dedicated in memory of _____

Amount donated \$ _____

6-Adopt-A-Statue Program: After sixty years of standing in the sun and snow, the beautiful statues of our Shrine are in great need of cleaning and repair. We have established this program for a person or a group of people to choose a statue to help repair. If you wish to adopt a statue, fill out and return the form to the left. Please contact us if you need information on prices and what statues are available to adopt.

**Please make all checks to
 Our Lady of the Woods Shrine
 with reference to
 "Shrine Restoration".
 All donations can be sent to
 Our Lady of the Woods Shrine
 Restoration Project**

**WE APPRECIATE YOUR GENEROSITY
 MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND YOURS**

**PO Box 189
 Mio MI 48647**

**OUR LADY OF THE WOODS SHRINE
ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH**

Our Lady of the Woods Shrine
St. Mary Catholic Church
100 S. Deyarmond Street
PO Box 189
Mio MI 48647

Phone: (989) 826-5509
Fax: (989) 826-1333
Email: ourladyofthewoodsshinemio@hotmail.com
Web: ourladyofthewoodsshine.org
Facebook: Our Lady of the Woods Shrine Restoration

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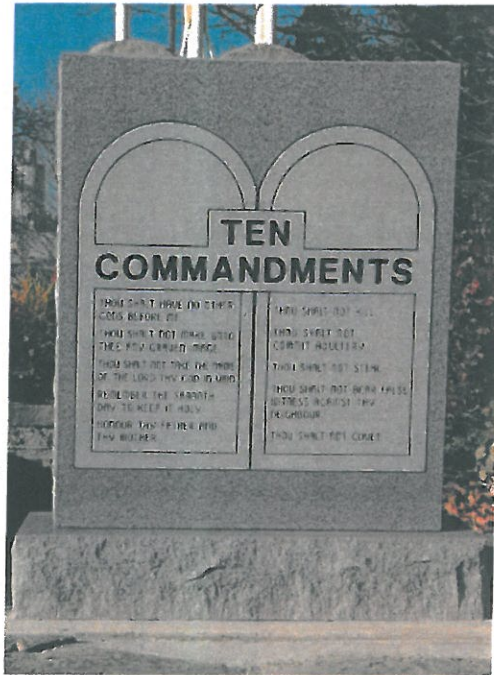
New Monument

In mid-2015, a parishioner of St. Mary's parish approached the Knights of Columbus about a monument he would like to donate to the Shrine. He wanted to donate a monument of the Ten Commandments. He asked for their help in acquiring permission to place the monument at the Shrine.

In Spring 2016, permission was granted and the monument was ordered. It arrived and was installed in late Summer.

The monument is located at the top of the stairs at the base of our large tubular cross. Since this location is in front of the Shrine, it is a perfect and easy place for all to enjoy.

Thank you to all who helped make this new addition to our Shrine possible. It is a wonderful way to remind us of how we should live our lives.



Exciting News

Beginning January 2, 2017, Father San's assignment will be St. Mary Catholic Church in Mio, with St. Francis of Assisi in Lewiston receiving a new priest.

The biggest change in both parishes will be the Mass schedule. At present time, St. Mary has weekday masses on Tuesday and Wednesday with St. Francis having mass on Thursday and Friday. In addition, Saturday masses in the Winter take place only in Lewiston. Once, the new priest arrives, both parishes will have weekday masses Tuesday thru Friday and St. Mary will add a Saturday evening mass.

Please watch the bulletin for more information and updates.

