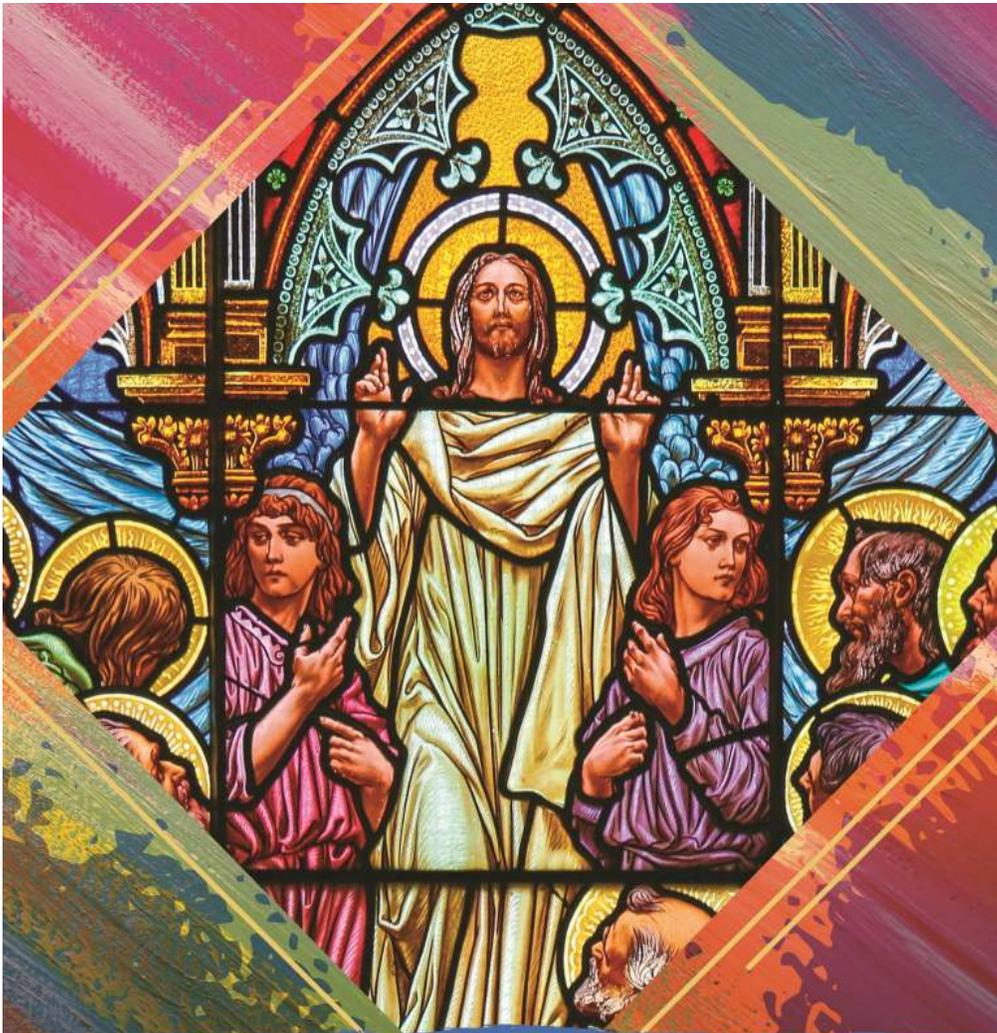




# THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF *Saint Mark*

February 15, 2026 • 6th Sunday In Ordinary Time



6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

“I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother  
will be liable to judgment.” - Mt 5:22a

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*Welcome!*

*Save these 2026*

*St. Mark*

*Pilgrimage Dates!*

1. Chrism Mass, Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond on March 30, 2026
2. Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine, Washington, DC on October 24, 2026
3. St. Mark Pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi Nov. 9th-18th, 2026 to commemorate the Jubilee Year of St. Francis of Assisi. (For more details about this pilgrimage, check out page 5 of this bulletin.)
4. The “One Nation Under God” 2026 National Eucharistic Pilgrimage passes through Diocese of Richmond June 2-5, 2026.

Bulletin Publication  
date: 2/9/26



## “Rooted in the Word...”

### This Week at Saint Mark February 16th - February 22nd, 2026

<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>President’s Day</b> <b>Parish Offices Closed</b> No OCIA Christian Formation
<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>Daily Mass/ Daily Chapel</b> Adult Bible Study/ Great Hall Daughters of Fatima Prayer Group/DC Burning of Palms KofC Pancake Dinner/Great Hall
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	CAST/offsite 6:30am Ash Wednesday Mass/ Sanctuary 10-1:00pm Food Pantry/ Great Hall 11:00am Divine Mercy Chapel/ DC 12:00pm Ash Wednesday Mass/ Sanctuary 6:00pm Our Lady of Perpetual Help Novena/ Sanct. 7:00pm <b>Ash Wednesday Mass/ Sanctuary</b>
<b>THURSDAY</b>	CAST/offsite 6:00am Men of St. Joseph/Conference Room 8:30am <b>Daily Mass/ Daily Chapel</b> 9-11:00am PLARN/ Great Hall 7:00pm Adult Bible Study/ Great Hall 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal/ Sanctuary
<b>FRIDAY</b>	CAST/offsite 6:00pm Lenten Supper/ Great Hall 7:00pm Stations of the Cross/ Sanctuary
<b>SATURDAY</b>	8:00pm Building and Grounds Meeting/ Great Hall CAST/offsite 10:00am Lector Training/ Sanctuary 4:00pm Reconciliation/ Daily Chapel 5:30pm <b>Mass/ Sanctuary</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b>	CAST/offsite 8:30am <b>Mass/ Sanctuary</b> 10:30am <b>Mass/ Sanctuary with Face Book Livestream</b> 12:00pm Migrant Ministry Meeting/ Library 12:30pm Children’s Formation/ Classrooms

### Daily Readings

<b>MONDAY</b> 2/16	James 1:1-11; Mark 8:11-13
<b>TUESDAY</b> 2/17	James 1:12-18; Mark 8:14-21
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> 2/18	<b>Ash Wednesday</b> Joel 2:12-18 ; 2 Corinthians 5:20 - 6:2; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18
<b>THURSDAY</b> 2/19	<b>Thursday after Ash Wednesday</b> Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Luke 9:22-25 Eugenia Manalo †
<b>FRIDAY</b> 2/20	<b>Friday After Ash Wednesday</b> Isaiah 58:1-9a; Matthew 9:14-15
<b>SATURDAY</b> 2/21	<b>Saturday After Ash Wednesday</b> Isaiah 58:9b-14; Luke 5:27-32 Cresencia Miranda †, Paul Thomas † <b>Policarpio Baylon†</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b> 2/22	<b>First Sunday of Lent</b> Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7; Romans 5:12-19 or 5:12, 17-19; Matthew 4:1-11 Moises Mina III †, Jaime Negrete †



Cindy Meier, Luis San Ciaguel, Joseph Perine, Marie Amella, Fr. Dan Klem, Theresa Muller, Ron Still, Joseph Wargo, Kathy Seddon, Don Coons, Dana Reid, Merla Marcelo, Henrietta Mayr, Creed Clawson, Jayme Oliveira Filho, Louisa Morrison, Dare O’Ravitz, Angie Hudson, Caroline Padilla, Gigliola Kamp-Casto, Erlinda Mariado, Lorraine Stambaugh, Susan Colonna, Lexie Murray, Adriane Pennington, Rosendo Ibanez, Reynaldo Francisco, Annora Steiner, Julie Bellinger, Chandler Brewer, Val Kandis, Jay Davis, Olivia Wiggins, Armida Valmeo, Nikolas Pakkidis

\* Prayer Requests may remain in the bulletin for one year.

### SACRAMENTS AT ST. MARK

Contact Parish Secretary in the Parish Office to begin the processes of baptism, marriage, or other sacraments.

**BAPTISM:** Celebrated the 1st weekend of the month except during Holy Week. Requirement: **Families must be registered.** Contact Religious Formation Office for Baptism classes prior to the Sacrament. Confirm Baptism date and time with Parish Secretary after all requirements have been turned in.

**MATRIMONY:** Couples required to give 6 months notice before planning a wedding in the Parish. Please do not set date before contacting the Priest.

**RECONCILIATION:** Celebrated 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month at 4:00 p.m.

### Samaritan Ministry

Volunteers visit the sick and those unable to get to mass. Training will be provided. If you would like to be a Samaritan Ministry volunteer, or to receive a visit from a Samaritan Ministry volunteer, call Ann Marie Cochran at 757-621-0699 for more details.

*Thank You!*  
*I wish to express my gratitude and heartfelt thanks to the nursery volunteers who have helped me so much in my time of need.*  
*Sincerely,*  
*Kathy Seddon*

# “Nourished by the Sacraments”

## A Reflection on Sixth Sunday In Ordinary Time/ Ash Wednesday

From Fr. Eric Asamoah

Our experience of making choices brings us back to our reading from Sirach. The book of Sirach is full of practical advice and wisdom, rooted in Jewish tradition. In this passage, Sirach reminds us that there is one fundamental choice to be made, the choice between life and death. This shows the deep respect God has for our freedom. But it also makes us responsible for our choices. God does not force obedience. On this 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A, we are invited to follow God with our whole heart. His commandments are not just rules, they are to guide us to make the right choices. This leads to real joy and peace.

The Responsorial Psalm 119, is the longest psalm in the Bible which focuses on God’s law and doesn’t treat law as a burden. The psalmist asks God for help to understand the law and to follow it with a sincere heart. We are invited then to love God’s command and ask for the grace to follow them.

Matthew’s Jesus in today’s Gospel does not overturn the Law of Moses (God’s commandment), nor does He set his followers free from the Law. He requires His followers to go beyond the Law by doing more than the Law requires. Jesus shows that fulfilling the law means living with true righteousness. Faith is not just about obeying rules; it is about having a heart that seeks what is right.

Jesus teaches that lust, dishonesty, anger and resentment, all begin in the heart. The importance of forgiveness is so great that it comes before strict religious duties. He tells us *“leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your neighbor.”*

Lent is just around the corner. And so, now is the time to think of how we’ll choose life and avoid death. What are those spiritual practices I’m going to take on; extra prayer, fasting, daily Mass, etc. that are going to give me life?

And what will I give up, in order to better pursue good, and choose life? God be with you all.

### A Reflection on Ash Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Ash Wednesday marks a profound threshold, a day when the Church invites us to step away from the noise of the world and enter the sacred silence of the desert. It is an essential day in the life of a Catholic because it serves as a stark, physical reminder of our human frailty and our absolute dependence on God’s mercy. When we receive the ashes formed from the burned palms of the previous year’s Hosannas, we are reminded that our earthly journey is finite. The words “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return” are not meant to be morbid; rather, they are a grounding truth that strips away our pretensions, inviting us to live with greater intention and a more sincere orientation toward eternity. This ritual humbles us, leveling the playing field of our humanity and uniting us in our shared need for a Savior.

Central to this day is the call to interior transformation, as beautifully articulated in the Gospel of Matthew. We are cautioned against performing our righteousness for the applause of others. Ash Wednesday is important because it challenges the modern instinct to curate an image of perfection. Instead, we are told that when we give alms, our left hand should not know what our right hand is doing; when we pray, we should go to our inner room; and when we fast, we should not look gloomy so that others may see our sacrifice. These instructions emphasize that Lent is not a season for public

performance, but for a private, authentic return to the Father who sees what is hidden. By focusing on secret acts of charity, prayer, and penance, we ensure that our Lenten journey is a matter of the heart rather than a display of vanity.

Ultimately, Ash Wednesday is the gateway to the Paschal Mystery. It sets the tone for the forty days ahead, teaching us that the path to the joy of the Resurrection must first pass through the honesty of the Cross. It is a day of hope, signaling that no matter how far we have wandered, the door to repentance is open. By embracing the ashes, we publicly commit to a season of shedding our old selves to make room for the new life Christ offers, beginning a journey of purification that leads us closer to the heart of God. I wish a fruitful season of lent.



**Join us for the Diocese of Richmond Chrism Mass March 30, 2026. A St. Mark bus trip to the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond will be available.**

Reserve your bus seat for \$40.00 (driver tip included); Cash or check (payable to St. Mark) are accepted. Seats are limited, so don’t delay; sign up in the commons today!

Departure is 2:00pm for the 6:00pm Mass.



### Palm Collection Begins Now

St. Mark is collecting last year’s palms for Ash Wednesday to be burned on Shrove Tuesday, February 17th. Donate old palms in the basket in the

Commons or bring them to the Parish Office after Masses and during regular Parish Office hours.



### Mission Statement

Rooted in the Word...nourished by the Sacraments...Guided by the Holy Spirit...We, the people of St. Mark, are united in our desire to serve those who are in need, to give our gifts and talents...to build the Kingdom of God by imaging Jesus Christ...(Established 1978)

# “Building the Kingdom of God by Imaging Christ”

## Justice Peace

For information on our Justice & Peace Ministries visit:  
[www.stmark-parish.org/ministries/justice-and-peace](http://www.stmark-parish.org/ministries/justice-and-peace), or email:  
[justiceandpeace@stmark-parish.org](mailto:justiceandpeace@stmark-parish.org)

 **February:** \$10 Gift Cards/Any items from our Food Pantry List/ Individual Fruit Cups

### Upcoming Justice & Peace Dates:

- **Rice Bowl Campaign** pick you bowl up beginning Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>
- **40 Days For Life:** February 18<sup>th</sup>-March 29<sup>th</sup> Monday 1-2pm/ Planned Parenthood
- **Migrant Ministry Planning meeting:** Sunday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> Noon/ Library
- Justice & Peace **Stations of Cross:** March 16<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm/ Sanct.
- **VA March For Life:** April 2<sup>nd</sup> Richmond .Visit our Justice & Peace table in Great Hall or Contact [justiceandpeace@stmark-parish.org](mailto:justiceandpeace@stmark-parish.org)



**Spiritual Adoption is HERE!** Visit our display in the Commons. Please consider “spiritually adopting” an unborn child and share the love for life that God has given you. Prayer pledge cards will be available after all Masses. Monthly updates and resources are provided to assist you with your prayer pledge. For more information [justiceandpeace@stmark-parish.org](mailto:justiceandpeace@stmark-parish.org)



**Migrant Ministry:** Have you donated used clothing to the Migrant Ministry but never really understood what it’s all about? Do you feel called to serve migrant workers but don’t know where to begin? Did you know our Diocese actively ministers to our migrant workers on the Eastern Shore of Virginia?

Join our efforts as we work to revitalize and expand our Migrant Ministry on Eastern Shore Sunday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> @ noon in Parish Library



**CAST** - February 18<sup>th</sup> -25<sup>th</sup> Still time to sign up online at CAST Food Donations: [https://stmarkhelps.ivolunteer.com/castfood\\_2026](https://stmarkhelps.ivolunteer.com/castfood_2026)

Volunteer Opportunities: [https://stmarkhelps.ivolunteer.com/cast\\_volunteer\\_at\\_chesapeake\\_cares\\_resource\\_center\\_2026](https://stmarkhelps.ivolunteer.com/cast_volunteer_at_chesapeake_cares_resource_center_2026)



**VB Women’s Jail Ministry:** For February we are collecting **full size** women’s hygiene products for the women at Virginia Beach jail. Please place items in wooden bins in the Great Hall next to the Justice & Peace table.



*Seasons of Hope*  
**A Catholic Grief Support Group**

Our parish grief support group is a gentle, prayerful space to share, listen, and find hope in Christ alongside others who understand.

**ALL ARE WELCOME**

For more details, contact  
Pat Winner at 757-615-2759 or  
Dale Mullin at 757-647-6994

## Parish Life

*“I am the vine, you are the branches.”*

• **Lent** is fast approaching! Please join us for Lenten Suppers in the Great Hall at 6pm before Stations of the Cross (at 7pm) in the Sanctuary. Bring a meatless soup or dish to share. In accordance with the USCCB the norm for abstinence and fasting applies to those 18-59 years of age. Abstinence does NOT include meat juices and liquid foods made from meat. Therefore, meat broths are permitted when making meatless soups and dishes.

Friday meatless suppers will begin on the Friday after Ash Wednesday. There will be NO meatless supper on Good Friday. Our schedule is as follows:

**February 20 & 27, March 6, 13, 20 & 27.**

A Lenten Supper schedule will be posted on the Parish Life bulletin board in the Great Hall.

• Last year our ministry spiritually and physically fed over 4,000 parishioners at various events. “The essence of love is service to others.” If you are looking for a way to serve, join Parish Life! Contact Linda Major at 757-615-0763 for more info.

• **Marriage is a reason and a season to celebrate!** Parish Life is keeping a compiled record of anniversaries in our parish. If you have not yet recorded your anniversary, please stop by the Parish Life table in the Great Hall and add your special day to the Anniversary Booklet.

**Happy Anniversary to the following St. Mark parishioners will celebrate a February wedding anniversary this week!**

**Ken and Jane Long - February 14, 1981 (45 years)**  
**Mark and Sharon Shofner - February 14, 1986 (40 years)**  
**Junnal and Crestine Mkgana - Feb. 18, 2016 (10 years)**

### Lector Training Available

If you signed up to be a lector at the Ministry Fair last month, or if you want to review instruction as a current lector, you are encouraged to attend our next Lector Training on February 21st at 10:00am in the sanctuary.

For more details on the training sessions or if you want to know more about becoming a lector, please contact Dan Wood at [Dan.Wood.va@gmail.com](mailto:Dan.Wood.va@gmail.com).



### Is OCIA for You?

If you are an individual who has not yet been baptized, received Eucharist or Confirmation, and you are looking to deepen your faith, please contact the Formation Office ([nicole@stmark-parish.org](mailto:nicole@stmark-parish.org)) or the parish secretary, and a member of the OCIA Team will contact you.

In compliance with Office of Safe Environment requirements, children under the age of 12 should be accompanied by an adult when using restroom facilities. At St. Mark, parents are encouraged to provide this supervision as needed. Thank you for your cooperation!

**Parish Office Hours: Monday-Thursday: 9:00am – 3:00pm; Sunday 9:00-1:00pm**

# Announcements/ Giving/ Contact Information

**Jubilee of St. Francis Assisi**

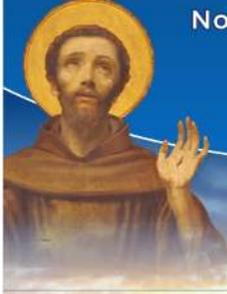
**St. Mark Church**  
A Pilgrimage to

## ROME & ASSISI

November 9 - 18, 2026

**\$6,743 per person**  
from Norfolk (ORF)

\*All Pricing Based on Double Occupancy,  
Pricing available from any airport:  
www.206tours.com/airports





Spiritual Director:  
**Fr. Eric Baffour Asamoah**



Group Leader:  
**Fe Guzman**



If you currently do not give online, but would like to be an online contributor, please sign up at: [giving.parishsoft.com/app/giving/stmarkvb](https://giving.parishsoft.com/app/giving/stmarkvb) or donate on the Parish Giving QR code.



For more details or to donate, contact Parish Bookkeeper, MaryEllen Cussen, at [bookkeeper@stmark-parish.org](mailto:bookkeeper@stmark-parish.org) or call the parish office

Fiscal Year July-June	February 1	Needed Year to Date New Fiscal Year	Offertory Year to Date	Excess/ (Short)
<b>Offertory</b>	<b>\$17,980</b>	<b>\$625,500</b>	<b>\$599,668</b>	<b>(\$25,832)</b>

Family Count: 791  
Families using envelopes: 80 (snowy day)  
Families using online donation: 220

### How to obtain your 2025 Tax Statement:

From our website ([stmark-parish.org](http://stmark-parish.org)), in the top Menu go to **Resources**.

From the drop-down menu, select **ParishSoft – Family Suite** and enter your username and password to login. Note: If you do not already have a **ParishSoft** account you will need to create one.

- Once you have logged into ParishSoft, select **My Own Church**.
- Select **My Offering** from the menu on left.
- Select **Giving History** at the top of the page.
- On the giving History, page be sure **Funds is set to ALL**, and that **'Tax Deductible Only'** and **'Include Member Info'** are **both selected** and the **Year is set to 2025**.
- Next, click the 'Download' button and select "Statement" to save your Tax Statement to your device.

If you have any issues logging into ParishSoft, please contact the parish office at 757-479-1010.

For more details, contact the parish office 757-479-1010 or [fe@stmark-parish.org](mailto:fe@stmark-parish.org)



**CALLING ALL COOKS!**

**CHILI COOK-OFF IS COMING!**

WITH BATTLE OF THE KIDS  
SIGN UP BY FEB 27  
bring the heat!



march 7, 2026  
6:45 pm

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT  
[fe@stmark-parish.org](mailto:fe@stmark-parish.org)

**Calling All Cooks!** If you would like to participate in the 2026 "Chili Cook-off with Battle of the Kids" (age 13 and under) on March 7th, please sign up in the Commons by Feb.27th.

For more information about this event, contact Fe Guzman at [fe@stmark-parish.org](mailto:fe@stmark-parish.org).



What's that on your forehead?

This Wednesday, we will celebrate the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the season of Lent with Ash Wednesday. Lent is 40 days of preparing our hearts for Jesus and for His Resurrection. We go to Church on Ash Wednesday and get ashes on our forehead in the form of a cross. It doesn't always look like a cross, sometimes it might look like Simba from Lion King, or a lightning bolt, or just a blot. Whatever it looks like, it reminds us that without God, we're nothing, but WITH God, we're EVERYTHING. You're worth the love of God; you're worth the Cross. To Jesus, you're worth everything!



### PARISH STAFF

Rev. Fr. Eric Asamoah.....[freric@stmark-parish.org](mailto:freric@stmark-parish.org)  
 Rev. Mr. John Kren.....Acting Pastoral Associate  
[deacon\\_john@stmark-parish.org](mailto:deacon_john@stmark-parish.org)  
 Sherry Smeland..... Parish Secretary  
[secretary@stmark-parish.org](mailto:secretary@stmark-parish.org)  
 Mary Ellen Cussen.....Business Manager  
[bookkeeper@stmark-parish.org](mailto:bookkeeper@stmark-parish.org)  
 Mark Smeland.....Music Director  
[music.director@stmark-parish.org](mailto:music.director@stmark-parish.org)  
 Vikki Ignacio .....Assistant Music Director  
 Brian Gridley.....Facility/IT Coordinator  
 Renee McCroskey.....Nursery Supervisor  
 Hank Harzold.....Parish Council Chairman  
 Tom Smith .....Custodian  
 William McMican.....Finance Council Chairman

### RELIGIOUS FORMATION STAFF

Fe Guzman.....Director of Religious Formation/Youth Minister  
 Nicole Brimer.....Coordinator of Religious Formation

### RELIGIOUS FORMATION OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday 9:00a.m. – 3:00p.m. Sunday 9:00a.m. - 2:00p.m.  
 Phone: 757-479-9897 • Fax: 757-479-9453; Email: [fe@stmark-parish.org](mailto:fe@stmark-parish.org)