

S.M.A.R.T. NEWS

A Saint Mary's Youth Newsletter | Youth.icStMary.org

DEAR FRIENDS,
by Patti McTaggart

**DO NOT NEGLECT TO DO GOOD AND
TO SHARE WHAT YOU HAVE, FOR SUCH
SACRIFICES ARE PLEASING TO GOD...
HEBREWS 13:16**

Each winter as the snow appears, I think back to the days when, as a little girl, my brothers, sister, and I would get SO excited to see the flakes coming down! Sledding! Snow forts! Snowball fights! All right...I'll admit...sometimes no school! But I can remember my dad sighing as he got out the shovel to remove the white stuff from our long driveway and even longer sidewalks that surrounded the house. Removing snow manually is a lot of work...and the older you get, the more you can count on a lot of sore muscles afterwards! I believe God gives us the snow for many reasons: It helps the ground for the crops to grow in the spring. The first snow provides us with a sense of cleanliness and purity. Lots of fun times like ski trips and snow forts are possible when it snows. And how often do we hear people say, "Oh we just HAVE to have snow for Christmas!" But I believe that God also gives us the snow to provide us with another opportunity: helping others. If you, as a young person, live near someone who might need the snow on their driveway or sidewalk removed, take the time and effort to remove it for them - without expecting payment. If you see an elderly person walking along the slippery sidewalk to their cars after Mass, or at the mall, or at a school event, or ANYWHERE, ask if they would like to grab your arm and you'll walk with them to their car. If you see someone in a wheelchair struggling with snow on the sidewalk, offer to give them a gentle maneuvering push through the obstacle. If you see someone floundering with groceries and small children, offer to help carry their bags. Sometimes the snow can keep people in their houses for long periods of time. If you know someone like that, send him or her a little note, call them up just to talk for a while, or - even better - spend some time visiting with them in person! For you see, God does not do great things for us because He HAS to...He does great things for us because He WANTS to...that's something for us to ponder as we slip and slide through this winter season...

NEW YEAR "THOUGHTS" TO LIVE BY

The most destructive habit.....Worry
The greatest Joy.....Giving
The greatest loss.....Loss of self-respect
The most satisfying work.....Helping others
The ugliest personality trait.....Selfishness
The most endangered species.....Dedicated leaders
Our greatest natural resource.....Children and youth
The greatest "shot in the arm".....Encouragement
The greatest problem to overcome.....Fear
The most effective sleeping pill.....Peace of mind
The most crippling failure disease.....Excuses
The most powerful force in life.....Love
The most dangerous pariah.....A gossip
The world's most incredible computer.....The brain
The worst thing to be without.....Hope
The deadliest weapon.....The tongue
The two most power-filled words....."I Can"
The greatest asset.....Faith
The most worthless emotion.....Self-pity
The most beautiful attire.....SMILE!
The most prized possession.....Integrity
The most powerful channel of communication.....Prayer
The most contagious spirit.....Enthusiasm
The most important thing in life.....GOD

JANUARY

31st-1st - BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF GOD - 5:00PM, 8:30AM, 10:30AM

8th - CONFIRMATION SESSION IN THE PARISH HALL - 5:00-6:15PM

19th - FREE LUNCH COOKIE-BAKING - in the parish hall from 3:30-4:30PM

20th-23th - March for Life in Washington, DC. - IMPORTANT!

FEBRUARY

5th - CONFIRMATION SESSION - IN THE PARISH HALL 5:00PM - 6:15PM

16th - Free Lunch Cookie-Baking from 3:30-4:30PM in the parish hall

19th - SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION 2PM

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL THE YOUTH WHO HELPED IN ANY WAY WITH OUR CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS AT ST. MARY'S - AS USHERS, GREETERS, SERVERS, READERS, MUSICIANS, BELL CHOIR MEMBERS, CHOIR MEMBERS, EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST, COOKIE-BAKERS (FOR THE HOMEBOUND AND THOSE WHO LOST LOVED ONES IN 2022), VIDEOGRAPHERS! YOUR GIFTS OF TIME AND TALENT ARE ALWAYS APPRECIATED. GOD BLESS YOU!

CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES 2023:

ALL FORMS MUST BE IN - YESTERDAY!

REMINDERS: CONFIRMATION SESSION
JANUARY 8TH FROM 5:00PM-6:15PM
SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION -
SUNDAY, **FEBRUARY 19TH , 2023 AT**
2:00PM





SAINT ANGELA MERICI

Feast Day: January 27th | Written by: **Ava Garcia**

Patron Saint of the sick, disabled and physically challenged people and those grieving the loss of parents. Birth: March 21, 1474 Death: January 27, 1540

St. Angela Merici was an Italian religious educator and founder of the Ursulines whose deep prayer life and relationship with the Lord bore the fruit of mystical encounters with God. She was born on March 21, 1474 in Desenzano, a small town on the shore of Lake Garda in Lombardy. At just 10-years-old, Angela and her older sister became orphans and went to live with their uncle in Salo. There they led a quiet and devout Catholic Christian life. After the untimely death of her sister, Angela was saddened by the fact that she had not had the opportunity to receive her last Sacraments and was concerned for her sister's eternal salvation. Angela was inspired by the Holy Spirit to dedicate herself to the Lord and to give her life in service to the Church to help everyone grow closer to the Lord. Still filled with grief, she prayed for God to reveal the condition of her deceased sister's soul. In a vision, she learned her sister was in Heaven with the company of saints. She became increasingly more devout and joined the Third Order of St. Francis where she also pledged to remain a consecrated virgin, forsaking marriage to one man to be married to the Lord and His Church. When Angela was 20-years-old, her uncle died and she returned to Desenzano. She found that around her hometown there were many young girls who had no education and no hope. Her heart was moved. She also became distressed by their ignorance and upset at the parents who had not educated them. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Angela became convinced there was great need for a better way of teaching these young girls. So, she opened her own home to them and began to teach them herself. She devotedly taught them the Catholic Christian faith. By her example and instruction, she taught them to how to pray and participate in the sacramental life of the Church. She evangelized and catechized these young girls, opening them up to the life of grace. Another vision from the Lord revealed to Angela that she was to found an institution with other consecrated virgins to further devote their lives toward the religious training of young girls. These women had little money and no power, but were bound together by their dedication to education and commitment to Jesus Christ and service to His Church. Living in their own homes, the girls met for prayer and classes where Angela reminded them, "Reflect that in reality you have a greater need to serve [the poor] than they have of your service." Angela's charming nature and natural leadership qualities made this a successful endeavor. She was so successful she accepted an invitation from the neighboring town, Brescia, to establish a similar school there. In 1524, she eagerly took on the opportunity to travel to the Holy Land. During the journey, she was suddenly struck with blindness while on the island of Crete. This didn't stop her though; she continued the journey with as much enthusiasm as she would have if she had her vision. She made the entire pilgrimage and visited the sacred shrines. On the journey back home, her sight was miraculously restored while she was praying before a crucifix in the same place where she had become blind. The Lord showed Angela through this experience that she must never shut her eyes to the needs she saw around her ? to not shut her heart to God's call. During the Jubilee year in 1525, Angela traveled to Rome to gain the special grace of the plenary indulgence offered to all Christian pilgrims. Pope Clement VII had heard of Angela and her great holiness. He noted her wonderful success as a religious teacher for young girls and invited her to stay in Rome. Angela was humble, disliked publicity and kindly declined the generous offer.