

# SAINT MARY GRAND

## 2023 Easter Pilgrimage for Young People to Rome, Assisi and Sansepolchro

Dear Parishioners of St. Mary,

St. Mary Church approaches its Bicentennial. We were founded in 1826 by Bishop Jean Dubois and celebrated the first mass at the parish church on Sheriff Street on May 14, 1826. It was Pentecost Sunday. It is appropriate to celebrate our 200 year anniversary on Pentecost Sunday May 24, 2026. No formal plans have been made yet for the celebration, but we are planning a fundraising campaign to finance the completion of the repairs to our magnificent church before the bicentennial celebration in 2026. We will also begin marking our mailings and website with the date and the remembrance.

At the same time, we know that our obligation is to pass on our faith to our young people. We are also passing on our spirit and our traditions as a parish. The invitation of our young men to join together and follow in the path of the Lord and the Apostles was begun last summer. Three young men could not come with us last year on the pilgrimage to Rome. They have tickets that were purchased for them and need to be used before June 2nd. The choice of traveling from Easter Monday, April 10th to April 18th fits in with the schedule for the free time of these young men and others. Easter week is a wonderful time to go to Rome and this year we are including a trip to Assisi and to the Tuscan city of Sansepolchro.

The cost of the trip remains \$500 round trip in order not to burden the finances of the families of the young men. We appeal to the parish to help us meet the remaining costs. Please help make this pilgrimage a memory for a lifetime for our young parishioners by making a tax-deductible donation towards our mission. You may use the enclosed form for details on how you can provide your generous support.

I am including an essay titled, "the City of Man and the City of God," written by Dr. Paul Connell, PhD. He is my classmate from my Alma Mater, The Thomas More College. We studied in Rome for two semesters and graduated in 1986. Dr. Connell lives in Rome and teaches there. He will help guide the students.

We will also go to Assisi for Sunday mass on April 16th, Divine Mercy Sunday and conclude in the city of Sansepolcho, the home of the great artist Piero della Francesca and the pilgrimage site of Santo Volto, the holy image. Thank you for your consideration of our youth and your generosity in building up our parish not only in brick and mortar but with the lives of the future.

Yours in Christ,



Fr. Andrew O'Connor  
Pastor

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**2023 Easter Pilgrimage for Young People to Rome, Assisi and Sansepolchro**  
April 10 - 18, 2023

Please accept my donation in support of the St. Mary Church youth trip to Italy.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Method:    Check     Cash     Credit Card     Venmo

Amount \_\_\_\_\_

If donating by **cash** or **check** (made out to **Church of St. Mary**), please enclose in an envelope along with this form and drop in the collection basket at Mass or drop off at the Rectory Office.

If donating by **Venmo**, find **@StMaryGrand** or use this qr code, and enter "Rome Trip" in the description. Bring this filled out form to the Church or Rectory Office at your convenience, or email a scan of it to [saintmarygrand1826@gmail.com](mailto:saintmarygrand1826@gmail.com)



**venmo**

If donating by **credit card**, please use our PayPal page. Visit [www.saintmarygrand.org/donate](http://www.saintmarygrand.org/donate) and follow the instructions. Bring this filled out form to the Church or Rectory Office at your convenience, or email a scan of it to [saintmarygrand1826@gmail.com](mailto:saintmarygrand1826@gmail.com)

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*The following is a reflection on why a young person should seek to live in the City of God and how to ignite that possibility in a trip to Rome.*

## **City as a Vocational Space**

**Dr. Paul Connell, PhD.**

Louis Kahn, the great twentieth-century American builder, reflected on the nature of a city as he looked back upon his own upbringing in Philadelphia:

“A city should be a place where a little boy, walking through its streets can sense what he someday would like to be.”

The sign of a healthy city is one where the sidewalks and shops are full of people going about their business, people from all walks of life and professions and trades. When a young man in adolescence witnesses this, he begins to imagine his own place in society.



There are many great cities in the world—and New York is certainly one of them—but there is only one city that can honestly claim the title “caput mundi”: Rome. Rome has been the standard of what a proper city should be ever since its founding in 753 BC.

In Rome the question of vocation is intensified since the sense of being called to a life of purpose—to follow one’s natural inclination of soul—is part of a truly Catholic outlook.

As a Roman Catholic, therefore, one’s calling informs one’s place, not only in the City of Man, but in the City of God.



Rome is known for its pieties towards things eternal and its sense of renewal. In its bold facades, ornate churches, and countless monuments to holiness and vaunting ambition alike, we see embodied high human aspiration.

Dante, in his *Convivio* says that the young are subject to a stupor or astonishment of the mind which falls on them at the awareness of great and wonderful things.

Such a stupor produces two results—a sense of reverence and a desire to know more. A noble awe and a noble curiosity come to life.

A pilgrimage to Rome in youth—or at any age, for that matter— holds out the possibility of that discovery: the discovery (or re-discovery) of the noble life that God wishes for all of all.

In a world where our young people are exposed so much that is base and ignoble, please generously support the Rome Pilgrimage 2023 of Saint Mary Grand.

Paul Connell, Ph.D  
Roma



*Our young parishioners in Rome, 2022*