

ST. MARK'S NEWS



6550 Picasso Rd. Goleta, CA 93117 Phone: (805) 968-1078 Fax: (805) 968-3965

St. Mark's Catholic Church- A Spiritual Oasis!

In Isla Vista it's easy to lose your way, and not only because there's a maze of similarly named streets and identical apartment buildings! But in a small college town that is infamous for its partying it's easy for students, and even for the families who live and work here, to feel overwhelmed, alone, or displaced.

That's where St. Mark's comes in! Nestled right in the heart of Isla Vista, St. Mark's is an oasis for those who are lost in the Isla Vista shuffle and are thirsting for a spiritual, loving, and supportive faith community.

St. Mark's opened in 1966 as the "Newman Center" for the UCSB Catholic students. Since then it has ministered to thousands of UCSB students. But it doesn't stop there! It opens its doors to Santa Barbara City College students, and Westmont students as well. The 7:00pm Sunday Masses are a gathering point for these students- it gives them a wonderful opportunity to come

together and worship in their own style, creating a supportive student community. These Masses are usually followed by social time for the students- a chance to get to know each other and have some fun! The Parish also provides and encourages student-led outreach activities, Bible studies, and retreats.

In addition to serving the students, St. Mark's is the home parish to many families, known affectionately as "year-round parishioners."

St. Mark's makes it a point to give as much as it can to the community as well. It offers blood drives, charity fundraisers, and a daily lunch program for the homeless, feeding approx. 40 people per day, Monday- Friday.

What an amazing gift St. Mark's Parish is to the Isla Vista community! We hope that it will be able to serve the students and the larger community for many years to come.

Search Retreats –“The Ability to Reach Out”

If you asked the college students of St. Mark's Parish "what is your favorite event St. Mark's has to offer?" you would, without a doubt, get this excited and unified response: "THE SEARCH RETREAT!"

Held annually, this retreat weekend offers the students a chance to get away from the pressures of campus life. More importantly, it gives them the chance to grow deeper in their relationship with God and in their understanding of their faith, and make new and lasting friendships with their peers.

Making new friendships is often what first draws the students to the retreat, says Molly Coyle, co-leader of the Parish's Search Retreats:

"A lot of students who move away from home for college for the first time feel lost, especially in Isla Vista which has a notorious reputation for partying. Search first of all offers a community of support from other Catholics in their same situation, and I believe the most important part of Search begins *after* the retreat, when we carry on the relationships we made during the weekend."

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

It is an honor and blessing to be the new pastor of St. Mark's University parish! Having grown up in Santa Barbara, I find myself coming full-circle back to this beautiful area after 20 years serving in parishes in Ventura County, and taking a few years to study in Washington, D.C. The heart of St. Mark's – and its reason for being – is service to the community of Catholic students, faculty and staff of UCSB. We are a precious commodity; one of only two in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles staffed by diocesan priests. It is a big job for one priest, in part because I am also director of the Santa Barbara Pastoral Region Vocation program. The plate is full, but it is a wonderful plate

As Molly Coyle points out in this newsletter, St. Mark's is a refuge for our students. When students are here they feel safe from peer-pressure and from resorting to the partying lifestyle which can often be the downfall for even the best-intentioned young

scholar. Like any good family, we take care of one another here at the parish. I like the fact that a number of our student parishioners have befriended members of our year-rounder community. I also appreciate the fact that our bi-lingual Spanish speaking students often attend our Spanish Mass and have become involved in catechetical teaching and Christ-like service to the immigrant Mexican community in our midst. Some lead retreats, others assist with communion to the sick, and still others help out in our daily lunch program for the homeless.

Please drop by for a visit anytime. I would like to meet you if you an alumnus or the parent of a student. We promise that you - like the current students here - will find a warm family welcome and place of prayer.

Fr. John W. Love, D.Min.
Pastor

WE NEED YOU! How Can YOU Support St. Mark's?

By Lauren Bergesen, Parish Development Director

St. Mark's is a busy and growing community. We are blessed with committed students and year-round parishioners who are always willing to give whatever time, energy, and monetary contributions they can. We are thankful for their continued support and participation!

However, our Parish has reached a critical point in its development. We hope to continue to provide our excellent services and spiritual opportunities, and would like to increase the ways that we meet our parish's needs. Unfortunately, these programs and services do need funding to keep going, and our parishioners' contributions alone are not enough.

YOU CAN HELP! Has St. Mark's touched your life? Please give back to this wonderful community!

There are three important ways to do this:

- **Prayers Please!** We can do nothing without the Holy Spirit as our guide. Please pray for continued

guidance and wisdom for our parish.

- **Stop By For a Visit!** We are always happy to see families of students, alumni, and guests at our Masses and events!

- **Make a Donation!** Please give a tax- deductible monetary donation to help us provide the best possible service to our community. Your donation will enable student outreach and greater opportunities for all our parishioners.

To give a donation, simply fill out and return the envelope provided. Or- we accept stock donations, charitable trusts, and credit cards. Do you want to leave a lasting legacy? Please consider remembering St. Mark's in your will!

If you have any questions, please contact Lauren Bergesen at (805) 968-1078, or email: stmarksislavista@gmail.com

Thank you for your contributions!

When asked what his favorite thing about Search is, Search co-leader Louie Reyes also commented on the connection made between students, saying that he appreciates **“The ability to reach out to those who need reaching out to. To be able to show them that we are here for them.”**

Certainly the Search Retreats are a wonderful way for the students to connect. Over the course of the weekend they create a real and much needed feeling of community that lasts long after the actual retreat is over. Students who have already attended a Search Retreat continue to build this community by meeting every Sunday evening following the 7:00pm student Mass. They come together for fellowship, prayer, and to plan for the next retreat.

When asked to share what they felt about Search, a majority of students who have already taken part in the retreat describe it as “amazing,” and “life-changing.” Several comment on how attending the retreat really built up their faith and brought them to a new level of spirituality. Senior Jessica Gisla says:

“I grew up in the Catholic Church and have always believed in God, but after attending Search I became so spiritually aware and I have a bond with God that I didn't know could exist.”

Search is beautifully constructed to spiritually nourish college students through a mix of prayer, contemplation, discussion, and social activities.

The results are truly amazing. If you spend five minutes observing a Search meeting you will be overwhelmed by the loving attitude of the students who are present.

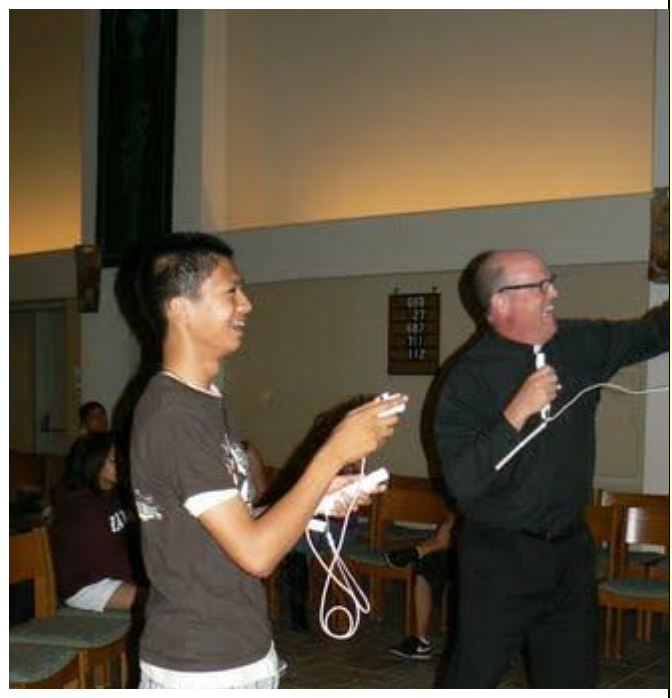
Senior Brianna Flores summed it up beautifully by sharing: **“Every time we get together I see the body of Christ. I am so thankful that Search is a part of my college career.”**

There's no better way to describe it.

ST. MARK'S STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

At St. Mark's, Fr. John Love encourages the college students to be leaders in the parish. UCSB Senior Matt Brehove has enthusiastically accepted this leadership role! He organizes student outreach events such as “Roman Rush” week. He leads weekly prayer and Bible studies for students, and takes part in the Search retreats. He works at parish fundraisers and community service events, and helps with the Children's Liturgy of the Word, What does he want the students' families to know about what St. Mark's has to offer? He states:

“Families should know that their son/daughter is going to have friends who will help them grow in their faith.”



Above- Welcome Week's "Roman Rush" Burrito Bar and Wii night!
Left- St. Mark's returning students take part in UCSB's Welcome Week to promote the parish.



Above- Fr. John and some of the students have some summer fun at Goleta Beach!

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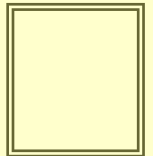
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UCSB ALUMNI- WHAT ARE THE
UCSB STUDENTS INTO NOW?
LOOK INSIDE TO FIND OUT!

PARENTS- WHAT IS YOUR
SON/DAUGHTER GETTING
INVOLVED IN? LOOK INSIDE
TO SEE...

FIND OUT WHERE YOUR
SON/DAUGHTER IS ON
SUNDAY NIGHTS...

Company Name
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code



Customer Name
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code