

**October 8, 2017**  
**27th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**St. Mary by the Sea Feast Day**

**"Though many have worshipped here in St. Mary, we are one bread and one body,  
for we have all received of the one Bread and one Chalice."**

*Today we remember the lives of all who have come to this church dedicated to Mary by the Sea, hostess to the traveler, the homeless, the homemaker, the lover and the loved. In this church, we have encountered the Christ of the universe in all we have met. Thank you, Holy Mary of God.*

Today is the Feast of our parish, St. Mary by the Sea. As we celebrate this parish, it is most appropriate to say "thank you." Our parish community is special because you are here. Everyone has gifts and talents making a contribution to our parish in one way or another, some more visible than others, some more hidden in the depth of the heart. But simply because you are here, we are blessed.

The following is a short history of St. Mary by the Sea. "*Catholicism began in Tillamook County in the 1860's. The first recorded mass in Rockaway was offered in a theater on July 10, 1921. On August 16, 1923, this lot was purchased for \$300, and in 1927, Benedictine Fr. Hildebrand Melchior, who also built the church in Cloverdale, built this church and a hall. Both Wheeler and Garibaldi wanted the new church in their communities, but Fr. Hildebrand knew the beach community would outlive the two timber-dependent communities, so Rockaway Beach got its church. The church was built with a strong nautical theme.*"

The following is a description of the church as found in the web-site. "*To walk in is to walk into the world of sailing ships. The walls and ceiling are paneled in the manner of ship's cabins, using hand-selected, straight grain, knot-free cedar boards. The beams in the ceiling and particularly around the sanctuary reflect the influence of a shipwright rather than a carpenter. From the ceiling hang four pronged anchors decorated with a ship's wheel. In the sanctuary are two ships' lanterns, one on either side of the altar. Along the walls and side altars hang anchors. The names on the holy water fonts, carved as Spanish galleons, are the Santa Maria and the San Salvador. The painting of the decorative designs on the beams of the ceiling was done by Edward Best.*"

Ida Clayton who came to Rockaway in 1910 with her husband wrote, ‘*The first church they had was on the beach. They’d gather round a bonfire on Sunday evenings. They’d all contribute, a song, a bible verse, a reading, or something. Finally someone says why don’t we take up a collection at these meetings and have a little fund towards the start of a church? So we did, and we appointed a man to look after it. He swiped it all’.*’

This little church has meant so much to so many people through the years. I would like to ask you, “What has/does this church of St. Mary by the Sea mean to you?”

### ... Congregational Sharing ...

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