

As a result of the pandemic in 2020, it became necessary for St. Mary's to continue to communicate with its parishioners and reach out to its community. The use of technology and social media became an important part of our outreach. The office computer was lagging in connection and speed, which were not up to the social media demands needed. To move forward with our goal to livestream Sunday Service, we needed to upgrade our current desktop computer system with one that meets the technology of today's social media platforms and needs of our congregation. Prior to returning to in-person service, St. Mary's purchased a small camera to pre-record its service and post the video to our website, Facebook, and YouTube social media platforms during its Sunday Service scheduled time. Our parishioners and visitors were happy that they were still able to worship with St. Mary's online.

Once we returned to in-person service, we took on the challenge of livestreaming our Sunday Service. However, due to our internet connection it was difficult for us to provide the livestreaming service due to lack of internet speed and bandwidth.

After researching our options to improve our connection and with the assistance and recommendations from Cynde Bimbi at the Episcopal Church in Delaware, we were able to figure out what we needed and how to move forward to get St. Mary's into the social media world of live streaming. Not only has the diocese provided us technical support, but they also informed us of their wonderful program called The Barnabas Fund - Technology Grant, which extended us the financial support we needed to be able to purchase the equipment needed to meet our goals. As a church currently in transition, our funds are very limited, and this grant has allowed us room to provide a better livestreaming experience.

St. Mary's currently has completed it's first phase of the process, which has allowed us to upgrade our desktop computer with tons of memory and speed as well as changing our internet service supplier to one which has greater speed and more bandwidth to allow us to use the wi-fi connection in the parish and livestream. This will also allow us to move forward with the audio equipment needed in the church.

Our second phase of this project is to purchase the video cameras and install them using the wi-fi connection. One of St. Mary's goal is to be able to provide our community a pleasant experience in watching St. Mary's Sunday Service online and encourage everyone to visit our "Little Church with a Big Heart" in Bridgeville.

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