

January 24, 2012

Media Alert

St. Mary of the Lakes Catholic Church to Celebrate 100th Anniversary

- WHO:** Bishop John Noonan of the Diocese of Orlando; Father Gilbert Medina; current pastor; former clergy; staff and parishioners from St. Mary of the Lakes Catholic Church in Eustis, Florida.
- WHAT:** 100th anniversary celebration for St. Mary of the Lakes Catholic Church in Eustis. Bishop Noonan will celebrate the Mass, which is followed by the burial of a time capsule on the church grounds and a reception at Lake Receptions in Mount Dora.
- WHERE:** St. Mary of the Lakes Catholic Church, 218 Ocklawaha Avenue, Eustis, FL 32726
- WHEN:** Jan. 28, 2012; Mass begins at 4 p.m., dinner begins at 6:30 p.m.
- WHY:** To celebrate the accomplishments of this parish community over the last century.
- OTHER:** St. Mary of the Lakes Catholic Church, the oldest Roman Catholic church in Lake County, Florida, was dedicated on Jan. 28, 1912, in a small church capable of fitting only 50 parishioners. The parish community was built after two area men, Charles Megargee and J.J. Ott, used their own personal funds in 1910 to purchase a property on which the church now stands. The cornerstone was laid a year later, in 1911, and the church was named St. Mary Catholic Church, after a donation of \$1,500 was offered with that provision.

The church was enlarged in 1936, and a new church – which included a hall, office and small rectory – was dedicated in 1980. Additional buildings include a Hispanic Ministry House and the St. Luke's Free Medical and Dental Clinic, a program of Catholic Charities of Central Florida which serves those with no medical insurance.

Currently, the church has more than 1,700 families registered. The time capsule that will be buried will not be opened until 2037, during the parish's 125th anniversary celebration.