St. Mary's Catholic Church Priests Accomplish Father Paulin's Dream Of Mass Dedicated To Area First Responders

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - It has been a dream of Father Jeremy Paulin, OMV, the pastor at St. Mary's Catholic Church, to have a Mass for first responders and their families. On Saturday, May 15, Father Paulin and the other St. Mary's priests accomplished that goal.

Father Paulin said the special Mass "was inspired by a desire to pray for and with all the men and women on the front lines of service to others - our firefighters, police officers and emergency medical personnel."

"These are people who need our prayers for many different reasons," Rev. Paulin said. "They need our support, they deserve our gratitude, and their families do as well."

Father Jeremy said this is something he's wanted to do for some time and decided to do it now, because May 4 is the Feast of St. Florian, the patron of firefighters and also because May 9-15 is National Police Week.

The Mass was attended by first responders and their families. Various local firefighters, police officers and medical personnel attended including Godfrey Fire Chief Eric Cranmer, and a Color Guard made up of Alton and Godfrey police and firemen.

Godfrey Fire Trustees Gerard Fischer and Matt Horn assisted at the Mass. Godfrey Mayor Mike McCormick and State Representative Amy Elik were present and State's

Attorney Thomas Haine offered remarks of appreciation and admiration for first responders after the Mass.

Father Paulin was very grateful for the gathering and hopes to make it an annual Mass for first responders.

The opportunity to pray together was "especially blessed by the presence of members of the Captain Jacob Ringering, Officer Blake Snyder and Trooper Nicholas Hopkins families," Father Paulin said.

A light reception was held afterward for the first responders and their families during a time of fellowship after the Mass, provided by the Mustache March 4 PD.

Note: All photographs are by Carolyn Simansky.