

MILITARY MINISTRY STEPS OFF AT ST. MARY

By Jon Matousek

At their Help USA Troops campaign this past spring, the St. Mary Military Ministry helped to collect, assemble, and ship care packages to currently deployed soldiers of St. Mary's parishioners' relatives, families, neighbors, or friends. The campaign was a clear expression of the purpose and goal of the ministry—suggesting and implementing ways for parishioners to convert good sentiment into good action and to serve and support active duty military personnel and veterans of our parish family.

“I see that there is so much good will out there towards veterans and those currently serving,” said John Szalinski, co-chair of the ministry, “but I think it can be hard for those who have not served to know how to act on that good will beyond the well intentioned, ‘thank you for your service’.”

“We're not looking to reinvent the wheel with this ministry;” said Diane Mulroe, St. Mary Director of Human

Concerns, “but rather to pray for and provide support and resources to our parishioners who have a veteran in their family or circle of friends. We want to reach out to all parishioners including those newly registered, so we have added the “blue card” to our welcome packages and we are getting back several filled-out cards each month.”

The blue card is a 4x6 card that highlights the goals of the Military ministry, offers a prayer for those serving our country, and provides spaces for the recipient to enter names of family members, relatives, or friends who are serving or have served as well as deceased veterans. The cards are available on the kiosk in the narthex and in the office.

Szalinski said, “Our parish community can help keep our ministry alive and vibrant by joining us as we remember our veterans at Memorial Day Mass and contributing to care package or



Mike Smith and John Szalinski teamed up to co-chair the Military Ministry. They invite anyone interested in supporting veterans and the armed forces to join the ministry.

letter writing drives for those currently serving.” He added, “We welcome our parishioners’ ideas of how we can further support our veterans, in particular, those who have been physically, emotionally, or spiritually wounded in service to our country.”

For more information on the St. Mary Military Ministry, contact Diane Mulroe at dmulroe@stmota.org.