



St. Mary - Holy Cross Parish

460 NW Washington Avenue Elkhart Iowa 50073



Third Sunday Of Advent

December 12, 2021

It is customary at St. Mary-Holy Cross after the final song, the assembly kneels and silently prays the "Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be" for the next person of our Parish who dies. Parishioners near death have expressed the comfort they experience knowing the Parish Community is praying for them. Please join us in this sacred prayer.

Dear Friends in Christ:

While trying to think of a topic for this article, I stumbled upon an interview with a researcher who puts Christ's birth in what we consider the year 1 BC. Reference was made to other researchers and their findings. Regardless of the date, the plethora of data can lend to consolation and to reasoning for us as Christians. It helps us and others understand that Jesus Christ, while divine, was born like other humans in a specific time and place. This is not some kind of fairy tale. In his second letter, St. Peter writes, "For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty" (2 Peter 1:16). That does not mean St. Peter witnessed the nativity, but as someone who later knew Jesus, especially after the Resurrection, he assures us that the stories are true.

~ Father Andrew

Parish Information

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Barb Liske - Secretary bliske@saintmaryhc.org
Geneveve Loraditch - PreK-6 RE gloraditch@saintmaryhc.org
Tracy Miller - PreK-6 RE tmiller@saintmaryhc.org
Sue Schmidt - Music sschmidt@saintmaryhc.org

Mass Schedule

| | | |
|--------------|---------|------------|
| Tuesday | 5:30pm | Holy Cross |
| Wednesday | 5:30pm | St. Mary |
| Thursday | 8:00am | St. Mary |
| First Friday | 9:00am | St. Mary |
| Saturday | 5:00pm | St. Mary |
| Sunday | 8:00am | Holy Cross |
| | 10:00am | St. Mary |
| 4th Sunday | 12:00pm | St. Mary |

Reconciliation: St. Mary: Wednesdays 4:45 - 5:15pm; after 9:00am First Friday Mass and Saturdays 4:00 - 4:30pm; or by appointment.

Baptism: Contact Fr. Andrew

Marriage: Contact Fr. Andrew at least six months prior to the proposed wedding date.

Priesthood/Religious: www.vocationsonline.org

Mass, Reconciliation and Adoration

Sunday, December 12

2:00pm, St. Mary, Parish Reconciliation Service

Tuesday, December 14

5:30pm Mass, Holy Cross †Bob Baker

Wednesday, December 15

5:45 - 5:15pm Reconciliation, St. Mary

5:30pm Mass, St. Mary †Elaine Barnwell
~ followed by Adoration

Thursday, December 16

8:00am Mass, St. Mary †Leo & Rosemary Overmohle

Saturday, December 18

4:00 - 4:30pm Reconciliation, St. Mary

5:00pm Mass, St. Mary For the Parish

Sunday, December 19

8:00am Mass, Holy Cross †Lyle Carpenter

10:00am Mass, St. Mary †Bernardine Gorman

Join us to commemorate our Savior's birth!

Christmas Eve Masses

5:00pm, St. Mary

7:00pm, Holy Cross

Christmas Day Mass

9:00am, St. Mary



Masses, December 25/26, Sunday Obligation

Saturday, December 25: **No 5:00pm Mass**

Sunday, December 26:

8:00am, Holy Cross & 10:00am, St. Mary - **No Noon Mass**

Masses, Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, Holy Day

Friday, December 31: 5:00pm, St. Mary

Saturday, January 1: 9:00am, Holy Cross

Regular Mass Schedule for weekend of January 1/2

Christmas is a Holy Day of Obligation. The Sunday obligation for the Feast of the Holy Family also remains in place.

Thus, we have two Mass obligations to fulfill between December 24 and 26; one for Christmas and one for Sunday.

Are You New to Our Parish?

We welcome you to our family of St. Mary-Holy Cross and invite you to become a member of our parish! Please fill out a registration card found in the vestibule of St. Mary or Holy Cross or on our website. We are glad you are here!

We are at the half way point in Advent and there's still time to benefit from the Advent reflection booklets we have available. Give one a try!

Advent Reconciliation Service

You are invited to celebrate God's love and forgiveness and be filled with His grace at our Advent Reconciliation Service today (Sunday), 2:00pm at St. Mary. We will have additional priests here to assist with individual confession.

Liturgical Ministers

Please contact the office to volunteer for our upcoming Masses December 18 through January 2nd. Thank you!

† For Pastoral assistance, please contact Fr. Andrew at 515-367-2685 or Fr.Andrew@saintmaryhc.org.

Decorating St. Mary's for Christmas

If you love to decorate this is for you!! We are in looking for a few planners and then additional people to decorate. Time is running short and we sure could use more assistance. We have a photo book of past years that could be used as a guide. Contact Fr. Andrew, Fr.Andrew@saintmaryhc.org / 515-367-2685 with questions or if you are interested in helping in this way!

Covid Reminders

The Diocese is recommending, not requiring, masks for all those over the age of five during all liturgies and events in church buildings. Masks are required for distribution of Communion for all clergy and Communion Ministers. We have masks and hand sanitizer available. If you wish to receive Communion on the tongue, please receive from Fr. Andrew (he sanitizes after each).

Go to <https://www.dmdiocese.org/resources/worship/coronavirus> for Diocesan updates.

Advent Prayer

God of power and mercy
open our hearts in welcome.
Remove the things that hinder us
from receiving Christ with joy
so that we may share his wisdom
and become one with him
when he comes in glory,
for he lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God,
forever and ever.

Amen.

Knights of Columbus
Dec. 12: 6:40pm Rosary, Church, 7:00pm Meeting, Hall
Stewardship Committee
Meeting: December 13, 6:00pm, Social Hall
Parish & Finance Councils
No December meeting

Coming Events

- † **Choir practice:** Sunday, Dec. 19 after 10am Mass and Thursday, Dec. 23, 5:00pm (no practice Dec. 12)
- † **Food Pantry Collection:** Weekend of Dec. 18/19 to benefit Catholic Charities Emergency Family Shelter
- † **Blood Drive:** Thursday, Jan. 27, 3:00-7:00pm, Social Hall

Thank You

To Our Parish Family,

A heartfelt thank you for all your cards and words of comfort at our sister's passing, and for the memorial wreath. Our thanks to those who provided the luncheon after her funeral. Thank you Fr. Andrew for your support during this difficult time.
~ Family of Susanne Campbell

Religious Education

Preschool - 6th Grade Coordinators

Geneveve Loraditch, gloraditch@saintmaryhc.org, 515-556-4150

Tracy Miller, tmiller@saintmaryhc.org, 515-520-7981

If your child is interested in receiving First Communion this spring, please attend a mandatory parent meeting Wed., January 5, 6:30pm in the Ed Center. We will discuss what First Communion will be like this year. If you are unable to attend, contact one of us to arrange an alternative time.

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Upcoming Schedule

Dec. 15/17 - Regular sessions

Dec. 22 & 29 - Christmas Break, no sessions

Jan. 5 - No class, Mandatory First Communion parent meeting

S.T.O.R.M. Report

Grades 7-12 Coordinators

Melissa Kahler, mkahler@saintmaryhc.org, 515-290-2830

Andrea Fisher, afisher@saintmaryhc.org, 515-240-5059

Grades 9 & 10, Confirmation Coordinator

Nicole Cory, ncory@saintmaryhc.org, 515-313-3014

EDGE

Dec. 15 - Jan 4 - No Sessions. Have a blessed Advent, Christmas & New Year!

Jan. 5, 12, 19 - Regular Sessions, 6:00-7:30pm, Social Hall

Purpose Confirmation Program

Sessions are 6:00-8:00pm in the Social Hall.

Sessions: Wednesdays, December 15 & January 26

Saint Displays due for 10th graders at our January session.

Youth Group

Dec. 15 - Jan 4 - No gatherings. Have a blessed Advent, Christmas & New Year!

Jan. 5, 12, 19 - Regular gatherings, 7:30-9:00pm, Social Hall

Dedication of Memorial for Pat Phelan

Sunday, December 19 following 8:00am Mass at Holy Cross, Polk County Conservation Director, Doug Scheele, will unveil a memorial marker (larger stone with a plaque on it) at the corner of Holy Cross property and Polk County Conservation property. It is a tribute by Polk County to Pat's belief that conservation, farming, and faith are intertwined. Pat often hosted conservation groups and international visitors (part of the World Food Prize) at Holy Cross. He shared stories about the land, the people who settled here, and their unwavering faith. *All parishioners are invited to come to this dedication and be part of this tribute to Pat.*

WOOH Thanks!!

Work of Our Hands participants thank all of you who took part in our festival last weekend and enjoyed some food, beverages and fellowship. We sincerely appreciate you taking the time to get to know us and the products, services and wares we have to offer. We'd like to particularly thank the parish Stewardship Committee for their assistance in making the festival a reality, especially Tammi and Garrett McClain, Arlene Anderson, Beth Hart, and Kelly Hoffmeier for their personal attention. And, we thank our parish community, especially Barb Liske and Heidi Kautza Fuchtman, who have supported WOOH for 19 years. Please consult our WOOH directory when you're looking for a special treat for yourself or a gift for someone else. Visit <https://www.saintmaryhc.org/WOOH%20Booklet%20for%20web.pdf>.

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

John Roberts, *Chair* - jroberts@huxcomm.net

Doug Jones - djones@bossard.com

Tim Loraditch - Tloraditch@gmail.com

Tammi McClain - tammimcclain71@gmail.com

Larry Sauer - sauerld@outlook.com

Celia Shedd - hoyhill@partnercom.net

FINANCE COUNCIL MEMBERS

Heidi Ackerman, *Co-President* - heidimdittmer@gmail.com

Sue Tollefson, *Co-President* - suet@iowacubs.com

John Fisher - Johntfisher@sienafastener.com

Diane Gannon - ddkgannon@gmail.com

Doug Jones - djones@bossard.com

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Arlene Anderson - arlene@4andersons.com

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Sue White - charylmyron@q.com

John Zidon - jzidon@msn.com

CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Laurie Phelan, *Chair* - Laurie.c.Phelan@gmail.com

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Lowell Crouse - l3jl@windstream.net

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PARISH TRUSTEES

Sheri Fogarty - fogarty929@gmail.com

Doug Jones - djones@bossard.com

PARISH AMBASSADOR TO CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Mike and Mary Winders - mwinde59@yahoo.com

Food Pantry Collection

Our collection next week is for Catholic Charities Family Emergency Shelter. Your monetary donation will help them purchase the needed supplies for those staying there. Thank you for your continued generosity in sharing with those who are having a difficult time.

Weekly Collection Financial Update

December 4 Budget Week 23

| | <u>Received</u> | <u>Budget</u> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Tithes/Plate/Youth/Bldg. Fund | \$8,187 | \$5,642 |

Year to Date Tithes/Plate/Youth/Bldg. Fund

| <u>Received</u> | <u>Budget</u> | <u>Last Year</u> |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------|
| \$126,751 | \$129,766 | \$120,438 |

2021 Annual Diocesan Appeal

| <u>Parish Goal</u> | <u>Payments</u> | <u>Unpaid Pledges</u> | <u>Refund</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| \$51,038 | \$55,925 | \$1,405 | \$4,887 |

Additional monies received from those paying on their pledges will also be refunded to the parish!

Advent in the Home & Heart

It is ultimately at home where a child's faith will take deep root and grow strong. Check out family faith resources that include hands-on activities, a list of family-friendly holiday movies, dinnertime conversation topics and more at [dmdiocese.org/advent2021](https://www.dmdiocese.org/advent2021). Make our Catholic faith come alive in your home during Advent with these meaningful and fun resources.

Snow Removal



Could you help with snow removal of sidewalks, etc. at St. Mary? We have weekend and/or weekday time frames. Instructions/schedule of events provided. Sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409094EA4A722A2FB6-sidewalk>. Please contact Bill Schmitt with questions, 515-291-8005. Thank you for your consideration of this request!

Christmas Flowers

Honor a loved one by making a donation toward flowers in their memory that will decorate St. Mary and Holy Cross this Christmas season. A memorial list will be included in an upcoming bulletin. *Flower donation envelopes are included with your tithe envelopes; additional envelopes are available on the table. Please be sure to include your loved ones names on the envelope and return your donation by December 19.*

Jesus Is The Only Reason For Every Season!

2022 Youth Tithes

We now have a minimum order for these envelopes and we do not need that many. We do have a number of them left from last year, so to provide these envelopes to our youth and not waste our resources, we are just going to use the left over 2021 packets for 2022 — no worries about the dates! You will find these envelopes in the vestibule next weekend.

Donations for 2021 / End-of-Year Statements

If you wish to have any donation included on your 2021 contribution statement, it must reach the Parish Office no later than Noon on Thursday, December 30, through collections at Mass, mailed or personally delivered to the Parish Office. Checks received after this date, even if dated December 2021, will be credited as 2022 donations.

To receive your year end statement, please email Sarah, sbaumberger@saintmaryhc.org or contact the office, 515-367-2685, with a request to email or print/mail your statement. We do not automatically mail out these statements to everyone. Thank you.

Additional Options for Tithing

Auto Debit: Please consider using this type of tithing. You designate a monthly dollar amount to be withdrawn from your account on the 15th or the 30th. If you have questions or would like to begin ACH, please contact Sarah at sbaumberger@saintmaryhc.org or find the form on the table at church or on the home page of our website.

Online Giving: This is available through the Catholic Foundation of SW Iowa with this secure link: <https://catholicfoundationiowa.org/make-a-donation/parishes-and-schools-relief/>. On the drop down choose *St. Mary/Holy Cross Parish-Elkhart* to make your tithe donation. No fees! The Foundation sends gift receipts.

Thank you for considering using one of these for your tithing and many thanks to those who do already.



Americans generate an additional 5 million tons of waste throughout the holidays.

Huxley Clothes Pantry

Thank you to those who have volunteered to help out at this Pantry during the remainder of this month. With your generosity of time, we have filled all shifts! Great job SMHC!!

Prayer Chain

If illness or a crisis strikes your family or friends, please don't hesitate to contact us so members of our Parish may offer prayers for those in need. For requests or to participate in our Prayer Chain, please contact Barb (bliske@saintmaryhc.org/515-367-2685). *If the request is not for you, please ask permission of the one it is for, to be on our prayer chain.*

Retirement Fund for Religious

This collection provides support for tens of thousands of elderly sisters, brother and religious order priests who ministered for years for little to no pay. Now their religious communities do not have adequate retirement savings. Your gift helps to provide medications, nursing care, and more. Thank you for giving back. *Donation envelopes are on the table. Please return your donation next weekend at Mass or mail it to the parish office.*

Become More Involved in the Community!

The Blessing Box Food Pantry in Elkhart is seeking volunteers to help box items to distribute to families. Please contact Tammi McClain, 515-290-3904 if interested.

Catholic Youth Camp Early Bird Registration

Young people come to CYC in Panora for a week of adventure, joy, faith, making memories and building friendships. Register by December 31 to get a discount for the best week of your child's summer! To find out more or to register, go to <https://stmcenter.com/>. *Added bonus:* Our parish pays \$100 of the fee for each child of the parish.

Emmaus House Gift Certificates

Need a gift for that hard-to-buy-for loved one? Get him or her a gift certificate for Emmaus House, now in Urbandale. Gift certificates can be used for services and events including group or private retreats and spiritual direction. Email us at marymc@theemmaushouse.org or call us at 515-282-4839.

Readings and Questions for Faith Sharing

Third Sunday of Advent, December 12

Theme: John baptized with water, but the Messiah will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Reading I: Zephaniah 3:14-18a • Rejoice, for the Lord is in your midst.

Reading II: Philippians 4:4-7 • Rejoice in the Lord always.

Gospel: Luke 3:10-18 • John the Baptist announces the coming of the Messiah

For Children: Why is it so important to keep promises which you have made?

For Youth: What do you remember from stories about your Baptism? What does your Baptism mean to you now?

For Adults: How can you live the promise of your Baptism each day?