

Descriptions and approximate time for the various St. Mary-Holy Cross committees, groups, roles and activities are listed on the following pages. We hope to provide enough detail for you to gain a better understanding of what volunteer opportunities are available to you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with committee members listed in the bulletin and website or contact the parish office to provide a contact name.

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Liturgical Ministers

Liturgical ministers are parishioners who assist in our celebration of mass at St. Mary and Holy Cross by carrying out a variety of functions that serve and support our Liturgy. Join us in celebrating mass! Ministries include:

Altar Server: Boys and girls, fourth grade and older, help during mass in the opening procession, holding the Book of Mass prayers for the priest, and helping the priest and deacon prepare the gifts at the altar.

Announcer: Welcome parishioners, newcomers and guests and read information about upcoming parish or community events at the beginning of mass, and invite all to greet one another.

Lector: Ministers of the Word who proclaim readings from the bible and prayers of the faithful during mass.

Eucharistic Ministers: Host Distributor & Cup Bearer: Help with the distribution of communion, either sharing the consecrated hosts or cup with those receiving communion at mass, or sharing a blessing with others who come forward. A Eucharistic Visitor is a person who takes communion to members of the Parish who, by reason of illness or infirmity, were unable to be present at Mass.

Hospitality Minister/Usher: Welcome people and help make them feel at home. Hospitality ministers greet those entering church, help them find available seating, take up the collection and assist with the presentation of the gifts to the altar during mass and passing out bulletins after mass.

Gift Bearers: Present the gifts of bread and wine and the collection at Mass. The hospitality ministers/ushers often bring the gifts forward, but we would like to have parishioner families or individuals present the gifts.

Time commitment: One-time introductory training of about 1 hour. Liturgical minister time commitment varies based on mass time and number of ministers in the rotation.

Liturgical Ministers (continued)

Music Ministers: Choir Members, Song Leaders and Music Leaders

The primary purpose of our St. Mary-Holy Cross Music Ministry is to bring people closer to God through music. Our focus is to enhance congregational singing and unite us as one through sung prayer. Parishioners and non-parishioners are welcome to join the music ministry!

Choir Member: St. Mary-Holy Cross choir is composed of those who show a talent and/or interest in sung prayer. Following are some of the choir opportunities at St. Mary-Holy Cross

- Dulci Jubilo (Adult Choir),
- Brothers In Song (Men's choir),
- Good News Singers (Children's choir - grades K-6),
- "Praise Band" (contemporary choir & instrumentalists),
- Youth Choir (grades 7-12),
- Funeral Choir,
- Other musical groups people would like to have

Song Leader/Cantor: Cantors lead the responsorial psalm and acclamations and sings other songs with the congregation during one of our weekend Masses.

Music Leader/Instrumentalists: Keyboardists, pianists, organists, woodwind players, percussionists, brass players, guitarists and other instruments. They provide their own type of prayer through instrumental arrangements of musical works. The Accompanists generally pick out the music we'll be singing at mass by finding suggestions in the magazine Today's Liturgy, send a list out to the singer(s) and make sure that the hymn numbers are up on the board. Accompanists are offered a stipend.

Time commitment (music ministers): For regular weekend mass our cantors and accompanists meet an hour before mass. For Choir, we have rehearsals (usually after mass - but maybe other rehearsal days too) for several weeks before singing.

Youth Religious Education

Children's Liturgy of the Word Leader: Children's Liturgy of the Word is geared towards children ages 5 - 8, although kids of all ages are welcome. After the Opening Prayer, Father Dan invites the children of the Parish to accompany the leader (Catechist) to the Ed Center where they hear the Sunday readings in words they can understand. They return to Mass after the Prayers of the Faithful. Children's Liturgy of the Word is scheduled for the first and third Sunday of each month during 10:00am Mass. A preparation guide is provided for the leader.

Time commitment: approximately 1 to 2 hours of preparation and presentation, once every 2 months.

Vacation Bible School Volunteers: VBS volunteers can contribute in a variety of ways! Volunteers can help with pre-VBS preparation of props, gathering supplies, music and planning. Volunteers can also help during VBS week with meal preparation and cleanup as well as assistance during VBS as a group leader and activity leader (crafts, games, music, theater).

Time commitment: varies based on your availability and can be as little as an hour (prep activities) up to 3 hours for each of the 4 VBS days in June.

PreK – 6th Religious Education Catechists and Assistants: Provide Catholic religious education to make faith living, conscious, and active! Guided by a curriculum, catechists and assistants make our faith come alive by teaching about the bible, traditions, saints, holy days to develop spiritual growth, gaining an understanding and knowledge of the Catholic faith, and deepening a respect for the dignity of others. Besides classroom teaching and activity time, Birthday Party for Jesus, All Saints Party and Mardi Gras are a few of the fun events the students and catechists get to experience.

Time commitment: approximately 1 to 3 hours per week of preparation and class time from September through April.

7th – 8th EDGE Assistants: Provide Catholic religious education using the [EDGE-LifeTeen ministry](#). EDGE is a relaxed learning and sharing atmosphere with adult leadership for group discussion and service projects. We supply "on the job" training and there are many faith filled benefits to being part of this awesome team. Only experience required is a caring compassionate heart!

Time commitment: approximately 2 hours per week for EDGE gathering from September through April.

9th – 10th Confirmation Class Assistants: Confirmation marks a unique time in our high schoolers life. They are invited to grow in faith and, through the power of the Holy Spirit, embrace a new maturity. The Sunday gatherings focus on preparation for confirmation and service activities.

Time commitment: approximately 2 hours per week for confirmation class from September through April.

High School Youth Ministry Assistants: Life Teen is a dynamic and active Catholic youth ministry program. The program understands the importance of high schoolers/teens to the church and helps lead teens closer to Christ by focusing on the mass, teaching Catholic beliefs, dealing with real life issues and social time. Adult leaders guide the group through interactive sessions and activities.

Time commitment: approximately 2 hours per week for class from September through April.

Adult Education

Adult Faith Formation: Adult faith formation provides support and encouragement for adult members of our parish and to learn about and strengthen their faith. The adult faith formation committee provides religious gathering opportunities and education to the adults of our parish. They are responsible for generating faith formation ideas, planning and hosting a variety of opportunities for further spiritual and enrichment of their lives. Examples would include The Women of the Bible, a Bible Timeline, a Scriptural Walk Through the Mass, the Great Adventure video series.

Time commitment: 2 - 4 hours per quarter for periodic meetings and hosting of events.

Sunday Scripture and Prayer Study Group: These sessions will be a time to pray, study, and discuss as a group, the upcoming Sunday Mass readings. Father Dan will prepare a copy of the text of the readings and a set of study notes for the session and email them to anyone who would like to receive them, even those who will not be at the session itself.

Time commitment: 1 hour per week or as time allows

Meditative Prayer Time: Gather with Father Dan for an hour of prayer time using three methods of prayer; the ancient practice of Lectio Divina, the prayerful reading of sacred scripture; St. Ignatius of Loyola's practice of the daily Examen, the prayerful review of our daily experiences; and Centering Prayer, one method of the prayer of silence within our Christian tradition of contemplative prayer.

Time commitment: 1 hour per week or as time allows

RCIA - Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Assistants: RCIA is the process the Catholic Church has implemented to welcome and help non-baptized and baptized persons from other Christian traditions join our church and communal life in the parish through the Sacraments of Initiation which are Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. Assistants/team members help coordinate the process, guide scripture reflections, accompany inquirers on their faith journey.

Time commitment: 2 hours per week, generally from September through Easter

Committees and Groups

Knights of Columbus: Charity is the first priority of the men of the Knights of Columbus (K of C)! The K of C are men of faith and action whose principal work involves helping others in need. Fund raising events and activities hosted by the Knights include; Fish Fry Fridays during Lent, Pancake Breakfasts, Youth Coloring Contests, Coats for Kids as well as volunteering within our parish and community.

Time commitment: 1 to 2 hours for monthly meetings plus time for other volunteer activities throughout the year.

Holy Cross Cemetery Committee: The committee represents both St. Mary-Holy Cross Parish members, and non-members who reside in Washington Township. They are responsible for processes for plot location, plot sales and documentation, cemetery maintenance and perpetual care, fiscal management, and all cemetery rules. The group is committed to ensuring Holy Cross Cemetery will continue be a beautiful and protected resting place for loved ones in the middle of a rich prairie. This is an active committee with irregular meeting times. All members receive training for all responsibilities of the committee.

Time commitment: the committee meets three times per year formally for 2 hours

Buildings and Grounds Committee: This is a loosely knit group which communicates mostly through email with eyes and ears for problems/concerns about buildings and grounds. The committee also serves as planners for any construction of new facilities or remodeling of existing facilities. Work days occur periodically and are communicated via e-mail.

Time commitment: No regular meetings at this time. Help is appreciated on any or all of the work days.

Decorating Committee (Art and Environment): The Decorating (also referred to as the Art and Environment Committee) plans and decorates for the liturgical seasons and holy days. They are responsible for the church and altar decorating, the social hall decorations and caring for the interior plants and flowers.

Time commitment: 3 - 4 hours for changes in the liturgical seasons

Finance Council: The Finance Council assists and advises Father Dan in fiscal matters including the establishment of a parish budget. It reviews the monthly and yearly financial statement and approves the financial report. Quarterly and a more extensive annual financial statement are published to the parish. This Council monitors the parish funds, but is not a fundraising group, rather it assists the Pastoral Council in implementing the vision and goals of the Parish.

Time commitment: monthly meetings of 1 to 2 hours. There are also occasional action items and review of documents outside of the meetings.

Liturgy Committee: The Liturgy Committee provides leadership, organization, coordination and communication for the liturgical ministries (e.g. Eucharistic ministers lectors, music ministers). Our purpose is to offer the people of St. Mary-Holy Cross a worship experience that fosters a loving relationship with Christ.

Time commitment: approximately an hour per month for meetings

Pastoral Council: The Pastoral Council shares in the pastoral leadership of the parish with Father Dan. Our goal is to focus on the long term vision and direction of SMHC, by being actively aware of the current state and gathering feedback about the future needs of our faith community. We rely heavily on prayer, reflection, and discussion during our gatherings. For more information, please contact a Pastoral Council member or refer to the SMHC website.

Time Commitment: monthly meetings of 1 to 2 hours per month

Stewardship Committee: Stewardship Committee helps support our St. Mary-Holy Cross community. We encourage participation by fostering a welcoming, open, fun and friendly environment for all. We initiate, coordinate or help support events. It's an informal and friendly group that likes to be hands on. Examples of activities we've been involved in include; new member welcome, bulletin boards, parish picnic, publication of the quarterly parish newsletter, partnering with Pastoral Council on Parish Survey.

Time commitment: monthly meetings of 1 to 2 hours and approximately 2 hours for other activities

Work of Our Hands: Work of our Hands (WOOH) was created to give parishioners another way to build community. WOOH organizes a festival that introduces the parish to artisans, service-providers, hobbyists and others from our parish, who are willing to provide their services or goods for a fee or barter. Do you have a business, hobby or service? Join us!

Time commitment: 1 -2 hour preparation meeting for annual WOOH festival. 4 to 6 hours total for set-up, festival and tear-down time.

Friends of St. Francis: A group dedicated to raising awareness and support for the Pope's encyclical On Care for Our Common Home. Through prayer, learning and education, advocating and action the Friends of St. Francis practice Catholic principles regarding care for God's creation and poor and vulnerable people locally and globally. We invite you to join us! See that everything is interconnected and that all of creation is a "kind of universal family" we can support locally here at St. Mary-Holy Cross.Time commitment: 1-2 hours per month for meetings and action items.