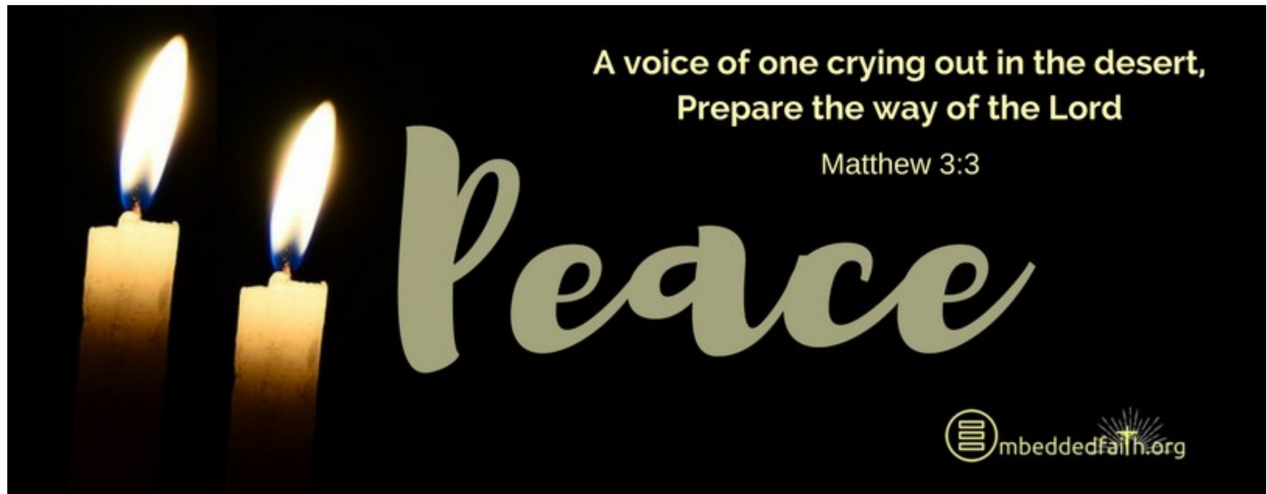




St. Mary - Holy Cross Parish

St. Mary: 460 NW Washington Avenue, Elkhart Iowa 50073

Holy Cross: 12704 NE 98th Street, Maxwell Iowa 50161



Second Sunday of Advent

December 6 & 7, 2025

It is customary at our Parish that 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 passes away. 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 Good People,

I hope this letter finds you well as we continue on our Advent journey. Just a reminder about all the good things that are happening. This weekend we bless all those expectant mothers as they prepare with Our Lady to give birth. We also have the Holy Day of obligation (Opportunity) to celebrate the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Monday, Dec. 8th. A reminder that mass times are 7AM and 6:30PM at St. Mary. After the 6:30 Mass we are having a pizza and dessert party. Thank you to the Stewardship Committee for putting this on.

Secondly, please note the extra time for the sacrament of reconciliation. If one of these times does not work for you, I am available for confession by appointment. Just email or text me.

Finally, as I write this, we are breaking record cold numbers for December. Last week we broke the snowfall record for November. I will do everything in my power to have mass. The issue on Sunday was that we could not get things cleared at Holy Cross with the wind. I also was not able to get out of my driveway as I had about a 4 foot drift. KCCI also got overwhelmed with calls. Please as usual use your best judgment when coming to mass, but most of the time I will try to have mass unless again we have unprecedented snow amounts with blowing and drifting snow. I will try to do a better job communicating, again it was just kind of unprecedented. ~ A.M.D.G. Fr. Ross

Parish Phone	515-367-2685
Parish General Email	smhc@saintmaryhc.org
Fr. Ross Parker, Pastor	515-367-2685/ rparker@dmdioocese.org
Nicole Cory - Confirmation	ncory@saintmaryhc.org
Andrea Fisher - 7th-12th Ministry	afisher@saintmaryhc.org
Melissa Kahler - 7th-12th Ministry	mkahler@saintmaryhc.org
Barb Liske - Secretary	bliske@saintmaryhc.org
Tracy Miller - Preschool - 6th RE	tmiller@saintmaryhc.org
Aubrey Sigmund - Music	asigmund@saintmaryhc.org
Candy Zidon - Bookkeeper	bookkeeper@saintmaryhc.org
Parish Web Site	www.saintmaryhc.org
Parish Facebook Site	St. Mary's Holy Cross Parish-Elkhart

See inside for varied Mass schedule.	Tuesday	8:00am	St. Mary
	Wednesday	5:30pm	Holy Cross
	Thursday	8:00am	St. Mary
	Friday	8:00am	St. Mary
	Saturday	5:00pm	St. Mary
	Sunday	8:00am	Holy Cross
		10:00am	St. Mary

Reconciliation: Saturday 4:00 - 4:30pm, St. Mary or by appointment with Fr. Parker

Baptism: Please contact the Office.

Marriage: Please contact the Office at least six months prior to the proposed wedding date.

Order of Christian Initiation of Adults: Please contact Fr. Parker or Nicole Cory

Priesthood/Religious: www.vocationsonline.org

Mass and Reconciliation

Monday, December 8 Holy Day of Obligation
Immaculate Conception of Blessed Virgin Mary

7:00am Mass, St. Mary † Leo & Rosemary Overmohle
6:30pm Mass, St. Mary † Fr. John Acrea

Tuesday, December 9

8:00am Mass, St. Mary † Tom Morris

Wednesday, December 10

5:30pm Mass, Holy Cross † Jimmy Pat Phelan

Thursday, December 11

8:00am Mass, St. Mary † JoAnn Meusburger

6:00-7:00pm, Reconciliation, St. Mary

Friday, December 12

8:00am Mass, St. Mary † James H. Fickbohm

6:00-7:00pm, Reconciliation, St. Mary

Third Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 13

3:00 - 4:30pm Reconciliation, St. Mary

5:00pm Mass, St. Mary † Bill Devereux

Sunday, December 14

8:00am Mass, Holy Cross People of the Parish

10:00am Mass, St. Mary † Jack Newell

Welcome To Our New Members!



Jason Cory, who lives in Elkhart
James & Teresa Stoelk, who live in Ankeny



New Birth by Water and the Holy Spirit

Celebrate with us in welcoming into our Faith

Brennen Theodore
Son of Dillon and Amanda Pitts

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, <https://www.saintmaryhc.org/membership>. We are glad you are here!

Pastoral Assistance

In case of an emergency please contact Fr. Ross Parker, 515-720-3434. To schedule a visit with Father at your home, or if a family member is in a care facility, home-bound, or hospitalized, and they wish a visit, please contact him at rparker@dmdioocese.org.

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary

Monday, December 8. Join us as we celebrate this Holy Day of Obligation honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary! Our Masses are 7:00am and 6:30pm at St. Mary. — Following 6:30pm Mass you are invited to come share in faith, fellowship, pizza and a sweet treat as we honor our Blessed Mother together!

We will be collecting personal care items to be distributed to the Food Pantries in Huxley, Maxwell, and Elkhart.



Advent Reflection Resources

We have booklets available to help you along your Advent journey; find one that is meaningful for you. Diocesan Advent resources can be found at dmdioocese.org/living-advent.

Prayer for Lighting Candle of Second Week of Advent

Lord, our God,
we praise You for Your Son, Jesus Christ,
for He is Emmanuel, the Hope of all people.
He is the Wisdom that teaches and guides us.
He is the Savior of us all.
O Lord,
let your blessing come upon us
as we light two purple candles of this wreath.
May the wreath and its light be a sign
of Christ's promise of salvation.
May He come quickly and not delay.
We ask this in His holy name. Amen.

Parish Council

Meeting: No December meeting

Finance Council

Meeting: No December meeting

Stewardship

Meeting: January 12, 6:00pm, Social Hall

OCIA / Grow in Your Catholic Faith

Thursdays, Dec. 11 & 18, 6:15pm, Hall

Knights of Columbus

Meeting: December 15, 7:00pm, Social Hall

Funeral Luncheon Food Donations

Team 1: Huxley and Cambridge

Father Parker does not have set office hours at the Parish.
To reach him please email, call or text:

rparker@dmdioocese.org or 515-720-3434.

Coming Events

- †**This Weekend:** Blessing of Mothers-to-be — Building Fund Collection — *After Masses:* Wine & cheese after Saturday Mass - Coffee & donuts after Sunday Masses - Advance Directives & End of Life Goals of Care, Social Hall and Holy Cross Church
- †**Choir practice:** Sundays Dec. 7, 14 & 21, 11:15 – 12:15pm, Tues. Dec. 9 & Thurs. Dec. 18, 6:30-7:30pm, St. Mary
- †**Fellowship, Pizza & Dessert Bar:** Following 6:30pm Holy Day Mass on December 8, Social Hall.
- †**Parish Additional Advent Reconciliation Times:** Thursday & Friday, Dec. 11 & 12, 6:00-7:00pm and Saturday, Dec. 13, 3:00-4:30pm, St. Mary
- †**Saturday, Dec. 13:** Hall in use 8:00am-3:30pm

Opening for a Parish Music Coordinator

We thank Aubrey Sigmund for the wonderful work she has done as Music Coordinator. We are looking to hire within our parish for this position around mid January. **This is a very flexible job—work some from home! Training provided!** It's a paid position averaging 10 hours most weeks, though more around Easter and Christmas. If you are interested or would like additional information, please contact Fr. Ross at rparker@dmdioocese.org or 515-367-2685.



Christmas Masses

Christmas Eve

5:00pm, St. Mary
7:00pm, Holy Cross

Christmas Day

9:00am, St. Mary

Religious Education: Preschool - 6th Grade

Coordinator

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

We are thinking deeper about the great mystery of Christ's birth and the Advent Season; you can also do that at home with your families. Light a candle on your Advent wreath and pray together, pick up the children's and /or family Advent materials on the table at Church, or do a family service project. This is a great opportunity to strengthen your family's faith together during this time of great preparation.

Upcoming Sessions

Dec. 10 - Regular Session

Dec. 17 - Regular Session

Dec. 24-Jan. 7 - No Sessions, Christmas Break

S.T.O.R.M. Report: 7th - 12th Grade

Coordinators

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

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

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

EDGE — Wednesdays, 6:00-7:30pm, Social Hall, 7th & 8th

Dec. 10 & 17: EDGE sessions

No sessions Dec. 24 - Jan 7, Christmas Break

Confirmation 9th & 10th Graders, Sessions in Youth Room

Sunday, Dec. 7: 11am-12:30pm, 9th grade only session

Sunday, Dec. 14: 2:00-5:00pm Confirmation to prepare and deliver meal to shelter, see email for details

Sunday, Dec. 21: 11am-12:30pm, 10th grade only session

S.T.O.R.M. Youth Group — Wednesdays, 7:30-9:00pm, Youth Area, 9th-12th graders

Dec. 10 & 17: Youth Gatherings

No gatherings Dec. 24 - Jan. 7, Christmas Break

It Is the Season!



Could you help with weekend and/or week day snow removal of sidewalks, etc., at St. Mary? We have the equipment, but need the people power! Thank you in advance! Sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409094EA4A722A2FB6-60961940-sidewalk>. Questions, please contact Bill Schmitt, 515-291-8005 / isucui@isualum.com. Many thanks to all who helped last year and a grateful thank you to Nick and Todd Volz for snow removal from St. Mary's parking lot and Laurie Phelan for snow removal at Holy Cross. We appreciate you!

"Keep Christ in Christmas" Ornament Contest

The Christmas season is here and the Knights of Columbus offer this contest. This is an opportunity for SMHC children in grades Preschool - 6th to recognize that Christmas is a special season of love and peace because of God's gift to the world -- the birth of His Son, Jesus Christ. Ornament entries are to be placed on the Christmas tree located in the Social Hall at St. Mary's. They will be collected on Sunday, January 4, after our Mass celebrating The Epiphany of the Lord. Winners to be selected at the January 19 K of C meeting and awarded the following week. Please go to the Religious Ed page of the Parish website for more information.

Weekly Collection Financial Update

	<u>Received</u>	<u>Budget</u>	
Tithes/Plate/	\$2,790	\$5,536	Nov. 23
Youth/Bldg. Fund	\$5,221	\$5,536	Nov. 30

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

<u>Received</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Last Year</u>
\$125,948	\$121,782	\$114,496

Mass Attendance: Nov. 22/23: 364; Nov. 29/30: 97

2025 Annual Diocesan Appeal

<u>Goal</u>	<u>Pledged</u>	<u>Payments</u>	<u>Outstanding</u>	<u>Refund</u>
\$47,320	\$55,425	\$53,285	\$2,100	\$6,090

Councils and Committees

PARISH COUNCIL

Anne Davis - annedavis06@gmail.com

Terri Hamm - Theresa.Hamm@mercyoneiowa.org

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Bill Kyle - bill@northiowaair.com

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Lisa Schoening - lisa@lisschoening.com

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Kris LeRoy - klsturtz@gmail.com

Jen Linderblood - jlinderb@yahoo.com

Tammi McClain - tammimcclain71@gmail.com

Kathy Petersen - katherine@huxcomm.net

Sue White - charylmyron@q.com

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Scott Turczynski, *Co-Chair* - ScottT@hrtind.us

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Tim Miller - millertimothyg@gmail.com

Laurie Phelan - Laurie.c.Phelan@gmail.com

Bill Schmitt - isucui@isualum.com

Lynn Schreurs - lschreurs@msn.com

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Lowell Crouse - l3jl@windstream.net

John Freeman - johnfmingo@hotmail.com

Tracy Irwin - irwin@partnercom.net

Stacey Rooney - rooneyslg17@gmail.com

Tom Rooney - roondog007@msn.com

Lynn Schreurs - lschreurs@msn.com

Larry Shaw - shawcattle77@gmail.com

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Doug Jones - djones@bossard.com

PARISH HISTORIAN

Larry Sauer - sauerld@outlook.com - 515-710-2421

PARISH AMBASSADOR TO CATHOLIC CHARITIES

John & Peg Evans - evansp3@yahoo.com

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS GRAND KNIGHT

John Roberts - jroberts@huxcomm.net

Laudato Si

Switch to a low-flow showerhead. Newer efficient showerheads use 2 gallons of water per minute or less, compared with 3 or more gallons a minute for older models. A family of four using low-flow showerheads can save about 20,000 gallons of water a year. See more at:

<https://www.saintmaryhc.org/on-care-for-our-common-home>

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. Their sacrifices now leave their religious communities without adequate retirement savings. Your gift helps to provide medications, nursing care, and more. Thank you for giving back.

Envelopes are on the table at both Churches. Please return your donation in the next few weeks. Thank you.



Christmas Memorials

We offer you the opportunity to remember your loved ones by donating towards the flowers that will decorate St. Mary and Holy Cross this Christmas season. A memorial list with the names of your loved ones will be printed in a future bulletin. *Flower donation envelopes are included with your tithe envelopes; additional flower envelopes are on the table. Please return your donation by December 16.*

Donations for 2025

If you wish to have any donation included on your 2025 contribution statement, it must reach the Parish Office by Wednesday, Dec. 31, via the collection at Mass or by mail. Monies received after this date, even if dated 2025, will be credited as 2026 donations. Thank you, your support is greatly appreciated! The Parish Office is closed December 24 - January 1.

Ministers for December 13 & 14

Saturday, December 13, 5:00pm Mass, St. Mary

Lector	Olivia Jones
Host Distributor	Lisa Jones
Cup Bearers	Susan Stillmunkes, Bob Selby
Ushers	Bob & Jack Selby
Music	Lisa Jones, Mary Schmelzer

Sunday, December 14, 8:00am Mass, Holy Cross

Lector	Lowell Crouse
Cup Bearer	Dawn Beukema
Altar Servers	Titus & Zeke Weber
Ushers	Todd & Jill Beukema
Music	Drew & Lorrie Hanlon

Sunday, December 14, 10:00am Mass, St. Mary

Lector	Garrett McClain
Host Distributor	Garrett McClain
Cup Bearers	Tracy Miller, Mike Nehring
Altar Servers	Gabe Miller, Amelia Muehlenthaler
	<i>Cross Bearer: Aubrey Conover</i>
Ushers	Bill & Kelly Dunbar
Music	Aubrey Sigmund, Viv Kahler, Mary Ortman

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Money Counters

December 7: Sharon Morris, Dona Cowman
December 14: Sue White, Kathy Petersen

Two Vacancies on Our Parish Council

If you know of anyone you would like to nominate (including yourself) or would like more information, please contact Father Ross, rparker@dmdiocese.org or 515-720-3434. Term begins January 1, 2026. Thank you for considering serving your Parish in this way!

Prayer Chain

If illness or crisis strikes your family or friends, please don't hesitate to contact us so members of our Parish can offer prayers for them. *If the request is not for you, please ask permission from the one it is, to be on our prayer chain.* For requests or to participate in our prayer chain, please contact the Office at bliske@saintmaryhc.org or 515-367-2685.

NCYC Thank You!

Thirteen of our Parish youth recently attended the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis, where they had the incredible opportunity to join a live meeting with the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, as well as hear powerful talks about deepening their faith and putting it into action.

We are deeply grateful for the support of our Parish Community and the Knights of Columbus, whose generosity helped make this trip possible. Thank you as well to our Youth Ministers, adult chaperones and participants for their time and dedication to making this trip a success. And a special thank you to Melissa Kahler for all of her preparation and leadership before the Conference.

Area Reconciliation Services

Monday, Dec. 8, 6:00pm, St. Boniface, Waukee
Wednesday, Dec. 10, 6:30pm, St. Theresa, DSM
Wednesday, Dec 10, 6:15pm, St. Joseph, DSM
Sunday, Dec. 14, 2:00pm, St. Mary of Nazareth, DSM
Thursday, Dec. 18, 7:00pm Ss. John and Paul, Altoona
Sunday, Dec. 21, 4:00pm, St. Pius X, Urbandale



Winter Weather Cancellations

Whenever North Polk School is cancelled, dismissed early, or evening school activities are cancelled due to weather, classes, meetings and activities here at the Parish will be cancelled as well. In most instances, Masses - both daily and weekend - will not be cancelled, so please use your own judgment. If the need arises to cancel weekend Masses or activities, it will be on Channel 8 TV and online only. (Holy Cross may be under "Maxwell" and not "Elkhart").

Readings and Questions for Faith Sharing

Second Sunday of Advent, December 6 & 7

Theme: God's kingdom is at hand - it is here.

Reading I: Isaiah 11:1-10 • The wolf shall be a guest of the lamb.

Reading II: Romans 15:4-9 • Accept one another, as Christ accepted you.

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12 • Reform your lives!

Question for Children: Beyond toys and other things, what do you hope will happen in your family this Christmas?

Question for Youth: What are your greatest challenges in allowing Christ to be your teacher and following him?

Question for Adults: Name the one thing in your life you must "move out of the way" in order to make more room for Christ - a grudge, a possession, a memory, a hurt.