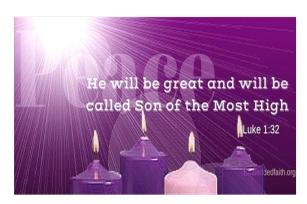


St. Mary - Holy Cross Parish

460 NW Washington Avenue Elkhart Iowa 50073

Holy Cross: 12704 NE 98th Street Maxwell Iowa 50161



Fourth Sunday of Advent December 24, 2023



The Nativity of the Lord December 25, 2023



The Holv Family December 31, 2023

Dear Good People,

A very blessed and Merry Christmas to all of you and a Happy and Healthy New Year. Just on a personal note, I want to thank all of you for the prayers for my Grandmother Kay Ross. Your many prayers have brought comfort to me and my family.

Just a little update on the schedule coming up for the next couple of weeks. For the weekend of January 30th/31st, we will just have our regular weekend schedule. This year the Solemnity of Mary Mother of God falls on a Monday, so it is not a holy day of obligation, but I cannot think of a better way to begin our New Year than by praying for the intercession of Our Lady. We will have Mass at 9 AM at St. Mary's. I will be gone for some vacation beginning on Friday, January 5th, and returning on the 11th. I am going to Florida with some priest friends of mine. So looking forward to that.

I will leave you with some final words from Pope Francis for the Christmas Season: Brothers and sisters, let us turn our eyes to Bethlehem, and listen to the first faint cries of the Prince of Peace. For truly Jesus is our peace. The peace that the world cannot give, the peace that God the Father has bestowed on humanity by sending his Son into the world. Saint Leo the Great summed up the message of this day in a concise Latin phrase: Natalis Domini, natalis est pacis: "the Lord's birth is the birth of peace" (Serm. 26, 5). A.M.D.G. ~ Fr. Ross

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.

Parish Phone Parish General Email Fr. Ross Parker, Pastor **Nicole Cory** - Confirmation Andrea Fisher - 7th-12th Ministry Melissa Kahler - 7th-12th Ministry Barb Liske - Secretary Geneveve Loraditch - PreK-6 RE gloraditch@saintmaryhc.org Tracv Miller - PreK-6 RE Sue Schmidt - Music Candy Zidon - Bookkeeper **Parish Web Site Parish Facebook Site** Parish Fax

smhc@saintmaryhc.org 515-367-2685/rparker@dmdiocese.org ncory@saintmaryhc.org afisher@saintmaryhc.org mkahler@saintmarvhc.org bliske@saintmaryhc.org tmiller@saintmaryhc.org sschmidt@saintmaryhc.org bookkeeper@saintmarvhc.org www.saintmaryhc.org St. Mary's Holy Cross Parish-Elkhart 515-367-7028

515-367-2685

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

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

Baptism: Please contact the office.

Rite of Christian Initiation: Please contact

Fr. Parker

Marriage: Contact the office at least six months prior to the proposed wedding date. Priesthood/Religious: www.vocationsonline.org

Mass and Reconciliation

Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24

5:00pm Mass, St. Mary †Lee Hindman & Duane Saari

7:00pm Mass, Holy Cross †Lyle Carpenter

Christmas Day, Monday, December 25

9:00am Mass, St. Mary People of the Parish

Tuesday, December 26 — No Mass today —

Wednesday, December 27

5:30pm Mass, Holy Cross *†Stephen & Michael Carpenter*

Thursday, December 28

8:00am Mass, St. Mary **†**Edward & Jessie Ross

Friday, December 29

8:00am Mass, St. Mary †Mary Ann Cory

Weekend of Dec. 30/31 — Feast of the Holy Family

Saturday, December 30

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

5:00pm Mass, St. Mary †Adam Baumberger

Sunday, December 31

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

10:00am Mass, St. Mary †Mark Schmidt

Monday, January 1 — Solemnity of Mary, Holy Day

†Edward & Lorraine Polansky 9:00am Mass, St. Mary

Tuesday, January 2

8:00am Mass, St. Mary *†Deacon Dave Bartemes*

Wednesday, January 3

5:30pm Mass, Holy Cross †Will & Mikey Carpenter

Thursday, January 4

8:00am Mass, St. Mary †John and Mildred Flaherty

First Friday, January 5 — No Mass today

Weekend of January 6/7 — Epiphany of the Lord

Saturday, January 6

4:00 - 4:30pm Reconciliation, St. Mary 5:00pm Mass, St. Mary †Patricia Schmitt

Sunday, January 7

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

10:00am Mass, St. Mary †Marion Nehring

Are You New to Our Parish? Welcome



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!

Pastoral Assistance

Emergency contact: Fr. Ross Parker, 515-720-3434. If a family member is in a care facility, home-bound, or hospitalized, and they wish a visit please contact Fr. Parker at rparker@dmdiocese.org.

Ladies of SMHC

Thank you for attending the Christmas Party. We value your fellowship! The personal care items were divided up between The Huxley Pantry, Maxwell Pantry, and The Blessing Box and were a special surprise to the clients. Merry Christmas!

~ The Stewardship Committee

Christmas Prayer

Dear Jesus,

On this holy Christmas,

we adore you in the manger,

helpless and small.

You, who are God,

became a humble child for our sake.

Teach us to embrace simplicity

and love as you did.

May we see you

in every person we encounter,

especially the lonely and marginalized.

Fill our hearts with your divine light,

dispelling darkness and hatred.

Grant us the grace to be instruments of your peace and kindness.

We offer this prayer in your holy name. ~ St. Teresa of Calcutta

Parish Council

Amen.

Meeting: January 16, 6:30pm, Social Hall

Finance Council

Meeting, January 23, 6:30pm, Social Hall

Stewardship

Meeting: January 8, 6:00pm, Social Hall

Knights of Columbus

Jan. 15, Rosary, 6:40pm SM, Meeting 7:00pm, Hall

Funeral Luncheon Food Donations

Team 6, Alleman, Baxter, Des Moines, Mingo, Mitchellville, Prairie City, Sheldahl, Slater

> Parish Office: Dec. 25 & 26 closed, Dec. 29 closes at Noon, Jan. 1 closed.

Fr. Parker does not have set office hours when he is here at the parish. To reach him, please email, call or text: rparker@dmdiocese.org or 515-720-3434.

Coming Events

- **† Sunday, Dec. 24 after 9am Mass:** Decorate St. Mary for Christmas — help is needed!
- Social Hall in use 6:00-8:00pm
- ↑ Tuesday, Jan. 2: 7:00pm RCIA Core Team Informational meeting, Social Hall
- Wine and Cheese after 5pm Mass — Coffee & donuts after 8:00am and 10:00am Masses
- ₱ Friday, Jan. 12: Hall in use 1-5pm, St. Mary in use 6:30pm

Join Our Team!



We are forming a core team at our parish for the benefit of RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults). We are looking for other members of our parish to be part of this core team. The responsibilities would vary but would not be time consuming. Please join us for an informational meeting on Tuesday, January 2, 7:00pm in the Social Hall at St Mary. Please contact Nicole Cory with any questions you may have, ncory@saintmaryhc.org, 515-313-3014.

Religious Education: Preschool - 6th Grade

Coordinators

Geneveve Loraditch, gloraditch@saintmaryhc.org, 515-556-4150 Tracy Miller, tmiller@saintmaryhc.org, 515-520-7981

We hope you are enjoying your Christmas break. This is a reminder that we have a parent meeting January 3, 6:30pm in the Social Hall for all those with children interested in receiving their first Holy Communion in the spring.

When we return from break on January 10, many of our sessions will be synthesizing the infancy narratives as we continue to celebrate the miracle of Christmas. Even though the stores have turned back on regular music and the Christmas merchandise is clearanced and traded out for Valentine goodies, our children are still reveling in this great mystery of Christ's birth!

Upcoming Dates

December 27- No Sessions

January 3- No Sessions. First Communion parent meeting, 6:30pm, Social Hall

January 10- Regular Sessions Resume

January 17- Regular Sessions

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

Coordinators

Melissa Kahler, <u>mkahler@saintmaryhc.org</u>, 515-290-2830 Andrea Fisher, <u>afisher@saintmaryhc.org</u>, 515-240-5059 Nicole Cory, <u>ncory@saintmaryhc.org</u>, 515-313-3014

EDGE (7th & 8th Grades)

Sessions: Jan. 10, 17 & 24, 6:00-7:30pm, Social Hall

Confirmation (9th & 10th Grades)

Sunday, Jan. 14, 11:00am (after Mass) - 12:30pm: 9th grade Teen/Parent Workshop, Social Hall

Sunday, Jan. 28, 11:00am (after Mass) - Noon: 10th Grade only session, Youth Room at St. Mary

Wednesday, Jan, 31, 6:00-7:30pm: 9th & 10th Grade family session, Social Hall

STORM Youth Group (9th - 12th Grades)

Gatherings: Jan. 10, 17 & 24, 7:30-9:00pm, Hall

Snow Removal

Sign up here to help at St. Mary: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409094EA4A722A2FB6-46550958-sidewalk. A list of activities will be emailed to you. If you have any questions please contact Bill Schmitt, isucui@isualum.com / 515-291-8005. Thank you!!

Donations for 2023

If you wish to have any donation included on your 2023 contribution statement, it must reach the Parish Office by Sunday, December 31 at 10:00am Mass. Monies received after this time, even if dated December 2023, will be credited as 2024 donations. The office will be open Wednesday, and Thursday December 27 & 28 and until Noon on Friday, December 29 to drop off those much appreciated last minute donations. Thank you.

2024 Youth Tithes

Children are encouraged to take a tithe packet located on the table, and on the paper provided, write their name by the number of the packet they have taken. Thank you!

Weekly Collection Financial Update

December 16/17 Budget Week 25

Received Budget

Tithes/Plate/Youth/Bldg. Fund \$17,262 \$6,114

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

 Received
 Budget
 Last Year

 \$122,596
 \$152,842
 \$128,653

Mass Attendance: Dec. 16/17: 263

2023 Annual Diocesan Appeal

<u>Assessed</u> <u>Pledged</u> <u>Paid</u> <u>Unpaid</u> <u>**Amt. Due**</u> \$55,196 \$52,825 \$50,445 \$2,380 **\$4,751**

Councils and Committees

If you prefer to speak with one of our committee members instead of email, please contact the parish office for their phone number.

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Celia Shedd, Chair - hoyhill@partnercom.net

Terri Hamm - Theresa. Hamm@mercyoneiowa.org

Drew Hanlon - drewsmhcpc@yahoo.com

Doug Jones - djones@bossard.com

Tammi McClain - tammimcclain71@gmail.com

Larry Sauer - sauerld@outlook.com

Lisa Schoening - lisa.schoening@cbdsm.com

FINANCE COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mike Winders - President - mwinde59@yahoo.com Heidi Ackerman - heidimdittmer@gmail.com John Fisher - Johntfisher@sienafastener.com Diane Gannon - ddkgannon@gmail.com Bill Rooney - 1rooneybill@gmail.com

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Katie Fredericks - katie fredericks@commonspirit.org
Beth Hart - mrsmatthart@gmail.com
Kris Sturtz - klsturtz@gmail.com
Jen Linderlood - jlinderb@yahoo.com

Jen Linderblood - jlinderb@yahoo.com
Tammi McClain - tammimcclain71@gmail.com
Kathy Petersen - katherine@huxcomm.net
Sue White - charylmyron@g.com

BUILDING & GROUND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Roberts, Co-Chair - jroberts@huxcomm.net Scott Turczynski, Co-Chair - ScottT@hrtInd.us Drew Hanlon - drewsmhcpc@yahoo.com Tim Miller - millertimothyg@gmail.com Laurie Phelan - Laurie.c.Phelan@gmail.com Bill Schmitt - isucui@isualum.com Lynn Schreurs - Ischreurs@msn.com

CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Laurie Phelan, *Chair* - Laurie.c.Phelan@gmail.com
Pat Bishop - pjbishop@midiowa.net
Lowell Crouse - I3jl@windstream.net
Tracy Irwin - irwin@partnercom.net
Stacey Rooney - rooneyslg17@gmail.com
Tom Rooney - roondog007@msn.com
Lynn Schreurs - Ischreurs@msn.com
Larry Shaw - shawcattle77@gmail.com

PARISH TRUSTEES

Sheri Fogarty - fogarty929@gmail.com Doug Jones - djones@bossard.com

PARISH HISTORIAN

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

PARISH AMBASSADOR TO CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Mike and Mary Winders - mwinde59@yahoo.com

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS GRAND KNIGHT

Mike Devereux - devoducks@msn.com



Prayer Chain

If illness or a crisis strikes your family or friends, don't hesitate to contact us so members of our Parish may offer prayers for those in need. If the request is not for you, please ask permission of the one it is for, to be on our prayer chain. To request prayers or to participate in our prayer chain, please contact the parish office, bliske@saintmaryhc.org.

Church Sian

Joy to the world because away in a manger there was a silent night, holy night!



Liturgical Ministers Dec. 30/31, Jan. 1 & Jan. 6/7

Saturday, Dec. 30, 5:00pm Mass, St. Mary

Needed: Host Distributor, 2 Ushers

Lector Susan Selby

Cup Bearers Bob and Susan Selby Altar Servers Jack & Tommy Selby Music Drew & Lorrie Hanlon

Sunday, Dec. 31, 8:00am Mass, Holy Cross

Needed: Lector, Cup Bearer, Altar Servers

Ushers Jerry & Patty Hilton Music Drew Hanlon, Maggie Bruce

Sunday, Dec. 31, 10:00am Mass, St. Mary

Needed: Host Distributor, 2 Altar Servers, 2 Ushers

Lector Linda Froehlich **Cup Bearers** Tom & Linda Froehlich Garrett McClain, Karon Lacev. Music

Celeste Muehlenthaler

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God Holy Day Monday, January 1, 9:00am, St. Mary

Needed: 2 Ushers

Lector Candy Miller **Host Distributor** Tom Froehlich

Cup Bearers Linda Froehlich, Susan Selby

Altar Servers Jack & Tommy Selby Music Drew & Lorrie Hanlon

Saturday, January 6, 5:00pm Mass, St. Mary

Lector John Roberts Host Distributor Mike Devereux

Di Schleisman, Drew Hanlon Cup Bearers Altar Servers Caleb & Callahan Coffelt Ushers Mike Devereux, Doug Jones Lisa Jones, Mary Schmelzer Music

Sunday, January 7, 8:00am Mass, Holy Cross

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

Sunday, January 7, 10:00am Mass, St. Mary

Di Schleisman Lector Host Distributor Tim Loraditch

Cup Bearers Greg Feldmann, Di Schleisman Altar Servers Pevton & Justice Loraditch

Ushers Bill & Kelly Dunbar

Music Jen Linderblood, Mary Ortmann

Money Counters

+ + + + + + + + + + +

December 24: Sharon Morris, Dona Cowman December 31: Sue White, Kathy Daup, Sharon Morris

January 7: Kathy Daup, Sharon Morris

Thank You

Fellow Parishioners,

Thank you so much for all the birthday wishes. I really appreciated them; they brightened my day! ~ Sharon Morris

To My Parish Family:

Thank you to everyone who sent me Christmas and birthday cards! It was very thoughtful and they brought a lot of smiles to me. ~ Janet Phelan

To the Community of St. Mary - Holy Cross,

Your generous contribution of money and personal care items is greatly appreciated. Thank you for helping us fill the pantry shelves and provide for those in need. Christmas Blessings to you! ~ The Blessing Box

Blood Drive

Save the Date Thursday, January 25, 3:00 - 7:00pm in the Social Hall. It is not too early to sign up! More than 100,000 units of blood are needed yearly. Please schedule an appointment at www.lifeservebloodcenter.org/ (appointments required, no walk-ins). Volunteers and treats are needed. Please contact Larry Sauer, sauerld@outlook.com / 515-710-2421.

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 TV channels 5, 8 and 17.

Readings and Questions for Faith Sharing Fourth Sunday of Advent, Dec. 23/24

Theme: God's Spirit comes to us in ways we least expect. Reading I: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 • The Lord is with

Reading II: Romans 16:25-27 • The Gospel reveals a mystery hidden for many ages.

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38 • Blessed are you among women! Question for Children: If you were to tell someone one thing about Jesus' mother, Mary, what would you say?

Question for Youth: "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you." This is God's greeting to each of us - he loves us just as we are. What are some of your personal strengths that God rejoices in?

Question for Adults: Name one area of your life where God has surprised you with love, abilities, or even a pregnancy. How is God's Spirit upon you in this dimension of life

Feast of the Holy Family, Dec. 30/31

Theme: Families grow through good times and bad.

Reading I: Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14 • Those who fear the Lord honor their parents.

Reading II: Colossians 3:12-21 • Family life in the Lord. Gospel: Luke 2:22-40 • The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom.

For Children: Why is it important for you to obey your parents or guardians?

For Youth: How does having a God who knows what it means to be human affect the way you pray and think about God?

For Adults: Whether single, married, or divorced, how does Paul's advice ring true in your own life?