



St. Mary - Holy Cross Parish

460 NW Washington Avenue Elkhart Iowa 50073

Holy Cross: 12704 NE 98th Street Maxwell Iowa 50161



Third Sunday of Advent December 16/17, 2023

St. Mary - Holy Cross Parish Annual Financial Report July 2022-June 2023

Overview: During fiscal year 2023, our parish continued to contend with several challenges, but showed growth in some key areas. We succeeded in meeting the financial objectives in the Diocesan Ignite campaign, earning our parish share back for future investment. Throughout this year, our parish continued to function well and was financially stable, thanks to the efforts of all of our parishioners, parish leadership, and staff! In the attached report, you will see that though our tithing households has increased significantly, our weekly tithing is lower than the past 6 years, and the general fund has felt this decrease.

Challenges: The continuing high cost for supplies and services will continue to have an impact on our parish expenses. As Catholics, we believe in fair pay for our employees, so we will continue to try to provide cost-of-living raises to parish staff. Our weekly collections have taken a significant drop, and the General Fund has likewise seen a decrease. B & G items such as the parking lot at St. Mary's is still uneven and broken, and we want to get it resurfaced. The parish Finance Council is aware of these issues and more and is committed to prioritizing parish needs and equitably managing the precious resources of the parish.

Opportunities: The number of households contributing to the parish has once again moved in a positive direction and our overall register of households has remained virtually the same. We are enjoying the stability of celebrating with Fr. Ross Parker as our full-time pastor. Our belief is that we will continue to grow and prosper in N.E. Polk County. We continue to have a solid parish spirit as shown in the activities surrounding the parish. Let us continue to build each other up, and find our parish worth investing in. We not only need parishioners financial support but also to volunteer to help guide us into the future to serve and share the Word of Our Lord. ~ Fr. Ross Parker & the SMHC Finance Council

– See additional information on the insert in this bulletin.

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 515-367-2685

Parish General Email smhc@saintmaryhc.org

Fr. Ross Parker, Pastor 515-367-2685/rparker@dmdiocese.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

Geneveve Loraditch - PreK-6 RE gloraditch@saintmaryhc.org

Tracy Miller - PreK-6 RE tmiller@saintmaryhc.org

Sue Schmidt - Music sschmidt@saintmaryhc.org

Candy Zidon - Bookkeeper bookkeeper@saintmaryhc.org

Parish Web Site www.saintmaryhc.org

Parish Facebook Site St. Mary's Holy Cross Parish-Elkhart

Parish Fax 515-367-7028

Mass Schedule

<i>See inside for Mass times for 4th Sunday of Advent and Christmas.</i>	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.

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

Tuesday, December 19

8:00am Mass, St. Mary †Special Intention

Wednesday, December 20

5:30pm Mass, Holy Cross †Bill Davis
6:00-7:00pm Reconciliation, St. Mary

Thursday, December 21

8:00am Mass, St. Mary †Fr. Jim Laurenzo
6:00-7:00pm Reconciliation, St. Mary

Friday, December 22

8:00am Mass, St. Mary †Mary Ellen Putnam
6:00-7:00pm Reconciliation, St. Mary

Saturday, December 23 —Sunday Obligation

4:00 - 4:30pm Reconciliation, St. Mary
5:00pm Mass, St. Mary †Virginia Schmelzer

Sunday, December 24 —Sunday Obligation

9:00am Mass, St. Mary People of the Parish
(no 8:00am Mass at Holy Cross this day)

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

Prayer for Third Week of Advent



O Almighty God,
gracious provider and giver of life,
we anxiously await
the celebration of your birth.
Like the people of long ago,
our ancestors in faith,
we, too, are in need of light,
in need of direction,
in need of your Word
to show us the way.
Our busy lives and the consumerism
that surrounds us
make it difficult to recognize your kingdom
and to hear your voice.
Help us Lord, to focus on you. Amen.

Parish Council

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

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!

† 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.


Parish Office: Dec. 22 closes at Noon, 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.

Advent Reflection Resources

Still a week left! We have a few books on the table to help you along this last week of your Advent journey. It's not too late!

Advent Reconciliation Times at St. Mary

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, December 20, 21, & 22 from 6:00 - 7:00pm, Saturday, Dec. 23, 4:00-4:30pm, or by appointment with Father Parker. 



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 will be included in next week's bulletin. *Donation envelopes are with your tithe envelopes or found on the table. Please return your donation by Tuesday, December 19.*

December 30/31 & January 1 Holy Day Masses

Regular weekend Mass schedule for December 30/31.
January 1 Holy Day, Solemnity of Mary Mother of God,
9:00am Mass at St. Mary.

Coming Events

- † **Weekend of Dec. 16/17:** Food Pantry collection for Catholic Charities Emergency Family Shelter
- † **Choir Practice:** Dec. 17 after 10am Mass & Thursday, Dec. 21, 7:10pm
- † **Sunday, Dec. 17:** Social Hall in use 4:00-7:00pm
- † **Saturday, Dec. 30:** Social Hall in use 6:00-8:00pm

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 whose communities now do not have adequate retirement savings. Your gift offers them necessities such as medications and nursing care. Thank you for giving back. *Donation envelopes are on the table; please return your donation in the next few weeks.*

A Quick Turnaround!

With the Fourth Sunday of Advent also being Christmas Eve, we will decorate after the 9:00am Mass on Sunday, Dec. 24. With this quick turnaround we sure could use some help! Please let Melanie Stoner know if you can help (melstoner13@yahoo.com/515-450-9355) or just stay after that Mass! Many hands make light work!

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 have a very good Christmas break! We resume classes in January 10. On January 3, 6:30pm in the parish hall, we have a First Communion parent meeting. Anyone who has a child interested in receiving in the Spring needs to attend this meeting. Please email Geneveve and let her know you will be attending.

Upcoming Dates

December 20/27- No Sessions- Merry Christmas!
January 3- No Sessions. First Communion parent meeting, 6:30pm, Social Hall
January 10- Sessions Resume

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 (7th & 8th Grades)

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

Confirmation (9th & 10th Grades)

Sunday, Dec. 17, 11:00am (after Mass) - Noon: 10th grade only session, youth room
Wednesday, Dec. 20, 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

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.

It Is the Season



Can 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 for helping your parish! Sign up at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409094EA4A722A2FB6-46550958-sidewalk>. You will receive a list of activities at the church so you know what days and times need to be shoveled. If you have any questions please contact Bill Schmitt, isucui@isualum.com / 515-291-8005.

Many thanks to all who helped last year and a grateful thank you to Nick and Todd Volz for removing the snow from the parking lot at St. Mary and to Laurie Phelan for taking care of snow removal at Holy Cross each year. We appreciate you!!

Church Sign

Come here this Sunday instead of shopping. The parking is easier and the gift is better.

Weekly Collection Financial Update

December 9/10 Budget Week 24

	<u>Received</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Tithes/Plate/Youth/Bldg. Fund	\$2,566	\$6,114

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

<u>Received</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Last Year</u>
\$105,334	\$146,729	\$116,340

Mass Attendance: Dec. 9/10: 269

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

BUILDING & GROUND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Roberts, Co-Chair - jroberts@huxcomm.net
Scott Turczynski, Co-Chair - ScottT@hrtnd.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 - lschreurs@msn.com

CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Laurie Phelan, *Chair* - Laurie.c.Phelan@gmail.com
Pat Bishop - pjbishop@midiaowa.net
Lowell Crouse - l3jl@windstream.net
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

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

Laudato Si

When working in the garden, try to use a watering can instead of a hose to focus on areas that need watering. Try to water early in the day to reduce evaporation. These steps can help to conserve dwindling water resources. See more: <https://www.saintmaryhc.org/on-care-for-our-common-home>.

Thank You

In this season of abundance and gratitude, we give thanks for you for caring about families who need essential assistance. Your support has made a tremendous "impact" for others. Gratefully,
~ IMPACT Community Action Partnership



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.

Liturgical Ministers December 23- January 1 are by sign up.

Please contact the office to volunteer. Thank you!

Saturday, Dec. 23, 5:00pm Mass, St. Mary

Needed: 1 Usher

Lector Lorrie Hanlon
Host Distributor Drew Hanlon
Cup Bearers Susan Stillmunkes, Susan Selby
Altar Servers Jack & Tommy Selby
Ushers Drew Hanlon
Music Lisa Jones, Mary Schmelzer

Sunday, Dec. 24, 9:00am Mass, St. Mary

Needed: Host Distributor, 2 Altar Servers, 2 Ushers

Lector Linda Froehlich
Cup Bearers Tom & Linda Froehlich
Music Christine Muehlenthaler, Laura Kutscher

Christmas Eve, Sunday, 5:00pm Mass, St. Mary

Needed: 2 Cup Bearers, Host Distributor to choir loft, 1-2 Ushers

Lector Lorrie Hanlon
Host Distributor Drew Hanlon, Bob Selby
Cup Bearers Joe Rumbaugh, Susan Selby
Altar Servers Jack & Tommy Selby
Ushers Joe Rumbaugh, Drew Hanlon, Gregg Richwine
Music Choir, Mary Ortmann

Christmas Eve, Sunday, 7:00pm Mass, Holy Cross

Needed: Cup Bearer, 2 Ushers

Lector Anne Davis
Altar Servers Claire & Oliver Hand
Music Jen Linderblood, Stacey Rooney

Christmas Day, Monday, 9:00am Mass, St. Mary

Needed: Lector, Host Distributor, 2 Cup Bearers, 2 Altar Servers, 4 Ushers

Music Drew & Lorrie Hanlon

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Money Counters

December 17: Kathy Daup, Trish Morris

December 24: Sharon Morris, Dona Cowman



Thousands of marine creatures die by mistakenly swallowing plastic bags that resemble jellyfish.

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!

Since we have a minimum order that is still too many, we have these dated by first Sunday of January, 2nd Sunday of January and so forth. If there is a 5th Sunday of the month, an envelope for that is in the back of the packet.

A Christmas Gift For The Soul!

What could be a more perfect gift to give others and yourself than the love and joy of celebrating Jesus in the company of thousands of Catholics?

- World Class Speakers
- Beautiful Masses
- Superb Music
- Adoration
- Reconciliation
- Fellowship
- Vendor & Organization Booths

Adult Tickets - \$30, Student/Youth - \$20;
In Person or livestream

Go to ChristOurLifelowa.com to purchase tickets.
September 28 & 29, 2024, Wells Fargo Arena, Des Moines

Find events and resources offered by the Diocese and other parishes at www.dmdiocese.org. Scroll towards end of page.

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

Third Sunday of Advent, Dec. 16/17

Theme: God is doing great things for us.

Reading I: Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11 • God is the joy of my soul.

Reading II: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 • Do not stifle the spirit.

Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28 • Prepare the way of the Lord!

Question for Children: As we get closer to Christmas, name one thing you really want for your home or the world, such as peace, friendship, or food for the poor.

Question for Youth: John tried to help people prepare their lives for the coming of the Messiah. What do you need to change about your life to be ready for Jesus' coming?

Question for Adults: If you were to write three suggestions for those who follow Jesus, to keep them strong in their faith, what would you write?