



St. Mary-Holy Cross
MASS APPEAL NEWSLETTER
 – NEWS FROM THE PEWS –
 OCTOBER 2023



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Faith, Fellowship, and Farming

As the calendar turns to September and October the days are getting shorter and the weather is cooler. In our area the fields are also taking on a golden hue. That means that harvest time is here. Our parish of St. Mary - Holy Cross has a wide cross-section of urban, suburban, and rural parishioners. This mix provides a unique opportunity to interact with others who come from many different walks of life. I think that diversity is a great strength of our community.

It is good for us to reflect on those people who earn a living on the land. We know that farming takes a great deal of hard-work, patience, and of course faith. Most farmers I know also want to be good stewards of the land so that future generations can continue to enjoy the land and environmental impacts can be minimized. I know that I speak often of the saints, but I think they are great models for us to emulate and to think about as we too are hopefully striving for sanctity and holiness.

At Holy Cross Church we have a statue of St. Isidore. St. Isidore is that patron saint of farmers. St. Isidore was from Spain and he lived in the 12th century. When he was Barely old enough to wield a hoe, Isidore entered the service of John de Vergas, a wealthy landowner from Madrid, and worked faithfully on his estate outside the city for the rest of his life. He married a young woman as simple and upright as himself who also became a saint—Maria de la Cabeza. They had one son, who died as a child.

Isidore had deep religious instincts. He rose early in the morning to go to church and spent many a holiday devoutly visiting the churches of Madrid and surrounding areas. All day long, as he walked behind the plow, he communed with God. His devotion, one might say, became a problem, for his fellow workers sometimes complained that he often showed up late because of lingering in church too long.

He was known for his love of the poor, and there are accounts of Isidore’s supplying them miraculously with food. He had a great concern for the proper treatment of Animals. He died May 15, 1130, and was declared a saint in 1622, with Saints Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier, Teresa of Avila, and Philip Neri. Together, the group is known in Spain as “the five saints.”

Reflection

Many implications can be found in a simple laborer achieving sainthood: Physical labor has dignity; sainthood does not stem from status; contemplation does not depend on learning; the simple life is conducive to holiness and happiness. Legends about angel helpers and mysterious oxen indicate that his work was not neglected and his duties did not go unfulfilled. Perhaps the truth which emerges is this: If you have your spiritual self in order, your earthly commitments will fall into order also. “[S]eek first the kingdom [of God] and his righteousness,” said the carpenter from Nazareth, “and all these things will be given you besides” (Matthew 6:33). (excerpts taken from [Saint Isidore the Farmer | Franciscan Media](#))



Hand Family Farm

In December of last year, we purchased the family farm making Jon the third generation of his family to be the steward of this land. His grandpa Howard purchased the farm in 1960 with the dream of seeing his family love and care for it just as he did.

Throughout the years the farm has seen different livestock and row crops. Currently we bale hay predominantly alfalfa small squares and are working on maintaining and caring for the farm.

The row crop ground is rented to a farmer who shares our values in farming. ~ Submitted by Jon Hand



Smith Family Farm

Shaymus and Kirsten Smith and their four children raise cattle, sheep, hogs, and poultry outside of Bondurant at Pine Grove Family Farms. Shaymus was raised on a farm outside of Elkhart. After starting a family of their own they knew it was important to begin raising livestock to establish a shorter and healthier food chain for their family. They then began adding to their livestock numbers as the years progressed, strongly believing all families should have easy access to locally grown food. Our goal at Pine Grove Family Farms is to connect our local community with ethically raised, high quality, regional farm products. ~ Submitted by Kirsten Smith



Rooney Family Farm

Our farm is a 3rd generation family farm. Tom's grandparents, James and Ella Rooney were lifelong members of Holy Cross. They owned another farm in the area that they lost during the depression, so they then sharecropped this farm until they could buy it in 1960. Our house was built in 1926. Tom and his dad Jim raised purebred Limousin cattle and farmed the land, while cash renting more land until the floods in 1993. Then all of the land they rented was flooded and is now part of the Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt, which surrounds our farm. Since that time we have rented the farm ground to a neighbor, and continued to raise Limousin cattle. We have enjoyed raising our children on the farm and now letting our grandchildren experience farm life. We are fortunate to live only 3 miles from Holy Cross Church! ~ Submitted by Stacey Rooney



Upcoming Parish Events:

- Build Your Own Omelette/Scramlette Bar - Sunday, October 15th after 10:00 am Mass
- Blood Drive - Thursday, November 2nd, 3:00-7:00 pm in the Social Hall
- Ladies Christmas Party - Monday, December 11th, Mass at 6:00 pm with a potluck to follow.
- 2nd annual chili cook-off - Saturday, January 20th after 5:00 pm Mass

Holy Cross Cemetery Updates

- 10 stones were leveled and straightened
- Memorial Flag mounts have been added along the Church and Cemetery property line to allow for more flags to be flown 4 times per year.
- We named the road through the Cemetery "Schreurs Lane," in honor of Lynn and Chris' efforts and initiation of the Holy Cross Cemetery Memorial Flags.



And on the 8th day, God looked down on his planned paradise and said, "I need a caretaker"

-- **so God made a Farmer.**

God said, "I need somebody willing to get up before dawn, milk cows, work all day in the fields, milk cows again, eat supper, then go to town and stay past midnight at a meeting of the school board"

-- **so God made a Farmer.**

"I need somebody with arms strong enough to rustle a calf and yet gentle enough to deliver his own grandchild; somebody to call hogs, tame cantankerous machinery, come home hungry, have to wait lunch until his wife's done feeding visiting ladies, then tell the ladies to be sure and come back real soon -- and mean it"

-- **so God made a Farmer.**

God said, "I need somebody willing to sit up all night with a newborn colt, and watch it die, then dry his eyes and say, 'Maybe next year.' I need somebody who can shape an ax handle from a persimmon sprout, shoe a horse with a hunk of car tire, who can make harness out of haywire, feed sacks and shoe scraps; who, planting time and harvest season, will finish his forty-hour week by Tuesday noon, and then pain'n from tractor back, put in another seventy-two hours"

-- **so God made a Farmer.**

God had to have somebody willing to ride the ruts at double speed to get the hay in ahead of the rain clouds, and yet stop in mid-field and race to help when he sees the first smoke from a neighbor's place

-- **so God made a Farmer.**

God said, "I need somebody strong enough to clear trees and heave bails, yet gentle enough to tame lambs and wean pigs and tend the pink-combed pullets, who will stop his mower for an hour to splint the broken leg of a meadow lark." It had to be somebody who'd plow deep and straight and not cut corners; somebody to seed, weed, feed, breed and rake and disc and plow and plant and tie the fleece and strain the milk and replenish the self-feeder and finish a hard week's work with a five-mile drive to church; somebody who would bale a family together with the soft strong bonds of sharing, who would laugh, and then sigh, and then reply, with smiling eyes, when his son says that he wants to spend his life "doing what dad does"

-- **so God made a Farmer.**

~ Paul Harvey. 'So God Made a Farmer' Speech to the FFA, delivered November 1978, Kansas City, MO.

Pumpkin Bars

Bars:

4 eggs
1 and 2/3 cup sugar
1 c veg oil
15 oz can pumpkin
2 c flour
2 tsp cinnamon
2 tsp powdered sugar
1 tsp baking soda
*Mix and pour into a greased 9x13 pan.
Bake 25 to 30 minutes at 350°F.

Cream cheese frosting:

8 oz cr cheese
1 stick real salted butter
1 tsp vanilla
1 box powdered sugar (1 lb)
*Mix until smooth

~submitted by Katie Frederichs



Apple Crisp

10 cups all purpose apples
(peeled, cored, and sliced)
1 cup white sugar
1 Tbsp all-purpose flour
1 tsp ground cinnamon
½ cup water
1 cup quick-cooking oats
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup packed brown sugar
¼ tsp baking powder
¼ tsp baking soda
½ cup butter, melted



*Gather all ingredients. Preheat oven to 350°F. Place sliced apples in a 9x13-inch baking dish. Mix white sugar, 1 Tbsp flour, and cinnamon together; sprinkle over apples. Pour water evenly over apples. Combine oats, 1 cup flour, brown sugar, baking powder, and baking soda in a large bowl. Add melted butter and mix with a fork until crumbly; sprinkle evenly over apple mixture. Bake in the preheated oven until top is golden brown and apples are bubbling around the edges, about 45 minutes.