



St. Mary - Holy Cross Parish

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

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



Feast of the Holy Family

December 27 & 28, 2025



Epiphany of the Lord

January 3 & 4, 2026

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. Just like Easter, we continue to celebrate the solemnity of Christmas that is called the Octave of the Nativity of Our Lord. We celebrate the birth of our Lord for eight days then the Christmas season up to the Baptism of the Lord. So, you can keep your Christmas lights and trees lit up! Within this blessed time, we also celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family and the Solemnity of Mary Mother of God a Holy Day of obligation and opportunity. For the Holy Day we will have mass at 5PM on the 31st at St. Mary and 9AM on the 1st at Holy Cross. It is also obviously a new year 2026. We truly live in the future. A very blessed new year to all of you. May God Bless us all abundantly this new year!

- 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

<i>See inside for varied Mass schedule.</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.

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

Tuesday, December 30

8:00am Mass, St. Mary † Bill Roberts

Wednesday, December 31 Holy Day Vigil

5:00pm Mass, St. Mary † JoAnn Meusburger

Thursday, January 1 Holy Day, Solemnity of Mary

9:00am Mass, Holy Cross † Will & Mikey Carpenter

First Friday, January 2

8:00am Mass, St. Mary † Ira & Mary Ann Cory

Saturday, January 3

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

5:00pm Mass, St. Mary † Gayleen Kennebeck

Sunday, January 4

8:00am Mass, Holy Cross † Karen Bellis

10:00am Mass, St. Mary People of the Parish

Tuesday, January 6

8:00am Mass, St. Mary † Holly Hanlon

Wednesday, January 7 — No Mass today

Thursday, January 8 — No Mass today

Friday, January 9 — No Mass today

Saturday, January 10

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

5:00pm Mass, St. Mary † Gerald Adams

Sunday, January 11

8:00am Mass, Holy Cross † Patrick Phelan

10:00am Mass, St. Mary People of the Parish

The Holy Family Prayer

JESUS, Son of God and Son of Mary, bless our family. Graciously inspire in us the unity, peace, and mutual love that you found in your own family.



MARY, Mother of Jesus and Our Mother, nourish our family with your faith and love. Keep us close to your Son, Jesus, in all our sorrows and joys.

JOSEPH, Foster-father to Jesus, guardian and spouse of Mary, keep our family safe from harm. Help us in all times of discouragement or anxiety.

HOLY FAMILY, make our family one with you. Help us to be instruments of peace. Grant that love, strengthened by grace, may prove mightier than all the weaknesses and trials through which our families sometimes pass. May we always have God at the center of our hearts and homes until we are all one family, happy and at peace in our true home with you. Amen.

Parish Council

Meeting: February 17, 6:30pm, Social Hall

Finance Council

Meeting: February 24, 6:30pm, Social Hall

Stewardship

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

OCIA / Grow in Your Catholic Faith

Mondays, Jan. 5 & 12, 6:15pm Youth Room

Knights of Columbus

Meeting: January 19, 7:00pm, Social Hall

Funeral Luncheon Food Donations

Team 3: Ankeny

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.

Masses for Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God



Our Masses for this Holy Day of Obligation are 5:00pm Vigil Mass on December 31 at St. Mary and January 1, 9:00am Mass at Holy Cross. Please join us to celebrate Mary!



Opening for a Parish Music Coordinator

We thank Aubrey Sigmund for the wonderful work she has done! We are looking to hire a new coordinator within our parish for this position beginning January 2. **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. For more information or if interested, contact Fr. Ross at rparker@dmdioocese.org.

The peace of Jesus is not just for Christmas.

The Parish Office is closed Dec. 24 through January 2.

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.

Father Parker is away January 7-14.

Coming Events

†**Weekend of Jan. 3 & 4:** Building Fund collection — Wine & cheese after 5:00pm Mass — Coffee & donuts after 8:00am and 10:00am Masses

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 Office is closed Dec. 24 - Jan. 2.

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@dmdioocese.org or 515-720-3434. Term begins January 1, 2026. Thank you for considering serving your Parish in this way!

Feast of Epiphany Prayer

Lord God of heaven and earth,
you revealed your only Son to every nation
by the guidance of a star.
Bless this home and all who live here.
Fill us with the light of Christ that our
concern for others may reflect your love.
Be our light in the darkness that we may not
stumble, and lift us up again if we fall;
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Religious Education: Preschool - 6th Grade

Coordinator

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

Merry Christmas to all of you. May the beauty and joy of this time of great celebration bring you closer to Him and your families.

—We have our First Holy Communion parent meeting January 7, 6:30pm at St. Mary. If your child is hoping to receive their sacraments this year, please plan to attend.

Upcoming Sessions

Jan. 7- Mandatory First Communion Parent Meeting, 6:30pm
Jan. 14- Regular Sessions

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
Jan. 14 & 21: EDGE sessions

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

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

Sunday, Jan. 25: 11am-12:30pm, 10th grade only session .

Wednesday, Jan. 28: 6-7:30pm, Family session, Social Hall

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

Youth Area, 9th-12th graders

Jan. 14 & 21: Youth Gatherings

"Keep Christ in Christmas" Ornament Contest

Ornament entries by SMHC children in grades Preschool - 6th are to be placed on the Christmas tree in the Social Hall by Sunday, January 4, after our Mass celebrating The Epiphany of the Lord. Winners will be selected at the Jan. 20 K of C meeting and awarded the following week. Please see the [Religious Ed](#) page of the website for more information.



It Will Snow Again

We have the equipment, but need people power!! Could you help with weekend and/or week day snow removal of sidewalks, etc. at St. Mary? Sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409094EA4A722A2FB6-60961940-sidewalk>. Thank you! Questions, please contact Bill Schmitt, 515-291-8005 / isucui@isualum.com.

Save the Date!



Things are heating up as we prepare for our next Chili Cook-Off on Saturday, February 7 after 5:00pm Mass. Get ready to taste, vote, and enjoy!

Weekly Collection Financial Update

December 21 Budget Week 25

	Received	Budget
Tithes/Plate/Youth/Bldg. Fund	\$4,668	\$5,536

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

Received	Budget	Last Year
\$149,794	\$138,389	\$135,648

December Food Pantry Collection: \$823.16

Mass Attendance: Dec 20/21: 349

2025 Annual Diocesan Appeal

Goal	Pledged	Payments	Outstanding	Refund
\$47,320	\$55,610	\$55,510	\$100	\$8,190

Councils and Committees

PARISH COUNCIL

Anne Davis - annedavis06@gmail.com

Terri Hamm - Theresa.Hamm@mercyoneiowa.org

Drew Hanlon - drewsmhcpc@yahoo.com

Kim Heger - hegerkim91@gmail.com

Doug Jones - djones@bossard.com

Bill Kyle - bill@northiowaair.com

Tim Miller - millertimothyg@gmail.com

Lisa Schoening - lisa@lisaschoening.com

FINANCE COUNCIL

Laurie Phelan, *Chair* - Laurie.c.Phelan@gmail.com

Julia Coash - jcoash@outlook.com

Craig Johnson - dad.craig@gmail.com

Anne Power - powerhouse57049@gmail.com

Bill Rooney - 1rooneybill@gmail.com

Tom Rooney - roondog007@msn.com

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Julia Coash - jcoash@outlook.com

Katie Fredericks - katie.fredericks1@hotmail.com

Beth Hart - mrsmatthart@gmail.com

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

BUILDING & GROUND COMMITTEE

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 - lschreurs@msn.com

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Laurie Phelan, *Chair* - Laurie.c.Phelan@gmail.com

Pat Bishop - pjbishop@midiaowa.net

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

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

John & Peg Evans - evansp3@yahoo.com

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS GRAND KNIGHT

John Roberts - jroberts@huxcomm.net

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.

Ministers for Holy Day & Jan. 3 & 4 & 10 & 11

Wednesday, December 31, 5:00pm Mass, St. Mary

Lector	Jill Swanson
Host Distributor	Susan Stillmunkes
Cup Bearers	Jill Swanson, Linda Froehlich
Altar Servers	Emma, Cora & Kate Sorenson
Usher	Tom Froehlich, Gregg Stillmunkes
Music	Drew Hanlon, Mary Snyder

Thursday, January 1, 9:00am Mass, Holy Cross

All Ministers Needed

Saturday, January 3, 5:00pm Mass, St. Mary

Lector	Linda Froehlich
Host Distributor	Mike Devereux
Cup Bearers	Tom & Linda Froehlich
Ushers	Mike D., Jim H., Doug J., Mike P.
Music	Drew & Lorrie Hanlon

Sunday, January 4, 8:00am Mass, Holy Cross

Lector	Sheri Fogarty
Cup Bearer	Jon Hand
Altar Servers	Claire & Oliver Hand
Ushers	Jerry & Deb Zenkner
Music	Drew & Lorrie Hanlon

Sunday, January 4, 10:00am Mass, St. Mary

Lector	Greg Feldmann
Host Distributor	Greg Feldmann
Cup Bearers	Tracy Miller, Angela Collum
Altar Servers	Rex Roberts, David Collum
	<i>Cross Bearer: Elizabeth Collum</i>
Ushers	Andrew Cory, Gregg Richwine
Music	Garrett McClain, Mary Ortmann

Saturday, January 10, 5:00pm Mass, St. Mary

Lector	Bill Sexton
Host Distributor	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Cup Bearers	Bill & Kris Sexton
Ushers	<i>Volunteers needed</i>

Sunday, January 11, 8:00am Mass, Holy Cross

Lector	Matt Hart
Cup Bearer	Laurie Phelan
Altar Servers	Titus & Zeke Weber
Usher	Sandra Hunter

Sunday, January 11, 10:00am Mass, St. Mary

Lector	Kris LeRoy
Host Distributor	Mike Nehring
Cup Bearers	Julie & Bob Coash
Altar Servers	Gabe Miller, Jackson Cory
	<i>Cross Bearer: Amelia Muehlenthaler</i>
Ushers	Bill & Kelly Dunbar

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Money Counters

December 28: Trish Morris, Kathy Daup, Dona Cowman
January 4: Sue White, Sharon Morris
January 11: Dona Cowman, Kathy Petersen

Thank You

The family of JoAnn Meusburger would like to thank everyone for the prayers and support both during JoAnn's illness and since her passing.

A special thank you to Fr. Parker and Fr. Krettek for the beautiful funeral Mass, to Drew & Lorrie Hanlon for providing music, to Barb and all office staff for fielding and answering our questions, to those who worked so hard in preparation for the visitation and funeral, all who donated desserts and salads for the luncheon and those who had a hand in preparing/serving the luncheon, and clean-up afterward.

We also thank those who were able to attend the visitation and/or funeral, and for the cards, flowers, and/or memorial donations. We are eternally grateful.

Mom dearly loved her church family and the outpouring of prayers, love, and support we've received since her passing is truly a testament to how much she was loved by all of you.

In appreciation,

The Meusburger Family

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

Feast of the Holy Family, December 27 & 28

Theme: We honor the relationships of parents & children.

Reading I: Sirach 3:2-7, 12-14 • Revere your father and bring comfort to your mother.

Reading II: Colossians 3:12-21 • Clothe yourselves with mercy.

Gospel: Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23 • Take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt.

Question for Children: When is it the hardest for you to obey your parents?

Question for Youth: St. Paul lays out a way of life for the followers of Christ. Which one of these is most difficult for you to follow? Which one is easiest?

Question for Adults: We are invited to let the word of Christ dwell within us and direct our daily lives. Which one of the lifestyle suggestions speaks most loudly to you?

Feast of the Epiphany, January 3 & 4

Mystery of the incarnation - Jesus is a gift to all humanity.

Reading I: Isaiah 60:1-6 • Your light has come!

Reading II: Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6 • We all share the same promise!

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12 • They opened their coffers and presented him with gifts.

Question for Children: In your life, who helps you to see Jesus in other people such as a classmate or a friend?

Question for Youth: The star guided the Magi to Jesus. Who are the people or events that have guided you in your relationship with Jesus?

Question for Adults: How this past week did you demonstrate God's love at home and at work?