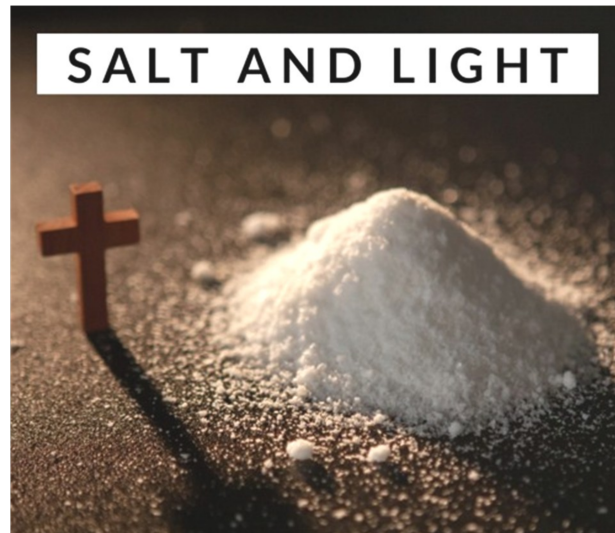


St. Mary - Holy Cross Parish

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

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



Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 7/8, 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. I just wanted to say a word of thanks to the Stewardship Committee for the tremendous work of putting on the Chili/Cinnamon roll contest. Thank you to everyone who submitted an entry as well.

Secondly, I spoke to our young people who went to the National Catholic Youth Conference and told them I was proud of them for putting on a breakfast last week and thanking the parish for their support. I think that is a good lesson for young people to acknowledge others in their generosity. The young people were very much inspired by the Holy Father, as well as spending quiet time in adoration. Thank you for the support in helping the kids go to NCYC.

Finally, we are very lucky as a parish to be growing. This is not the case in a lot of places around the country or even in our own diocese. If there is someone you do not know please take a moment to introduce yourself so that all may be welcomed as Christ. That personal connection means a lot to people. Sometimes we just need to get out of our comfort zone to make others feel welcome, but we realize that when we do that we are glad we did!

~ 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
Candy Zidon - Bookkeeper	bookkeeper@saintmaryhc.org
Music Coordinator -Position Open	
Parish Web Site	www.saintmaryhc.org
Parish Facebook Site	St. Mary's Holy Cross Parish-Elkhart

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

Tuesday, February 10

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

Wednesday, February 11

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

Thursday, February 12

8:00am Mass, St. Mary † *Kay Ross*

Friday, February 13

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

Saturday, February 14

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

5:00pm Mass, St. Mary † *Delila Roberts*

Sunday, February 15

8:00am Mass, Holy Cross † *Stephen & Michael Carpenter*

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

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

Come to Sample and Vote!!

All are invited to join us after 5:00pm Mass this Saturday (Feb. 7) to sample and vote on the Chili and cinnamon roll entries. Help pick the winners!

Snack Time

Pick up your ordered snack pack this weekend. We will have a limited supply of cash and carry snack packs available. Thank you for supporting the young Church!

Learn About the Byzantine Tradition

Father Bruce Riebe from Saint Andrew of Crete Byzantine Catholic Outreach of Iowa will join us this Monday, February 9, 6:15pm in the Social Hall to share about the Byzantine tradition, including prayer, liturgy, and spirituality. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn how the Catholic faith is lived and celebrated in the Eastern Church. All are welcome, please join us!

Lent Begins February 18 †

- **Ash Wednesday** is February 18. Our Masses are 7:00am and 6:30pm at St. Mary. - Liturgical Ministers are needed.

- We are looking for volunteers to **lead the Stations of the Cross** on Friday's February 27, March 6 & 27; we have a choice of booklets from which to read. And volunteers to **host a meal after Stations** on February 27 & March 27.

Please consider getting involved in your parish in this way; a sign up is at St. Mary or email the Office at bliske@saintmaryhc.org to volunteer or if you have questions. Thank you!

Prayer

Father God,
I ask for Your strength
to persevere in all that I do.
Whether faced with challenges
or opportunities,
may I approach them
with courage, wisdom and reliance
on Your grace.
I pray for resilience
in my faith, my work, my studies,
and my daily life.
Help me to keep my eyes fixed on You,
standing firm in Your promises,
and moving forward with hope
and confidence. Amen.

Parish Council

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

Finance Council

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

Stewardship

Meeting: April 13, 6:00pm, Social Hall

OCIA / Grow in Your Catholic Faith

February 9: with special guest Fr. Bruce Riebe, Social Hall; Feb. 23, 6:15pm, Youth Room — No session Feb. 16

Knights of Columbus

Meeting: February 16, 7:00pm, Social Hall

Funeral Luncheon Food Donations

Team 5: Elkhart & Cambridge

Fr. 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

- † **Saturday, February 7:** Chili Cook-off and Cinnamon Roll contest following 5:00pm Mass, Social Hall.
- † **Weekend of Feb. 7/8:** Building Fund Collection — Pick up Snack Packs after Masses
- † **Monday, Feb. 9:** Guest speaker Father Bruce Riebe from Byzantine Catholic Outreach of Iowa, 6:15pm, Social Hall
- † **Lenten Meal following Stations of the Cross:** Friday's Feb. 27, March 13 & 27

Fish Frys

The Knights of Columbus are looking forward to serving their fish frys again this year from 5:00 to 7:00pm on Fridays February 20, March 6 & 20, in the Social Hall.

- Sign up to bring a dessert for a fish fry at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0B4AA8A62DA5FD0-61631815-desserts>. Thank you!



Food Pantry Collection

Please bring non-perishable food items to Mass the weekend of February 21/22; we will also take up a monetary collection. Thank you for your continued generosity in sharing with those needing a little help along the way. Your donation will assist Catholic Charities Food Pantry.

Religious Education: Preschool - 6th Grade

Coordinator

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

We have 15 children receiving their First Holy Communion this year. Would you like to sponsor a Bible for one of these children? Each Bible has a leather cover and has the child's name engraved on it. It is a lifelong treasure to them and we are so thankful for all those who support this fundraiser. If you would like to donate a Bible or do a partial donation, the cost is \$50 and a check can be mailed to the office with "Bible" in the memo.

Upcoming Sessions

February 11- Regular sessions, First Communion enrollment Mass, 9:00am

February 18- Ash Wednesday, No sessions. Please attend Mass with your family

February 25- 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 Sessions: Feb. 11 & 25

—no Edge Feb. 18, Ash Wednesday; please attend Mass with your Family.

Confirmation 9th & 10th Graders, Sessions in Youth Room
Please see your email for questions regarding upcoming dates. Also be on the lookout for a sign up to volunteer for our KofC fish fry Fridays.

Sunday, Feb. 8: 11:00am-12:30pm, 9th grade only session
Saturday, Feb. 14 and Sunday, Feb. 15: 11:00am-3:00pm, 10th grade only (teen & sponsor) Prayer Stations, Social Hall
Sunday, Feb 22: 11:00am-12:30pm, 10th grade only session
NO February Wednesday Family Session

S.T.O.R.M. Youth Group — Wednesdays, 7:30-9:00pm,
Youth Area, 9th-12th graders
Gatherings: Feb. 11 & 25

Pay It Forward!

Have you ever received a random act of kindness? Pay it forward by helping provide a meal at Catholic Charities Emergency Family Shelter in Des Moines on the second Sunday of June or July. One or more families or groups can volunteer to prepare and deliver a meal (number for the meal varies) to the Shelter. Volunteers can pay for the meal themselves, be reimbursed by the parish, or receive a Gift-In-Kind receipt. *To volunteer or to find out more, please contact Stacey Rooney, rooneyslg17@gmail.com / 515-490-5034.*

End of Year Statements

To receive your year end statement, please email Candy, bookkeeper@saintmaryhc.org or contact the office, 515-367-2685, with a request to email or print/mail your statement. In an effort to save money, we do not automatically mail out these statements to everyone.



January Blood Drive Results

- 15 people registered - 17 units of blood collected
- 51 lives saved or sustained!!!!

Thanks to all who donated and to everyone who helped with the Drive. You are very much appreciated!

Weekly Collection Financial Update

February 1 Budget Week 31

	Received	Budget
Tithes/Plate/Youth/Bldg. Fund	\$7,813	\$5,536

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

Received	Budget	Last Year
\$189,032	\$166,067	\$173,839

Mass Attendance: Jan. 31/Feb 1: 309

Wine & Cheese & Donut Sunday

Contact the Office if you would like to host wine & cheese on March 7 or coffee & donuts after 8:00am Mass on March 8.

Councils and Committees

PARISH COUNCIL

Anne Davis - annedavis06@gmail.com
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

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

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Katie Fredericks - katie.fredericks1@hotmail.com
Beth Hart - mrsmathart@gmail.com
Kris LeRoy - klsturtz@gmail.com
Jen Linderblood - jlinderb@yahoo.com
Tammi McClain - tammimccclain71@gmail.com
Kathy Petersen - katherine@huxcomm.net
Sue White - charylsue@msn.com

BUILDING & GROUND COMMITTEE

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Scott Turczynski, *Co-Chair* - ScottT@hrtlnd.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

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Pat Bishop - pjbishop@midiaowa.net
Lowell Crouse - ldcjac82@gmail.com
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

Lenten Resources

You can choose from various booklets for your Lenten reflection to prepare for Easter Sunday. A brief description of our reflection booklets is below; booklets will be available next weekend.

Little Black Book

Find six minutes of quiet time every day to use this book and you will experience an enrichment of Faith by Easter. The right hand page walks through the Passion according to Mark, with reflections and prompts to help you become more familiar with hearing the Lord's voice. The left hand page are stories of holy men and women, as well as interesting information about our Faith and traditions. This book begins the Sunday before Ash Wednesday; that gives us three days to prepare for a fruitful Lent.

Hearts Full of Love

For Families

God gives his heart to you and your family and he cannot forget you; just as you give your heart to your children and cannot forget them. Our Lenten practice of prayer, penitence, fasting and almsgiving are chances for your family to shine God's heart of love a little brighter every day. Each day there is a line from one of the Mass readings; talk about it together. There is a simple short prayer to say together. Try a family-friendly activity. It all helps your family to experience that incredible, eternal, heart-to-heart love God has for your family.

Jesus is Always With You

Lent for Kids

Daily thoughts, activities and Prayers. Make Lent meaningful and memorable for children with this booklet. Each day encourages children to reflect, pray, and act in ways that deepen their understanding of Lent and remind them that Jesus is with them—always.

The Word Among Us

Were You There?

Scripture readings with daily meditations and inspirational features. This Lent, gaze at the glory of Jesus through three lenses: his role as *Lord*, as *Messiah* and his *cross*. Read and pray over the articles in the front of this magazine and as you pray every day, imagine Jesus standing before you and gaze on him. When you receive Holy Communion, see your Lord and King who welcomes you to his table and who longs to enter your very being. And when you read Scripture, hear the words as if the Lord is speaking them directly to you. This will change your life; you'll know a new joy and gratitude for the Lord for his love for you.



A Journey For the Soul

In our lives we encounter hassles and heartaches, trials and tribulations. We get off course; feeling frenzied, frazzled, fearful and frustrated. Listen to the Lord and work towards avoiding the four dreadful downfalls of disappointment, defeat, discouragement and devastation. This Lent, make the most of life's challenges and opportunities. This booklet offers you a refreshing break from everything that makes you feel stressed, rushed and overcommitted.

Not by Bread Alone

The word "Lent" comes from an old English word meaning springtime. It refers to the lengthening of days and the increase of sunshine. The Season of Lent is springtime for the soul. Whatever the Spirit is leading you to do or give up or add to your life this Lent, follow that call. And when Easter comes, you'll be ready to celebrate because with the help of this booklet you will be awake, renewed, your heart alive, and ready for the Feast of Easter.

Parish Lenten Opportunities

Mass: Tuesdays, 8:00am St. Mary, Wednesdays, 5:30pm Holy Cross; Thursdays and Fridays, 8:00am St. Mary
Stations of the Cross: This is a devotional prayer practice that reflects on the Passion and Death of Jesus using artistic representations, accompanied by prayerful reflections. The tradition as it is today began with St. Francis of Assisi. We pray these Stations on Fridays, 6:00pm at St. Mary. We will have a meatless meal after these Stations on February 27, March 13 & 27 and a fish fry on February 20, March 6 & 20.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: St. Mary: Saturdays, 4:00-4:30pm or by appointment with Fr. Parker. *Additional evening Reconciliation times will be in March; date and time to be announced.*


Diocesan Resources: Visit <https://www.dmdiocese.org/living-lent> for Lenten opportunities and resources for families, teens and adults of all ages.

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.

Additional Options for Tithing

Auto Debit: You designate a monthly dollar amount to be withdrawn from your account on the 15th or 30th. Please contact Candy at bookkeeper@saintmaryhc.org if you have questions or would like to begin ACH or find the form on the table at church or on the home page of our website.

Online Giving through the Catholic Foundation of SW Iowa with this QR Code or this secure link:  <https://catholicfoundationiowa.org/make-a-donation/parishes-and-schools-relief/>. On the drop down choose St. Mary/Holy Cross Parish-Elkhart to make your Tithe, Building Fund and/or Food Pantry donation. The Foundation sends gift receipts. *Thank you for considering one of these options.*

Catholic Youth Camp

CYC is for those entering 3rd–12th grade next Fall. Details/registration at www.stmcenter.com. *Our Parish contributes \$100 toward the camp fee for each child of the Parish!* Contact the Office at bliske@saintmaryhc.org / 515-367-2685 with camp dates to have this portion of their fee paid.



It Will Snow Again

We are in need of your assistance to keep the sidewalks and steps at St. Mary safe and accessible. Use this QR code or this link to sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409094EA4A722A2FB6-60961940-sidewalk>. Contact Bill Schmitt with questions, isucui@isualum.com / 515-291-8005.

Ministers for Feb. 14 & 15

Saturday, February 14, 5:00pm Mass, St. Mary

Lector	Kris Sexton
Host Distributor	Bill Sexton
Cup Bearers	Kris Sexton, Lisa Jones
Ushers	Doug Jones, <i>Volunteer needed</i>
Music	Drew & Lorrie Hanlon

Sunday, February 15, 8:00am Mass, Holy Cross

Lector	Matt Hart
Cup Bearer	Michele Hand
Altar Servers	Claire & Oliver Hand
Usher	Sandra Hunter
Music	Drew Hanlon, Stacey Rooney

Sunday, February 15, 10:00am Mass, St. Mary

Lector	Garrett McClain
Host Distributor	Jacki Ausman
Cup Bearers	Tom Ausman, Garrett McClain
Altar Servers	Jackson Cory, Aubrey Conover
	<i>Cross Bearer: Rex Roberts</i>
Ushers	Tom & Jacki Ausman
Music	Sue Harrington, <i>Accompanist needed</i>

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Money Counters

February 8: Dona Cowman, Kathy Daup
February 15: Sharon Morris, Kathy Petersen



During the time it takes you to read this sentence, 50,000 12-ounce cans are made.

Digital Catholic Mirror Newsletter

Sign up for The Catholic Mirror newsletter A new bi-weekly digital newsletter from the Diocese. Every issue will feature Catholic news and events from around the Diocese plus additional news stories out of the Vatican and USCCB. Sign up today by visiting www.dmdiocese.org/newsletter

**God formed us. Sin deformed us.
Christ transformed us.**

Men's Christian Experience Weekend (CEW)

This weekend is a great opportunity to step away from the busyness of everyday life and focus on faith, renewal, and personal growth. February 20-22 at OLIH Church in Ankeny. For more information and to register, please go to <https://www.olih.org/adult-ff/97-cew>.

Monastic Experience For Women

The Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration invite single Catholic women, ages 18-40, who are curious about religious life, to their Monastic Experience February 27-March 1, at their monastery in Clyde, Missouri. It's a chance to experience the daily rhythm of monastic life where participants can join the Sisters in praying the Divine Office, daily Mass and Eucharistic Adoration, as well as experiencing Lectio Divina (praying with Scripture) and gaining wisdom from the Benedictine tradition.

There is no cost to attend, and more details are available at www.benedictinesisters.org - [Vocations](#) - [Events](#), including additional dates for 2026. To register, please contact Sister Nancy Rose at 660-944-2221 ext. 142 or vocation@benedictinesisters.org or complete the form at <https://bit.ly/4skj3Xa>.



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

Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Feb. 7 & 8

Theme: We are all called to be children of the light.

Reading I: Isaiah 58:7-10 • True holiness is found in right relationships with one another.

Reading II: 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 • Become transparent to let God's light shine through.

Gospel: Matthew 5:13-16 • Salt is another image of holiness, and saltiness is given by God.

Question for Children: What can you do to bring the light of Jesus into the lives of family, friends and people you meet?

Question for Youth: How do you feel when Jesus says that YOU are the salt of the earth and that YOU are called to be the light for others?

Question for Adults: What specific efforts do you take to maintain your light? Do you let your light dim? Why?