



*Gingerbread church created by the Johnson Family (Josh, Jennifer, Elsa, Langston, Kendall)*

Two red cardinal birds are perched on green pine branches with brown pinecones. The branches are in the foreground, framing the word "Noel".

# Noel

**Merry Christmas from St. Mary Parish**

312 S. State Street Appleton, WI 54911 • (920) 739-5119 • [www.stmaryparish.org](http://www.stmaryparish.org)





*In Joy & Sorrow...*

Pondering Together the Treasures of our Faith

**WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE**

Mon., Dec. 26	12:05 PM	Mass at St. Joseph
Tues., Dec. 27	8:30 AM	Parishioners of St. Mary
Wed., Dec. 28	12:05 PM	Bertilla Muellenbach
Thurs., Dec. 29	12:05 PM	Ralph Kaufman
Fri., Dec. 30	8:30 AM	Marge Garvey
Sat., Dec. 31	4:30 PM	Vic & Marian Barlow & Jean Henesler
Sun., Jan. 1	8:00 AM	St. Mary & Twinning Parishes
	9:30 AM	Fr. Mike O'Rourke
	11:00 AM	Dan Fegan

**WEEKLY EVENTS**

- December 26 (Mon)**  
Office Closed
- December 27 (Tues)**  
8:30 AM Mass/Chapel  
2:00 PM Rosary & Perpetual Help Devotions/Chapel  
6:30 PM CrossWalk Choir/L5
- December 28 (Wed)**  
12:05 PM Mass
- December 29 (Thurs)**  
9:00 AM Day of Service for middle & high school students  
Community Room  
12:05 PM Mass
- December 30 (Fri) Feast of the Holy Family**  
Office Closed  
8:30 AM Mass/Chapel
- December 31 (Sat) New Year's Eve**  
9:00 AM Confessions/Church  
4:30 PM Mass
- January 1 (Sun) Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**  
Masses: 8:00, 9:30 & 11:00 AM

**We will not have Coffee & Donuts, Liturgy of the Word With Children, or Babysitting services on Sunday, December 25 or Sunday, January 1.**

**CONTRIBUTIONS**

OFFICE: Dec 12-Dec. 16: \$11,341.44  
 CHILDREN'S: \$15.00  
 WEEKEND: Dec. 17-18: \$15,629.55

**Prayer Requests**

Contact Luanne Witthuhn ([dlaawi@yahoo.com](mailto:dlaawi@yahoo.com)) or Anne Walkowski (830-1534) if you have a prayer need. In your prayers, please remember the needs in our prayer basket, including: safe travels for relatives coming home.



**CHRISTMAS MIRACLE**

There are those who scoff at miracles.  
 I don't know what they make of the birth of the Child.  
 For that matter,  
 I don't know what they make of the birth of any child.



There are those who laugh at dreams,  
 so they've never heard an angel's voice,  
 nor seen any unusual light in the night's sky,  
 nor felt the yearning to set out in search of the new life.



There are those who do not see the Star.  
 I wonder where it is they go  
 when everyone else sets out for Bethlehem.  
 To those of us who believe,  
 into every night is born a Star.



-Taken from Ann Weem's [Kneeling in Bethlehem](#)  
 During this Holy Christmas Season, I pray that the Lord...

- ...open our eyes and hearts to the miracles that are happening all around us - the hint of rose in the dawning sky; a piping-hot cup of freshly brewed hazelnut coffee first thing in the morning; the gift of silence charged with the voice of Jesus affirming, "You are my beloved child"; the laughter of children and their unconditional loving hugs; the revitalized spirit, bursting with joy, after enduring a long illness and now finally feeling better; the gift of forgiveness; the expanding heart that accompanies a good laugh; a genuine compliment for a job well done...What are some of the miracles in your life this Christmas Season?
- ...give us a deep-down hope that makes it possible to dream - that we can work together for the common good across our nation; that our refugee sisters and brothers may one day have warm homes like ours, which we take for granted; that everyone may be free to choose their faith and respect the faith choices of all; that family members and friends suffering from addictions may one day be freed and forever recovering; that humankind may experience the glory and peace that only God can give...What are some of your dreams this Christmas Season?
- ...spark wonder and awe within us as we behold the night sky punctuated by stars of light - hoping that, slow but sure, the darkness in the human heart may be penetrated by the light of the Lord's love; that, rather than complaining, and even cursing, we may light a candle and bring light into a neighbor's life; that not even that darkness of selfishness, and death itself, can ever stop the Lord from embracing us and holding us close, and surrounding us with the light of his love...What are some ways in this Christmas Season that you can bring light into someone else's heart?

This Christmas Season, I am joyfully grateful for the gift that you, the People of God of Saint Mary Parish, are in my life. It is a honor, which I do not deserve, to be able to serve you in the Name of Jesus! Let us continue to pray for each other in the New Year!!! Merry Christmas!!!  
 - Father Bill +

## Adult Faith Formation

Please pre-register for these events.  
 RSVP to Carol Jensen by phone (739-3700 x 22)  
 or email ([cjensen@stmaryparish.org](mailto:cjensen@stmaryparish.org)).

### Reflections for the New Year

Thursday, December 29 • 10 AM-noon • St. Joe's Rm. 209-211  
 Did you know the French begin the New Year by eating a stack of pancakes? So will we! Join us for a pancake breakfast at 9:30 AM. Stay for a morning of prayer and fun, to learn about unique New Year's customs, and to reflect on the year past, and where you are going in 2017. Be sure to bring your 2016 calendar. Free will offering requested.

### Give Yourself a Gift!

#### Christ Renews His Parish (CRHP) Retreats

Men's: February 25-26 / Women's: March 25-26

#### Here's what last year's participants liked best:

"The beautiful shared testimonies of faith walks and reflections afterward. The whole experience was very nice and definitely a growth experience.

"Meeting new women in our parishes."

"Enjoyed time to focus with other men, away from distractions."

"Wonderful hospitality from beginning to end."

Brochures for CRHP can be found at the back of church. No cost to you! Questions? Call Carol at 739-5119.

### January Opportunities

Understanding Your God-Given Emotions: Worry, Fear, Sadness, Anger, Joy, Love, with Victoria Gossens, MSW.

January 10, 6:30 PM, St. Joseph Holly Hall. Free will offering.

Alpha Begins January 12! Thursday evenings, 6:00 PM. Register before January 7.

De-Stress and Feel Your Best with Victoria Gossens, MSW.

January 17, 6:30 PM, St. Joseph Holly Hall. Free will offering.

QPR Training for Suicide Prevention by Prevent Suicide-Fox

Cities. January 31, 6:30 PM, Community Room. Please register before January 24.

### 1st Eucharist Parent Meetings

If your child or children will be preparing for 1st Eucharist this year, we ask that you (parents only) attend a meeting to hear more about the process. There are two meeting times to choose from:

Tuesday, Jan. 3 • St. Joe Holly Hall • 6:30 PM

Thursday, Jan. 5 • St. Mary Community Room • 6:30 PM

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend one of these evening meetings. You will choose the First Eucharist Mass time for your child at this meeting. Thank you!



Thank you to Lizzie Miller, who created the beautiful Nativity mural in the Marian Way. We are grateful that you shared your talent with us this Christmas season.



### Thank You! ♥

Thank you to all who helped make this Christmas special at St. Mary this year; everyone who donated items to our Needs Tree, children who brought toys for our St. Nick Gift Giving weekend, musicians, cleaners, volunteers who gave their time and talent putting up Christmas trees, decorating the church & Marian Way, participating in the Live Nativity, helping at liturgies, and so many more that we can't name them all. You are most warmly appreciated. A very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you!

### Don't Wait Until the Last Day! 2016 IRS Contribution Laws



We are thankful for your financial stewardship gifts. The IRS requires donations to be received ON or BEFORE Dec. 31, 2016 to qualify for your 2016 deductions.

⇒ The parish office closes at 4:30 on Thursday, Dec. 29 and will be closed on Friday, Dec. 30.

⇒ Checks dated 2016 and placed in the New Year's Eve collection will be posted to 2016. All checks placed in the New Year's Day collection, including pre-dated checks, will be posted to 2017 and will not qualify for a 2016 tax deduction.

Only exception: checks mailed & postmarked by Dec. 31, 2016.

And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

### In Loving Memory

In the spirit of Christian charity, please pray for those who have lost a loved one. May fond memories comfort you during this difficult time. If you have lost a loved one and would like to have him or her remembered in the bulletin, please call the office at 739-5119.



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