

WEEKLY UPDATE

December 18, 2022
Fourth Sunday of Advent



**The parish office will close at noon on
December 20th for a staff gathering.**



Keeping the Chapel Lights On!

What: Fr Bill is hearing Confessions
When: December 20 from 6 to 9 p.m.
Where: in the Chapel

2023 calendars are in the back of church.

End of Year Financial Contributions

- The parish office will be **closed from December 23, 2022 through January 1, 2023**. The office will re-open on January 2 at 9am.
- If you have **end-of-year donations** for parish support, Christmas flowers, utilities, the building fund, bequests, etc., please get them to the office by **WEDNESDAY, December 21, 2022**.
- Donations received before December 31 will still be processed in 2022. We can receive donations by mail, the drop box at the parish office door, or via Faith Direct (click Donate on stmaryparish.org).
- If you have **stock transfers** that need to be processed before December 31, please start them early so we may process them **by December 21**. Contact Chris Higgins, our Business Administrator, if you have questions (chiggins@stmaryparish.org or 920-460-9990).

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve

4pm, 6:30pm, 10pm
Choir Concert 9:30pm

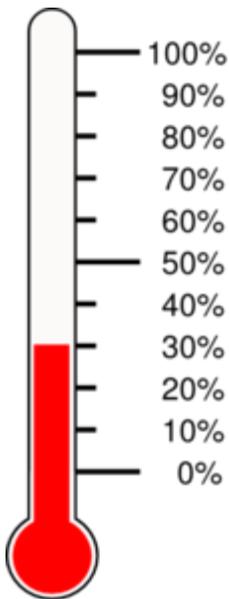
Christmas Day

9:45am
**no 6:30pm Mass*



2023 Financial Pledge Forms

Thanks so much if you have returned your Financial Pledge Card for 2023 back to the parish. It was beautiful to see so many green envelopes placed before the Lord's altar during the month of November. Stewardship is a way of life that grounds us in gratitude to the Lord and generosity to others. Gratitude and Generosity, with a whole lot of humility sprinkled in, is the recipe for holiness of life! If you have not returned your Pledge Card, I would encourage you to participate in this holy act which acknowledges God as the Great and Good Gift Giver.



We have received **34%** of our 2023 Financial Pledge forms from parishioners to date.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

WHAT
IS IT?



- Age-appropriate readings & activities
- Kids ages 3-6
- In our Community Room
- Kids return before Communion

Shamrock Shenanigans is back in March 2023!

We are looking for some elves and leprechauns to plan this year's festivities and fundraising. If you want to get involved, contact Chris Higgins in the parish office (chiggins@stmaryparish.org – 920-739-5119). We will get going in the new year.

Nollaig Shona!





CHRISTMAS SHOP AT THE SCRIP TABLE



Gift Cards are a Great Gift!!

On Hand Cards:

- Amazon
- BP
- Festival
- Fleet Farm
- Haen Meat
- Home Depot
- Kohl's
- Kwik Trip
- Meijer
- Walmart
- Menards
- Woodman's
- Piggly Wiggly
- Jacob's Meat



Help us decorate
for Christmas!
All are invited!

9AM until mid-afternoon
Come when you can!

Tuesday, Dec. 13
put Christmas trees
up in church

Tuesday, Dec. 20
decorate church,
chapel, Marian Way &
Community Room



ST. MARY PARISH - APPLETON

Xavier Scholarship Opportunities



**FOR ST. MARY
PARISHIONERS
CONSIDERING OR
ATTENDING XAVIER
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
IN 2023-24**

St. Mary offers several scholarship opportunities for our parish students that are not need-based. In addition to the standard scholarship and tuition assistance (FACTS) program through the St. Francis Xavier Catholic School System, multiple other scholarship opportunities are available through the Xavier Catholic Schools Foundation.



WHERE CAN I FIND APPLICATIONS AND MORE INFO?

- At xaviercatholicschools.org under Admissions > Tuition Assistance and Scholarships > Scholarships
- In our parish office

Information about FACTS, School Choice and other scholarship opportunities is also available at xaviercatholicschools.org.

Considering Xavier Catholic Schools for your children but have questions? The Xavier Admissions office is happy to help you! Call 920-735-9380.

ST. MARY ADOPT-A-STUDENT PROGRAM

In addition to FACTS Tuition Assistance, School Choice Program, and the Xavier Foundation Scholarships available, here at St. Mary Parish we have an Adopt-A-Student program to help families who may need additional financial assistance.

Contact Fr. Bill or Chris Higgins in the St. Mary Parish office for more information @ 920-739-5119.

**ALL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS
DUE BY MARCH 3, 2023!**



ST. MARY SCHOOL/CATHOLIC CENTRAL LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP

To carry on the 150 year tradition of generosity and fraternity associated with our school community, this scholarship has been established to help support young families in their decision to send their child(ren) to Xavier Elementary (PK3-4th grade) schools.

What? Three scholarships of \$2,000 each will be awarded to families with \$1,000 being awarded the first year and \$500 in years two and three.

Who is eligible? Active members of St. Bernard, St. Joseph or St. Mary Parishes with students registered at **Xavier Elementary Schools**.



THE FATHER MICHAEL K. O'ROURKE EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP FUND

What? Three \$500 scholarships awarded for the upcoming school year.

Who is eligible? Students/families of **Xavier Middle School** who are registered parishioners of St. Mary Parish.
Note: There is a second middle school scholarship opportunity for students interested in science.



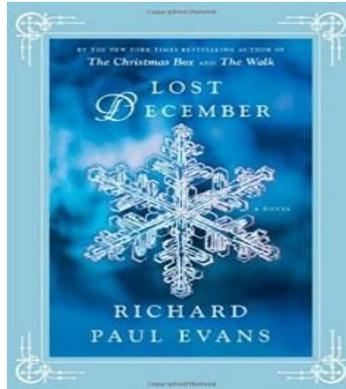
MERLIN AND JOAN BRUNNER SCHOLARSHIP

What? One scholarship of \$1,000 available to an incoming freshman. Follows the recipient for their four years at Xavier High School (total of \$4,000). Students must remain in good standing to be awarded the scholarship each year.

Who is eligible? Parishioners of St. Mary Parish who are registered as **incoming freshman at Xavier High School** for the 2023-24 school year. Applicants are required to write an essay on "What do you want to be doing ten years from now and how do you plan to attain it?"

Fun fact: There are **11 additional scholarships** available for XHS students outside of tuition assistance program. Please check xaviercatholicschools.org for more information.

St. Mary's Book Club



For January 10 our book selection is *Where the Past Begins: A writer's Memoir* by Amy Tan. From New York Times bestselling author Amy Tan, a memoir on her life as a writer, her childhood and the symbiotic relationship between fiction and emotional memory.

Looking further ahead, the book selected for February 7 (changed to first Tuesday due to Valentine's Day Feb 14) is: *The One Hundred Years of Lenni and Margot: A Novel*. The book is a mixture of love and laughter, loss and sorrow, hope and new adventures, of two people separated by sixty-six years.

For more information, please contact Mary Schulz, 920-809-4474. New members are welcome to join anytime.

“Let Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament speak to your hearts. It is he who is the true answer of life that you seek. He stays here with us: he is God with us.”

Blessed Carlo Acutis



Adoration

Come spend some quiet time in church with Jesus every Wednesday between 4:30pm and 8:00pm.

In Loving Memory

If you have lost a loved one and would like them to be remembered in the bulletin, call the parish office at 920-739-5119.

Prayer Requests

Contact Laurie Richter (lauriejrichter@gmail.com) or Ann Walkowski (920-428-0969) if you have a prayer need. Please remember the requests in our prayer baskets.

Mass Times and Intentions

Mon., December 19, 12:05pm	Debbie & Dave Wagner
Tue., December 20, 8:00am	Mass at St. Bernard Parish
Wed., December 21, 8:00am	Mass at St. Bernard Parish
Thur., December 22, 12:05 pm	Bob & Fran Drephal
Sat., December 24, 4:00pm	Jan Mercier
6:30pm	Bob & Sis Balliet
10:00pm	Bill Hoffman
Sun., December 25, 9:45am	Debbie & Dave Wagner

Events Calendar

Monday, December 19

7:00pm Boy Scouts/St. Anne Room

Tuesday, December 20

9:00am Connect Group/Lower Level Room 7

9:00am Decorate church for Christmas/Church

12:00pm Parish Office closes for the afternoon for a staff gathering!

1:00pm St Mary & St Joe's Prayer Shawl Group/St Joe's

2:00pm Rosary Group/Church

6:00pm Keeping the Chapel Lights On/Chapel

Wednesday, December 21

9:30am Connect Group/Lower Level Room 7

4:30pm Adoration/Church

4:45pm Beacon - Grades 1 to 5

6:30pm Beacon - Grades 6 to 12

Thursday, December 22

6:30pm Adult Choir Rehearsal/Choir Loft

Friday, December 23

Parish Office closed! We will re-open on January 2nd!

Saturday, December 24

9:00am Confessions/Chapel

4:00pm Christmas Eve Mass

6:30pm Christmas Eve Mass

9:30pm Adult Choir Concert/Church

10:00pm Adult Choir sings at Christmas Eve Mass

Sunday, December 25

9:45am Christian, Christoph, Tiana, and Jayden Junior Baptisms

9:45am Christmas Day Mass



In Joy & Sorrow

with Fr. Bill Swichtenberg

ST. MARY PARISH | 312 S. STATE STREET APPLETON, WI | 920.739.5119 |

12.18.2022

4th Sunday of Advent

A NOVENA OF (NINE) WEEKS WEEK IV DISCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT'S PATH FORWARD

For at least the last twenty years of my priestly ministry, at weekday Masses where I am leading the music, we have ended the Mass singing the refrain to "Center of My Life." Perhaps you know it! "O Lord, you are the center of my life. I will always praise you. I will always serve you. I will always keep you in my sight." While I have yet to plan my Funeral Liturgy, let it be known that I want "Center of My Life" to play a part in the Mass. I have yet to decide. Will it be the Opening or the Closing Song? Or maybe both?

True story:

At the end of a television interview while he was still Superior General of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits whom he led from 1965 to 1983), the interviewer threw a surprise question at Dom Pedro Arrupe: "Who is Jesus Christ for you?" The answer came right back: "Jesus Christ for me is everything!"

As we partner with the Holy Spirit, journeying towards Saturday, January 28, the day on which we begin to formulate a Five-Year Parish Mission Plan, we are spending these nine weeks reflecting together on what we stand for as a Spiritual Family and how we will go out into our families, places of work, and community to make a difference for Jesus.

We must be even more convinced that "Jesus Christ for Saint Mary Parish Family is everything!" Jesus is at the center of everything we are and do in this faith community and beyond.

Looking to Deacon Keith Strohm, in his book, [Ablaze: Five Essential Paradigm Shifts for Parish Renewal](#), we are challenged to pray about and think about this second paradigm shift, moving from engagement to encounter.

Parish vitality is linked to the degree in which parish family members are involved in the life of the parish. A dynamic parish has a lot going on. There are many programs and activities that are meant to engage parish family members. In addition to attending the Mass on the weekend, the parish hopes to involve as many members as possible in an event or a ministry that brings folks back to the parish during the week. A vital parish is a parish on the move.

While all of this activity is commendable, it is always possible that we might be compared to a super active club.

Moving from engagement to encounter is crucial in reaffirming again what we are really about as a parish family. We are about providing a framework for as many people as possible to encounter Jesus. If we lose sight of Jesus and of our mission of making more disciples for Jesus, we are, in a sense, spinning our wheels.

In his Encyclical Letter, *Deus Caritas Est (God is Love)*, Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI wrote, "Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction." (Paragraph 1)

I am reminded of the Risen Jesus' encounter with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, who had yet to experience the reality of the Lord's Resurrection. They are down in the dumps, disillusioned, and near despair after the horrors of that first Good Friday. Jesus walks with them. Jesus listens to them. Jesus enters into their story. Jesus responds to their needs for meaning and purpose. Jesus shows them that he can be their source for healing, joy, and hope. Jesus shows himself to them in the breaking of the bread.

What are avenues we can introduce that can facilitate this kind of encounter between the Lord and between us? How can we better discover the place of Jesus in our hearts and the unique ways Jesus is calling us to serve him and his Church, discerning the Spirit's movement in our lives? The combination of the Holy Spirit and each person, well aware of her or his God-given gifts, is powerful when put into action.

Engaging others is good but encountering others and encountering Jesus as individuals and as a spiritual family is better!

Let us pray!

Holy Spirit, draw us closer to you. Keep us out of Your way. Reveal to us Your plan which will inflame us with the fire of Your love. Touch the heart of every member of our Parish Family. Give us Your holy gifts of wisdom, integrity, and honesty. Write the values we hold as Your Spiritual Family on the heart of every member. May Your love impel us to go forth on mission, bringing Your healing and hope to every person we encounter. Make us Your joyful disciples so that we can invite more and more people to discover, follow, and worship Jesus! We make our prayer in His name. Amen.

Fr. Bill +

St. Mary Parish Office

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Website: stmaryparish.org

Business Hours:

Mon - Thurs, 9am-4pm

closed Fridays

Contact us:

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Marriage

Congratulations! Contact Fr. Bill at least 6
months before your planned wedding date.

Baptism

Congratulations! Contact Nadine Duncan for
information.

Confession

Sat. 9-10am and Tues. 6:15-7:15pm

St. Mary Cemetery

920-882-4158

cemetery@stmaryparish.org

Website: stmaryparishcemetery.org

Xavier Catholic School System

920-735-9380