

Welcome to the Stillwater Catholic Parishes

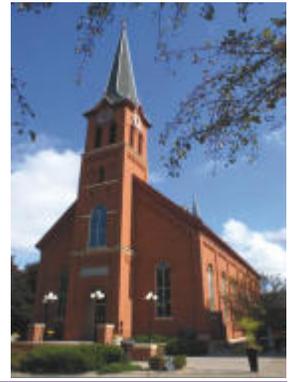


Church of St. Michael

611 South Third Street
www.stmichaelstillwater.org
Parish Office: 651-439-4400 | Fax: 651-430-3271

St. Mary's Church

423 South 5th Street
www.stmarystillwater.org
Parish Office: 651-439-1270 | Fax: 651-439-7045



St. Croix Catholic School
www.stcroixcatholic.org School Office: 651-439-5581

After-Hour Clergy Emergency Line

651-430-1551

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 20, 2020



Piermatteo d'Amelia, "The Annunciation," circa 1487, tempera on panel, 102.4 x 114.8 cm. (c) Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2016

Christmas Mass Schedule:

Confessions Available:

Christmas Eve: Thursday, December 24

- *2:00 p.m. (St. Michael's - Livestreamed - No music at this Mass)
- *4:00 p.m. (St. Michael's - Livestreamed)
- *5:00 p.m. (St. Mary's - Livestreamed)
- 6:00 p.m. (St. Michael's)
- 10:00 p.m. (St. Michael's)

Christmas Day: Friday, December 25

- 7:30 a.m. (St. Michael's - No incense, Capacity 350)
- 8:00 a.m. (St. Mary's)
- *9:15 a.m. (St. Michael's - Livestreamed)
- 10:30 a.m. (St. Mary's)
- 11:00 a.m. (St. Michael's)

Saturday, December 19

- 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. (St. Mary's; 2 priests)
- 3:00 - 4:15 p.m. (St. Michael's; 2 priests)
- 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. (St. Michael's)

Monday, December 21

- 5:00 - 5:25 p.m. (St. Michael's)

Tuesday, December 22

- 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. (St. Mary's)
- 4:00 - 5:15 p.m. (St. Michael's; 2 priests)
- 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. (St. Michael's)

Wednesday, December 23

- 5:00 - 5:25 p.m. (St. Michael's)

Churches of St. Mary & St. Michael

Entrance Antiphon: Cf. Isaiah 45:8: Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Savior.

Processional Hymn: 501: 1. People, look East! The time is near Of the crowning of the year. Make your house fair as you are able, Trim the hearth and set the table, People, look East and sing today—Love, the Guest, is on the way. / 2. Furrows, be glad! Though earth is bare, One more seed is planted there. Give up your strength the seed to nourish, That in course the flow'r may flourish. People, look East and sing today—Love, the Rose, is on the way. / 3. Birds, though you long have ceased to build, Guard the nest that must be filled. Even the hour when wings are frozen God for fledging-time has chosen. People, look East and sing today—Love, the Bird, is on the way.

Kyrie: Kyrie eleison. Lord, have mercy. Christe eleison. Christ, have mercy. Kyrie eleison. Lord, have mercy.

First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16: When King David was settled in his palace, and the LORD had given him rest from his enemies on every side, he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God dwells in a tent!" Nathan answered the king, "Go, do whatever you have in mind, for the LORD is with you." But that night the LORD spoke to Nathan and said: "Go, tell my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: Should you build me a house to dwell in?' " "It was I who took you from the pasture and from the care of the flock to be commander of my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you went, and I have destroyed all your enemies before you. And I will make you famous like the great ones of the earth. I will fix a place for my people Israel; I will plant them so that they may dwell in their place without further disturbance. Neither shall the wicked continue to afflict them as they did of old, since the time I first appointed judges over my people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD also reveals to you that he will establish a house for you. And when your time comes and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your heir after you, sprung from your loins, and I will make his kingdom firm. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me; your throne shall stand firm forever."

Psalms Response: Psalm 89: *Response:* For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord. *Verses:* The promises of the Lord I will sing forever; through all generations my mouth shall proclaim your faithfulness. For you have said, "My kindness is established forever"; in heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness. / "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant: Forever will I confirm your posterity and establish your throne for all generations." / "He shall say of me, 'You are my father, my God, the Rock, my savior.' Forever I will maintain my kindness toward him, and my covenant with him stands firm."

Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27: Brothers and sisters: To him who can strengthen you, according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret for long ages but now manifested through the prophetic writings and, according to the command of the eternal God, made known to all nations to bring about the obedience of faith, to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation: Luke 1:38: Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38: The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with

you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. "Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Sanctus: #377B: Santcus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Domine Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

Eucharistic Acclamation: We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your resurrection until you come again.

Amen

Agnus Dei: #384B: Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona nobis pacem.

Communion Antiphon: Isaiah 7:14: Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.

Spiritual Communion Prayer: My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Communion Hymn 515: 1. Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming From tender stem hath sprung! Of Jesse's lineage coming As seers of old have sung. It came, a blossom bright, Amid the cold of winter, When half spent was the night. / 2. Isaiah 'twas foretold it, The Rose I have in mind, With Mary we behold it, The Virgin Mother kind. To show God's love aright She bore to us a Savior, When half spent was the night. / 3. O Flow'r, whose fragrance tender With sweetness fills the air, Dispel in glorious splendor The darkness ev'rywhere; True man, yet very God, From sin and death now save us, And share our ev'ry load.

Hymn 972: 1. The angel Gabriel from heaven came, With wings as drifted snow, with eyes as flame, "All hail," said he, "O lowly maiden Mary, Most highly favored lady." Gloria! / 2. "How blest among all women you shall be, Whom ev'ry age will praise continually. Your Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold, Most highly favored lady." Gloria! / 3. Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head, "To me be as it pleases God," she said. "My soul shall laud and magnify God's holy name." Most highly favored lady, Gloria!

Recessional: Hymn 492: 1. O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear. Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel. / 2. O come, O Wisdom from on high, Who order all things mightily; To us the path of knowledge show, And teach us in her ways to go. Refrain. / 3. O come, O come, great Lord of might, Who to your tribes on Sinai's height In ancient times once gave the Law In cloud and majesty and awe. Refrain.

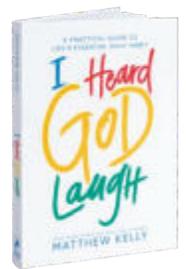
Bi-Parish News & Events

Holy Communion for 65+ and Others Who Have Been Missing the Eucharist: Sunday, December 20

On Sunday, December 20 from 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m., Fr. Izen and Fr. Barnes will be distributing Holy Communion in the St. Mary's parking lot. Vehicles should travel North/South in order to turn right into the north entrance of the parking lot. Follow the signs and staff directions through the lot to one of the communion stations. Vehicles then leave through the south exit. This opportunity is primarily for those who have had to miss Holy Mass during this time.

Christmas Book Giveaway

Thanks to the generosity of the Men's Club, the Churches of St. Michael and St. Mary are offering two books this Christmas for you to refresh your faith life. In I Heard God Laugh, Matthew Kelly tells about developing habits of spending time with our Lord to increase our faith life and foster a relationship with Christ. The second book, Do Something Beautiful for God, The Essential Teachings of Mother Teresa is a collection of reflections by Saint Teresa of Calcutta.



This book provides a reflective teaching for each day throughout the year. Choose the book that best suits you and your family! Books will be available at both parishes during the Christmas season. We hope you enjoy this gift and share it with others. Joyous Noel!



Knight Notes

If you are interested in joining the Knights of Columbus, please contact Mark Hartmann (989-600-8309) or visit St. Michael's or St. Mary's parish webpages under the "Get Involved" tab to learn how you can live the faith as a Knight. In celebration of the beatification of our founder, Blessed Fr. Michael McGivney, the Knights of Columbus are offering a free year of membership to those who apply before 12/31/2020. The initiation process (exemplification) consists of a short online video to be watched with a brother knight. Vivat Jesus!

Gospel Meditation for December 20: The Fourth Sunday of Advent

In Blaise Pascal's work, *Pensees*, he says: "What else does this craving, and this helplessness, proclaim but that there was once in man a true happiness, of which all that now remains is the empty print and trace? This he tries in vain to fill with everything around him, seeking in things that are not there the help he cannot find in those that are, though none can help, since this infinite abyss can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object; in other words by God himself."

We have a difficult time accepting that fulfillment and happiness are not achieved by our own merits but through a relationship with God. We are hardwired for this relationship and it is in our DNA. The simple fact is that we come from God and are designed to return to God. If our beginning and our end define who we are, why would we not want to seek the One who can truly satisfy? The world does not realize that it is waiting. It is waiting for the birth of God in time, within one's soul and in eternity. We get so confused by seeking other momentary satisfactions that we misinterpret the hunger within. We crave God.

The union of God and humanity, revealed in Jesus Christ, is precisely what sets us on a straight path, orders our relationships, establishes proper focus and goals and tells us whose kingdom we really are meant to serve. We are so lost. God is with us. The prophet Nathan told this to King David, the angel said this to Mary and the birth of Christ brings this Good News to us. We do not need to be busily looking for more things but must learn to find contentment and blessing in the One Presence. This is the beautiful simple message of Advent!

If you are feeling unsettled, anxious, angry, disgruntled, disconnected, unhappy, worried, fearful, off center, becoming overly self-indulgent, unable to spend time alone and without distraction, then there's a good chance you are lost. Now is the time to allow God to find you! Ponder the holy simplicity of Mary's call to be the Mother of God. "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." When we are helpless and at home with our emptiness, God will fill us. Our Savior has come. ©LPi

Parish & Archdiocesan News & Events

Advent Confessions: December 19 and 22

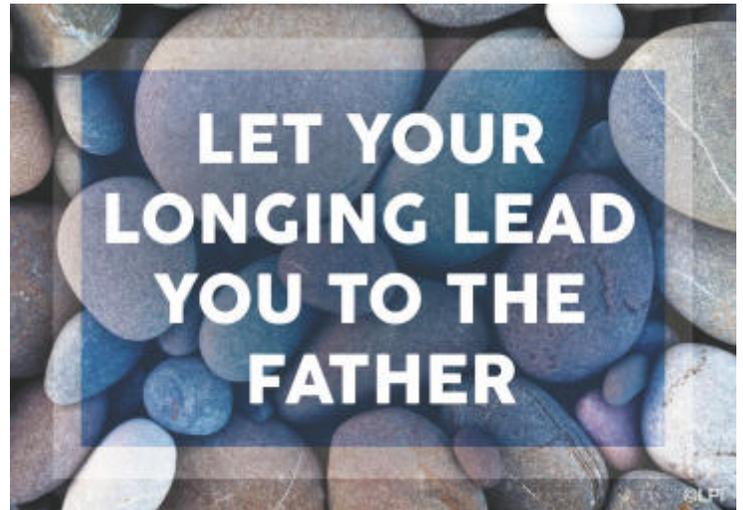
Return to the Father's merciful heart before Christmas! In addition to the regular schedule for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Father Izen and Father Barnes will offer extended hours of Confession on Saturday, December 19 and Tuesday, December 22.

Saturday, December 19

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. (St. Mary's; 2 priests)
3:00 - 4:15 p.m. (St. Michael's; 2 priests)
5:30 - 6:30 p.m. (St. Michael's)

Tuesday, December 22

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. (St. Mary's)
4:00 - 5:15 p.m. (St. Michael's; 2 priests)
6:00 - 7:00 p.m. (St. Michael's)



2021 Calendars

The 2021 liturgical calendars have arrived and are available at both parish church entrances while supplies last. A special thank you to Simonet Funeral Home, who fully sponsored the calendars for both parishes again this year!

Pick Up Your 2021 Parish Envelopes!

If you receive envelopes for your Sunday stewardship donations, 'tis the season for picking them up! St. Michael's offertory envelopes are located just outside of the Atrium (on the rampway from the back parking lot entrance to the church). St. Mary's offertory envelopes are located in the Atrium leading to the Great Hall. Look for the box with your family's name, organized in alphabetical order. If you do not see your box or would like to start receiving envelopes, please contact your parish office. If you know of family, friends or neighbors who have not returned to church due to the coronavirus, your help in delivering them is greatly appreciated!

Resources for Family and Friends of Those Struggling with SSA

There is much confusion concerning the Catholic Church's response to persons who experience same-sex attraction and gender dysphoria. We know our call and mission to love, to will the good of the other. What does this look like in real life, especially in these situations? This question is especially relevant for parents with children struggling with these topics. As a parent, you don't have to choose between the Church and your child. It is possible to have a loving and supportive relationship with your children or young adults while not embracing beliefs contrary to the Faith.

Please reach out to missiontolove@costm.org for resources, prayer, and support. All communication will be kept confidential.

Are You Hurting?

If you or someone you love is grieving the loss of a child to abortion, come and experience the healing mercy of Jesus Christ on our weekend retreat. The next Rachel's Vineyard Twin Cities' retreat is January 8-10, 2021. For more information contact Nancy at rachels@rvineyardmn.org, call 763-250-9313 or see www.rvineyardmn.org.

Marriage Encounter Weekend: January 9-10

These last months have been incredibly difficult on all of us and marriages have suffered! Please let us help you to find enrichment, joy, and hope in your relationship! Register for the January 9-10 Marriage Encounter. Weekends are held at Mt Olivet Conference and Retreat Center in Farmington. Visit www.marriages.org for additional information or call 651-454-3238.

Churches of St. Mary & St. Michael

Fr. Michael Izen, Pastor

frizen@costm.org | 651-379-1261

Fr. Austin Barnes, Parochial Vicar

frbarnes@costm.org | 651-379-1262

St. Mary's Church

December Parish Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

651-439-1270

fharris@costm.org

Parish Council Chair, Mary Wicker

(651-430-3223)

Mass Times

Monday - Saturday 7:30 a.m.

Sunday 8:00 a.m.; 10:30 a.m.; 6:00 p.m.

Church of St. Michael

December Parish Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

651-439-4400

info@costm.org

Parish Council Chair, Dennis Symalla

(952-222-0245); symalla@centurylink.org

Mass Times

Monday - Friday 5:30 p.m.

Saturday (Anticipatory) 4:30 p.m.

Sunday 7:30 a.m.; 9:15 a.m.; 11:00 a.m.

Online Mass

Follow us on Facebook and join us live online every day for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass:

Monday - Saturday 7:30 a.m. (Facebook)

Sunday 9:15 a.m. (Facebook & YouTube)

***Updated (10/18):** Our 9:15 Sunday Mass will be broadcast on Channel 18 (Valley Access) on: Wednesdays (5 p.m. and 11 p.m.) Thursdays (5 a.m. and 11 a.m.) Saturdays (9 p.m.) Sundays (Live at 9:15 a.m.)

Sacrament of Reconciliation

St. Michael's (Northwest Corner of Church)

Monday - Friday 5:00—5:25 p.m.

Saturday 3:00—4:15 p.m.

St. Mary's (Confessional, Behind Screen)

Saturday 8:00—8:30 a.m.

Attending Christmas Mass?

Dear Parishioners of St. Michael's and St. Mary's – Even during these strange times, I pray your final days of Advent are filled with joy and hope. A few notes in preparation for our Christmas Masses:

First, things will look mostly familiar regarding our regular Mass schedule. We added a 2:00 p.m. Mass at St. Michael's on Christmas Eve Day as Archbishop Hebda granted an exception to celebrate a Mass before 4:00 p.m. (this year only). Since the 4:00 p.m. Mass is our most popular, adding a 2:00 p.m. Mass seemed wise.

Next, we will not offer "sign-ups" for parishioners to attend Christmas Masses. While we might reach capacity and need to ask some to return for another Mass time, most of our Christmas Mass crowd consists of folks who are not regular Mass-goers. Since they are not reading the bulletins or receiving Flocknote messages, many would not know to sign up and we would still reach maximum capacities.

In conclusion, what is the best strategy for our faithful parishioners? Avoid the 4:00 p.m. Mass. Most Masses will offer overflow seating in both the Social Hall and the School Gym, but this still does not guarantee seating for everyone. Historically, Christmas morning Masses are more lightly attended, especially 7:30 a.m. at St. Michael's and 8:00 a.m. at St. Mary's (but please note the smaller capacity at St. Mary's).



Whenever you decide to attend, we look forward to celebrating the Nativity of Our Lord with you. Here is our full Christmas Mass Schedule:

Christmas Eve: Thursday, December 24

*2:00 p.m. (St. Michael's - Livestreamed - No music at this Mass)

*4:00 p.m. (St. Michael's - Livestreamed)

*5:00 p.m. (St. Mary's - Livestreamed)

6:00 p.m. (St. Michael's)

10:00 p.m. (St. Michael's)

Christmas Day: Friday, December 25

7:30 a.m. (St. Michael's - No incense, Capacity 350)

8:00 a.m. (St. Mary's)

*9:15 a.m. (St. Michael's - Livestreamed)

10:30 a.m. (St. Mary's)

11:00 a.m. (St. Michael's)

*These Masses will be livestreamed to our parish YouTube and Facebook pages. Search "St. Michael Stillwater" on either platform to find us.

To make time for cleaning between liturgies, church doors will open for seating 30 minutes before Mass begins. (We will not have pre-Mass Christmas carols this year). Capacity at St. Mary's is 200 (Church 100, Great Hall 100). Capacity at St. Michael's is 550 (Church 250, Social Hall 100, Gym 200). Please contact your Parish Office with any questions.

Stewardship

The Season for Giving: End-of-Year Strategies

For those considering year-end charitable giving, the SECURE and CARES Acts offer donors the potential to reduce tax liability in 2020. Here are three things to consider:

“Above-the-Line” Deduction for Cash Gifts in 2020

The CARES Act enables a taxpayer who takes the standard deduction to still benefit from his or her charitable gifts. A \$300 “above-the-line” deduction is now available for gifts of cash by a nonitemizer, but the gift may not be to a donor-advised fund or supporting organization.

100% Charitable Deduction Limit

For 2020, the CARES Act increases the deduction limit from 60% to 100% of adjusted gross income (AGI) for gifts of cash to charity (excluding donor-advised funds and supporting organizations). The gift may be for any charitable purpose.

Gifts of Long-Term Appreciated Securities

Giving a gift of long-term appreciated securities is often more tax advantageous than giving cash. This is because capital gains taxes can be avoided on gifts of long-term appreciated securities.

Questions? We encourage you to seek professional guidance from financial advisors for further information.



Operating Funds: (Weekly collection, EFT payments and gifts used only for operating expenses for Fiscal Year July 1, 2020—June 30, 2021). Please contact your Parish Office if you previously received envelopes and no longer need them since switching to online giving! Thank you for your timely response.

7/1 - 12/13/2020	St. Mary's	St. Michael's
Budgeted Collections	\$188,365	\$686,185
Actual Weekly Collections	\$192,870	\$645,522
Amount Over / (Short)	\$4,505	(\$40,663)

Respect Life News

Each year during Advent, we prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of Christ our Savior at Christmas. As we anticipate this joyful celebration, we recall the journey of the Holy Family from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Far from home, poor, and in great need, Mary and Joseph find refuge in a simple stable. But this humble setting among the livestock soon welcomes the heavenly host of angels and the infant Jesus himself.



Today, women in our own communities are pregnant, poor, perhaps without a home, and in great need. They may feel alone, scared, and overwhelmed, not knowing where to turn. In challenging circumstances, expectant mothers need a refuge of their own. Like the Holy Family, they may be reliant on the kindness of others.

This year, may the story of the first Christmas inspire us to reach out to mothers in need. May we proactively seek to offer loving support and encouragement as they prepare to welcome their children. By answering this call, may we help mothers experience the joy, hope, and peace brought by the infant Jesus. And may we, too, share in and bear witness to the miracle of new life. usccb.org/prayforlife

St. Michael's Parish News

Congratulations to Newly Baptized!

We welcome to our parish community the newest members of our Christian family through the Sacrament of Baptism: Everett Reece Motte (son of Taren and Daleena) and Finnley Jo Nelson (daughter of Derek and Callie).

In Sympathy

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Cortzie Downs, Lucille Sawczuk, and Larry Zenner (father of Pat Burchill) and for all loved ones who mourn their loss. *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

St. Mary's Parish News

In Sympathy

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Mary Ann Schwantes and Harold Sinn (father of Sally Zabel) and for all loved ones who mourn their loss. *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

Early Christmas Stop-In at St. Mary's

Stop by St. Mary's to pick up your calendar, envelopes, and Christmas Book giveaway on Saturday, December 19 from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. noon! Members of the Pastoral Council, Finance Council, and Trustees will be staffing the table. This will also be an opportunity to make your end-of-year financial gift to the parish. In addition, Father Izen and Father Barnes will be available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation from 8:00 a.m. until 9:00 a.m. We hope to see you on the 19th!

Worship and Liturgy

Mass Intentions for the Week of December 21 - 27

St. Mary's Church

Mon. 7:30 a.m. † Patricia Haas
 Tues. 7:30 a.m. † Dick Bailey
 Weds. 7:30 a.m. † Betty Gfrerer
 Thurs. 7:30 a.m. † Raymond & Caroline Williams
 5:00 p.m. Fr. Jack Donahue
 Fri. 8:00 a.m. Ceil Burtzloff
 10:30 a.m. † Regina Shuda
 Sat. 7:30 a.m. † Stephen MacDonald
 Sun. 8:00 a.m. † Ernesto Argiro
 10:30 a.m. † Molly Kennealy
 6:00 p.m. The People of St. Mary's

Request A Mass Intention

To have a Mass said for someone, please contact your Parish Office.

Church of St. Michael

Mon. 5:30 p.m. † Sally Heimerman
 Tues. 5:30 p.m. † Steven Bahr
 Weds. 5:30 p.m. † Norman Dupre II
 Thurs. 2:00 p.m. The Health of All Parishioners & An End to the Pandemic
 4:00 p.m. † Marguerite & † John H. Rheinberger
 6:00 p.m. † Bill Wetzel
 10:00 p.m. † Glenn Crain
 Fri. 7:30 a.m. † Jun Jun Edar
 9:15 a.m. † Ernesto Argiro
 11:00 a.m. † Dr. Jack Delaney
 Sat. 4:30 p.m. The People of St. Michael's
 Sun. 7:30 a.m. The Reed Family
 9:15 a.m. † Marlene Gockowski
 11:00 a.m. † Richard Heath

24/7 Eucharistic Adoration at St. Michael's

There is urgent need for Adorers to pray in our Adoration Chapel - Please prayerfully consider spending an hour with Our Lord!

"Jesus wants you to do more than to go to Mass on Sunday. Our communal worship at Mass must go together with our personal worship of Jesus in Eucharistic adoration in order that our love may be complete." (from *Redemptor Hominis*, by St. John Paul II)

Sign-Up to Pray

Please continue using WeAdoreHim.com to schedule your Holy Hours, find subs, and make or renew your commitment. Contact Sam with any questions.

Chapel Coordinator

Samantha Bertrand
 sjkbertrand@gmail.com
 612-615-4393

Daily Readings

Mon., December 21 - St. Peter

Canisius, Priest & Doctor of the

Church: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21 [1a; 3a]/Lk 1:39-45

Tues., December 22: 1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd/Lk 1:46-56

Wed., December 23 - St. John of

Kanty, Priest: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14 [cf. Lk 21:28]/Lk 1:57-66

Thurs., December 24 - Christmas

Eve: Morning: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29 [2]/Lk 1:67-79

Fri., December 25 - The Nativity of

the Lord: Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 [2a]/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25. Night: Is 9:1-6/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13 [Lk 2:11]/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14. Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20. Day: Is 52:7-10/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 [3c]/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or Jn 1:1-5, 9-14

Sat., December 26 - St. Stephen, the

First Martyr: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17 [6]/Mt 10:17-2

Sun., December 27 - The Holy Family

of Jesus, Mary and Joseph: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 [cf. 1] or Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9 [7a, 8a]/Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 or Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19/Lk 2:22-40 or 2:22, 39-40

Having once taken on human flesh, into now the future reaches of eternity, God will always remain man.

And this God-Man is here;

Bethlehem is wherever there is a

Catholic Church or chapel in which Christ is present.



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Serving the parishes of St. Mary, St. Michael and St. Charles | SCCS Office: 651-439-5581 | www.stcroixcatholic.org

Inside the Classroom: Middle School, Grades 6-8

SCCS's team of Middle School faculty guides students to a deeper level of self-reflection, discovering their God-given talents and limitations, developing leadership skills consistent with God's plan, and contributing to the goodness of God's creation. This effort, starting in Grade 6, is integrated into every subject and all activities. By the time our students reach Grade 8, they are confident, independent learners who take responsibility for their own education and personal formation. They aspire to make a difference in the world with their scientific, mathematical, and communication skills. They interpret the history and hope of humanity through the lens of the Catholic faith. They are the leaders of the student body: from running Student Council meetings, to leading morning prayer, to planning and executing school events.



- *Created for Greatness Virtuous Leadership Program
- *Socratic Seminars
- *1:1 Student Learning Technology (Chromebooks)
- *Full Option Science System (FOSS)
- *Institute for Excellence in Writing
- *All-School Mass and Adoration
- *Week-Long Trip to Environmental Learning Center (Grade 8)
- *Grade 8 Theatrical Production
- *Service Projects
- *Core Classes: Religion, Math, Language Arts (Reading and Writing), English and Communications, History, Science
- *Specialist Classes: Art, Music, Physical Education/Health, Technology, Spanish (Grade 8)
- *Extracurriculars: Band & Orchestra, Catholic Athletic Association, Student Council, Math Club, Quiz Bowl, Geography Bee, Yearbook, National Junior Honor Society, Children's Choir (parish program)

Now Accepting 2021-2022 Admissions Applications

Initial Admissions Application Window Now Open through January 13*, 2021 for Preschool - Grade 8.

Admissions Applications may be found on the school website, StCroixCatholic.org > Admissions. You may also contact Admissions Coordinator Denise Faust for more information or to schedule a tour. Email dfaust@stccs.com or call 651-439-5581 (Ext. 232).

Admissions letters and Tuition Assistance awards will be mailed to new families in February 2021.

Re-enrollment for current SCCS families (Preschool - Grade 7) will take place **January 6-13, 2021.**

*After January 13, Admissions applications will continue to be received by SCCS. Considerations for acceptance of these applications will be made after acceptance decisions are made for initial applications.



Faith Formation

Serving the parishes of St. Mary and St. Michael | Faith Formation Office: 651-351-3175

In-Person Sessions:

NO CLASSES PREK—CONFIRMATION the weeks of December 21 and 28. See you after the New Year!



All About the Atrium: The Comet Star

The star is an important biblical image. In Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, the youngest children are introduced to the symbol of the star, often depicted with a “tail” and sometimes called a comet star. This comet star is seen in all levels of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. According to Sofia Cavalletti, the founder of this work, the star has a long history in the Bible. Shortly before the season of Advent, the youngest children are introduced to biblical geography as they discover a small red dot on a globe to indicate the land of Israel. Once this announcement has been made to the children, they may be presented with a raised surface map, highlighting the three most important cities in the life of Jesus: Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem. They come to know and recognize the symbol for the town of Bethlehem as a star. The older children also recognize the town of Bethlehem—symbolized by a comet star in their mapwork—as a symbol of the Incarnation (God becoming man) itself in the timelines of the History of the Kingdom of God and the Plan of God.

The Prophecy of the Star and Scepter is presented to the older child in the Level One Atrium and revisited in the Level Two Atrium. Like all of the Messianic Prophecies, it is filled with striking images and promises fulfilled in the Mystery of the Incarnation of Jesus the Messiah and also in the Parousia, when Christ will come again. There is one prophecy that mentions the star. Found in the book of Numbers (the fourth book of the Bible), this verse

is one of the earliest prophecies: *A star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.* -Numbers 24: 17b

In the Gospel of Matthew, wise men from the east travel to Israel, inspired by this star. Sofia Cavalletti writes on page 78 of The Good Shepherd and the Child: A Joyful Journey, “God places a ‘sign’ (a star) even in nature so that those from far away, and not of Jesus’s country or religion, can also know of his coming. The Magi follow the star to honor him and give him gifts.” For the three to six-year-old child, the six to twelve-year-old child, and even the adult, the gifts that are given to this child—and that the Magi “adore” him by prostrating—make us wonder: Who is this baby? Why a “tail”? The first rendering of a “tail” depicted on a star dates back to the 14th century, when Italian artist Giotto di Bondone painted it in his famous fresco in the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua. Giotto was probably influenced by the sight of Halley’s comet visible from the earth to the naked eye in 1301. Since that time, the “tail” or “comet” of the star was seen as a divine sign guiding the Magi toward Bethlehem. Many painters and sculptors also began using the “tail” in depicting the Nativity. The children delight in the star. We see this in their work with the material in the Atrium, and it is visible in their artwork. Most often, the child’s star is drawn with the color yellow, and we know the color yellow expresses great joy. As you prepare to celebrate the feast of Christmas, do you have a star as part of your home Nativity? We invite you to adorn your Christmas tree and include this comet star in your family Nativity. May your feast be marked by great joy!

© The United States Association of The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd



First Communion Mass Sign-Up: Families of children receiving the Sacrament of Holy Communion this year should have received a SignUpGenius to select a Mass for their child. If you did not, please contact our Faith Formation Office.

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