

**December 26, 2021**  
**St. Mary's Parish & School**



944 Hopmeadow Street  
www.stmarysimsbury.org  
parishoffice@stmarysimsbury.org

Parish Office .....(860) 658-7627  
School Office .....(860) 658-9412  
Prayer Line .....(860) 658-2118

**Office Hours:** M-Th 8:30 - 3:00 PM; Fri 8:30 - 12:00

**Mass Times**

Mon—Th ..... 8 AM  
Saturday .....5 PM  
Sunday ..... 8, 9:30 and 11 AM

**Reconciliation:** Saturday 3-4 PM

**Baptisms:** Sunday 12:15 PM By Appointment

**Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Rosary**

Thursday after the 8:00 AM Mass. You are encouraged to recite the Rosary *privately* for the welfare of the Church and Country.



**Staff Directory**

**Pastor**

Father Stephen Sledesky ▪ Ext. 301

**Deacon**

Art Miller

Deaconartmiller@gmail.com

**Finance Manager**

Joanne Dunn ▪ Ext. 307

financemanager@stmarysimsbury.org

**Parish Office**

Heather Benedetti ▪ Ext. 306

parishoffice@stmarysimsbury.org

**Faith Formation Grades K-6**

Kathy Piggott ▪ Ext. 304

reled1-6@stmarysimsbury.org

**Faith Formation Grades 7-8**

Lori Ryan ▪ Ext. 309

reled7-8@stmarysimsbury.org

**Youth Ministry Grades 9-10**

Steve DiMotta ▪ Ext. 302

youthministry@stmarysimsbury.org

**Stephen Ministry** ▪ Ext. 114

Sharon Locandro, Linda McGurn,  
Linda Duff

stephenministry@stmarysimsbury.org

**Prayer Line Ministry**

cmlocandro@gmail.com

**Music Ministry**

Patricia Lepak & Cynthia Bos

**St. Mary's School**

Principal Margaret Williamson

mwilliamson@stmarysimsbury.eduk12.net

## Mass Intentions

**Saturday December 25**  
**Christmas Day**  
**9 AM & 11 AM**  
**(No Vigil Mass)**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>December 26</b>
8:00 AM	Paul J. Dlubac III By: Yong Cha's Family
9:30 AM	Stephen Ministry
11:00 AM	People of St. Mary's Parish
<b>Monday</b>	<b>December 27</b>
8:00 AM	Patty Dorman By: Catherine Rivard
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>December 28</b>
8:00 AM	Anthony Verdecchia By: The Duff Family
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>December 29</b>
8:00 AM	John L. Forneris By: The Forneris Family
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>December 30</b>
8:00 AM	Jean Lafontaine By: Noreen & Jack Scafuri

### Pray for the Sick:

Please pray for the following parishioners/loved ones who are sick - Dawn Wilson, Abby Harris & Family, & Maria O'Donnell

### Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturdays @3:00 –4:00 PM.

### Mass Book 2022 is Now Open:

The Mass Book for 2022 is now open. Please call the Parish Office to schedule a Mass. The recommended offerings are \$10.00 for a weekday Mass and \$25.00 for a weekend Mass.

**No Adoration (12/30) :** Please note, there will be no Adoration on Thursday, 12/30.

**Kentucky Relief Fund:** Please place a marked envelope in the collection box if you would like to contribute.

**Parish Office Hours:** The Parish Office will be closed on Monday, December 27th due to the holiday.

**The Giving Tree:** Thank you to everyone who supported our Giving Tree. Many people were blessed this Christmas Season.

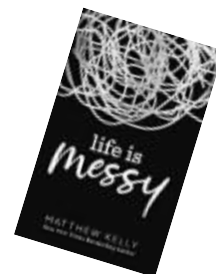
### Fr. Matera Faith Formation Fund:

Thank-you to everyone who has been so generous with their donations to this fund in honor of Father Matera. Donations will be accepted until 12/31.



**Thank You:** Our church provided 112 gift bags for residents at Governor's House/Ark, Virginia Connolly, Anthology and our own home-bound parishioners.

**Our Christmas Gift:** Enjoy Matthew Kelly's book Life Is Messy as our gift to you this Christmas Season. You can pick up your copy in the Magowan Center.



### Prayer Requests:

To request prayers for a family member or friend, email their name to the Parish Office. Names will be announced for one month. For continual prayers, contact the Prayer Line Ministry.

## Parish Maintenance and Repairs

Maintaining our parish facilities and making repairs are among our major expenses every year. This is why our Christmas Collection is so important. For example, in addition to regular parish maintenance, this year we incurred the following expenses: (1) sidewalk replacement, (2) stair replacement for both church and rectory, (3) new handrails for the church, (4) tree removal and trimming, (5) irrigation system expansion, and (6) roof repairs. These large repairs cost \$63,000 in addition to our regular maintenance. Your generosity to this year's Christmas Collection and your continued contributions throughout the year can keep us from running a deficit.



## *From the Pastor's Desk...*



**Merry Christmas everyone!** Christmas certainly is a beautiful time to be together with family and friends, for the exchange of gifts and “decking the halls” with festive decorations. Christmas music fills the air in stores and offices, along the sidewalks of outdoor “malls” and across the airwaves. So much of our contemporary music, though certainly celebratory, fails to capture the true meaning of Christmas. Reflecting recently on one of our lesser-known Christmas carols, I was reminded of the meaning of this season and how we might be invited to respond. *In the Bleak Midwinter* marries a text from a 19<sup>th</sup> century poem of Christina Georgina Rossetti to a tune composed by Gustav Holst (more famous for his symphony known as “The Planets”). The song begins with a reference to the time of year Jesus was born, according to tradition: “In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone.” Although for us in the northeast United States, this description is very familiar, it likely was not the case where Jesus was born, where mild winters never dip below freezing, and summers can be scorching hot. The carol continues by poetically reminding us that God came down from heaven, taking on human flesh: “Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain; ... a stable place sufficed the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.” Finally, this wonder of God becoming human elicits a response from us: “What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; if I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet what can I give him: give my heart.”

**Christmas** is indeed a time when we celebrate God’s abundant and generous love, which cannot be confined to heaven, but rather spills over onto the earth in the person of Jesus. As John’s Gospel tells us, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life” (Jn. 3:16). Jesus, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, the eternal Word of God, takes on human flesh, becoming one of us, like us in every way except sin. This is the amazing truth of Christmas – God who is so absolutely, head over heels in love with us, that God (2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Trinity) would leave heaven and take on a human body, a human nature, so that he could be that close to us! Do we fully appreciate the lengths to which God has gone for us in love? Maybe this Christmas Season (which does last until January 9<sup>th</sup> this year) we could take some time amid the crinkled wrapping paper and dropped needles from the tree, and reflect on God’s amazing love for us – **God’s presence with us through his Son, Emmanuel.** In this way we can better appreciate how loved and cared for we are by God, and the great gift he has given us in Jesus. And just maybe, as with that little known Christmas carol, *In the Bleak Midwinter*, we can respond along with the composer, “**Yet what can I give him? Give him my heart!**” May you all have a most blessed Christmas!



### **Seminarian Coming to St. Mary’s**

This January, we are privileged to host one of our Archdiocesan seminarians, **Mr. Martin Chouinard**, for two weeks during his winter break. Experiencing life in a parish is an important aspect of his seminary training. Due to the early bulletin deadline, I don’t have more biographical information or details to share, but will do so as soon as possible. Join me in joyful anticipation of his visit here with us, and continue to pray not only for him in his vocation, but to pray for more young men to consider a vocation to priesthood for the future!

## Bulletin Updates

Due to the early deadlines for holiday bulletins, please be sure to check the weekly email sent from the Parish on Fridays for the most updated information. If you are not receiving these emails, please visit <https://www.stmarysimsbury.org/email-communications>.

## New Year's Day Mass

Join us at 9 AM for Mass (This year it is not a holy day of obligation because it falls on a Saturday; There will be no vigil Mass).

## Altar Server Training

We are in need of new servers to join this wonderful ministry at St. Mary's. All youth in 4th Grade or above are welcome to participate in our annual training program, which will be a three-session class (*please plan to attend all three sessions*) on **1/2, 1/9 & 1/16** from 12 PM—1 PM. We invite you to join us at the 11 am Mass, with training classes taking place following Mass. Please register via our website or by email ([ServerLeader@StMarySimsbury.org](mailto:ServerLeader@StMarySimsbury.org)).



## St. Mary's Men's Ministry

Are you looking for a way to connect with other men and talk about your faith? Join via Zoom Saturday mornings 8:00 - 9:30 AM. Receive the meeting ID and password at [MensMinistryStMary@gmail.com](mailto:MensMinistryStMary@gmail.com).

**St. Mary's Women's Guild** Become a member by sending your contact information to [stmarywomensguild@gmail.com](mailto:stmarywomensguild@gmail.com).



*St. Mary's Faith Formation team would like to wish everyone Christmas Blessings and a Happy New Year!*

**A heartfelt thank-you to all of our Bulletin Advertisers who so generously support St. Mary's Church.**

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*The Staff and Volunteers at St. Mary's School wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year!*

## School Vacation

St. Mary's School will be closed for Christmas vacation through January 2nd. School will resume on Monday, January 3rd.

## Thank You

Thank you to all who helped support our CHOICE program with the generous purchase of gift cards for the Giving Tree and the holiday season. We are so grateful for your participation!

## Open House!

Sunday, January 30, 2022  
1:00 PM to 3:30 PM .Come see how our students are creating, collaborating and climbing to new heights! Register today! Now enrolling for the 2022-2023 school year, PrK – grade 8.

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