



THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD



"For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you
who is Christ and Lord." - Lk 2:11

Parish Staff

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Pastor:	Fr. John Paul Walker, O.P.	Ext. 247 (Office)
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Shrine Director:	Fr. Jonathan Kalisch, O.P.	

Mass Intentions

Daily Mass

Noon Deceased Members of the Knights of Columbus, their wives and Columbian Squires †

Thursday, DECEMBER 24

4pm (St. Joseph):
For the Poor and Needy in Our Community
5pm (St. Mary): Shrine Intentions
6pm (St. Joseph): For those separated from Loved Ones this Christmas
Midnight Mass (St. Mary): Pro Populo

Friday, DECEMBER 25: The Nativity of the Lord

9am (St. Joseph): Pro Populo
10am (St. Mary): For the Children of St. Mary Parish
12pm (St. Mary): Deceased Members of the Knights of Columbus, their wives & Columbian Squires †

Saturday, DECEMBER 26

St. Stephen, The First Martyr
8am Shrine Intentions
5pm Rocco John D'Eugenio †

Sunday, DECEMBER 27

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH

9:00 AM Pro Populo
10 AM Linda Cenabre † & the Centro/Cenabre Families
Noon Deceased Members of the Knights of Columbus, their wives & Columbian Squires †
5:00 PM Thanksgiving

Monday, DECEMBER 28

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs
5pm Pasquale & Rose Greco †

Tuesday, DECEMBER 29

5pm Bartolome & Maria Bulatao †

Wednesday, DECEMBER 30

5pm All Living Dominicans & Their Families

Thursday, DECEMBER 31

5pm Deceased Benefactors of St. Mary Parish †

Friday, JANUARY 1

The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

9am (St. Mary): Mothers of St. Mary Parish
12pm (St. Mary): Deceased Members of the Knights of Columbus, their wives & Columbian Squires †
5pm (St. Joseph): Pro Populo

WELCOME TO ST. MARY PARISH

We are so happy you are here!

St. Joseph Church is open daily for personal prayer between 9:00AM and 7:00PM on weekdays and will open shortly before the first Mass and close shortly after the last Mass on Saturdays and Sundays.

St. Mary Church is open seven days a week for personal prayer between approximately 7:00AM and 7:00PM.

When at Church, please observe the new 'social distancing' health rule by keeping at least 6' apart from others in pews or confession lines. Confessions and daily Mass are now happening again according to our usual schedule which can be found on our newly updated parish website which is also full of information on special parish events, opportunities to get involved in parish life and spiritual growth and much much more!

www.stmarysnewhaven.org

Our parish currently livestreams daily and Sunday Mass seven days a week at 12:00 noon as well as at 10am on Sundays directly on our parish website, via Facebook live on our Facebook page, found by visiting <https://www.facebook.com/stmarysCT/> and on our YouTube channel youtube.com/c/StMaryParishNewHaven

You can also watch it later. This is easy to do, you do not need to have a Facebook account to view livestream or to view the video later on our Facebook page.

Archived copies of the Masses are also available on our YouTube channel and you do not need to be YouTube subscriber to access the St. Mary Parish YouTube Channel.

The regular Thursday adoration will not take place on December 24 and December 31. Due to the Holidays, the parish offices will be closed on December 24 & December 25 and December 31 & January 1.

From the Archdiocese of Hartford

FURTHER EXTENSION OF DISPENSATION FROM SUNDAY MASS OBLIGATION

In light of the recent increase coronavirus cases within the state of Connecticut and continued uncertainty regarding the extent and duration of the coronavirus and the state and throughout the Archdiocese of Hartford, Archbishop Blair has now extended the dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation for all the Faithful of the Archdiocese of Hartford through Tuesday February 16, 2021, which is the eve of Ash Wednesday. The Archdiocese of Hartford continues to monitor the severity of the situation surrounding the pandemic and will provide updates regarding decisions reached for the archdiocese as they are made.

1600 year-old words to address a COVID-marked Christmas

Today we celebrate the wonderful feast of Christmas. And yet, dare I say for all of us, it will be the most unusual Christmas of our lives. None of us have escaped the impact that 10+ months of pandemic has made on our families, our parish, our nation, and our world. For many, loss of employment has created heavy financial strains. Others are dealing with the grief of having lost a loved one—in some cases compounded by the reality that they were not allowed, due to COVID, to be physically present with that person at the very end. Others have walked the journey through being ill with this virus and then recovering, or have caught it recently and are still in the process of recovering. Children have had to learn how to adjust to an online classroom from a computer screen, and parents have had to shift work and life schedules and often adapt to having their children learning from home. All of us went through a period of months where there was no possibility of attending Mass, and many others due to their own physical condition are still unable to be present at Mass in person. It has been a difficult and disorienting year, in which all of us have carried the weight of the Cross in some form or another.

In the midst of this experience, I wanted to share with you a portion of a Christmas homily delivered by Pope Saint Leo the Great in the mid-5th century. It is one of the most famous homilies in the history of the Catholic Church, and it captures beautifully the meaning of the great celebration of Christmas.

“Dearly beloved, today our Savior is born; let us rejoice. Sadness should have no place on the birthday of Life. The fear of death has been swallowed up; life brings us joy with the promise of eternal happiness.

No one is shut out from this joy; all share the same reason for rejoicing. Our Lord, victor over sin and death, finding no man free from sin, came to free us all. Let the saint rejoice as he sees the palm of victory at hand. Let the sinner be glad as he receives the offer of forgiveness. Let the pagan take courage as he is summoned to a new way of life.

In the fullness of time, chosen in the unfathomable depths of God’s wisdom, the Son of God took for himself our common humanity in order to reconcile it with its creator. He came to overthrow the devil, the origin of death, in that very nature by which he had overthrown mankind.

And so at the birth of our Lord the angels sing in joy: *Glory to God in the highest*, and they proclaim *peace to men of good will* as they see the heavenly Jerusalem being built from all the nations of the world. When the angels on high are so exultant at this marvelous work of God’s goodness, what joy should it not bring to the lowly hearts of men?”

As we are all so aware, as this difficult year of 2020 draws to a close, there is such a great need in our world for the peace, the joy, and the hope that Christmas brings. Christmas is a reminder of the incredible love that God the Father has for each of us, and it brings the promise that, no matter what might be happening in the world, He never abandons us. For He is Emmanuel, “God with us.”

Wishing the most profound graces and blessings upon all of you this Christmas season and throughout the upcoming year. May the darkness of 2020 give way to a bright dawn in 2021.

Kneeling with you at the manger,

Fr. John Paul

THANK YOU'S AS 2020 DRAWS TO A CLOSE

“Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thess 5:16-18)

We all know how difficult a year 2020 has been. As this year draws to a close (and aren't we all interiorly saying, "Good riddance!") I would like to acknowledge—on behalf of myself, Fr. Joachim, Fr. Ignatius, and the entire parish staff—that this year would have been even darker were not for the incredible generosity and charity of so many people. Of particular note, I would like to recognize the following people.

I wish to thank the incredible folks from John Canning Co., who continued their work on the repainting and re-decoration of St. Mary Church despite the pandemic and all of the added difficulties the pandemic brought. Your dedication to the project allowed us, in the midst of this strange year, to re-open St. Mary's as a new and beautifully restored worship space.

I wish to thank Fr. Jonathan Kalisch, Lori Myers, Peter Sonski, Matt McGrath, and the (literally) hundreds of volunteers from the parish and from KofC councils all over the state who were responsible for planning and staffing the McGivney Festival celebrating the beatification of Fr. Michael McGivney. To pull off a celebration on the magnitude of what we did, in the time frame we had to work with, in the midst of a pandemic, was nothing short of miraculous. I am sure most of those who attended or followed along online only have the slightest understanding of the incredible sacrifices made by so many to make that weekend possible.

I wish to thank the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus, whose support, expertise, manpower, and funding has made so much of what was accomplished this past year possible.

I wish to thank the many parishioners who have tirelessly volunteered to assist after Masses with disinfecting pews, doorknobs and other common surfaces. Your generous response to our calls for assistance have helped to keep everyone entering our churches safe.

I wish to thank our parish ministry leaders who have done their very best to adapt to changing circumstances to continue to provide as many opportunities for faith formation, ministry, and social outreach as we could reasonably provide... sometimes in-person, sometimes online, sometimes some combination of the two. While "parish life" has been far from normal, it has not been entirely absent, either. And that is because of your creative thinking, flexibility, and generosity in continuing to offer opportunities for everyone to get involved.

I wish to thank those who have continued to financially support our parish despite the pandemic. Knowing that many others have been unable to do so, or only able to do so at a reduced amount, those of you who have been able to give as much or even more than before have truly been a financial lifeline for us. Thank you for providing the desperately-needed funds to allow us to continue to stay afloat in these challenging times.

Finally, and most of all, I wish to thank all of you, our parishioners, who have been so incredibly supportive of your priests and your parish during this difficult year. Those small greetings and gestures of thanks, either in-person after Mass or via an email, text message, a note mailed in to the parish office... they make a greater difference than you might imagine. As I said during the homily during the **very first** live streamed Mass last March, the day after all in-person Masses were suspended, "There is no 'playbook' for doing this. There is no page in the '*Pastor's Handbook*' that tells me what to do when the entire sacramental life of a parish is shut down by a pandemic." As your priests have all done our best—sometimes successfully, and sometimes less so—to provide for the sacramental, catechetical, and pastoral needs of all of you, our parishioners, your support and encouragement has meant *so much* to us. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you.

God Bless,

Fr. John Paul