

# CHURCH of the HOLY CROSS

631 South State Street  
Dover, Delaware

302 674 5787  
holycrossdover.org

522 Main Street  
Marydel, Maryland

410 482 7687  
iccmarydel.org



## IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

December 3, 2023

First Sunday Advent

holy cross

### PARISH OFFICE HOURS

School Year, Monday-Friday, 8:30 am-3:30 pm  
Summer, Monday-Thursday, 9 am-1 pm

### SCHOOLS OFFICE HOURS

School Year, Monday-Friday, 8 am-3:30 pm  
Summer, Monday-Thursday, 9 am-1 pm

### SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday, Vigil, 5 pm  
Sunday, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 am Spanish

### DAILY MASS SCHEDULE

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 8 am

Wednesday – 8:15 am

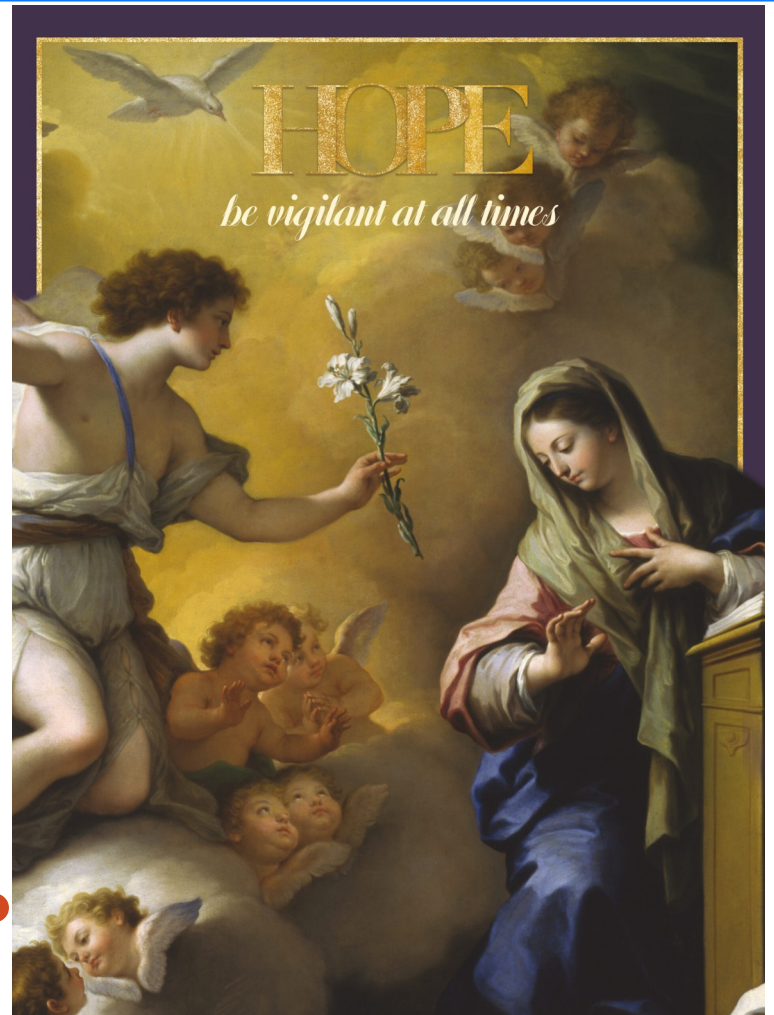
Federal Holidays, 9 am only (Presidents Day, MLK Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day)

### CONFESSION SCHEDULE

Saturday, 8:30 am – 10:00 am,  
Fridays in Lent, 5:30 pm

### ADORATION CHAPEL HOURS

Daily, 5 am – 9 pm



### HOLY DAY SCHEDULE (HC AND ICC)

Mary, Mother of God, January 1  
Assumption, August 15  
All Saints' Day, November 1  
Immaculate Conception, December 8  
Christmas, December 25

*Mass schedules for Holy Days of Obligation and other special days will be printed in the bulletin as each one draws near*

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### PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9 am-5 pm  
Closed Wednesday and Friday

### SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday, 8:30, 11 am  
Sunday, 1 pm, Spanish

### DAILY MASS SCHEDULE

Thursday, 6 pm, Spanish

## RECEIVING THE SACRAMENTS

*The seven Sacraments of the Church were instituted by Christ to confer grace.*

**Sacrament of Baptism.** Call the office to register for Parent Pre-Baptismal Instruction. For adults seeking to enter the Church and be Baptized, contact our Religious Education Office.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession).** Children in our religious education program and school are prepared for Confession at age seven as part of First Communion preparation.

**Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.** Children in our religious education program and school are prepared for First Communion at age seven. Adults seeking First Communion should contact our Religious Education Office. To request a visitation for Holy Communion to the Sick, contact our parish office.

**Sacrament of Confirmation.** Young people in our

parish are prepared for reception of Confirmation in the ninth grade (age 14). Adults seeking Confirmation should contact our Religious Education Office.

**Sacrament of Marriage.** Couples planning for Marriage are to contact a parish priest or deacon one year in advance to set the wedding date and plan for pre-Cana instruction.

**Sacrament of Holy Orders.** If you believe you have, or someone you know has, a vocation to the Priesthood or Diaconate, please contact one of our parish priests.

**Anointing of the Sick.** For the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, which is administered by a Priest, a person or an immediate family member must make the request. Late night requests may not be able to be answered until the next day.

## Feast of Immaculate Conception Mass Schedule

**Thursday, Dec. 7**  
7:00 pm Holy Cross

**Friday, Dec. 8**  
8:00 am Holy Cross  
9:30 am Holy Cross  
*(This is a school Mass only)*  
12:10 pm Holy Cross  
5:30 pm ICC  
7:00 pm ICC (Spanish)

Immaculate Conception will also hold a Novena for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception from Nov. 29 through Dec. 7 at ICC at 7 pm each night. All are welcome to attend.

## WEEKLY OFFERING (HC)

Ending November 19 2023

OFFERTORY TYPE	RECEIVED	BUDGETED/ NEEDED	DIFFERENCE
Regular	\$30,800	\$27,650	\$3,150
YTD	\$528,884	\$562,450	(\$33,566)
Needs	\$1,412	\$1,712	(\$300)

## WEEKLY OFFERING (IC)

Ending November 19, 2023

OFFERTORY TYPE	RECEIVED
Regular	\$4,240
Second Collection	\$433

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If you know of someone who would like to advertise in the bulletin, please contact Diocesan Publications at 800-233-8200.

Dear Parishioners,

**Trivial Matters.** I like trivia... odd facts... bizarre questions. For example: (1) If you are a swashbuckler do you swash your buckle or buckle your swash? (2) If you are engaging in tintinnabulation, what are you doing? (3) If you take a kakapo, a toucan, a seagull, and a canary, and you release each one from the top of the Empire State building. Which one will stay in the air for the shortest amount of time after you release it? (4) If you have an inch-worm, does that inch-worm live-and-die as an inch-worm or does it become something else? For me, these are the silly, but trivially invigorating questions that titillate the mind. For the record, the answers are: (1) You swash your buckle. (that is to say, you raise and move your shield to protect yourself); (2) "Tintinnabulation" is the act of ringing a bell; (3) The kakapo, because it can't fly and will plummet to the ground in a matter of moments; and (4) An inch-worm is not a worm at all; it is a form of a caterpillar, and it undergoes a metamorphosis and becomes a moth.

**Beginnings.** Ah, that little inch-worm moving upon the ground, marks the beginning of the fluttering life of the moth that takes to the air. That inch-worm, to quote once of my favorite songs by the group Chicago from their 1970 hit "Beginnings" is "only the beginning, only just the start." Just as the caterpillar is the start of the beautiful butterfly, the kernel is the start of popcorn, and the acorn is the start of the great oak tree, the inch-worm is the beginning something good.

**Happy New Year.** And on the matter of beginnings, this Sunday is the start of the new Church year; it is the beginning of the Season of Advent. The Season of Advent starts on the first Sunday of Advent, and with it an entire new Church year lies ahead. While the civil new year begins on January 1, for the Catholic Church the new year arrives today, this Sunday, with the start of Advent. And unlike the January 1 "New Year" the new Church year doesn't begin with celebration and festivity — it begins with a four week period of preparation for the coming Christ, and takes on a penitential tone as we prepare for the big event. And for us the big event is not the start of the new Church year, but rather what lies ahead: the celebration (on December 25) of the first born of the new creation, Jesus Christ: mankind's new beginning, and salvation.

**Be Prepared.** Advent, the beginning of the Church year, is connected to a few important "beginnings" in our Catholic faith. The most obvious of those was noted above: Jesus Christ who is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega. His coming into this world, for which Advent prepares us, marks a

new beginning for mankind — his birth is the beginning and the fulfillment of the long awaited hope for a Messiah. To quote from "O Holy Night," he is "the thrill of hope" for which a "weary world rejoices." And Advent marks the beginning of that period of preparation for his coming.

**Good Things Come in Threes.** In addition to coming of Christ into the world, there are two other beginnings that dance around the Season of Advent that are worth noting. And they have to do with "Apostolic succession" and the salvation history.

**St. Andrew and November 30.** The Season of Advent begins on the Sunday closest to feast of St. Andrew (November 30). The question is this: Is that a coincidence? Or is St. Andrew's feast being in that position intentional? That is to say, could November 30 have been the Feast of St. Cunegunda, the Feast of St. Vincent de Paul or the Feast of St. Demetrius the Myrrh Streamer (that's a real thing, look it up), or is St. Andrew's placement at the doorstep of Advent to be considered meaningful? While the answer to that question could be argued both ways, I like to think that it is intentional, and, in fact, quite meaningful.

**Call Awaiting.** So, what is the meaning of St. Andrew's feast day signaling the beginning of the Church year? Or better put why is his feast day, November 30, meaningful to the beginning of the Church year. Well, St. Andrew was the first Apostle called by Christ; the first of the Twelve. Thus, just as Advent marks the beginning of the Church year, St. Andrew marks the beginning of the Apostles, and the beginning of what we call "Apostolic Succession." That is, it marks the beginning of the idea that Christ came into this world as a new born king, and after he would ascend back to the heaven, he would leave a line of successors, shepherds (a.k.a., Bishops) — that can forever be traced back to Him — to continue to lead that Church that he would create. And that line of succession began with St. Andrew.

**Norm!** When we pray in the Nicene Creed, "I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church," that term apostolic speaks about the lineage of Apostles chosen by Christ and their successors (most especially in the person of the Pope). And thus, the beginning of the Church year (the Sunday closest to feast of St. Andrew) is normed by celebration of Jesus' calling of the first Apostle (Andrew), and the beginning of Apostolic succession — the beginning, in kernel

(continued on page 10)



## HC & ICC CLERGY

Vy. Rev. James S. Lentini , V. F.	Pastor
Msgr. Daniel McGlynn	Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Brennan Ferris	Parochial Vicar

## HC CLERGY

Mr. Philip Belt	Deacon
Mr. John Harvey	Deacon
Mr. Richard Kosior	Deacon
Mr. Robert McMullen	Deacon
Mr. Vincent Pisano	Deacon

## ICC CLERGY

Mr. Sherman Mitchell	Deacon
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## HC STAFF

Parish Office	302 674 5787
Jane Green	Receptionist, ext. 110
Diane Belt	Assistant to the Pastor, ext. 113
Kenneth Trojan	Business Manager, ext. 119
Michele Dornberger	Records/Asst. Bus. Mgr., ext. 116
Arline Dosman	Dir. of Hispanic Ministry, ext. I18
Tammy Korosec	CRE Religious Ed, ext 122
Linda Darling	Youth Ministry, ext. 123
Justin Wurzel	Maintenance Director
Len Dornberger	Cemetery Administrator, ext. 135
Michael Perza	Dir. of Music Ministry, 302 698 9302

## MAILING ADDRESS

*Church of the Holy Cross*  
631 S. State St.  
Dover, DE 19901

## ICC STAFF

Parish Office	410 482 7687
Marilyn Dixon	Office Manager
Alicia Poppiti	DRE Religious Ed.
Susan Venezia	Bookkeeper
Arline Dosman	Dir. of Hispanic Ministry

## MAILING ADDRESS

*Immaculate Conception Church*  
P. O. Box 399  
Marydel, MD 21649-0399

## HOLY CROSS SCHOOL

Catholic Education Pre-K3 to Grade 8  
302 674 5787  
holycrossdover.org/school

Linda Pollitt	Principal, ext. 111
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## MAILING ADDRESS

*Holy Cross School*  
631 S. State St.  
Dover, DE 19901

## RECENTLY DECEASED

Our condolences to the families of those who recently passed:

- M. Dana Lasocha
- Miguel Cadiz
- Peggy Perlot

May their soul and souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace. Amen.

## BAPTISMS

Welcome to our newly registered parishioners

- Adelyn Rae Iplenski

## HOLY CROSS CEMETERY

The pre-Christmas clean-up is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 9th. This includes the removal of Halloween and Thanksgiving decorative items as well as anything in violation of the cemetery's Rules and Regulations. If you wish to reclaim your decorations for reuse please do so by then. Your assistance in disposing of decorations at home will help reduce our clean up time and costs.

Christmas decorations (such as wreaths, poinsettias, blankets, etc.) are permitted from December 1st until March 1st. As always, thank you for your understanding and cooperation in maintaining our sacred grounds. For more information, contact Len Dornberger at 674-5787 x135.

## KNIGHT OF COLUMBUS

The Knights of Columbus is having a membership drive. Men of both ICC and Holy Cross are welcome and invited to join the K of C. Contact people are: Francesco "Chris" Cristiano for ICC at 302-653-9004 and Dr. Wayne Thomas for Holy Cross at 302-697-1152

## 2ND SUNDAY ADVENT (DEC 10)

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 40:1-5, 9-11

We hear a call "to prepare a way for the Lord".

SECOND READING: 2 PETER 3:8-14

Peter suggests there will be a new creation" where righteousness will be at home."

GOSPEL: MARK 1:1-8

John the Baptist baptizes in water, anticipating the coming of the Messiah, who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.

## VOCATIONS

The Church is in great need of vocations to the priesthood and religious life in all its forms. And you can do something about it! Share a piece of pie with others:

**PRAY** for vocations for the Church and encourage others to do so.

**INVITE** young people you know to pray with you and join you in participating in faith formation and Church activities of all types.

**ENCOURAGE** young people you know to consider a vocation to priesthood or religious life, especially if you think they have the qualities to make a holy priest or religious

## MARRIAGE MOMENTS

On Dec. 3, Christians start the Advent season of “Waiting” for the birth of Jesus. Help each other exercise the self-discipline of waiting to celebrate. Sure, you have to prepare, probably buy a Christmas tree and presents. Perhaps try waiting to decorate the tree till Christmas Eve.

## PARENT POINTERS

The Christian season of Advent begins on Dec. 3. Advent is a time of waiting. Of course we’re waiting (again) for the rebirth of Christ into our world. But waiting is hard, especially for children. Help your children enter into the positive spirit of waiting. Perhaps make an Advent calendar and open a new door each day.

## CATHOLIC FORUM

Listen to Catholic Forum each week. Next Saturday, December 9th, Michael Foley, author of the international bestseller, “Drinking With the Saints,” will talk about his book, “Why We Kiss Under the Mistletoe: Christmas Traditions Explained,” plus we will chat with Sister Ann David Strohming about the 800th anniversary of St. Francis’ establishing the tradition of the Christmas Crèche. You can listen online anytime at [cdow.org/CatholicForum](http://cdow.org/CatholicForum), or by searching “Catholic Forum” on Apple, Spotify, iHeartRadio, or Amazon Music podcasts. You can see videos of select interviews at [YouTube.com/DiocesefofWilm](https://www.youtube.com/DiocesefofWilm).

## MASS INTENTIONS DECEMBER

<b>4 MONDAY</b> HC 8:00 am	Donald Poliquin
<b>5 TUESDAY</b> HC 8:00 am	Lolita V. Papas
<b>6 WEDNESDAY</b> HC 8:15 am	Herman Jeff Francois (LI)
<b>7 THURSDAY</b> HC 8:00 am HC 7:00 pm	Walter Schroter James Hesson, Jr.
<b>8 FRIDAY</b> HC 8:00 am HC 9:30 am HC 12:10 pm ICC 5:30 pm ICC 7:00 pm	Joyce Russavage Grazina Kapyas (LI) Mary Patricia Woods For the People For the People
<b>9 SATURDAY</b> HC 8:00 am HC 5:00 pm	Katharine Eucker Cathy Castiglione
<b>10 SUNDAY</b> HC 7:30 am ICC 8:30 am HC 9:30 am ICC 11:00 am HC 11:30 am ICC 1:00 pm	DM Ranieri Family James and Elizabeth Griffith Gu Mersindo Figuera Keith DeFrancesco Herman Joseph Francois (LI) For the People

(LI—LIVING INTENTION  
DM—DECEASED MEMBERS)

*THE SANCTUARY LAMP IN THE CHAPEL FOR 12/3–12/9 IS FOR MSGR. DAN MCGLYNN (LI).*

*THE SANCTUARY LAMP IN THE CHURCH FOR 12/3–12/9 IS FOR DM BUTLER/HORNICH FAMILY.*

## FROM THE DIALOG...

The Dec. 15 edition of The Dialog will be the final edition of 2023. We will have no print edition of The Dialog Dec. 30. We return to print Jan. 12 with our first edition of 2024.



DEC. 9/10, 2023

EMHC

SERVERS

5:00 PM

J. Clendaniel L. Darling  
D. Darling F. Ernst

L. Curley  
S. Murawski

LECTORS

D. Dixon  
H. Walker

7:30 AM

J. Davis J. Fischer  
A. Fischer R. Fritzsche

L. Boggs  
E. Bydlon

LECTORS

R. Pritchett

9:30 AM

T. Arndt G. Wessel  
D. Banach M. Wessel

M. Ford  
B. Song  
D. Song

LECTORS

C. Petkka  
S. Winfrey

11:30 AM

T. Hernandez M. Richard  
E. Patoriza

TBD

LECTORS

TBD

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

TBD

8:30 AM

LECTORS

T. Woodeshick

TBF

11:00 AM

LECTORS

L. Soule

1:00 PM

TBD

S. TUCKER

If you or someone from your family is going to be in one of our local rehabilitation facilities or nursing homes, our Extra-Ordinary ministers of Holy Communion serve all of these facilities. If you are going to be in one of these facilities, even for a short time, please be sure to register yourself as a Catholic so that you will be on their list for our ministers to bring you the Eucharist on the weekend. All the facilities are very cooperative and will gladly add the name to the list for our ministers each week.

If you are in the hospital make sure you are on their Catholic list so we can have our ministers bring you communion daily. You must inform the hospital to put you on the Catholic list otherwise we do not know you are there.

ADORATION CHAPEL (HC)

Can you spare an hour to spend with Jesus? Our Adoration Chapel is open from 5 am to 9 pm Monday through Sunday. We have openings. Call John Murphy at 302-233-1779 or email him at jkm2015@verizon.net to schedule.



- SUNDAY 7 am, 4 pm, 5pm
- MONDAY 5 pm
- WEDNESDAY 7 am, 4 pm, 5 pm
- THURSDAY 4 pm
- FRIDAY 6 am
- SATURDAY 5 am, 9 am, 10 am, 12 pm, 1 pm, 2 pm

This is the year of the Eucharistic Revival. What better time is there to select an open hour in our Adoration Chapel and spend some time with Jesus weekly. Please consider taking some time each week out of your busy schedule to sit in silence and prayer before Our Lord. Call today to reserve your hour. You will be so blessed and glad you did.

SAMARITANS THANKS



Thank you to all who contributed canned goods, Turkeys, and other food items that we used to help distribute baskets to the needy in our community. We were able to provide a Turkey and all the trimmings for a

Thanksgiving dinner to 143 families, consisting of 378 adults and 582 children.

The Samaritan Pantry is now accepting Hams or Turkeys and the accompanying Christmas Dinner foods. They can be dropped off in the building behind the Rectory in the door with the new green donations sign.

KNITTING GROUP

If you enjoy knitting or crocheting and fellowship, join the Prayer Shawl Ministry. We meet on Tuesday mornings from 10 am to Noon in the St. Look Room of the Early Learning Center Building. Please come join us to see what we are all about.



**Preparémonos para el Adviento-** Comienza el 3 de diciembre de 2023. El primer domingo de Adviento es también el comienzo del nuevo año litúrgico, en el que entramos en un nuevo ciclo litúrgico. Dios viene para todos, y todos lo esperan. Primera vela / Domingo: ESPERANZA (Vela de la Profecía)-Segunda vela / Domingo: LA PAZ (La vela de Belén)-Tercera vela / Domingo: ALEGRÍA (Vela del Pastor)- Llamado «Domingo de Gaudete», que significa alégrate, una vela rosa en la corona de Adviento representa este domingo. En la misa, también verás a sacerdotes y diáconos con vestiduras rosas, que nos llevan a esperar con alegría el nacimiento de Jesús. Cuarta vela / Domingo: AMOR (Vela del Ángel). Vivamos el Adviento.

**Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe:** Ya se aproxima la celebración en honor a nuestra Señora de Guadalupe los días 11 y 12 de diciembre. Si usted desea cantarle a la Virgen por favor de comunicarse con el Señor Horacio Pérez. O con el Señor Genaro Pérez para coordinar el ensayo. El día 11 de diciembre las mañanitas a las 10:00pm el día 12 La santa Misa a las 7:00PM seguida por la gran fiesta en el gimnasio. Quedan todos cordialmente invitados.

**Todos es los viernes de 6-8 Foro Cristiano** con el padre Brennan Ferris: Todos los viernes, de 6:00PM hasta las 8:00PM. El tema es: "El Misterio Eucarístico" donde todo el año las clases se centrará en la EUCARISTIA y la PRESENCIA REAL en la Eucaristía Venga y fórmese para poder defender su Fe Católica, esto será un curso de formación que termina el día 2 de junio 2024. El tema de este año es sobre "El Misterio Eucarístico" que sin duda es el centro de nuestra FE, de la Liturgia Sagrada y sobre todo de la vida **cristiana**.

**POSADAS:** Ya está tomadas todas las Posadas 2023. Puede unirse a la que le quede más cerca o unirse a la Posada del Fr. Ferris, que es la Primera.

Sábado 16, 7:00PM En la iglesia.

Domingo 17, 7:00PM. Dirección 2411 White Oak Rd. Dover, DE 19901

Lunes 18, 7:00PM. Dirección 139 Carnation Dr. Magnolia, DE 19962

Martes 19, 7:00PM. Dirección 42 S. Edgehill Ave. Dover, DE

Miércoles 20, 7:00PM: Dirección 389 Mannering Dr. Dover, DE 19901

Jueves 21, 7:00 PM Dirección 35 Hickory Dale Dr. Dover, DE 19901

Viernes 22, 1635 Nathaniel Mitchell Rd. Dover, DE 19904

Sábado, 23 Dirección: 8:30PM 66 Roberts Dr. Dover DE 19901

Domingo 24, de Diciembre: 8:45 PM Misa de Nochebuena La Iglesia

## ICC

Las clases el domingo 3 de diciembre.

**Formación de Adultos.** Lunes 6:30 – 8:30PM Los lunes, en el salón de reuniones de la oficina parroquial. .

Preparación Sacramental para la Primera Reconciliación Sesión #3 **el martes, 5 de diciembre** a las 6:30 – 7:30 pm en el salón.

**Para la preparación Sacramental de la Confirmación Sesión # 3** el domingo 17, de diciembre de 3:00 – 5:30 en el salón.



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (HC)

**Next Class:** December 3rd - 3:00pm-5:00pm

Please be mindful when dropping and picking up students. Keep our parking lot safe by parking your car and walking your student up to the building. When picking up your student, park your car and walk to the cones by the exit ramp.

Interested in enrolling a student in Religious Education? Contact Tammy Korosec at either (302) 674-5787 X 122 or email [tkorosec@holycrossdover.org](mailto:tkorosec@holycrossdover.org)

## LAFF (LIVING AS A FAMILY OF FAITH CATECHESIS)

**Next LAFF class** is December 10 at 10:30 am.. Come out and join us; families gathering for prayer, communion with one another, sharing our Faith Life experiences.

**Is your family interested in joining the Living as a Family of Faith Catechesis with Deacon Vince?** Contact Tammy Korosec at either [tkorosec@holycrossdover.org](mailto:tkorosec@holycrossdover.org) or call (302) 674-5787 X 122

## ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY (HC)

**Advent is here!** Holy Cross Church and Deacon Bob are pleased to offer the class Advent: Preparing for Christ Cycle B. Classes will be held on Tuesdays at 9:00 am or 7:00 pm; it began November 28th in the Matthew/Mark Room in the Parish Office. The class is free, there will not be a workbook provided.

If you are interested in attending and have not already signed up, please register either by email- [tkorosec@holycrossdover.org](mailto:tkorosec@holycrossdover.org) or calling Tammy Korosec at (302) 674-5787 X 122.

### Online Opportunities for Adult Ed:

<https://ascensionpress.com/pages/catechisminayear>

### In English:

Father Mike Schmitz  
<https://media.ascensionpress.com/all-bible-in-a-year-episodes/>

### In Spanish:

Fray Sergio Serrano  
<https://ascensionpress.com/pages/biy-espanol-registration>

## YOUTH PROGRAMS AT HOLY CROSS

**Confirmation Classes:** Sunday, December 3 at 3 pm and Wednesday, December 6

**Confirmation Retreat:** Our candidates will be attending retreat next weekend. Please keep our teens, peer leaders and adult leaders in your prayers.

### Purse Bingo:

**Mark your calendars!** Our annual purse bingo to raise money to assist our teens attending Catholic Heart Work Camp this summer will take place on Saturday, **March 9**. Tickets will go on sale after Christmas - \$35 per ticket. Please plan on joining us for a fun evening.

## SRE AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

### Religious Education at Immaculate Conception:

Classes will resume today, December 3rd.

### Sacramental Preparation Classes:

**First Reconciliation session #3:** Tuesday, December 5th at 6:30pm- 7:30pm in Hall

**Confirmation session #3:** Sunday, December 17th @ 3pm-5:30pm in hall.

**Adult Formation at Immaculate Conception:** Monday evenings 6:30-8:30pm in the Parish office meeting room.



Today is the first Sunday in Advent. It's time to break out the purple and green. It's time to focus on so many aspects of the season that is not Christmas. I have wondered so many times as to why the season of Advent doesn't seem to get the same amount of attention paid as does the season of Lent. Maybe it's only me, but it does appear that because the red, green and sparkly season of Christmas seems to begin on the evening of Thanksgiving Day (or earlier?) that the meaningful season of Advent seems to be overlooked. I realize that in the commercial world of retail, Christmas is a retail boon, but do we all have to fall victim to their snare?

The season of Advent is a time for preparation. A preparation of the heart. To make a welcoming place for the newborn savior in our heart in a way that the innkeeper was unable.

At Holy Cross we avoid the snare. Symbols of the season abound inside and out. There is an Advent wreath, or a Nativity scene (minus the baby Jesus) in every classroom and hallway. Our annual Jesse Tree sits beautifully beside the ramp in what has become known as the HSA corner. Mrs. Klaus has overseen the distribution of the blank balsa wood ornaments. Each ornament that goes on the Jesse tree bears a symbol that represents an event or a person leading up to the foretold coming of the Messiah. The students put a great deal of effort into their designs resulting in a beautiful symbol of the season admired by all.

Our eighth graders always look forward to pairing up with their prayer partners for fellowship and Advent wreath making. Advent wreaths are not difficult to make. You can make one with just a few supplies, some can be found around your own house. An Advent wreath is a beautiful way to talk about the idea of religious symbolism with children. The circle of the wreath, with no beginning and no end, symbolizes God's eternal nature. The evergreen branches symbolize the immortality of the soul. Decorative pine cones or seed pods symbolize new life and resurrection. The four candles symbolize the four weeks of the Advent season, but also the four thousand years from the creation of Adam and Eve to the birth of Jesus Christ. Traditional Advent prayers can be found online. There is a fabulous website for great ideas for any season incorporating a Catholic influence. <https://www.catholicicing.com/advent-ideas/> Will you light the first candle on the family Advent wreath this evening? Symbolism is important because it provides a visual of some sort that children can associate with a season such as Advent.

Children of all ages enjoy listening to the words of the stories of the coming of Jesus. The trek to Bethlehem, the stable story, the lovely pictures that children associate with the days leading to the birth of our Savior all help to create the sense of anticipation and making a pathway for Jesus as we make a gradual approach to the season of Christmas.

Speaking of stories, the story of St. Nicholas is enjoyed by all following the discovery of the goodies left behind in the shoes outside the classroom doors! And, the story of St. Lucy told on her Feast Day, December 13th, is made all the more memorable when children in Kindergarten enjoy cinnamon rolls for snack that day! The story of St. Lucia (Lucy) is an interesting one to tell to the children. I would encourage you to share it with your children, even if you don't go all out and make the crown. A great family tradition to start--baking cinnamon buns as a family gathered in the kitchen.

There are literally hundreds of ways to observe and enjoy the season of Advent as a family who makes a slow, and gradual approach to the Christmas holidays. The season becomes so much more meaningful when the true meaning of the season is left intact. Family traditions are formed that can be shared with others from generation to generation.

It is what we encourage. We know it's difficult. But, not impossible. As a family we challenge you to embrace the season of Advent. Find ways to adorn your home in the rich and regal purple signifying the coming of the King. And....enjoy it.

Hail and blessed be the hour and the moment  
In which the Son of God was born....

form, of our Church becoming “apostolic.”

**An Immaculate Beginning.** The Season of Advent also is home to another beginning: The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (December 8) in the womb of St. Ann. The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is the only universal solemnity that lands fully within the Season of Advent. Is that significant? Yes, it is, and here’s why: The Birth of Jesus Christ (God-in-the-flesh) identifies Christ as the first born of the new creation. The new creation is the time of man’s redemption by way of the coming of the Messiah — the Word-made-flesh— into our world for “us men and for our salvation” (as per the Nicene Creed).

**What’s Up Doctrine.** The coming of Christ and His being born into the world, in a grand sense, didn’t just begin with Mary saying “yes” to God at the Annunciation (celebrated on March 25), but rather traces back to the Immaculate Conception (December 8), with Mary’s being conceived in the womb of St. Ann. The Immaculate Conception is the doctrine that God preserved the Virgin Mary from the taint of original sin from the moment she was conceived, making her the “Singular Vessel of Devotion” and “New Eve” from whom salvation would be born into this world. Thus Advent, the beginning of the new Church year, normed by the beginning of the call of the first Apostle, also gives home to beginnings of the new creation and the beginning of our salvation bound up in the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.

**The Most Important Beginning.** All good things come to an end, so the saying goes. But the corollary to that statement is that all good things also come from a beginning. And this Season of Advent is all about beginnings: beginnings, whether related to Mary or St. Andrew or salvation history, that see their fulfillment in the birth of Christ on December 25, when Christ comes into the world. Our faith is built on the person of Jesus Christ, our salvation is built on his love for us and his salvific actions, and our redemption began when God-became-man on that first Christmas all those years, when on that “night Divine” God touched mankind in the most profound manner. Advent is the Season that allows us time to prepare, ponder, and express penitence, as we stay watchful awaiting that moment, that new beginning — that coming of Christ.

**Living on a Prayer.** Or perhaps this idea more simply expressed to us in the opening prayer (the collect) for the first Monday of Advent. That pray says:

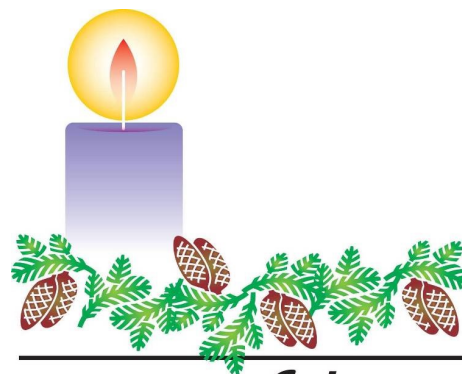
*Keep us alert, we pray, O Lord our God, as we await the advent of Christ your Son,  
so that, when he comes and knocks, he may find us watchful in prayer and exultant in his praise.  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.*

**The Waiting.** With the Season of Advent, Church in her wisdom commends us not to celebrate Christmas before Christmas but rather take some time, some beautiful time, reflecting on the coming of Christ, contemplating his second coming at the end of time, and considering all the facets of key moments in salvation history. Advent is the start of the new Church year... and the Good News is that this is only the beginning. And this beginning is related to two other beginning that are worthy of our contemplation: the beginning of the new creation in the Immaculate Conception, and beginning of the Apostolic succession (and our Apostolic Church) in kernel form, with the calling of St. Andrew, whose feast day reckons the start of Advent.

**Christ is Coming.** So, take time this Advent, to prepare your heart for the coming of Christ. If your faith is strong make this Advent a beginning-time to build-up your faith even more. If your faith has waned, make this Advent a beginning-time to renew your faith. The first words of the first reading from the first Sunday of Advent: “*The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and Judah.*” Translation: Christ is coming! Be prepared.

**Get Ready!** The Church is telling us what a hit song by The Impressions from 1965 once told us, “*People get ready!*” And thus, the Church blesses us with a season of waiting, of preparation — of Advent! A time to get ready, a time for waiting. But remember always that in Advent we are not waiting for the sake of waiting – rather we are waiting for something wonderful, something amazing, something salvific. It is now the start of that waiting period. And it is only the beginning!

Yours in Christ,  
Fr. James Lentini  
Pastor



FIRST SUNDAY OF *Advent*