



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 22, 2024

Fourth Sunday of 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

icc

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

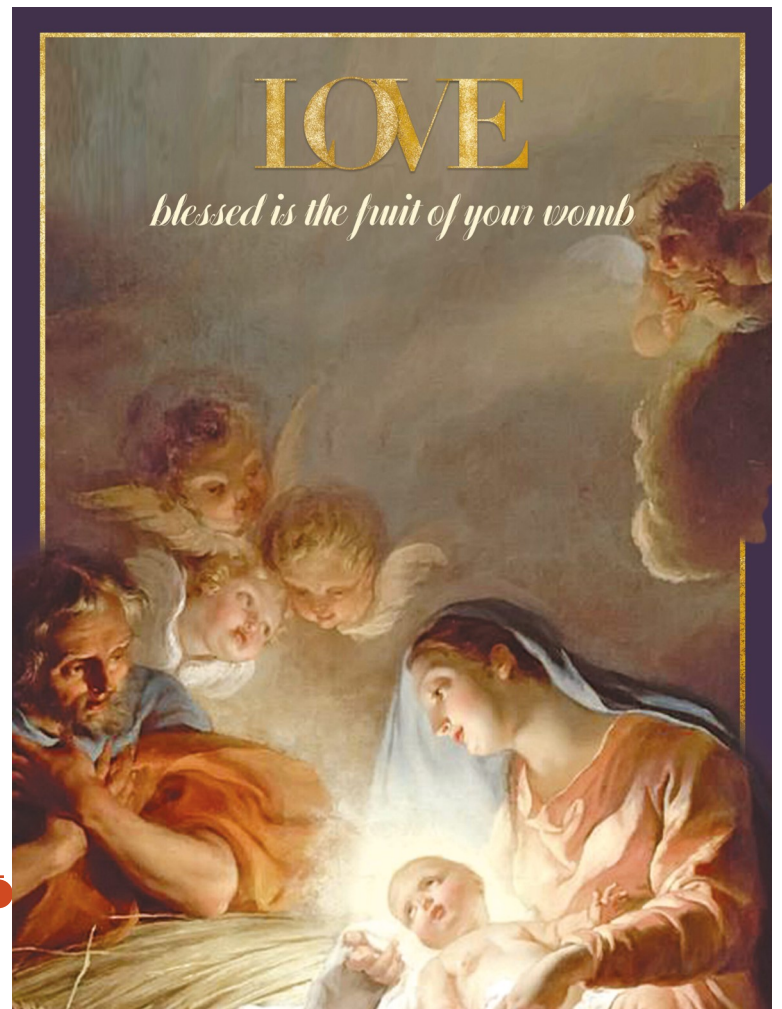
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9 am-5 pm
Closed Wednesday and Friday

SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE

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

DAILY MASS SCHEDULE

Thursday, 6 pm, Spanish



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

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.

HOLY CROSS MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve, December 24

4:00 pm Mass
6:30 pm Mass
9:00 pm Hispanic Mass
Midnight Mass

Christmas Day, December 25

8:00 am Mass
10:00 am Mass

New Year's Eve, December 31

5:00 pm Mass
7:00 pm Hispanic Mass

New Year's Day, January 1, 2025

8:00 am Mass
10:00 am Mass

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve, December 24

5:00 pm Mass
7:00 pm Hispanic Mass
Midnight Mass

Christmas Day, December 25

9:00 am Mass

New Year's Eve, December 31

5:30 pm Mass
7:00 pm Hispanic Mass

New Year's Day, January 1, 2025

9:00 am Mass

WEEKLY OFFERING (HC)

Ending December 8, 2024

OFFERTORY TYPE	RECEIVED	BUDGETED/ NEEDED	DIFFERENCE
Regular	\$25,439	\$27,630	(\$2,191)
YTD	\$595,371	\$619,466	(\$24,095)
Needs	\$1,581	\$1,775	(\$194)

WEEKLY OFFERING (ICC)

Ending December 8, 2024

OFFERTORY TYPE	RECEIVED
Regular	\$5,299
2nd Collection	\$1,350

Thank you to all advertisers in our bulletin.

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

Dear Parishioners,

In 1891, Irish writer Oscar Wilde produced what would be one of his most famous novels, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. That novel, remade three separate times into a motion picture, was a morality play with a message that is apropos of our human condition as it relates to the coming of Christ at Christmas.

Gray Matters. The story concerns Dorian Gray, a handsome young man whose image is captured in a large portrait of himself. Dorian is convinced by a worldly fellow named Lord Henry Wooten that image, beauty, and worldly desires are the only things worth living for. Dorian buys this lie hook, line, and sinker. But then he realizes that he will lose these superficial (but important to him) joys as he ages.

Let's Make a Deal. So, Dorian decided he would sell his soul to the Devil in order to make a deal. The deal was this: that he (Dorian) will remain young and active, while his image in the large portrait of himself would age and reflect the wounds of his sinful behavior. After a while, as he lives his life of decadence, debauchery, and self-indulgence, Dorian remains young and handsome, but his portrait (now locked away from view) becomes hideously grotesque.

Picture Imperfect. Dorian later tries, by changing his ways, to restore the image in the portrait. But to no avail; he cannot rectify the effect of the original sin of his course of action. Dorian decides he cannot live seeing who he has become — which he sees in this portrait daily. He decides to repent of his crimes. He realizes that the only remnant of his formerly wicked lifestyle is the portrait, so he takes a knife and shreds the portrait. The next day, Dorian is found dead — an old man lying on the floor withered. On the wall is his portrait, showing, once again, a beautiful, young Dorian Gray.

The story's message is a pointed one: Man cannot run from his sins; they will catch up

with him. Dorian Gray needed more than a change of heart; he needed a Savior.

Gray Skies. This brings us to Christmas: Mankind, 2024 years ago, needed a Savior. Mankind, created in the image of God, had damaged that image by his breaking of commandments and covenants, by rejecting the ways of God, by worshipping false gods, and by doing what Dorian Gray did: living a hedonistic life, a worldly life, that forgot all about the call of God. In doing so, the image of God that was imputed into man got horrifically deformed and skewed. The portrait of mankind as being in the image of God was becoming unrecognizable.

Needing a Savior. Even as some repented or started to live holy lives, that damage to the relationship between God and man had so marred the image of God in man that to restore — to redeem — mankind would require more than simple repentance. It required a Savior. After all, like Dorian Gray, mankind could take a knife to that deformed image created by sin and stab at it. But trying to rid oneself of our deformed image of God makes us forget that under that deformity is still the image of God. The damage we did to our godliness doesn't need to just be gotten rid of — it needs to be healed.

Image Problem. To put this in artistic terms, the image of God imputed into man by God's creation of us needs to be redrawn by the artist himself... the hand of God is needed in order to fix man's — dare I say — "image problem." And so, 2024 years ago, God sent his Son into the world, in the person of Jesus Christ, thus beginning the restoration of the image of God in man. With the birth of that babe in the manger, and over the next 33

Continued on page 10

HC & ICC CLERGY

Vy. Rev. James S. Lentini , V. F.	Pastor
Rev. John Enemuoh	Parochial Vicar
Rev. John Hynes	In Residence

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
Sharon Seelig	Records Office, ext. 116
Arline Dosman	Dir. of Hispanic Ministry, ext. 118
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

Mallory O'Mara	Principal, ext. 111
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MAILING ADDRESS

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

CHRISTMAS (DEC. 25) FIRST READING: ISAIAH 52:7-10

The world is full of rejoicing because those who are waiting for the Lord will see him face to face.

SECOND READING: HEBREWS 1:106

God, the creator and sustainer of the universe, has spoken to us, in our time, through his Son.

GOSPEL: JOHN 1:1-18

Mary, Light gives itself to everyone, without making distinctions between people.

HOLY FAMILY (DEC. 29)

FIRST READING: 1 SAMUEL 1:20-22, 24-28

Hannah gifted her baby son to the Lord, to live out his life in God's house.

SECOND READING: 1 JOHN 3:1-2, 21-24

God's children are a consecrated people.

We live in God; God lives in us.

GOSPEL: LUKE 2:41-52

As a boy, Jesus loved to be in the Temple. He found it hard to tear himself away!

SAMARITANS

The Samaritans are in need of to work our outreach hotline. You work from your own home to vet the calls coming in to the Samaritans for help. You do not use your own phone number, rather a cell phone that is connected to the Samaritans. If interested, please call the Holy Cross Parish Office to leave your name and contact information please.

WEBSITE SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE!

In the weeks ahead, our parish representative from Solutio, Inc., will be setting up the advertising for our website for the year. Please consider participating in this effort since the revenue from the ads is what makes the website possible at no cost to the parish. It's a great way to get your name in front of the families in the parish. Advertisements may be purchased for a business, family memorial, or you can sponsor an ad supporting Catholic Charities, Knights of Columbus, Vocations, etc.

Please give these ideas some thought. We need and appreciate your help! If you are interested or just curious as to prices and want more information, please contact (302) 865-7153 or Sponsorship@SolutioSoftware.com.

YEAR END CONTRIBUTIONS

As the year draws to a close, we invite you to recommit your donation to the parish offertory collection, or consider an increase in your giving. Perhaps an additional gift to your parish over the holidays. Contributions received by December 31 will qualify as a 2024 tax deduction. Thank you for being part of our mission of hope and service.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY MASS

Bishop William E. Koenig invites all married couples in the Diocese of Wilmington to the Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass on World Marriage Sunday, February 9, 2025, at 1:00pm at St. Margaret of Scotland Church in Newark, DE. Those celebrating significant anniversaries (5-year increments) - 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, or any anniversary beyond 50, will receive a special certificate from the Bishop. Reservations are needed, no matter what the anniversary year. Reservations are required by February 4, 2025.

Bishop Koenig will be available for photos with interested couples beginning at 12:00 pm and again after the Mass. If you would like to have a photo taken with Bishop Koenig, please arrive at 12:00 pm or plan to stay after Mass. Questions may be referred to the Office for Marriage and Family Life at 302-295-0657 or by emailing OMFL@cdow.org. Registration can be completed by using the following link – <https://cdowcym.wufoo.com/forms/zdx6q1g0hx3jsm/>

PRO LIFE INFORMATION

Dr. Bernard Nathanson's - 8-point Strategy (Taken from the book FACT CHECK by Terry Beatley)
Point #2 - Crafts Slogans - My Body My Choice / Abortion is a Personal Decision

"Dr. Nathanson helped devise the cunning slogans which marketed the idea that abortion - the intentional killing of an unborn baby - is a woman's decision, her right, a prerogative to use her body as she chooses.

NARAL introduced the idea of abortion as "women's healthcare" making it appear that women's unique gift of childbearing was a disease. The life of the child was not even a consideration, nor how abortion would affect the physical, emotional, and spiritual health of mothers and fathers,

MASS INTENTION DECEMBER

23 MONDAY

HC 8:00 am Charles Dunn

24 TUESDAY

HC 8:00 am Saviour Borg
HC 4:00 pm Msgr. Daniel McGlynn
ICC 5:00 pm For the People
HC 6:30 pm For the People
ICC 7:00 pm For the People
HC 9:30 pm For the People

25 WEDNESDAY

HC Midnight For the People
ICC Midnight For the People
HC 8:00 am For the People
ICC 9:00 am For the People
HC 10:00 am For the People

26 THURSDAY

HC 8:00 am Robert Raczynski
HC 7:00 pm For the People

27 FRIDAY

HC 8:00 am Helen M. Balogh

28 SATURDAY

HC 8:00 am Edward Biter
HC 5:00 pm Judith Caputo

29 SUNDAY

HC 7:30 am Frances Hettinger
ICC 8:30 am Nellie Taraila
HC 9:30 am John M. Scleskey
ICC 11:00 am Brady Family
HC 11:30 am Dosman and Anderson Families
ICC 1:00 pm For the People

Dec. 22 – Dec. 28 Sanctuary Candle in Church is for Edward Biter.

Dec. 22 – Dec. 28 Sanctuary Candle in the Adoration Chapel is for the Living Intention of Lea Accalogoun.

forever eroding the family, the foundation of society."
"I remember laughing when we made those slogans up...We were looking for some sexy, catchy slogans to capture public opinion...They were very cynical slogans then, just as all of these slogans are today...very, very cynical."
Bernard N Nathanson, MD, World Net Daily, 01/21/21
www.hosea4you.org

PURSE BINGO:

Save the Date! **March 22, 2025** for our fundraiser to assist our teens attending Catholic Heart Work Camp in June. More details to follow.

DECEMBER 28/29, 2024

EMHC

SERVERS

5:00 PM

J. Bieker
C. Bugglin

M. Phillips
P. Sheldon

L. Curley
M. Rubino

LECTORS

S. Winfrey

7:30 AM

J. Chandler
J. Davis

W. Thomas
A. Wyllie

S. Corpuz
L. Thomas

LECTORS

R. Pritchett

9:30 AM

J. Salamone
G. Wessel

M. Wessel

H. Louissaint
W. Shuron

LECTORS

T. Baurys
S. Crossen

11:30 AM

A. Cisneroa
C. Garcia

B. Guzman

TBD

LECTORS

TBD

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

8:30 AM

B. Lawson

LECTORS

G. Godfrey

11:00 AM

F. Cristiano

LECTORS

L. Schlaupitz

EXTRA-ORDINARY MINISTER OF HOLY COMMUNION

We are in need of more volunteers to help with taking Holy Communion to our sick and homebound, visit the hospital, and to help at our Masses in the Church.

Have YOU ever considered becoming an extra-ordinary minister? WE NEED YOUR HELP!! Please consider this important ministry. Thank you. Call the Parish Office if needed.



ADORATION CHAPEL

Adorers needed! Do you have an hour a week to spend with our Lord in the Adoration Chapel? We are so blessed at Holy Cross to have the ability to spend time with Christ in the Eucharist. If you look at other parishes in our Diocese, they may have an hour a week, or a day a week to Adore our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Here at Holy Cross, we have 16 hours a day, seven days a week. Unfortunately, we are not filling all these hours.

If you are able to, get another parishioner, to fill a time with you, or you can join someone who has an hour, we can give Glory to God in the Eucharist. We should never leave our Lord alone...Most Saints spent an hour or hours a day in Adoration. Please consider your time. An hour a week. Is this too much? For more information, call, text or email John Murphy for a time convenient for you. 302-233-1779, jkm2015@verizon.net

QUOTE: "Each time you approach the Blessed Sacrament remember that Jesus has been waiting for you for twenty centuries for this personal visit from you." (St. Josemaria Escriva, founder of Opus Dei)

SUNDAY 7 am, 4 pm, 5pm

MONDAY 5 pm

TUESDAY 4 pm

SATURDAY 5 am, 9 am, 10 am, 11 am, 12 pm, 1 pm, 2 pm 7 pm, 8 pm

CATHOLIC FORUM

Merry Christmas! Listen to Catholic Forum each week. This week, tune in to hear an interview with Fr. Cyrille Ulrich Miyigbena, a priest of Cotonou Archdiocese in Benin Republic in West Africa. He is the Director of the International Catholic School of Prayer and Evangelization, Juenesse Bonheur. The Catholic Forum podcast on Apple, Spotify, iHeartRadio, Amazon Music podcasts and YouTube.com/DiocesefofWilm debuts every Wednesday at 12:00 p.m.; and on Relevant Radio 640 every Saturday afternoon at 1:30

SEVEN SISTERS APOSTOLATE AT HOLY CROSS

LADIES: Would you like to give a gift of prayer for our Priest, specifically Fr. John Enoumu? We are still in need of additional sisters to give:

- One Holy Hour
- One Day a Week
- One Priest
- One Heart of Prayer

MEN are welcome and encouraged to join this ministry as substitutes.

PICK UP A PAMPHLET IN THE GATHERING SPACE AND contact: Delizabeth Diaz-Martinez -- email: 7sistersapostolate2023@gmail.com

- **El Adviento:** Cuarto domingo de AMOR, la vela del Ángel se enciende, cuarta vela / Domingo: AMOR (Vela del Ángel). Esta cerca la Navidad. Culturas de todo el mundo celebran el Adviento de diversas maneras. La mayoría de estas tradiciones y actividades giran en torno a la esperanza, la preparación y la celebración con amigos y familiares. Somos pueblo de Dios, somos Iglesia, somos parroquia, somos comunidad, somos familia en camino la santidad. Como comunidad oremos y seamos peregrinos de esperanza para el prójimo.
- **Ambientación del Templo:** Hoy pondremos las coronas en las ventadas del exterior de la parroquia y el árbol de Navidad en el Nártex. Mañana 23 de diciembre, estaremos ambientando dentro del Templo a partir de las 10 de la mañana. Se necesitan voluntarios.
- **La Santa Misa Nochebuena** 8:45 PM. Nuestro sincero agradecimiento a las familias que nos acogen en sus hogares. Que Dios los Bendiga!“ Participemos con alegría compartiendo con FE el Nacimiento de Nuestro Salvador Que ésta Navidad nos enseñe a vivir en Unidad, Amor y Paz.”
- La oficina del Ministerio Hispano y todos los que laboramos en las parroquias de la Santa Cruz y La Inmaculada Concepción queremos desearles a usted y a su familia una Feliz y Santa Navidad que el Niño nacido en un humilde pesebre de Belén, llene sus corazones de amor, Alegría , traiga Paz y Esperanza a sus familia y al mundo entero. Que el Año Nuevo sea de Gracia y que la Paz que solo viene de Dios reine en sus hogares.
- **Peregrinos de Esperanza:** El próximo Año del Jubileo será en 2025 y el tema escogido por el Santo Padre es “Peregrinos de Esperanza El Año Jubilar dará inicio con la gran tradición de abrir la Puerta Santa comenzará cuando el Papa Francisco abra la Puerta Santa de la Basílica de San Pedro el 24 de diciembre de 2024. Somos Iglesia, Somos parroquia, somos comunidad, somos familia en camino al jubileo. Como comunidad oremos y seamos peregrinos de esperanza para el prójimo.

EDUCACIÓN RELIGIOSA EN INMACULADA CONCEPCIÓN

Sacramentos:

Primera Reconciliación:

Retiro: Sábado, 11 de enero 2025 de 9-12 en el salón, solamente los niños

Sacramento: El sacramento de la Reconciliación será e sábado, 18 de enero en la Santa Cruz, en Dover a las 10:30 de la mañana .

Confirmación 2025: Sesión # 4 domingo 12 de diciembre de 3-5:30 en el salón parroquial.

La hoja de los padrinos entregarlos el 1 de enero .comuníquese con Alicia en la oficina parroquial llame al 410-482-8939 o por correo electrónico a dre@iccmmarydel.org

Formación de Catequistas : Domingo, 12 de enero de 12-2 PM en el salón de conferencia de la oficina .



RELIGIOUS ED AT HOLY CROSS

“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.” (John 3:16)

As we honor the birth of Jesus, may your hearts be filled with peace and joy! - Tammy Korosec, CRE

Next CCD class: January 5, 2025!

LAFF (Living as a Family of Faith)

Class : January 12, 2925 Matthew/Mark room in the Parish office, 2nd floor building C. This program engages the family, whether it be parents with K-8 children, or a family who wants to enter the Catholic church and receive the sacraments of initiation together hand in hand. Come out and join us; families gathering for prayer, communion with one another, and sharing our Faith Life experiences. Registration forms can be found at: <https://holycrossdover.org/teaching-the-faith/christian-formation/k-8-formation>

Deacon Bob's Adult Education – No Class on December 17th or 24th. Coming January 7th! “The Wild Goose Series”.

This series is an invitation for Catholics to make a more profound, life-giving relationship with the Holy Spirit. “The gift of the Holy Spirit is not merely something reserved for Confirmation. The Spirit desires a relationship with us that will take us on the greatest adventure imaginable: a journey to the very heart of God. The Holy Spirit desires to be present to us in a manner that brings light out of darkness, freedom out of bondage, order out of chaos and life out of death. Come Holy Spirit!” Classes Tuesday at either 9:00am or 7:00pm in the Matthew/Mark room of the Parish Office, 2nd Floor, Building C. All are welcome, this is a free class. No workbooks are available for this series. If you have any questions, please contact Tammy Korosec at tkorosec@holycrossdover.org or call (302) 674-5787 X 122.

ADULT FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES

Get ready for Rosary in a Year by Ascension Press

If you've ever struggled to build a habit of

prayer, this podcast is for you. In Ascension's Rosary in a Year podcast, Fr. Mark-Mary Ames, CFR, guides listeners in a step-by-step journey that will change the way you pray – no matter where you are in your spiritual life. By starting small and adding on over time, listeners will find themselves falling more in love with this powerful Marian devotion, becoming a source of grace for the whole world.

Listen to discover....

- *How to build a daily habit of prayer*
- *How to form a relationship with Jesus and Mary*
- *The Biblical foundations of the Rosary*
- *How to meditate with sacred art (visio divina), saint writings, and scripture (lectio divina)*
- *The power of Mary's influence in your life*
- *...and more.*

Follow this link for more information:

<https://ascensionpress.com/pages/riy-signup>

YOUTH MINISTRY

Youth Group:

A very special thank you to the teens who came out to help bake cookies on Saturday, December 8. Your love and energy in baking oh so many dozen cookies will be greatly appreciated by our families who receive them in their Samaritan Christmas boxes.

The Office of Youth Ministry wishes all our families a very joyous and peace-filled Christmas.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT ICC

Sacraments:

First Reconciliation:

Retreat: Saturday, January 11, 2025 @ ICC, 9am-12noon in Hall, children only.

Sacrament: Saturday, January 18 @ Holy Cross, Dover at 10:30am

Confirmation Preparation: #4,

Sunday, January 12th at 3pm-5:30 in the Parish hall.

Sponsor sheets due January 1st

Catechist Formation: Sunday, January 12th at 12noon-2pm in office Meeting room

Merry Christmas from all in the Religious Ed program at ICC!

This past week Holy Cross Catholic School was filled with excitement and joy as we celebrated the final days of school before our Christmas break. It was a time for reflection, community, and festive cheer, all centered on the true meaning of the season—preparing our hearts for the birth of Christ.

On Tuesday, our Junior High students brought the spirit of Christmas to life during their Christmas concert. Both the band and choir performed beautifully, showcasing their incredible talents. Students enjoyed a special daytime performance, while parents and family members were treated to an evening show. The concert was a wonderful opportunity for our community to come together and celebrate through music. We are deeply grateful to Ms. Swartzentruber for her dedication and for helping our students share their gifts in such a meaningful way.

Wednesday was another busy and exciting day, as we hosted a school tour for prospective families. It is always a joy to meet future Crusaders and share the many qualities that make Holy Cross such a special place. We are proud to highlight our strong academics, faith-based education, and welcoming community.

On Wednesday afternoon, our school came together for a beautiful Christmas Rosary, led by our 5th-grade class under the guidance of their teachers, Mrs. Speed and Mrs. Ritzke. This prayerful event reminded us of the true reason for the season—preparing our hearts for Christ’s coming. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our 5th graders and their teachers for leading us in this meaningful tradition.

Thursday brought even more Christmas joy with a student council Christmas dress-down day. Students were thrilled to show off their festive attire, which added to the excitement of the day. We also had a special visitor on campus—a Christmas Cow! This adorable guest brought smiles to the faces of our students and staff, creating a fun and memorable moment for all.

Friday marked the end of our week with a half-day for students. As they were dismissed, we encouraged them to reflect on the final week of Advent, which focuses on the theme of love. It was a reminder to carry the spirit of Christ’s love into their homes and hearts during the holiday season.

After dismissal, our faculty and staff gathered for a Christmas luncheon, enjoying time together before the break. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our shared mission of Catholic education and to reflect on the blessings of the Advent season.

As we enter this holy time of Christmas, we at Holy Cross are grateful for the opportunity to walk together in faith. Advent has been a time of preparation, and now we joyfully anticipate celebrating the birth of Jesus. When we return from break, we will continue to rejoice in the Christmas season and the gift of Christ’s presence in our lives.

We wish all of our students, families, and staff a blessed and joyful Christmas. May your holiday season be filled with love, peace, and the light of Christ. Thank you for being part of the Holy Cross family, and we look forward to seeing you in the new year!

Merry Christmas and God bless!

Mrs. O’Mara, Principal



years in his life, that image of God in mankind was patiently restored, stroke by stroke, color by color, layer by layer. Thirty-three years later, the artist, Jesus Christ — from the Cross — would sign that restored image in his blood. And, redemption would be completed, and salvation would be at hand.

And all of this began in that Little Town of Bethlehem, in a rustic stable with a small manger, where a Virgin gave birth to the Prince of Peace, our Immanuel, Jesus Christ, our Lord, our King, and our Savior. Jesus Christ was born unto us, fully divine and fully human, and presented to the world the perfection of what it meant for man to be in the image of God.

It's the Season for a Reason. So this Christmas Day, this Christmas week, this Christmas Octave, this Christmas Season, as you ponder what God has done for you — and for us — think about that first Christmas. On that day, God gave us the firstborn of the new creation. A new beginning. A time of hope and salvation. A time when the Divine Artist would restore his own handiwork; he would restore us to be that image of God that was intended.

Hymn About Him. Thus, on Christmas, on that first Christmas, on that Holy Night where *the stars are brightly shining*, God became man so that man could once again fully reflect the image of God. Invoking again, the theme of the hymn *O Holy Night*, with the coming of Christ, *a world that long lay in sin and error pining* could experience *the thrill of hope* as the *weary world rejoices* and *the soul felt its worth*. Yes, on that Holy Night, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and the redemption of man was at hand.

Christmas is a time for us to appreciate that without the incarnation of God as man, without the birth of Jesus Christ, the state of mankind would not be a pretty picture.

Making Things Right. At Christmas, we are not just celebrating God's coming as man; we are celebrating God's redemption of mankind. We are celebrating the new creation, where the damage we did to the image of God in his creation — all distorted and marred — is made right.

Restoration. Art restorers get paid a pretty penny for their good work in bringing masterpieces back to their original state by careful, painful, and persevering work. We could never fully repay to God, to Jesus Christ — God in the flesh — the restoration work that he did for us. He brought us back, gave us hope, and through his salvation and through his power of forgiveness, allows us to again and again and again restore that image of God in each of us when we sully it. And that is something to be Merry about this Christmas and every Christmas.

The Greatest Gift. So, let us not be like Dorian Gray and decadently ignore God's call to faith. Let us not sully and distort the image of God imbued into each of us. Let us live our lives in imitation of Christ and give him thanks every day for the ultimate Christmas gift given to man on that first Christmas: the Gift of Redemption.

On behalf of the staff and the clergy of Holy Cross and Immaculate Conception Parishes, I wish each of you a happy, holy, and healthy Christmas and a prosperous New Year in 2025! God bless.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. James Lentini
Pastor

Merry Christmas