



# CHURCH of the HOLY CROSS

631 South State Street  
Dover, Delaware

302 674 5787  
holycrossdover.org

522 Main Street  
Marydel, Maryland

410 482 7687  
iccmmarydel.org



## IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

December 31, 2023

Holy Family

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

### PARISH OFFICE HOURS

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

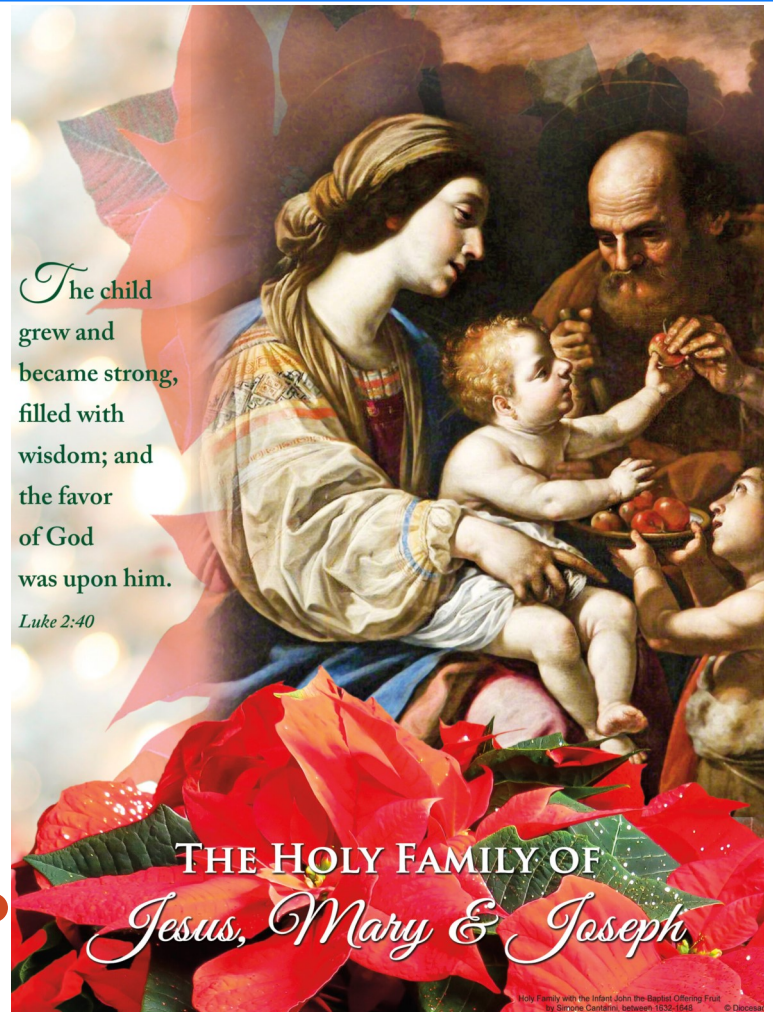
### SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE

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

### DAILY MASS SCHEDULE

Thursday, 6 pm, Spanish

icc



*The child  
grew and  
became strong,  
filled with  
wisdom; and  
the favor  
of God  
was upon him.*

*Luke 2:40*

THE HOLY FAMILY OF  
*Jesus, Mary & Joseph*

### 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.

## Happy New Year from the Clergy and Staff of Holy Cross and Immaculate Conception



## WEEKLY OFFERING (HC)

Ending December 17, 2023

OFFERTORY TYPE	RECEIVED	BUDGETED/ NEEDED	DIFFERENCE
Regular	\$32,194	\$27,440	\$4,754
YTD	\$649,786	\$672,420	(\$22,634)
Needs	\$1,924	\$1,712	\$212

## WEEKLY OFFERING (IC)

Ending December 17,, 2023

OFFERTORY TYPE	RECEIVED
Regular	\$4,157
Second Collection	\$758

Thank you to all our 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,

On January 1, we celebrate the solemnity of the great Mother of God, Mary, most holy. The feast that was previously celebrated on this day, prior to 1970, was the Feast of the Circumcision of the Lord. The readings at Mass for this day currently are actually the same readings that used on this day when it was the Feast of the Circumcision of the Lord. The Gospel reading, then and now, relates to us about Mary and Joseph taking Jesus to be circumcised:

*When eight days were completed for his circumcision, He was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.*

**Law and Order – and More.** Though the readings have not changed, the focus of those readings has. With the Feast of the Circumcision, these readings were seen to make note of Mary and Joseph meeting the obligation of Jewish law, following the established order. Today, those self-same readings, due to the focus on Mary's motherhood, emphasize her faithfulness in living out her faith and meeting her obligations of faith because of her love of God, and her fealty to Him (that is, being the handmaid of the Lord, and serving the call of God). This great holy day honors Mary, the Mother of God in that glorious and unique place of service in salvation history.

**More than Maids-a-Milking .** Today, also marks the Octave Day of Christmas (the eighth day of Christmas); but don't think of "Maids-a-Milking," as the famous Christmas song commends, think of it as the final day of most exultant portion of our Christmas season: the last of eight days of celebrating the very day of Christmas. But, the season is not over, as we await, during the succeeding days of Christmas season, both the Epiphany of the Lord and the Baptism of the Lord (which ends the season).

**First Things First.** The Octave Day of Christmas, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, and the Circumcision of the Lord all coalesce on the liturgical calendar on the first day of January. But, outside the ecclesiastical realm, January 1 also has a special place in the world in general: The first day of the first week of the first month of the New Year, marks the beginning of the civil New Year of 2024 (FYI, a year whose numbering is normed by the Birth of

Christ). So, let's talk about January and the New Year.

**A Two-Faced Month.** The name of the month "January" comes from the name of the Roman god Janus. Janus had two faces: one face looking to the past and the other looking to the future. As we enter the new year of 2024, it is indeed a good time to prayerfully look back at the year that has just ended and to look with hope to the new year ahead of us. John Lennon in his 1971 hit, "Happy Christmas," said it well: *"And so this is Christmas, and what have we done, another year over, and a new one just begun."*

**What Have We Done?** And so, at this time of year, we ask ourselves "and what have we done?" We ask ourselves a battery of questions about the year that just passed. We look back, hopefully not just to lament or just to celebrate, but rather to use that time of retrospection to determine how we can do better, what we need to change and how to move forward in the coming year.

**To Thine Own Self.** A review of the past year helps us to set goals and resolutions for the new year. But for us we perhaps often fall into the way of our culture by making mere wishes rather than making real and honest resolutions. The culture tells us that you can do and be anything you want; that sounds nice and uplifting, but it is not true. We have to be honest with ourselves, and know our own limitations. One can wish and wish, but a blind man will not become a baseball umpire; a paraplegic will not become a tap dancer; Lucy may wish to get into Ricky's show on every episode of "I Love Lucy," but it is not in the cards; and I may want to be the center on the Philadelphia 76ers, but that is not going to happen. As the old saying goes, *"If wishes were horses, beggars would ride!"*

**Of "Wishcraft" and Genies.** So, for us, resolutions cannot be fantastical wishes that some genie will magically grant. No, for us resolutions must be real improvements: they identify things we should be doing, but are not doing. They are changes we need to make and can make in our own life, by examining ways to overcome obstacles in our

*(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:

- Bernard Stephen Demeter
- Galen Purcell

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

## NEW PARISHIONERS

Welcome to our newly registered members:

- Mark, Christina, Adelina, Jason, and Ayla Kelleher
- Lorraine Freese

## RECENTLY BAPTIZED

Congratulations to our newly baptized members:

- Mia Yvonne Vazquez
- Victor Alexander Vazquez, Jr.
- Benjamin Emmanuel Vazquez
- Vanessa Guadalupe Vazquez

## HOLY CROSS CEMETERY

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.

## EPIPHANY (JAN 7)

### FIRST READING: ISAIAH 60:1-6

Arise, shine out Jerusalem, for your light has come.

### SECOND READING: EPHESIANS 3:2-3, 5-6

All people share in the promise and salvation of God.

### GOSPEL: MATTHEW 2:1-12

“And falling to their knees, they did him homage.”

## WEDDING ANNIVERSARY MASS

Bishop William E. Koenig invites all couples celebrating their 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, 25th, 30th, 35th, 40th, 45th, 50th, wedding anniversary, or any anniversary beyond 50th, to the annual Wedding Anniversary Mass being held on World Marriage Sunday, February 11, 2024, at 1:00PM at St. Margaret of Scotland Church in Newark, DE. Reservations are required by February 2, 2024.

Bishop Koenig will be available for photos with interested couples beginning at 12:00 pm and again after the 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/k1uxe9k20m649mn/>

## SEVEN SISTERS APOSTOLATE AT HOLY CROSS

LADIES: Would you like to give a gift of prayer for our Priest? 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

## RETROUVILLE:

Rediscover the love in your marriage. Tens of thousands of couples have healed their marriages through Retrouville (pronounced Ret-ro-vy). If you know anyone who could benefit from this program, please pass this on. Couples learn to build communication skills and to increase intimacy. It provides help for marriage problems, difficulties, or crises. The next program will be held February 16 - 18, 2024 at the Family Life Center in Malvern, PA. For more information, or to register, visit [www.HelpOurMarriage.org](http://www.HelpOurMarriage.org) or call 215-766-3944 or 800-470-2230. All inquiries are strictly confidential.

## MARRIAGE MOMENTS

Ask your spouse if there's one little annoying habit that he/she would like you to work on changing. You don't HAVE to do it, but the best part of a New Year's resolution might be making an effort to please the one you love most

## MASS INTENTIONS JANUARY

<b>1 MONDAY</b>	
HC 8:00 am	For the People
HC 10 am	For the People
<b>2 TUESDAY</b>	
HC 8:00 am	Thomas Francis Loughran
<b>3 WEDNESDAY</b>	
HC 8:15 am	Adele DeGravelle Meyers
<b>4 THURSDAY</b>	
HC 8:00 am	Donald Peer
ICC 6:00 pm	For the People
<b>5 FRIDAY</b>	
HC 8:00 am	James Canalichio
<b>6 SATURDAY</b>	
HC 8:00 am	Grace Jara
HC 5:00 pm	Ethan Statham
<b>7 SUNDAY</b>	
HC 7:30 am	LI Rosemarie and Robert Pritchett
ICC 8:30 am	Barbara Dixon
HC 9:30 am	Marie Schaal
ICC 11:00 am	Lorraine Monahan
HC 11:30 am	Earl Francis
ICC 1:00 pm	For the People

*THE SANCTUARY LAMP IN THE CHAPEL FOR 12/231 -1/6 IS CLYBOURN FAMILY.*

*THE SANCTUARY LAMP IN THE CHURCH FOR 112/231 -1/6 IS LI EDWIN AND NINA FRANK.*

## CHRISTMAS CRECHES

A new video, produced by the Diocese of Wilmington, presents a montage of photographs of Nativity crèches from the Catholic churches of Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore. The video, which also includes beautiful instrumental Christmas hymns as a background, is on the Diocese of Wilmington's YouTube channel – [YouTube.com/DiocesefWilm](https://www.youtube.com/DiocesefWilm). Families are invited to watch the 12 ½ minute video together, discuss which scene they like best and why, maybe try to be the first to identify the scene from our parish. Also, the video could be played in the background of Christmas gatherings so everyone can enjoy the holy music and images.

JAN 6/7, 2024

EMHC

SERVERS

5:00 PM

J. Bieker L. Darling  
D. Darling D. Kaltenbaugh

L. Curley  
J. Cutrona  
M. Rubino

LECTORS

J. Davis  
D. Dixon

7:30 AM

J. Chandler S. G4ede  
R. Fritzche T. Svienty

T. Catipay  
S. Corpuz

LECTORS

J. Davis

9:30 AM

T. Arndt K. Boyer  
D. Banach S. Cordie

J. Beugre  
C. Beugre  
W. Shuron

LECTORS

T. Baurys  
J. Coffield

11:30 AM

T. Hernandez M. Richards  
E. Pastori-za

TBD

LECTORS

TBD

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

TBD

8:30 AM

LECTORS

K. Cairns

TBF

11:00 AM

LECTORS

D. King

1:00 PM

TBD

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](mailto:jkm2015@verizon.net) to schedule.



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.

- 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

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.

- ¡Feliz Año Nuevo 2024! En nombre de nuestros sacerdotes, diáconos y todos los que laboran en nuestras parroquias, y las Juntas directivas de La Santa Cruz y La Inmaculada Concepción queremos desearles, Un Año Nuevo lleno de bendiciones, de esperanza, Fe, caridad, optimismo, nuevas oportunidades, nuevas resoluciones, buena salud y sobre todo que este nuevo Año nos ayude a trabajar para el Reino de Dios en nuestros hogares, nuestras comunidades y seamos piedras vivas que ayude a unir a las, familias, a las comunidades bajo la luz de Jesucristo.
- El Foro Cristiano se reanuda el día 5 de enero a las 6 de la tarde a 8 de la noche con el padre Brennan Ferris. 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 día 7 de enero, 2024 es la Solemnidad de la Epifanía del Señor y celebraremos el día de Reyes con la llegada de nuestros Reyes del Oriente que vendrán a adorar al niño Dios y nos acompañarán después de la Santa Misa en nuestra tradicional Rosca de Reyes y traerán regalos para nuestros niños. Las personas que desean donar una Rosca o un atole, por favor de comunicarse con cualquier miembro de la Junta Directiva.

## ICC

- No habrá clases dominical el 24 ni el 31 de diciembre las clases se reanudan el domingo, 7 de enero, 2024
- Formación de Adultos. Lunes 6:30 – 8:30PM Los lunes, en el salón de reuniones de la oficina parroquial. .
- Retiro de Primera Reconciliación: sábado, 13 de enero de 9am a 12mediodia en el salón.
- Primera Reconciliación: sábado, 27 de enero, al12 meridiano en la Santa Cruz, Dover
- Para la preparación Sacramental de la Confirmación Sesión # 4 el domingo 14, de enero de 3:00 – 5:30 en el salón.



**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (HC)**

**Next Class:** January 7th at 3:00pm-5:00pm

**Save the Date!**

**February 28th at 7pm** in the Parish Hall  
 “Mark’s Gospel” presented by the Reverend Joseph Morris from the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

“The one-person performance is not a “reading” or a “talk” but the entire Gospel of St. Mark memorized and performed as storytelling. It’s fast paced, energetic, up close and personal.”

**All are welcome!**

The families of all Holy Cross students LAFF, and Religious Education Students are encouraged to attend.

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

**Next LAFF class** is January 14 at 10:30 am. Come out and join us; families gathering for prayer, communion with one another, sharing our Faith Life experiences. See above for a special Lent formation opportunity.

**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 or call (302) 674-5787 X 122

**ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY (HC)**

Mark your Calendars for these upcoming formation opportunities!

**Tuesday offerings: Note new start date January 16th-February 6th** **Forgiven: The Transforming Power of Confession**

“Forgiven explores the grace and healing offered in Confession and shows how this sacrament of mercy reveals the depth and bout of God’s love.

**February 13th-March 19th** No Greater Love: A Biblical Walk Through Christ’s Passion. “Filmed on location in the Holy Land, No Greater Love is a biblical pilgrimage that reveals Christ’s amazing love for us. Best selling author Edward Sri guides you through the last hours of Christ’s life.”

**Special Lent offering:**

**February 28th at 7pm** in the Parish Hall  
 “Mark’s Gospel” presented by the Reverend Joseph Morris from the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

“The one-person performance is not a “reading” or a “talk” but the entire Gospel of St. Mark memorized and performed as storytelling. It’s fast paced, energetic, up close and personal.”

For more information, please contact tkorosec@holycrossdover.org or call Tammy Korosec at (302) 674-5787 X 122.

**YOUTH PROGRAMS AT HOLY CROSS**

**Confirmation Classes:** Sunday, January 6 at 3 pm and Wednesday, January 9 at 6 pm

**Confirmation Retreat:** For those teens unable to attend the December retreat, please put January 27 at 8 am on your calendar.

**MOUNT 2000:**

We have two spots open - please let Mrs. Darling know if you would like to attend - February 2-4, 2024 cost is \$100 for the weekend.

**Youth Formation Group:** Come be a part of a **new group** forming for high school teens. Meetings will take place on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month from 6:30-8:30 pm in the Luke room of the ELC building. The first meeting will be a planning meeting, so bring your thoughts. Music, faith, fellowship and food - a great place to meet some great people! **First Meeting - Tuesday, January 9 at 6:30 pm**

**SRE AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

There will be NO SRE Sunday, December 31st due to the holidays. Classes will resume on Sunday, January 7th

**Sacramental Preparation Classes:**

**First Reconciliation Retreat:** Reconciliation retreat: Saturday, January 13, 9am-12noon in the hall

**Sacrament of 1st Reconciliation:** Saturday, January 27th, 12noon at Holy Cross, Dover

**Confirmation Session #4:** Sunday, January 14th, 3-5:30pm in the Parish hall.



*Not all Christmas gifts come in a beautifully beribboned box.  
Not all Christmas presents come in a craftily designed gift bag.*

*We need not wait until Christmas to realize the abundance of  
blessings bestowed upon us by the newborn Savior.*

In this Christmas season we are still relishing all the gifts bestowed upon our school community. One of the best gifts I could have received this Christmas season came a little early. No ribbons, no brightly colored wrapping paper, no fluffed-up tissue paper. But it was a beautiful gift, nonetheless. As with most valued gifts, this one was worth sharing with others. I received the gift from the parent of one of our Pre-K students by way of an email. With the permission of the sender, I share her heartfelt message.

*Dear Miss Traynor,*

*I have to tell you how charmed we were all weekend listening to Sam as we decorated for Christmas. This year, we purchased one of those white cut out figure nativity sets for the front yard. As we set it up, Sam looked specifically for the "Mother Mary" and the "baby" and said they were his best friends. He carried them around much of the day. He insisted on putting the baby up in his room until Christmas when we could put him outside. When he saw the table I set up my nativity on, he called it a "prayer table" and said "Ms. Traynor has one." He is getting very good at saying his prayers and often insists on saying them "by himself" for the family before dinner and at night. We couldn't be happier with his religious education, especially my husband John. I think I told you about his discussion that "public school was just fine" for him when I told him I planned to send Sam to Holy Cross. Now, John beams when Sam comes home with a new song or prayer that he has learned at school. Thank you so much for being such a crucial part of his learning. We couldn't do this without you!*

Rest assured that the best gift you could have given your children this Christmas season is the gift of a Catholic education. The value of this gift is immeasurable and lifelong. It may not be in a lovely box underneath the Christmas tree, but it is all wrapped up in a beautiful package. Their best gift this season and for all seasons is Holy Cross School and all that rests inside.

**It is on behalf of those who enrich your children's lives every day; the faculty and staff of HCS that I extend warm and heartfelt wishes for a blessed New Year filled with bounteous blessings and lifelong memories all through 2024.**

path that may keep us from the right path; the path to which Christ beckons us.

**Climb Every Mountain.** I am reminded of the song “Up Where We Belong” from the movie “An Officer and a Gentlemen” – one of the lines in that songs noted, *“There are mountains in our way, but we climb a step every day.”* Resolutions are ways to make those steps and to climb those mountains in our life. In making those steps, Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God, is both our guide and our companion, and the one who can make our climb successful. Our faith in Christ and his Church is what allows us to move forward and move mountains! It is our resolutions this year and every year that should move us to put that faith in to action and allow the Lord to lead us forward.

**Plan B?** But what if we don’t do that? What if we don’t want to resolve to improve ourselves and move forward with Christ? Well, the alternative shuns the idea of resolutions and in their place substitutes wishes. Thus, the alternative to moving forward becomes simply spend your life looking back, and just wishing things were different. Or looking at others and lamenting what they have and you don’t, and wishing for it to be otherwise. No plan, just disembodied wishes, and laments.

**Same Old, same old?** I am reminded of a song played on the radio during this time of year, by singer Dan Fogelberg, called “The Same Old Lang Syne.” In that song, the singer spends his time looking back on an old relationship, rather than looking forward. One Christmas Eve, the snow was falling beautifully, and he meets his old girlfriend. Amidst the beauty of the snow, the two people talk about old times, they reminisce, and they do all of those things we do when catching up with old friends. And as the snow continues to fall, the two of them share a beer in her car, and they talk and talk. The singer then wishes, wishes, wishes that perhaps they could get back together and relive their former ways of life – their glory days— even though she is now married. But then, reality sets in, and the real world comes down on him like an anvil. And as the two of them part ways, he watches her drive away. The singer then laments, *“And as I turned to make my way back home, the snow turned into rain.”*

**A Lot of Salt.** This is what can happen to us when we bind ourselves to this world and are always looking backwards and not ahead. For instance,

- When we lament what others have that we don’t.
- When we lament what was left behind.
- When we lament what could have been.

Now, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with remembering or reminiscing, because it is, in fact, what we learn from the past that can help us with the present and the future. However, while it is good and fine to remember the past, we cannot languish there. That’s what happened to Lot’s wife. In the Book of Genesis, as Abraham and others looked ahead to the promised land, she looked back, and wound up frozen as a pillar of salt, unable to ever look forward. I would commend any of you who are of this mindset, lament all you want, but life doesn’t have an undo button – thus, we must look forward. We can remember yesterday, but our eyes must be on tomorrow.

**Cooperating with God.** It is only when we look ahead to the promises of our Lord, to the hope of Heaven, to the joys of faith, that we shall we be able to realize our New Year’s resolution of a new and strengthened life in union with God and his Holy Church... a Church that was born of his Son, who was born of his mother Mary, who pondered all of these things in her heart, and cooperated with God’s grace to the fullest.

**The Example of Mary.** And so, let our resolution for this new year – and for every year to come – be this: To follow the example of Mary, the Mother of God, who trusted in the Lord, and who didn’t fear the future, as she declared, *“Let it be unto me according to the thy word.”* Those ten little words are the ingredients of one big happy year ahead for us all in 2024. Mary, Mother of God, pray for us!

Yours in Christ,  
Fr. James Lentini  
Pastor