

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 14, 2025

3rd 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

icc

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

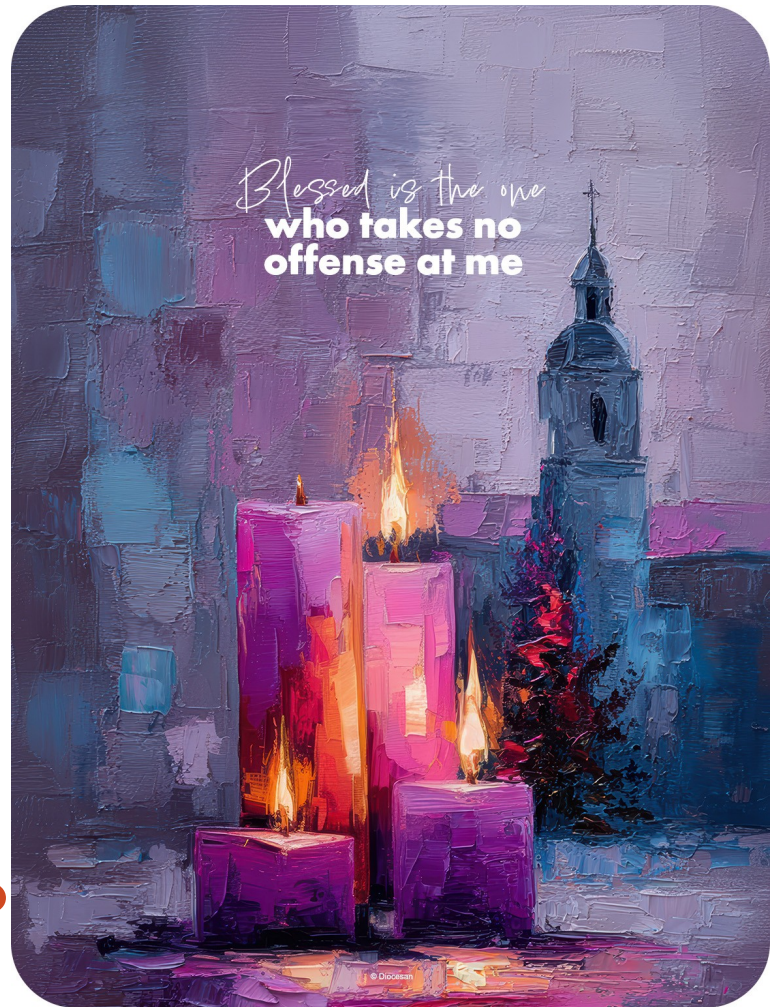
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9 am-5 pm
Closed Wednesday and Friday

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

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 – Wed, Dec 24, 2025

4:00 pm in Church / 4:00 pm in Hall

6:30 pm Mass

9:00 pm Spanish Mass

Midnight Mass

Christmas Day – Thurs, Dec 25, 2025

8:00 am Mass and 10:00 am Mass

New Year's Eve – Wed, Dec 31, 2025

Solemnity of Mary

5:00 pm Mass

7:00 pm Spanish Mass

New Year's Day – Thurs, Jan 1, 2026

8:00 am Mass and 10:00 am Mass

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Immaculate Conception Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve – Wed, Dec 24, 2025

5:00 pm Mass

7:00 pm Spanish Mass

Midnight Mass

Christmas Day – Thurs, Dec 25, 2025

9:00 am Mass

New Year's Eve – Wed, Dec 31, 2025

Solemnity of Mary

5:30 pm Mass and 7:00 pm Spanish Mass

New Year's Day – Thurs, Jan 1, 2026

9:00 am Mass

WEEKLY OFFERING (HC)

Ending November 30, 2025

OFFERTORY TYPE	RECEIVED	BUDGETED/ NEEDED	DIFFERENCE
Regular	\$32,583	\$26,972	\$5,611
YTD	\$572,663	\$582,970	(\$10,307)
Needs	\$1,840	\$1,738	\$102

WEEKLY OFFERING (ICC)

Ending November 30, 2025

OFFERTORY TYPE	RECEIVED
Regular	\$3,920
Second	\$427

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,

Among the most neglected of all our Christian obligations is the obligation to rejoice. Just as the word of God commands us to believe and to love, so does it command us to rejoice. On the third Sunday of Advent, the church reminds us of this often-forgotten obligation. This Third Sunday of Advent is called “*Gaudete* Sunday.” *Gaudete* is Latin for “rejoice.” It is a command taken directly from St. Paul’s Letter to the Philippians (4:4-5), which forms the words of our Entrance Antiphon for Mass: “*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.*” This is a positive command, one that we are supposed to keep at all times and in all circumstances. It is not a conditional command that we keep only when things are going well with us. For us, we are to rejoice even in tough times, because we are a people of hope, a people in darkness who have seen a great light.

Let’s Be Frank. Let me put this in a more musical context. Frank Sinatra, the chairman of the board, ol’ Blue Eyes, gives an incredible message of hopefulness on, of all places, his tombstone. On Frank Sinatra’s tombstone is inscribed the words, “*The Best is Yet to Come.*” This posthumous admonition reflects the ultimate Christian hope enmeshed in this season of Advent, a season when we are called to wait in hope. And we wait patiently for a good reason: Because, indeed, the best is yet to come.

Finding Oneself in a Stuff Spot. Many people think this world is the be-all and end-all. They believe that Christmas is about stuff, and stuff, and still more stuff. They believe life is about getting, and getting, and perhaps about giving, so long as you get a return on your gift. If that’s one’s view of life, good luck with that. Because, you see, this season of Advent moves us in an entirely different direction. It moves in a direction that prepares us for Christmas, prepares us for the entrance of God into our world as well as into our hearts. It is a season not about the worldly but about hope and salvation. It’s the season that reminds us that while the world God created for us is good, that while the many pleasures we have in life are good, that while the joys of family and friends are good, nonetheless, in truth, “the best is yet to come.”

The Son in the Morning. And using Frank Sinatra to flesh out a good way to understand who it is that we are waiting and hoping for during Advent, I quote Sinatra again, when in that song, “The Best is Yet to Come,” he croons: *The best is yet to come / and wouldn’t that be fine? You think you’ve seen the sun / but you ain’t seen it shine.* Keeping those words in mind, Advent prepares us for, to quote from a Christmas song, “*the thrill of hope*” as “*a weary world rejoices for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.*” And so,

today, we are reminded of that command, that imperative, to “*rejoice always,*” — if not at what is, then at what will be, and at what God promises! But be aware that, like every other command, the command to joyfulness is demanding.

A Time of Ruin. I’m reminded of a story told by author Leo Buscaglia, who wrote books like “Personhood” and “Because I Am Human.” He tells a story about his father coming home from work one day and announcing that he had lost all his money because his business partner had duped him and run off with the company’s funds. His family was financially ruined.

A Time of Joy. That evening, his mother responded by selling her expensive jewelry and buying food for a sumptuous feast. Some friends criticized her for reckless spending at a time when poverty was staring her in the face. Her response: “The time for joy is now, when we need it most, not next week.” Her hopeful act ultimately rallied the family and gave them the thrill of hope and the rejoicing they needed to face the future with confidence and trust that God is in control... and that the best was yet to come.

In that regard, three *Gaudete* Sunday reflections regarding rejoicing:

1. Rejoice in Good Times and Bad Times. In that regard, three *Gaudete* Sunday reflections: First, St. Paul, in today’s Entrance Antiphon, tells what we must do at all times:

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near. (Philippians 4:4-5).

For when the Lord is near to us, when salvation is about to come into our world, we know the best is yet to come. So, we must rejoice, pray, and give thanks. And since the Lord is always near, we rejoice always. As followers of Christ, we know that life on earth is not always rosy, but life after death is blissful. Thus, our hope is not in this life only, in this world alone. No! So, in bad times we need to tough it through faith and prayer, and be consoled that tough times don’t last, but tough people do. That is why we can rejoice in good times and in bad, as Jesus himself did.

2. Spiritual vs. Material. Last Year, at this same time, in the Second Reading, St. Paul in his Letter to the Thessalonians commended us:

(continued on page 10)

HC & ICC CLERGY

Vy. Rev. James S. Lentini , V. F. Pastor
 Rev. John Enemuo 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

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
 Maryland, 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

MAILING ADDRESS

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

DEC 21 - 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 7:10-14

The birth of Jesus is prophesied in the Old Testament: a child will be born to a young woman, and he will be called Emmanuel.

SECOND READING: ROMANS 1:1-7

Paul tells us that Jesus is both a son of David and a Son of God. He is God Incarnate, God made man.

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 1:18-24

Joseph decides to take Mary home as his wife and the angel tells him that Mary will give birth to a son through the action of the Holy spirit, and he will be called Emmanuel—"God is with us".

RECEPTIONIST POSITION

Holy Cross Parish is

looking for a Full

Time Reception-

ist. Seeking an enthusi-

astic candidate eager

to work as the first point of contact for visi-

tors. Your role is crucial in creating a positive and

professional first impression. Responsibilities

include answering and routing incoming calls,

maintain confidentiality and manage sensitive

information with discretion, receive and distrib-

ute mail, packages, and deliveries, provide sup-

port to others in the office; assist with clerical

tasks, miscellaneous office tasks as requested;

scheduling baptismal prep classes and securing

dates for baptisms; recording sacramental infor-

mation into appropriate records; prepare and set

up weekly Mass binders ; Experience with Mi-

crosoft Word, Publisher, and Excel and have

strong organizational and multitasking abilities.

Please send your resume

to secretary@holycrossdover.org.

Help Wanted

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

Please be generous when the Retirement Fund for

Religious collection is taken in our parish this

weekend of December 13/14.

Rising health-care costs and the absence of tradi-

tional retirement plans have placed significant

financial strain on many religious communities.

The Retirement Fund for Religious helps address

this need, supporting more than 21,000 religious

over the age of 70. In 2024, the average annual

cost of care was about \$56,600 per person, with

skilled nursing care averaging \$96,000.

SAMARITAN'S FOOD PANTRY

We are now in need of hams for our Christmas baskets. They can be left in the freezer at the Samaritan drop off. We can always use canned goods such as soups, vegetables, instant potatoes, jello, peanut butter/jelly, etc.

Thanks to all who contributed paper bags to aid in our packing of the food. Right now we have an ample supply so please hold off on bringing in more bags at this time. Thank you.

CATHOLIC FORUM

Listen to Catholic Forum each week. Tune in this week for the annual Catholic Forum Christmas show featuring Bishop Koenig's Christmas message to the people of the Diocese of Wilmington and an exclusive report from Rome with EWTN's Boglarka Sztancs! The Catholic Forum podcast on Apple, Spotify, iHeartRadio, Amazon Music podcasts and YouTube.com/DioceseofWilm debuts every Wednesday at 12:00 p.m.; and on Relevant Radio 640 every Saturday afternoon at 1:30.

RECENTLY DECEASED

Condolences and prayers go out to the families who recently lost a loved one:

- Camille Ann Weyant

RECENTLY BAPTIZED

Congratulations to our newest baptized members:

- Mia Sophia Hartley
- Luca Michael Pool
- Elian Emmanuel Lopez Hernandez
- Edwens Destinas
- Edwin Destinas

NEW PARISHIONERS

Welcome to our newest parishioners:

- Justin and Britnye Greene
- Todd and Linda Stewart

CEMETERY NEWS

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.

MASS INTENTION DECEMBER

15 MONDAY

HC 8:00 am Michale Lanagan (LI)

16 TUESDAY

HC 8:00 am Doris and Hugh Tate

17 WEDNESDAY

HC 8:15 am James W. Conrad

18 THURSDAY

HC 8:00 am Ludwik Kosior

19 FRIDAY

HC 8:00 am Michael Dunlop

20 SATURDAY

HC 8:00 am John and Mary Asman

HC 5:00 pm Mariann Greene

21 SUNDAY

HC 7:30 am Fred Bulinski

ICC 8:30 am Marge Messner

HC 9:30 am Biter and Mood Families

ICC 11:00 am Nellie Taraila

HC 11:30 am Sergio Perez

ICC 1:00 pm For the People

Dec 21 – Dec 27 Sanctuary Candle in Church is for the intention of parishioners of Holy Cross.

Dec 21 - Dec 27 Sanctuary Candle in the Adoration Chapel is for the intention of Thomas Steward and Joseph Panichi.

FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

You are invited to the Festival of Lessons and Carols on Sunday, December 14 at 3:00 PM at the beautiful and historic Cathedral of St. Peter

The Cathedral of St. Peter, 6th and West Streets, Wilmington, DE will present a Festival of Lessons and Carols on Sunday, December 14 at 3PM. The concert will feature scriptures, choral music, and congregational hymns performed live and live-streamed by the choirs of the Cathedral and St. Patrick's Church. (302-654-5920) • <https://www.youtube.com/DowntownCatholic>

DECEMBER 20/21, 2025

EMHC

SERVERS

5:00 PM

B. Richards
G. Richards

P. Sheldon
J. Bieker

J. Cutrona
J. Nunez

LECTORS

D. Belt
G. Murphy

7:30 AM

S. Gede
M. Jacobs

L. Luckett
R. O'Neill

E. Costa
M. Costa
S. Murawski

LECTORS

C. Cuffee

9:30 AM

M. Sossich
G. Wessel

M. Wessel
R. Willey

G. Maddalena
M Willoughby

LECTORS

C. Parks
C. Petka

11:30 AM

A. Cisernos,
C. Garcia

B. Guzman

TBD

LECTORS

TBD

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

8:30 AM

A. Smith

LECTORS

K. Escalante

11:00 AM

J. Carrow

LECTORS

Lausten Family



HELP WANTED—WE NEED YOU

We are looking for more volunteers to help us bring Holy Communion to the sick and homebound of our parish. Call the Holy Cross Parish Office if interested in this ministry.

We can always use more volunteers to help at Mass as an Altar Server, Extra-Ordinary Minister of Communion, or a Lector. If interested please contact the Parish Office at 3020-674-5787.

ADORATION CHAPEL

"To entrust our struggles to Jesus, we have to spend time with Him in prayer. We have to have a relationship with Him. In quiet, we can speak honestly with Him about what is in our hearts. During Eucharistic adoration you can look at Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. You know that He looks at you and He looks at you with love. He often speaks to us gently, in stillness."

Pope Leo XIV, November 21, 2025

Come, signup for Adoration and make this the best Advent ever. You may just decide to make this a weekly commitment after Advent. You don't need a time if you cannot make a commitment. Please feel free to come in and sit with our Lord, when you can.

Contact John Murphy 302-233-1779

or jkm2015@verizon.net for any of the times available listed below:

Sunday: 7-8am, 5-6pm, 6-7 pm, 7-8 pm, 8-9pm

Monday: 9-10 am

Wednesday: 5-6 pm, 8-9 pm

Thursday: 8-9 pm

Saturday: 5-6 am, 12-1pm, 1-2pm, 7-8 pm, 8-9pm

K OF C DONUT SALE

The Knights of Columbus Council 4182 will be selling Krispy Kreme donuts next Sunday, December 21, after the 7:30 and 9:30 am Masses in the gathering space. Cost is \$16 a dozen, \$10 a half dozen, or a good will donation for a single. There will also be coffee, water, and juice available. Sorry for the change in date.

REDISCOVER THE LOVE IN YOUR MARRIAGE (2026 PROGRAMS)

In 2026, the programs will be held February 6-8, July 31 - August 2, and October 21-23, at the Malvern Retreat Center in Malvern, PA. For more information, or to register, visit MarriageHeldDelVal.org or call 215-766-3944. All inquiries are strictly confidential.

Tens of thousands of couples have healed their marriages through Retrouvaille (pronounced Retro-vy). If you know anyone who could benefit from this program, please pass this on. It provides help for marriage problems, difficulties, or crises.

- **Domingo de Gaudete:** El Tercer Domingo de Adviento lleva el nombre de “Domingo de Gaudete”, o “Domingo de la Alegría”. Se denomina así por la ‘cercanía’ de, l ‘falta poco’, para la Natividad del Señor: la primera palabra que se dice en el introito de la Misa es precisamente “Gaudete”, es decir, “¡Regocíjense!”. el sacerdote se revestirse con una casulla de color rosa como signo de gozo, y la Iglesia invita a los fieles a profundizar en el deseo de conversión, se enciende la tercera vela de la corona de Adviento, la vela distinta, la única de color rosado. Alegremonos va vine la Navidad.
- **POSADAS:** Todas ya estan tomadas unase a la Posada de la iglesia o una familia si desea contribuir ¿Qué son las Posadas?Es la Novena de Navidad. Las posadas navideñas esn una tradición popular hispana que se celebra durante los nueve días previos a la Navidad, del 16 al 24 de diciembre. Representan la búsqueda de María y José de un lugar para el nacimiento de Jesús, recreando el pasaje bíblico de su peregrinación a Belén. A menudo los pequeños se disfrazan de María y José algunos pastorcitos o angeles van cada noche,visitan una familia que ha pedido posada en su casas cantando villancicos para pedir alojamiento y, una vez que se les concede, entran y se reza el santo Rosario, se canta ycelebran con comida, música y piñatas. Ayuda a preparar el corazón para la Natividad del Señor. En la última parte del Adviento, esperamos con alegría su Primera Venida, en Belén. Una buena forma de hacerlo es meditar el Santo Rosario las antífonas de Adviento que se usan en la Misa, porque cada una evoca un título mesiánico de Cristo del Antiguo Testamento.
- **Foro Cristiano :** No tendremos Foro Cristiano a partir del 12 de diciembre hasta el 9 de enero por las fiestas navideñas,para que todas puedan asistir y acompañar en las posadas.
- **POSADAS**
 - Martes, 16, de Diciembre: 8:00PM lugar Holy Cross Dirección: 631 South State St. Dover, DE 19901
 - Miércoles 17, de Diciembre: 7:00PM Familia Ruiz Rangel, Dirección: 35 Hickory Dale Dr.Dover, DE 19901
 - Jueves 18, de Diciembre: 7:00PM Familia Betancourt, Dirección: 2411 White Oak Rd.Dover, DE 19901
 - Viernes 19, de Diciembre: 7:00PM lugar Dover para Cristo, Dirección: 3158 Kenton Rd. Dover DE 19904
 - Sábado 20, de Diciembre: 7:00PM Familia Gerónimo Ramírez, Dirección: 139 Carnation DR. Magnolia DE 19962
 - Domingo 21, de Diciembre: 7:00PM Familia Encinas,47 Orchard Grove Way, Camden DE 19943
 - Lunes 22, de Diciembre: 7:00PM Familias, Rivas Soto, Rivas Méndez, Familia De La Paz 1101 S. Little Creek Rd. Dover, DE 19901
 - Martes 23, de Diciembre: Lugar, Marcela Sánchez. Dirección: 66 Roberts Dr. Dover DE 19901
 - Miércoles 24, de Diciembre: 8:45 PM Santa Misa de NOCHEBUENA Holy Cross
- **Se Necesitan ministros:** Si usted está interesado en participar y compartir sus talentos como Catequista, Lector, ministerio de Música, Hospitalidad,, ministros EMC, Arte y Ambientación. Por favor hable con los coordinadores de los ministerios o llame a la oficina al 302-674-5787 ext. 118
- **APOSTOLADO DE LAS SIETE HERMANAS EN LA SANTA CRUZ** Al fortalecer al sacerdote, fortaleces a toda la Iglesia... (P. Gerald Fitzgerald, SP) Únase al Apostolado de las Siete Hermanas en Holy Cross para ofrecer: Una hora santa, Por un sacerdote; Cada semana, Un corazón de oración. Contacto: Delizabeth Díaz-Martínez correo electrónico 7sistersapostolate2023@gmail.com

ICC

Primera Reconciliación Prep: Sesión # 6- Martes, Diciembre 9, 6:30-7:30pm, Salón de eventos
Por favor comuníquese con Alicia Poppiti at 410-482-8939 o email to dre@iccmaryl.org para cualquier pregunta.

Confirmación Prep:

Session #3- Sunday, December 14, 3-5:30pm , Salón de evento
Session #4- Sunday, Enero 18 2026, 3-5:30pm , Salón de evento

OCIA: Domingos 5:30 PM -7:15 PM en La Oficina Parroquial, Llámanos y aprenda nuestra Fe.

RELIGIOUS ED AT HOLY CROSS

Next class: January 6 and January 7, 2026
If you still need to register, or have any questions please contact Tammy Korosec at tkorosec@holycrossdover.org or call (302) 674-5787 X 122.

Wishing all of our staff, students, and volunteers a most Blessed Christmas. Enjoy your time with family and friends.

LAFF (LIVING AS A FAMILY OF FAITH CATECHESIS)

December class : December 21

The Holy Cross offices of Religious Education and Youth Ministries with you and your families a very Blessed and Merry Christmas!

We gather after 9:30am Mass in the Matthew/Mark room. Class will begin at 11:00am and will last until approximately 1:00pm.

Contact Tammy Korosec at either tkorosec@holycrossdover.org or call (302) 674-5787 X 122 for further information.

ADULT EDUCATION CLASS

Foundations of Faith: A Journey Through the Catechism of the Catholic Church” will take a pause until 1/6/2026.

In preparation of the fourth week of Advent we will hear the Venerable Fulton J. Sheen explain to us the true meaning of Christmas.

We will resume the Foundation of Faith series beginning January 6.

Deacon Bob’s Adult Ed Class is every Tuesday at either 9:00am or 7:00pm in the Matthew/Mark room of the Parish Office, 2nd Floor, Building C

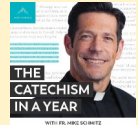
If you have any questions or would like to order the workbook set, please contact Tammy Korosec at tkorosec@holycrossdover.org or call (302)674-5787 X 122.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Youth Group:
Our next youth group meeting will be on Sunday, December 14 from 6:45 - 8 pm in the Luke Room of the ELC building. We will have a small white elephant gift exchange and games and food.

CHECK OUT THESE LINKS:

- <https://ascensionpress.com/pages/luke-in-50-days-announcement>
- <https://ascensionpress.com/pages/riy-signup>
- <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>



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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT ICC

OCIA:
Monday nights in Parish Office from 5:30-7:15pm,
Please call and join us.

Confirmation Prep:
Session #3- Sunday, December 14, 3-5:30pm in Parish Hall

First Communion Prep:
Parent meeting- Tuesday, January 6th, 7pm, parish hall
OR Sunday, January 11th, 2:30pm in Parish Hall



As we closed out our second week of Advent, we continued to reflect and to prepare our hearts for the coming of the Lord.

Monday was a very eventful and grace filled day. We began together in prayer as we celebrated Mass for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. During this solemnity we honored Mary, full of grace, and rejoiced that she is the Mother of God. Our fifth grade class and our choir led us beautifully. We are grateful for their reverence and leadership.

Following Mass we recognized many students who have accomplished wonderful things throughout our first trimester. We honored art students, music students, members of our National Junior Honor Society, and also presented a new award to one junior high student from each homeroom and from each enrichment class. This award is not academic in nature. Rather, it celebrates students who exemplify kindness, leadership, and respect. It acknowledges character and recognizes how our students live the mission of Holy Cross each day. At Holy Cross School, we strive to lead one another and to cultivate a lifelong sense of justice, peace, compassion, and respect for all of God's creation. These students model that mission beautifully, and we are proud of the example they set both in and out of school.

Mid morning on Monday our fourth graders traveled to Legislative Hall to participate in the Wreaths Across America ceremony for the state of Delaware. This was an extraordinary opportunity for our students to gather with heroes from our community, as well as law enforcement and government officials. They witnessed firsthand how we honor both the living and the deceased who fought for the freedom of our country. Our students had the privilege of placing wreaths around Legislative Hall in the city of Dover.

Monday also marked the opening of our Secret Santa Shop which was thoughtfully organized by our Home and School Association. This gave our students the chance to shop for loved ones and to share in the joy of giving during the Christmas season. We are sincerely grateful to our HSA and to all the volunteers who made this special tradition possible. The shop remained open throughout the week.

On Tuesday our elementary students performed two showings of their Christmas concert. Both performances were filled with joy and truly brought the spirit of the season to all who attended. We were so impressed by our actors, singers, and every student who participated. A special thank you goes to Ms. Swartzentruber for preparing our students so well. We are blessed with tremendous talent in both our students and our staff.

On Wednesday our junior high math league team participated in another competition. We were proud of their continued dedication as they challenged themselves to solve complex problems and earn points for our school. Thank you to Dr. Olmstead for guiding and encouraging this wonderful group of mathematicians.

On Thursday report cards were made available on Powerschool so that parents could review grades and comments from our first trimester. It is hard to believe that we are already moving through our second trimester. Later that afternoon we held our final faculty meeting of the calendar year. It is amazing to think we are so close to the start of 2026.

Friday was a calm and peaceful day that allowed us to pause, reflect, and give thanks for the many blessings God has placed before us. We now look forward with love as we prepare to enter the third week of Advent together as a Holy Cross community.

God bless,
Mrs. O'Mara

Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil. (1 Thess 5:19-22).

In other words, one must not stifle the Spirit, despise the word of prophets, or indulge in any form of evil. Paul is asking us to activate, engage, enliven, and nourish the spiritual part of our lives. As humans, we have a material and a spiritual life. Some of us give all of our attention to the material dimension of life, neglecting the spiritual dimension. There is a temptation to do that, but we must resist that temptation! Why? Because, on some level, we know that while most people think, “Lord, lead me not into temptation, because I can find the way myself.” But we truly do need to push back against the temptation to value the material dimension of our lives at the expense of the spiritual dimension.

You can see this conflict between the material and the spiritual in the way we may—at times—prepare for the coming of Christmas, when we may take more care to decorate our homes than to clean up our souls, and be more focused on finding sales than seeking salvation. Thus, the Church gives us Advent as a time to prepare spiritually for the coming of the Son of God. And we should prepare spiritually, because, to paraphrase those Sinatra lyrics, “*You think you’ve seen God’s sun, but you ain’t seen Him shine.*” Spiritual preparation bound up in patient hope and prayer will allow you to see Him shine, and to rejoice! Remember, the Shepherds, hoping and waiting, the fields did get to rejoice grandly and have their hopes fulfilled, while King Herod and those who were consumed with the worldly did not.

3. Abiding in Optimism. In this week’s Second Reading, St. James the Apostle calls us, during this season of Advent, to wait patiently. In other words, to abide in hope,

Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord... Take as an example of hardship and patience, brothers and sisters, the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. (James 5:7a,10).

By definition, the hopeful person must also be a patient person. To patiently hope as Christians, we must patiently hope not with dread, but with optimism, just like “the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.” We, too, trust in the Lord, and we do it with optimism!

A word about optimism: We are an optimistic people. To put a definition on what it means to be an optimist: An optimist is someone who gets chased up a tree by a lion but is then able to enjoy the view from up there. An optimist is someone who steps in horse manure and gives thanks to God for fertilizer. Yes, the true optimist is the man who started his diet on Thanksgiving morning! A true optimist is always looking for a reason to rejoice.

It is tough always to be optimistic, but that is what we are called to be. Despite the difficulties, setbacks, and tribulations of the present moment, we are called to optimism and hope. So, be aware that even amidst a winter of our discontent, in a grace-filled heart, it is always springtime! And that brings us back to the life of hopefulness, and indeed optimism, to which St. Paul and St. James invite us this Advent. This life of hopefulness and optimism is, in fact, the life of God in us. And it is God-in-us and God-with-us who makes it all happen. And our job is to hear God in our lives, to say yes to God, and to surrender totally to Him.

Rejoice Always! You know, it is a truism that it is hard for us to live a life of rejoicing always – you should see me on days when I miss the latest sale at Best Buy. There’s no joy in Mudville for me on those days! Nonetheless, the One who calls us to rejoice in this life is the One who always gives us what He commands: namely, Joy.

The Best is Yet To Come. And our Lord, who is faithful, promises us something special as regards our desire for that Joy. He promises us that in about a week and a half from now -- as well as at the end of a life lived faithfully -- the best is yet to come. Salvation, redemption, and the thrill of hope! And, you can take that to the bank! So, today, and for days, weeks, months, and years to come, “*rejoice in the Lord.*” It is a truth from Scripture, it is a command of our Christian faith, and we need to make it a way of life.

And so, I tell you, today, tomorrow, and forever: Rejoice always in the Lord. Always! Because the best is yet to come!

Yours in Christ,

Fr. James Lentini, Pastor