

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

January 25, 2026

3rd Sunday Ordinary Time

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

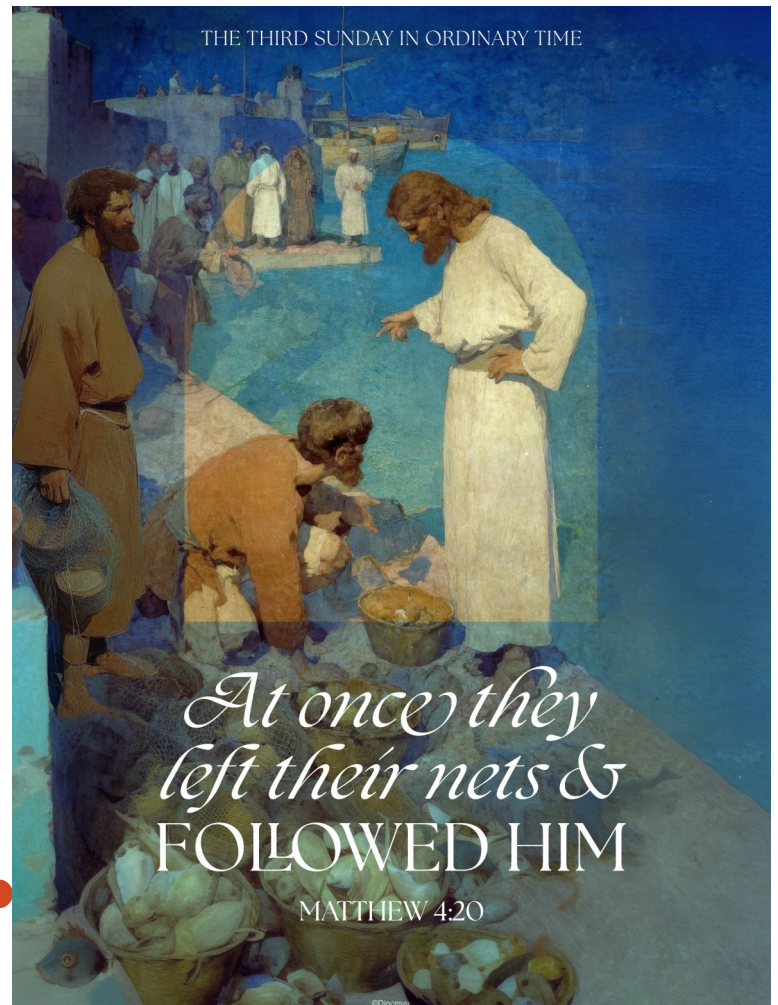
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9 am-5 pm
Closed Wednesday and Friday

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.

TAX LETTERS—HOLY CROSS

Holy Cross Parish will email tax statements to everyone we have an email address for in our Parish Data System. These will go out by February 1. Emails come from the following site: notifications@ondemandmail.com. If you don't see an email, please check your spam folder.

If you don't have a current email on file with us, you can call the Parish Office to request a tax letter be mailed or give us an email address so we can send you one. Thank you.

TAX LETTERS—IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Please call the Immaculate Conception Office if you wish to receive a tax statement.

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CATHOLIC SCHOOL'S WEEK

We celebrate Catholic School's Week beginning Sunday, January 25. Students will be in the Gathering Space to thank you for your support. Surprise notes will be in this bulletin for parishioners as well. Thank you for your continued support!!

WEEKLY OFFERING (HC)

Ending January 11, 2026

OFFERTORY TYPE	RECEIVED	BUDGETED/ NEEDED	DIFFERENCE
Regular	\$23,235	\$27,500	(\$4,265)
YTD	\$746,668	\$745,860	\$808
Needs	\$1,692	\$1,738	\$154
Christmas	\$36,902	\$37,500	(\$598)

WEEKLY OFFERING (ICC)

Ending January 11, 2026

OFFERTORY TYPE	RECEIVED
Regular	\$4,129
Christmas	\$591

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.

This Sunday, we have the odd occurrence of a major feast of the Church not being observed. January 25 is the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. It celebrates the great conversion of Saul of Tarsus (later, St. Paul) — a persecutor of Christians — who saw the light and embraced faith in Jesus Christ. St. Paul, who would become the greatest evangelist of all time, has his great conversion of faith celebrated annually on January 25. But not so this year, not so. What is going on? Is St. Paul in the penalty box? No, nothing that drastic.

Rank You Very Much. The Conversion of St. Paul is ranked by the Church as a feast day. There is a hierarchy of holy days, ranging from: Solemnities (like St. Joseph, Ss. Peter and Paul, the Assumption of Mary, etc.), to Feasts (like the Conversion of Paul, St. Andrew, St. John, etc.) to Memorials (like St. Anthony, Our Lady of Sorrows, etc.) to Optional Memorials (like St. Thomas More, St. George, St. Isidore the Farmer, etc).

Never on Sunday? Holy Days never override the Sundays of Advent, Lent, or Easter. During Christmas, all the Sundays are spoken for with assigned Holy Days (Holy Family, Epiphany, Baptism of the Lord). However, when a Solemnity lands on a Sunday during Ordinary Time, it takes the place of the regular Sunday celebration, as opposed to when a Memorial or Optional Memorial lands on Sunday — it never takes the place of the Sunday. But when a Feast lands on Sunday during Ordinary Time, sometimes it takes the place of the Sunday, sometimes not. What is the deciding factor? If the Feast is a Feast of the Lord and only if it is a Feast of the Lord — e.g., the Exaltation of the Cross, the Transfiguration, the Presentation of the Lord, etc. — it does take the place of Sunday. Other feasts do not.

Conversely. The Conversion of St. Paul is one of those other Feasts that do not override the regular Sunday celebration. That said, it is still a wonderful feast to know about, one that highlights the power of Conversion. Here are some thoughts on St. Paul's conversion, other important conversions in the history of the Church, and the value of conversion.

Making Change. On the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, we are reminded of Conversion as a key value of our Christian belief. When we slide away from being faithful, we are called to conversion — to draw ourselves back to God. St. Paul's conversion was profound: he moved from persecutor of Christians to a Christian evangelist in mere moments (more on that later), but our own conversions in everyday life are also important and should be inspired by him.

Take me to Your Liter. Now there are many non-spiritual conversions we experience in life, like when we convert measure-

ments from imperial measure (inches, feet) to those of the metric system (centimeters, meters). In the cell phone carrier battle, conversions from AT&T to Verizon to T-Mobile happen all the time. And, there are other conversions, too: Moving from caffeinated to decaf (Heaven forbid), from PCs to Macs (godspeed), and even betraying the logic of the universe and moving from McDonalds to Burger King (Heaven help us).

Of Hearts and Hamburgers. We change lots of things in our lives. However, having a conversion or change of heart in the realm of faith is a little tougher than going from a Big Mac to a Whopper (though for me, it might be a comparable challenge). Tough though it may be, we are called to conversion.

Conversion and All that Jazz. In 1981, jazz guitarist George Benson had a hit song with a conversion-type title, *"Turn Your Love Around."* That title sums up a key to conversion — we have to turn our love around. If God is not the center of life, we have to turn things around. When we sometimes forget the primacy of God (and the love of God) in our lives, we need to turn our love around. When we turn back to God, that is a moment of blessed conversion.

Slip Slidin' Away. Conversion is always called for because people are often, to quote singer Paul Simon's 1977 hit song, *"slip slidin' away."* Thus, when we are slip-slidin' away from Mass attendance, we are called to conversion — and return to worship God. When we are slip-slidin' away from prayer, we are called to conversion — to open ourselves up to the Lord again. Likewise, when we are unfaithful to a spouse, defrauding a customer, hateful of another, etc., we are called to conversion — to come back to where we ought to be.

It Don't Come Easy. We are called to straighten up and fly right, to make conversion. And yes, that's easier said than done. When it comes to conversion, to quote Ringo Starr's 1973 hit, *"You know it don't come easy."* But we are blessed because, in our Catholic faith, there have been many conversions to look to for inspiration. Some of these conversions did not just change the person making the conversion, but changed the world. To this end, I present you with five game-changing conversions in Catholic Church history:

The Conversion of St. Paul. Saul of Tarsus was a persecutor of Christians; he hated them. He saw Christianity as upending the way of life of the Jewish people and causing divisions. He sought to arrest Christian, persecute them, and even kill them. As tradition and scripture relate, one day on

(continued on page 10)

HC & ICC CLERGY

Vy. Rev. James S. Lentini , V. F.	Pastor
Rev. John Enemuó	Parochial Vicar
Rev. Rommel Padilla	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
 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

MAILING ADDRESS

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

FEB. 1—4TH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME
FIRST READING: ZEPHANIAH 2:3; 3:12-13

Those who look for God find him by acting with justice.

SECOND READING: 1 CORINTHIANS 1:26-31

God's true followers are often those people who are of little importance in the eyes of the world.

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 5:1-12A

The Beatitudes—Jesus climbs the mountain not to escape the world, but to reimagine it. The Beatitudes are not sentimental sayings: they are a radical blueprint for justice.

SAMARITAN'S FOOD PANTRY

More donations are always welcome. We can always use Hamburger Helper, Manwich, canned goods such as kidney, black, pinto beans, soups, instant potatoes, Brownie Mix, peanut butter/jelly, etc. Thanks for your generosity.

MARTHA AND MARY MINISTRY

The Martha and Mary Ministry invite you to join us to provide solace to the bereaved in our parish. There are many ways that you can serve the Lord and our brothers and sisters during the difficult time of losing a loved one. We will be providing greeters in the Gathering Space to assist in directing visitors to their seats and handing out worship aids, setting up for repasts and providing baked goods upon request. **We welcome both men and women to join us in this important ministry.** If you are interested in joining us please contact Lori Christiansen at 302-745-6900 or via email at shera29@verizon.net.

CATHOLIC FORUM

Listen to Catholic Forum each week. Tune-in this week when The Dialog's Joe Owens interviews retiring Communications Director and Catholic Forum host, Bob Krebs. 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.

Purse Bingo

Please join us on Saturday evening, February 28 from 6 pm to 10 pm for a fun night of bingo. We have some beautiful bags to win, basket auction prizes and 50/50. All proceeds help to send our teens to Catholic Heart Work Camp this summer.



Tickets are \$35 each - tables of 8 - and may be purchased in the Parish Office or by emailing: ldarling@holycrossdover.org.

RECENTLY DECEASED

Our condolences to the families who recently lost a loved one:

- Carolyn McClafferty

NEW PARISHIONERS

We welcome those who have recently registered as members of Holy Cross

- Jose, Andrea and Aylin Sandoval and Aura, Angie and Astry Aguilera
- Robert, Mary and Lilah Sherman

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 8, 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, 2026.

Bishop Koenig will be available for photos with interested couples beginning at 12:00 pm and again after the Mass. If you would

MASS INTENTION JANUARY/FEBRUARY

26 MONDAY

HC 8:00 am Margaret & James Kane

27 TUESDAY

HC 8:00 am Bill Mihartse

28 WEDNESDAY

HC 8:15 am Marylyn Schaeffler

29 THURSDAY

HC 8:00 am June Clacher
ICC 6:00 pm For the People

30 FRIDAY

HC 8:00 am Mary Coyle

31 SATURDAY

HC 8:00 am Kevin Boos
HC 5:00 pm Maria E. Beltran

1 SUNDAY

HC 7:30 am May Everhart
ICC 8:30 am Neil & Ann Thomas
HC 9:30 am Marilyn Schaeffler
ICC 11:00 am Richard Dewson
HC 11:30 am Krit Bordelon
ICC 1:00 pm For the People

Jan 26—Feb 1 Sanctuary Candle in Church is for the intention of parishioners of Holy Cross.

Jan 26—Feb 1 Sanctuary Candle in the Adoration Chapel is for parishioners of Holy Cross.

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://cdowmarriagepreparation.wufoo.com/forms/qf0nytf11mq100/> or by going to the Diocesan Website - Ministries - Marriage and Family Life.

JANUARY 31/FEBRUARY 1, 2026

EMHC SERVERS

5:00 PM G. Murphy G. Richards L. Curley
B. Richards P. Sheldon J. Cutrona

LECTORS

D. Belt
H. Curley

7:30 AM J. Denney J. Fisher J. Shevock
A. Fischer S. Gede S. Shevock

LECTORS

C. Cuffee

9:30 AM D. Banach S. Cordie H. Louissaint
K. Boyer D. Martinez G. Maddelena

LECTORS

J. Lausten
M. Lausten

11:30 AM M. Rivera E. Pastoriza C. Cortes
M. Richard L. Mario

LECTORS

D. Rangel
D. Runser

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

8:30 AM A. Smith

LECTORS

G. Godfrey

11:00 AM F. Cristiano

LECTORS

A. Poppiti



Eucharistic Ministers to the Hospital and Homebound Needed

We are looking for more volunteers to help us bring Holy Communion to the sick and homebound of our parish and to those in the hospital. This ministry keeps growing as we have more and more homebound parishioners who are seeking to receive Our Lord.

Call the Holy Cross Parish Office if interested in this ministry: 302-674-5787, extension 110 or 113.

ADORATION CHAPEL

Jesus came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "So, you men could not stay awake and keep watch with Me for one hour?" Matthew 26:40

Don't you have at least one hour a week to spend in prayer with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Adoration? Come signup for Adoration....many hours open.

If you cannot make a commitment with your busy schedule, look at the hours open and come in when you can. Any free time you have to be with our Lord is good for the soul. Keep this option for praying and adoring open in your life.

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

REDISCOVER THE LOVE IN YOUR MARRIAGE (2026 PROGRAMS)

RETROUVAILLE: REDISCOVER THE LOVE IN YOUR MARRIAGE

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. Couples learn to build communication skills and to increase intimacy. It provides help for marriage problems, difficulties or crises. The next program begins the weekend of February 6-8, 2026 at the Family Life Center in Malvern, PA. For more information, or to register, call 215-766-3944 or visit www.MarriageHelpDelVal.org. All inquiries are strictly confidential.

- Foro Cristiano Reanudaremos nuestro Foro Cristiano “Conozca Su Fe Católica” el viernes, 9 de enero 2025 de 6-8 de la noche, en el ELC que es el último edificio C se ca de la cancha de juegos y suba al segundo piso. Quedan todos cordialmente invitados.
- **¿Qué es el Tiempo Ordinario?** El Tiempo Ordinario es el período más largo del año litúrgico, dividido en dos partes, que se enfoca en la vida diaria y las enseñanzas de Jesús, celebrando a Cristo en la vida diaria, con el color verde y la Eucaristía dominical como elementos clave, tras Navidad y Pascua, y antes de Adviento y Cuaresma, donde se escucha la Escritura y se aprende del ejemplo de Cristo y los santos. No tiene nada de ordinario. "Ordinario" se refiere a "numerado" u "ordenado" (del latín ordinalis), no a algo "común" o "aburrido". Celebra los aspectos de la vida y ministerio de Jesús: enseñanzas, parábolas, milagros y la misión salvadora de Dios. Dura 33 o 34 semanas.
- **-Primer periodo:** Desde el lunes después del Bautismo del Señor (fin de Navidad) hasta el Miércoles de Ceniza (inicio de Cuaresma).
- **-Segundo periodo:** Desde el lunes después de Pentecostés (fin del tiempo pascual) hasta el sábado antes del primer domingo de Adviento.
- **Fiesta de la Candelaria:** La Fiesta de la Virgen de la Candelaria es una celebración religiosa y cultural que conmemora la Presentación de Jesús en el Templo y la Purificación de María 40 días después de Navidad (el 2 de febrero). Honra a la Virgen María como portadora de la luz (candelas), combinando tradiciones católicas con ritos ancestrales de los países andinos y Latino América. Incluye misas, bendición de velas, procesiones, música y danzas tradicionales, siendo una de las devociones marianas extendidas en América Latina.
- **Voluntarios:** Si usted está interesado en participar y compartir sus talentos como lector, ministerio de música, ujier, ministros Extraordinario de la Comunión, Arte y Ambientación, dar Clases Pre-bautismales. 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- EDUCACIÓN RELIGIOSA

- **Sacramentos:**
- **OCIA:** Todos los lunes en el salón de la oficina parroquial. de 5:30-7:15pm
- **Primera Comunión:** Sesión # 2 martes, 27 de enero, 6:30 -7:30 en el Salón parroquial.
- **Confirmación 2026:** Sesión # 4 domingo 18 de enero de 3-5:30 en el salón parroquial.
- **Retiro de Confirmación:** Aquí en ICC ,7 de febrero de 9:00 am – 4:00 PM en el salón parroquial.
- **Formación de Catequistas:** El martes, 3 de febrero, de 7-8:30 pm en el salón parroquial.

RELIGIOUS ED AT HOLY CROSS

Next Class: February 3rd (K-4th Grade) and February 4th (5th Grade and Sacramental Prep)

All Classes in the Elementary Building from 6:00pm-7:30pm (please arrive between 5:45pm and 5:50pm so classes may begin on time.

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.

LAFF (LIVING AS A FAMILY OF FAITH CATECHESIS)

Next classes February 1st and February 15th. We gather after 9:30am Mass in the Matthew/Mark room. Class will begin at 11:00am and will last until approximately 1:00pm.

ADULT EDUCATION CLASS

Next Class: February 3rd (K-4th Grade) and February 4th (5th Grade and Sacramental Prep)

"Foundations of Faith: A Journey Through the Catechism of the Catholic Church is the ultimate way for your parish or small group to encounter the wisdom of the Catechism and deepen your understanding of the Catholic Faith.

This is a free class; however, the workbook set associated with this program is available for a cost of \$40 (workbook and catechism chart)

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.

MONDAY MORNING GROUP

Beginning January 26th, the Monday Morning Group will begin Dan Burke's "Spiritual Warfare and Discernment of Spirits"

Class begins at 9:00 am in the Luke room on the 2nd floor of the Early Learning Center, the Parish Office.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Confirmation Classes:

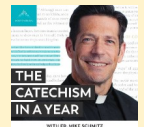
Our next Confirmation Class will be Sunday, January 25 from 5-6:30 pm and Wednesday, January 28 from 6-7:30 pm. Both classes will be in the Matthew Mark room 2nd floor of the ELC building - this week only. Parents will NOT be invited to this class because of the space constraints.

Youth Group:

Our next Youth Group meeting will be on Sunday, January 25 from 6:45-8 pm in the Luke Room, 2nd floor ELC building. All high school youth are welcome to join us.

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>



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT ICC

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

Catechist Formation/In-Service: Tuesday, February 3rd, 7-8:30pm in Parish Hall.

Confirmation Prep: Session #5- Sunday, February 22nd, 3-5:30pm in Parish Hall

Confirmation Retreat: Here at ICC, February 7th, from 9am-4pm in the Hall. This is for the Confirmation Youth only.

First Communion Prep: Session #2: January 27th at 6:30pm-7:30pm in Parish Hall

This past weekend, nine Holy Cross educators traveled across the country to Nevada for the Get Your Teach On conference. We were blessed to be represented by staff from every building, including early childhood, elementary, and junior high. Office coordinators, our school counselor, and I also attended. The experience was both inspiring and energizing. We gained practical instructional strategies, classroom tools, and resources to bring back to our students.

Surrounded by educators from across the United States, we listened to keynote speakers, participated in sessions, and shared ideas about what makes schools thrive. It was encouraging to hear how others build strong learning communities and support children with excellence and care. We returned to Holy Cross grateful for the opportunity to grow professionally and eager to share what we learned with our colleagues.

This past week also included a day off on Monday as we observed Martin Luther King Jr Day. We made it a priority to help students understand why we were out of school. This was not simply another day away from class, but a day to honor the courage and leadership of Dr. King and to reflect on how one person's choices helped shape our nation. Dr. King worked so that people would not be treated differently because of the color of their skin. Students from PreK through eighth grade learned about his life and legacy, and we are reminded that respect, dignity, and justice must be lived out every day in the way we treat one another, as disciples of Christ.

On Tuesday, it was wonderful to welcome everyone back to campus. Wednesday was a busy and exciting day as we hosted a junior high math league competition for our section of the state. We are proud of our Holy Cross team for representing our school with determination and confidence as they tackled challenging problems alongside other young scholars from around Delaware.

Also on Wednesday, our Military Club met again to plan special ways to pray for and honor our nation during Catholic Schools Week. Students also wrote letters and created crafts for priests serving on military bases, which will be sent next week. We are grateful for their thoughtful service and their commitment to supporting those who care for others in both spiritual and sacrificial ways.

On Thursday, representatives from our diocese brought special visitors from Damascus to speak with students in grades five through eight about a summer camp opportunity rooted in our Catholic faith and centered on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Their presentation was engaging and sparked meaningful conversation and excitement among our students. That evening, we hosted the Circle of Honor event in our church, and our junior high students represented Holy Cross beautifully through their presence and support.

Friday marked the interim point for Trimester Two. It is hard to believe we are halfway through the trimester already. Families are encouraged to check PowerSchool to review academic progress in each subject. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your child's teacher. Consistent communication and partnership between home and school is one of the best ways we can support student growth.

Next week begins our 2026 Catholic Schools Week, and we are extremely excited for the events planned. Most importantly, we look forward to celebrating and reflecting on the mission of Holy Cross and the blessings of Catholic education.

Thank you for your continued support.

In Christ,
Mrs. O'Mara, Principal

the road to Damascus, Saul was traveling to torment some more Christians. On that road, he was suddenly, to quote another song of the past, **"blinded by the light."** There was a flash; he was thrown from his horse. Unable to see, he lay on the ground, and the voice of Christ spoke to him. That encounter with Christ changed his life. When he regained his sight in three days, he saw the world differently; soon after, he was baptized and became known as Paul. St. Paul went from being an enemy of Christianity to its biggest evangelist. He spread Christianity to the Gentiles (non-Jews), bringing it from Jerusalem throughout Mediterranean Europe and into Rome. He was ultimately beheaded in Rome for his evangelizing.

The Conversion of St. Augustine. Young St. Augustine had many questions about life, and he followed various philosophers in search of answers. None filled his soul with the answers he wanted. During this time, and up until his early 30s, Augustine also lived a raucous, promiscuous, and bacchanalian lifestyle. As the saying goes, he *"was lookin' for love in all the wrong places."* Then one day, when he was in his 30s, he heard St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, preach, and he heard the beginnings of the answers to his questions. St. Ambrose would guide him in learning the faith. He was inspired to conversion by a verse of Scripture (Roman 13:13-14; go ahead, look it up). That led him to be baptized in the faith of his mother, St. Monica, who prayed for his conversion daily for many years. St. Augustine went on to become a Bishop and one of the greatest philosophers and theologians of Catholicism.

The Conversion of Constantine. Roman Emperor Constantine, who in the religion of ancient Rome was deemed to be a god, one day had a conversion experience that not only brought him to Christianity but also made him cast aside any illusion that he was a god. Shortly before a battle had a vision, recounted by early Christian writer, Lactantius:

"Constantine was directed in a dream to cause the heavenly sign to be delineated on the shields of his soldiers, and so ... he marked on their shields the letter X, with a perpendicular line drawn through it and turned round thus at the top (P), being the [the first two letters in Greek] of Χριστός (Christ)." And Constantine went on to win that battle using the sign from his vision. Constantine's conversion marked the end of pagan Rome and the rise of Christianity. In 313 AD, Constantine legalized Christianity throughout the Empire. While not a saint in the Western Church, he is recognized as "St. Constantine, Equal of the Apostles" in the Eastern Catholic and Orthodox Churches, as he, like the Apostles, spread the

The Conversion of Clovis. Clovis was King of the Franks (although I always thought Sinatra should have that title). In 496 A.D., Clovis was down on his luck; the German tribes were beating his troops like a rented mule. Clovis was an idol-worshipping pagan, but His wife was a Christian. She urged him to pray to God; he did, praying: *"Most mighty God... I pledge you perpetual service unto your faith, if only you give me now the victory over my enemies."* His prayer was answered: His troops began winning. Clovis ultimately conquered much of central Europe. He was soon baptized and then convinced the chieftains within his kingdom to do likewise. And from that one key conversion, Europe was on its way to becoming fully Christian, a continental conversion that would be capped and completed by the conversion of St. Stephen of Hungary in 1000 A.D.

The Conversion of St. Kateri Tekakwitha. A member of the Mohawk Indian tribe, St. Kateri was a young girl whose ill health in her early years left her sickly. Listening to the preaching of Jesuit Missionaries, St. Kateri moved away from the religious practices of her people, and became a convert to Catholicism as a teenager, and was baptized at age 20. As a result of her conversion, her family and her people shunned St. Kateri. But she remained firm in faith. By her example, other Indian tribesmen converted and joined her in a Christian Indian colony. Kateri had a deep devotion to the Eucharist and to Christ crucified. Inspiring many, she died at age 24 in 1680. Today, over 20% of American Indians are Catholic (the largest single Christian religion among Native Americans), and it all goes back to St. Kateri Tekakwitha.

And Many Others. I would be remiss if I didn't mention the importance of several other key conversions, like the conversions of St. Stephen of Hungary (from pagan beliefs to Catholicism), St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (Episcopalianism to Catholicism), St. Edmund Campion (Anglicanism to Catholicism), and many, many more.

It could well be said that the story of our faith is the story of conversion. By reflecting on these great conversions in faith history, and perhaps after listening to a little jazzy touch of George Benson, be inspired by St. Paul, make some time to turn your love around. Answer God's continuing call to conversion.

Yours in Christ, Fr. James Lentini, Pastor