

December 24, 2023



MARY MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

**“FOR TODAY IN THE CITY OF
DAVID A SAVIOR HAS BEEN
BORN FOR YOU WHO IS
MESSIAH AND LORD.”**

LUKE 2:11

4th Sunday of Advent

MASS TIMES

Saturday Vigil 4 PM
Sunday 8 AM & 10 AM
Tuesday–Friday 7:30 AM

CONFESSIONS

Saturday 3:15 - 3:45 PM or
by appointment.

HEARING ASSISTANCE

Hearing devices are available. See us for additional information, especially for hearing aids paired with Bluetooth.

THE ROSARY

Prayed before each weekday Mass
Tuesday - Friday beginning at 7:05 AM.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday–Friday 8 AM - 3 PM

Contact the parish office to register, schedule a baptism, schedule a wedding (six months notice required), and to request the Sacrament of the Sick.

SCRIP

Scrip is sold before and after all week-end Masses and in the parish office on Fridays from 8 AM - 3 PM.

BULLETIN DEADLINE

Requests are due to the office by Monday in written format.

PARISH STAFF

788-5483

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AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

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President

Tara Key 782-5998
Principal, Cathedral School

Kate Moll 782-5564
Principal, Blessed Sacrament School

Angela Koblitz 783-5483
Principal, St. Patrick School, Onalaska

Andrew Bradley
Principal, Aquinas Middle School 784-0156
Principal, Aquinas High School 784-0287

OUR MISSION

Mary, Mother of the Church parishioners are called to be the People of God, formed by the Holy Word and nourished by the Holy Eucharist. We joyfully share our faith and gifts of time, talent, and treasure. We are committed to serve all God's people in the building of the Kingdom.

4th Sunday of Advent

Advent: Preparing Our Hearts for Christ's Coming

The Gospel for the Fourth Sunday of Advent is Luke 1:26-38. Now the Readings turn our focus to the events surrounding the birth of the Savior. The angel Gabriel announces, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a Son, and you shall name Him Jesus...The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the Child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God...for nothing will be impossible for God." The words of the angel remind us that Advent is a season of HOPE. We are not to be afraid, for with God, nothing is impossible.

These words can seem like nice thoughts but how is it possible to have this gift of hope? One telling example stands out in the life of Saint John Paul II. When he first became pope, he spoke to the crowds these very words: "Do not be afraid!" How could he have such hope when the Holy Father, in his native Poland, had lived through the invasion by the Nazi's and the killing of most everyone that he knew during World War II? In the aftermath of the war it was held that the 'Iron Curtain' would never come down. Through Pope John Paul's prayer, unwavering trust in God, and his perseverance in calling for its destruction, we witnessed the downfall of this blockade to freedom without a shot being fired.

The season of Advent is a time to grow in the virtue of hope – to not be afraid. One way is to commit to pray three Hail Mary's with a specific intention in mind, something that heretofore might even have seemed impossible. We will want to ask Our Lady to pray with us, as she is one who experienced the "impossible". Mary, Mother of the Christ Child, will intercede for us. Let us ask her to prepare our hearts to receive the true Gift of Christmas—Christ Himself—in a much deeper way, as she was the first to receive Him as a newborn Babe on Christmas Day.

Special Mass Schedule Christmas

- Dec. 24 at 4:00 PM & 6:30 PM
- Dec. 25 at 9:00 AM

Mary, Mother of God*

- Jan. 1 at 9:00 AM

*Not a holy day of obligation this year, so there will be no 4 PM Vigil Mass on Sunday, Dec. 31.



NEEDED: Liturgical Ministers

Liturgical positions need to be filled for Christmas and Jan. 1 Masses at 9 AM. This includes Sacristans, Ministers of Holy Communion, Greeters, Gift Bearers, and Servers. Please consider filling in if you are available. Go to www.mmoclacrosse.org and click on the Ministry Scheduler link at the top of the page, or call Steve at 608-788-5483, ext. 1.

Parish Office Hours During the Christmas Season

The parish office will be closed on Dec. 26 & 29.

From the Pastor and Parish Staff

We wish you and your loved ones a blessed and Merry Christmas!

May Christ's peace reign in your hearts and in your homes!



Serving you in the name of Christ is an honor and a privilege. May 2024 be a special year of grace for all of us.

Family Is Important at Christmas

We make an extra effort to be with family at Christmas time...often times leaving our own comfortable homes, grimacing a bit as we brace for a trip that might include snow and freezing temperatures, loading a trunk full of gifts and "just-in-case-items," and perhaps adding an overnight expense to our budget. We do all this to share conversation and meals with family...sometimes with the awareness that our family relationships aren't as good as we experience with our own neighbors and co-workers back home. And yet we travel, because family is important.

Our family of faith is also important...and imperfect. It can seem easier to stay at home and say a little prayer, but it's important to remain engaged in the family of faith. That's why we go to Mass for Christmas.

In heaven, there is only one family. God is shaping that family right here on Earth. The start of a new year is a great time to renew our commitment to this family and our weekly family gatherings.

Being registered and being active in a local parish is important. It might not always be exciting, but it's important because it's important to be part of the family.

- ◆ If you're not registered in a parish, call your local church. First, you may need to spend a couple months visiting area parishes to find one you're most comfortable with. Consider Mary, Mother of the Church!
- ◆ If you're already registered in a parish but not the church-going type, make an extra effort...as you are for Christmas.
- ◆ If you're holding back because you were married outside the Church—whether it's your first marriage or not—contact a priest and he can guide you through the necessary steps.
- ◆ If you have been a faithful church-goer, perhaps it's time to be involved in some parish ministry.

May your New Year be full of grace, happiness, and family.

Yours in Christ, Father Konopa

Early Bulletin Deadlines

Submissions for the Jan. 7 is due by Tuesday Dec. 26.

Christmas Flower Donations

We are receiving donations toward the purchase of flowers and decorations in memory of a loved one or as a gift. You can use the flower envelope in your Nov/Dec. packet or use a blank envelope with your donation and the name of the person(s) you would like to memorialize. A list of those who are honored and remembered will be published in January.

Family Life

Wedding Banns (III)

Deven Nietzold & Lily Manning on December 30, 2023. Keep them in your prayers as they prepare for their wedding.



Faith Formation

Family Faith Formation Christmas Break

Family Faith Formation does NOT meet Wednesday December 27. Families should be completing At Home Lesson 3-2: Love Like Jesus and 3-3: Pray Like Jesus. We will see you again on January 3. Contact Kristin with any questions: kjohnson@mmoclacrosse.org or 608-788-5483 Ext. 4.

Youth Faith Formation

Middle and High School Youth Faith Formation will not be meeting on Wednesday, December 27th. Enjoy the arrival of Jesus with family, friends, and food! We will resume on Wednesday, January 3rd with our Christmas Party. If you would like to make a donation of food or drinks for this youth event, please contact Samuel Obert- sobert@mmoclacrosse.org. Lastly, please remember to return all 'Safe Environment' paperwork by January 3.

Finance

Diocesan Annual Appeal

The target goal for our parish is \$110,420. As of December 15, parish participation is at 26% Please be generous. If you are unable to contribute financially, please return the appeal form to the diocese with \$0 written in the amount pledged line. Thank you.



Eucharistic Revival

Two Minutes With Jesus

1. The Eucharist is called the Holy Sacrifice. A sacrifice is an offering of love for someone. Jesus rescued us and set us free from the bondage of sin by offering Himself through His painful sacrifice on the Cross. At each Mass, Jesus offers Himself to the Father for love of us. Jesus is not being “re-sacrificed” but the sacrifice of Calvary is being made present at each Mass. To express our gratitude and to open our hearts more deeply to Him, we can show our love by offering small sacrifices to Him: our willingness to forgive after being

hurt by someone, cutting our time short with TV to take time for prayer, visiting someone who is sick, etc. Let’s pray this right now and every day this week: Thank You, Jesus, for loving me so much that You were willing to die in order to save me and set me free from the bondage of sin. This week, read how we are to imitate Jesus by walking in the way of love in Ephesians 5:2— “Walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved me and gave Himself up for me as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God”.

Jesus by walking in the way of love in Ephesians 5:2— “Walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved me and gave Himself up for me as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God”.

2. The Eucharist is called Holy Mass. The word “Mass” comes from the Latin word “Missa.” Missa is related to the word “missio,” the root of the English word “mission.” At Mass, we come to receive the Eucharist – the Real Presence of Jesus. He gives Himself to us out of love, to strengthen us in living out the Christian life. At the end of Mass, we are dismissed with the words, “The Mass is ended, let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.” Each of us are sent on mission, to show our love for God by loving and serving others and passing on the Catholic Faith to them. We want to help others to know the Truth – Jesus Christ – so that they also can find peace, which only He can give. Let’s pray this right now and every day this week: Jesus, please give me the courage to speak about my friendship with You in simple ways to others, when the opportunity arises. And let my actions to speak louder than any words I say. This week, read how we are to serve others in Hebrews 6:10 — “Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”

Social Justice

Donate to Help Victims of Violence in the Holy Land

Catholic Relief Services, in conjunction with Caritas partners, are working to meet the desperate humanitarian needs caused by the terrorism and fighting in the Holy Land. How can you help? Visit www.crs.org or scan the QR code to find out.



Warming Center Volunteers on Tuesday, Jan. 2

Food & Milk (to be delivered to 413 S. 3rd St. by 6:30 PM): Pattie Nimocks, Mary Jothen, OPEN, OPEN, Mary Lawrence (milk)

Intake (6:30 PM - 9 PM): Mary Olson, Sarah Kopski, Terri Pedace, Dave & Nancy Imhoff

Morning Volunteers (6 - 8:30 AM Wed.): OPEN, OPEN

Free haircuts by Linda Kuehl
--Mary Olson, MMOC Coordinator for The Warming Center, molson@mmoclacrosse.org.



December 24, 2023

Liturgical Roles December 24-25

Minister of Holy Communion

4:00 PM Deacon Terry Bell, Lance Miller-Choir,
Lori Hammes, Erica Stanek
6:30 PM OPEN, OPEN, Kellie Schmitz
9:00 AM Deacon Terry Bell, Nick & Janice Ber-
ry, Mary Olson, OPEN-Choir

Lector

4:00 PM Sue Ernster, Sarah Scarlett
6:30 PM Mary Jo Swartout, Barbara Stetzer
9:00 AM Patricia Kirchner, Barbara Stetzer

Server

4:00 PM Lincoln & Porter Stanek
6:30 PM OPEN, OPEN
9:00 AM OPEN, OPEN

Cantor

4:00 PM Sunday Choir
6:30 PM Christine Nelson
9:00 AM New Life Choir

Musician

4:00 PM Jenny Nielsen
6:30 PM Christopher Carskadon
9:00 AM Christopher Carskadon

Sacristan

4:00 PM Sue Groetsch
6:30 PM OPEN
9:00 AM Mike Keogh

Gift Bearer

4:00 PM Lance & Jennifer Miller
6:30 PM OPEN, OPEN
9:00 AM OPEN, Sandy Pitsch

Greeter

4:00 PM Deke Stanek, Bob & Cindy Klar, Arian
Arens, Mike & Joan Weissenberger,
OPEN, OPEN-Lead
6:30 PM Pat & Donna Burns, OPEN, OPEN,
OPEN, OPEN, OPEN, OPEN
9:00 AM Jon Mason, OPEN, Lydia & Felicity
Bell, OPEN, Patrick Hogan, OPEN-
Lead

Live Streamer

4:00 PM Joseph van Oss

Song Leader

4:00 PM Linda Gillette
9:00 AM Dawn Mazzola

Liturgical Roles December 30-31

Minister of Holy Communion

4:00 PM Rita Sanchez, Joseph & Therese van
Oss
8:00 AM Deacon Terry Bell, Mary Lawrence, Fred
Berneking
10:00 AM Deacon Terry Bell, Terri Pedace, OPEN

Lector

4:00 PM Chris Schlegel, Jerry Iverson
8:00 AM Charles Heiderscheid, Bob Mahr
10:00 AM Patricia Kirchner, Bill Brendel

Server

4:00 PM Sue Ernster, Tenley Solverson
8:00 AM Ryann Klar, Matthew Klar
10:00 AM Isabella Neubauer, Adelyn Neubauer

Cantor

4:00 PM OPEN
8:00 AM Pattie Nimocks
10:00 AM Mary Kulas

Musician

4:00 PM Natalie Solverson
8:00 AM Christopher Carskadon
10:00 AM Christopher Carskadon

Sacristan

4:00 PM OPEN
8:00 AM Sue Groetsch
10:00 AM Linda Gillette

Gift Bearer

4:00 PM George & Maggie Bell
8:00 AM David Parker, Manuokalewa Parker
10:00 AM Chuck & Jessica Neubauer

Greeter

4:00 PM Patrick Hogan, Mary Schaub, Joan Weis-
senberger, Jim Spielbauer, Harper Solv-
erson, Neil Kumm, Joe Riemer, Phil Wat-
son-Lead
8:00 AM Dave Lawrence, Cindy Klar, Jon Mason,
Jack Branson, Daniel Skiles, Sandy
Pitsch, Rosie Pennebecker, Bob Klar-
Lead
10:00 AM Andrew Schwartz, Lydia Bell, Felicity
Bell, OPEN, Chuck, Polly & Charlotte
Berendes, Linda Schwartz-Lead

Scrip Seller

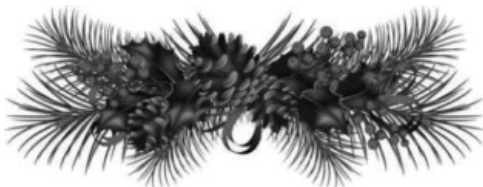
4:00 PM Heidi Schlegel, Vickie Kloss
8:00 AM Mary Genz, OPEN
10:00 AM Tammy Byington, Sheri Skelton

Hospitality

8:00 AM Ken & Michelle Morrison
10:00 AM OPEN, OPEN

Live Streamer

4:00 PM Joseph van Oss



Weekly Mass Intentions

Tuesday, December 26, 2023

No Mass

Wednesday, December 27, 2023

7:30 AM † Donald Bowman

By Family

Thursday, December 28, 2023

7:30 AM † Nancy Kaiser

By Family

Friday, December 29 2023

7:30 AM † Jerome & Alyce Herouf

By Rod & Bev Kadrmas

Saturday, December 30, 2023

1:00 PM Neitzold & Manning Wedding

4:00 PM † Donald Bowman

By Family

Sunday, December 31, 2023

9:00 AM Servais & Werner Families

By Linda Werner

10:00 AM Pro Populo



Memories, in a way, are like creating a masterpiece that has so much beauty to it; the end result takes one's breath away. The memories made at the Mary, Mother of the Church Cookie Walk has, as its own, a different type of masterpiece, just as unique as its parish - it has each of you as a part of this and the end result, "priceless." Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for making the 2023 Cookie Walk such a heart-warming success and the day that it was by whatever and however you contributed to it. A special thank you to the surrounding La Crosse Community for your continued support of our end-of-the-year parish fundraiser. We are truly surrounded by so many blessings! Wishing all a very happy Holiday season.

Door Prize Winners

\$20 gift card donated by Kwik Trip: Candy Hetti, Carol Peterson, Shelly Fortner, Judy Given, Mary Asmus.

\$25 Walmart gift card: Everly Johnson.

Poinsettia Plants: Pat Hogan, Mariah Callan, Rosa Wittenberg, Sue Moyle, Betty Berg.

Raffle Winners:

Christmas Eve basket: Kathy Storlie

Christmas Morning basket: Rachelle Vogel

The Little Baker basket: Sara Hart

Relax and Rejuvenate basket: Betty Stoll

Taste of Italy basket: Linda Gillette

Spirited Selections basket: Sue Milisch

Toasting Good Moments basket: Sue Milisch

Adult rocker: Pat Muehr

Youth rocker: Megan Bauer

Toddler rocker: Gary Vogel

Mystery Box: Julie Jordan



The 2023 MMOC Cookie Walk brought in \$11,929.23!

Date of the 2024 MMOC Cookie Walk: December 14.



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