

The Parish of the Holy Cross

95 Nichols Road + Nesconset, NY 11767 + 631.265.2200 +
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LET ALL BE WELCOMED AS CHRIST!

Vision Statement: *Holy Cross is a vibrant Catholic community striving to maintain a spirit of welcome to all, serving as a guiding beacon to nourish and sustain prayer, work and play.*



Come and pray with us!

Third Sunday of Advent - December 17, 2023

We celebrate Eucharist

Monday-Thursday 9:00 AM; Saturday 5:00 PM; Sunday 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM & 11:30 AM
The 9:00 Weekday Mass & Sunday 11:30 Mass are livestreamed on Facebook.

We celebrate Reconciliation

Saturday 3:30 PM - 4:15 PM; Wednesday after 9:00 AM Mass

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!

631.265.2200 + Fax: 631.265.2229 + Email: parish@holycrossrc.org
Parish Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 AM - 4 PM (closed 12:15 - 1 PM)

PASTORAL TEAM

Rev. Michael F. Holzmann
Pastor, ext.115

Deacon Joseph Maffeo
Pastoral Minister, ext.124

Mrs. Judith Pickel
Pastoral Associate, ext.116

Mrs. Michele Hall
Pastoral Associate, ext.120

Mrs. Tricia Clarke, ext.112
Director of Religious Ed.

Mrs. Kelley Mowat, ext.113
Coordinator of Parish Outreach

Mr. Brian Reich
Director of Music Ministry

PASTORAL STAFF

Mrs. Jane Wirth
Parish Secretary, ext.122

Dr. Vincent Mazurek
Music Minister/Webmaster

Mrs. Mary Pannone, ext.111
Religious Education Secretary
(mpannone@holycrossrc.org)

Ms. Karina D'Angelo
Business Manager, ext.110

Mr. Roberto Maza
Custodian

Mrs. Mary Inghilterra
Weekend Sacristan

Remembering Our Sick

Please pray for those in our parish who are sick,
their families and caregivers:

Bob Alderdice	Theresa Arzillo
Jo Barry	Kathy Barry
Barbara Bombace	Cole Brennan
Ann Callari	Judy Carlson
Jason DeLuca	Manuela Diaz
Ann Egan	Ralph Farino
Yolanda Fattarusso	Sienna Fricke
Linda Heinrichs	Debbie Jablinowski
Kristen Kennedy	Roberta Lamb
Dora Libretti	Gerald Losquadro
Charlotte Lynch	Viola Malek
Jeanne Marie Malley	Olivia Melia
Loretto Narducci	Carina Ranieri
Liam Richards	Elaine Ruane
Casey Schultz	Kathy Schwinn
Barbara Sherry	Celeste Sichenze
Kyle Sweeney	Bill Tanner
Grace Van Epps	Peter Warns
Danny Youngworth	

Upcoming Mass Intentions

Week of Sunday, December 17, 9AM Masses

Mon. Mary Ann Hannon (living)
Tue. Marguerite Fredrick
Wed. Suzanne, Daniel & George Bergmann
Thu. Tricia Folliero (living)



*New Life
in Christ*

Saturday, December 23, 5PM Mass

Debra DiBella, Dick Herzog, Florence Mischuk,
Gregg Lombardi

Sunday, December 24, Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:00 AM Nick & Millie Matonti
9:30 AM Deborah Parente, Michael Cono
11:30 AM People of the Parish

Sunday, December 24th, Christmas Eve Masses

4, 6 & 10 PM All Prayer Card Intentions

Monday, December 25th, Christmas Day Masses

8, 9:30 & 11:30 AM All Prayer Card Intentions

If you would like to have the name of your loved
one listed in our prayers for the sick,
please call 631-265-2200 x122.

KNOW WHO YOU ARE, AND REJOICE

by Father Michael

This week's first reading is one of my favorite passages from the Old Testament. The prophet Isaiah recognizes that he has been called by God to bring glad tidings to the poor. From his mouth will come a message that will bring comfort and hope to those in turmoil. This reading is beautiful in and of itself. But it takes on even more power in Luke's Gospel when Jesus stands in the temple and reads this passage from the sacred scrolls just as he begins his public ministry. Jesus recognizes the call his father has given him and realizes the time to begin that work has now come.

This passage from Isaiah was one of the scripture readings proclaimed on the day of my ordination. Without trying to sound pompous, these words have always rung a chord of truth in my own heart. Through the years, the one part of who I am that has become most clear to me is to be one who proclaims and preaches God's Word. It is a humbling realization, at times even daunting, but one that fills me with excitement and tremendous satisfaction and joy.

In today's second reading St. Paul urges us not to "quench the Spirit" nor to "despise any prophetic utterances." God calls to each of us in unique ways. Sometimes it takes the passing of many years and some challenging life experiences for us to fully appreciate what each of us has been called to. We need to allow that Spirit to be at work in our hearts. We need to trust that the Lord has called us for specific reasons. The greatest gift we will ever give God is to use well and return to the Lord all he has given us. John the Baptist understood this well. He clearly says he is not a prophet or Elijah. But he does own that he is "the voice of one crying in the desert." He says as clearly as possible that his actions are not about himself. Rather, he intends to point beyond his own accomplishments and allow others to know Jesus. He understands his role and seems to find great peace in that.

Woven throughout these passages of God's call and our response is the word "rejoice." When we make a connection in our own lives to that wondrous mystery of who God called us to be, the only possible response is to rejoice. What a beautiful message to hear on this third week of Advent. There can be many distractions along the way that may make us lose focus, but this season calls us back. May the silence and spirit of anticipation in Advent allow us to know that wondrous grace of God dwelling within. Yes, Come Lord Jesus. But, also, you are already here dwelling within, REJOICE!

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Weekly Calendar

Sunday, December 17th	9:30 AM
• RITE OF WELCOME	Worship Area
Monday, December 18th	9:30AM & 6:30-7:30PM
• CONFESSION	Chapel
• SPECIAL NEEDS	4- 6 PM Atrium
Tuesday, December 19th	10 AM
• IN STITCHES	Fr. Joe Room
• MOMS' GROUP	7PM Fr. Joe Room
Thursday, December 21st	10 AM
• SCRIPTURE STUDY	Fr. Joe Room
• CHRISTMAS CHOIR REHEAR.	7PM Worship Area
Sunday, December 24th	8, 9:30 & 11:30AM
• 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT MASSES	Worship Area
• CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES	4,6 & 10 PM
Monday, December 25th	8, 9:30 & 11:30AM
• CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES	Worship Area
<i>(The Parish Office is closed on 12/25 & 12/26)</i>	

Scripture Readings for December 24, 2023



- + 2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14,16
- + Romans 16:25-27
- + Luke 1:26-38

Celebrants for Next Weekend's Masses, December 23rd/24th

4th Sunday of Advent

5:00 PM	Fr. Frank
8:00 AM	Fr. Michael
9:30 AM	Fr. Michael
11:30 AM	Fr. Frank



Celebrants for Christmas Masses, December 24th/25th

Christmas Eve, December 24th

4:00 PM	Fr. Michael
6:00 PM	Fr. Frank/Dcn. Joe
10:00 PM	Fr. Michael

Christmas Day, December 25th

8:00 AM	Fr. Frank/Dcn. Joe
9:30 AM	Fr. Michael
11:30 AM	Fr. Michael

*The Bread and Wine for the week December 17th - 23rd have been donated in loving memory of **Jim Emerson** by his family.*



Christmas Flower Offering Envelopes

Names of loved ones will appear in the Christmas bulletin.

Special Collection

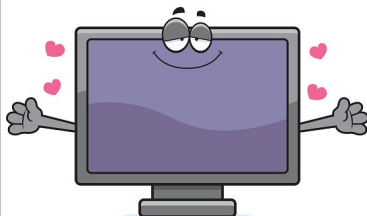
This weekend we will also be collecting for our **Repairs and Major Renovations** fund. Thank you for your continued support!

Help Needed!



The **HCTV Ministry** that runs the slides at the weekend Masses can use your help! From Saturday, December 23rd, to Monday,

Christmas Day, there will be **ten Masses to cover**. If you are a regular parishioner, high school student, or even a college student home for the holidays, please consider helping.



Please call **Wendy at 631-724-0930** if interested. Training included.

Thank you!

COME JOIN US!

HELP WANTED

Children's Liturgy of the Word is coming back in January, twice a month at the 11:30 AM Mass. Children grades 1 - 4 gather in the Fr. Joe Room for 15 - 20 minutes during Mass.

Volunteers are needed:

- **Leaders** - Adults, High School Juniors or Seniors to lead the children in their own Liturgy of the Word (Training and materials are provided.)
- **Helpers** - Older children (5th grade and up) to assist the leaders
- **Musicians** - Guitarists, Keyboardists, Vocalists to add music to the experience



Questions? Interested? Please call Jude at ext. 116.

THANK YOU!

Thank you to The Blessed Sacrament Council of the Knights of Columbus here at Holy Cross for their generous donation of 24 brand new winter coats for the teenagers of our Outreach families.

These coats were made available to families as they came to pick up their Christmas gifts from the parish.

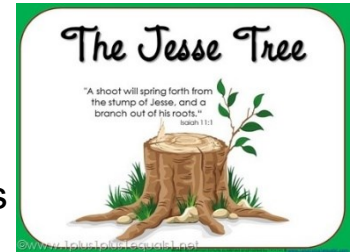
Parents had the opportunity to choose the size and color specifically for their child.

Thank you, Blessed Sacrament Council, for your support of our Outreach families and for your generous gift!



LITURGY BYTES

An Advent Favorite



Another popular Advent symbol that is seen in some churches is the Jesse Tree. Briefly, it contains symbols representing the ancestry of Jesus.

The Jesse Tree helps us connect the custom of decorating Christmas trees to the events leading to the birth of Jesus. The tree is named from this passage from the prophet Isaiah (11:1) which says: "A shoot shall come out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." Jesse was the father of King David. We adorn a Jesse Tree with illustrated ornaments that represent the people, prophecies and events leading up to the birth of Jesus. The ornaments of the Jesse Tree tell the story of God in the Old Testament, connecting the Advent season with the faithfulness of God across thousands of years of history. There are numerous symbols that can be used that connect with the Bible stories like Creation, Adam & Eve, Noah's ark, Jacob's ladder, the Ten Commandments, Solomon's temple, John the Baptist, Mary, Elizabeth, Joseph, the Shepherds, and Jesus.

Believe it or not, the tradition of decorating Christmas trees actually predates the arrival of Christianity in western Europe and was adopted by the early Church. In order to associate the custom more clearly with Christianity, people made Jesse Trees with regular Christmas trees, using decorations related to the events leading up to the birth of Jesus, which included some of the Old Testament prophecies about Him. Over the years, the type of tree used changed to something sparse with just branches on it since a branch was a sign of new life and new beginnings. Jesus was a descendant of King David, and Christians believe that Jesus is the new branch.

This can be a great exercise for families with children in keeping the birth of Jesus a priority during Advent and Christmas. There are many Jesse Tree resources online to get you started.

Have a prayerful, watchful, and blessed week ahead! ~ *Michele Hall*

CHRISTMAS MASSES

Christmas 2023 Mass Schedule **The Nativity of the Lord**

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 23rd @ 5:00PM
Sunday, December 24th @ 8:00AM, 9:30AM & 11:30AM

Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24th
4:00PM, 6:00PM & 10:00PM

Christmas Day

Monday, December 25th
8:00AM, 9:30AM & 11:30AM

Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

Saturday, December 30th @ 5:00PM
Sunday, December 31st @ 8:00AM, 9:30AM & 11:30AM

Solemnity of Mary

Sunday, December 31st @ 5:00PM
Monday, January 1st @ 10:00AM

Confessions

Saturdays: 3:30 – 4:15PM
Wednesdays after the 9:00AM Mass
Monday, December 18th: After the 9:00AM Mass
and 6:30PM to 7:30PM

Christmas Mass Intentions



In lieu of individual announced intentions at the Christmas Masses, there are cards in the atrium on which to write your special intentions. These cards will be placed on the Altar at all the Christmas Masses.

Virtus Class for Volunteers in the Diocese of Rockville Centre

A person wishing to volunteer in any parish or organization in the Diocese of Rockville Centre must first complete three requirements:

1. Attend Protecting God's Children (Virtus)
2. Sign the Codes of Conduct
3. Complete a background screening application

(Background screening is conducted on all volunteers and employees every 5 years)

Directions to Complete the 3 Requirements:

1. Sign up to attend a Protecting God's Children class: www.Virtus.org
 - a. If you have not attended a Virtus class, you are a first-time registrant.
 - b. The first screen will ask the name of your organization - from the drop down list select Rockville Centre – Safe Environment.
 - c. Follow all directions on the next screens.
 - d. One screen will have the Codes of Conduct. Please acknowledge the Codes of Conduct.
 - e. Continue with the registration process and select the class you will attend.
 - f. After selecting the class, you will be instructed to complete the background screening application.
2. Background Screening Application:
 - a. Sterling Volunteers is the company providing the background screening.
 - b. Follow all the directions to complete the background screening application. **DO NOT STOP ONCE YOU BEGIN THE APPLICATION!** If you stop, you are locked out of the process due to security procedures.
 - c. You will need to provide your Social Security #; if you do not provide a Social Security # you will be charged a fee by the Diocese.
 - d. After completing the application, hit the "submit" button.

The next class offered at Holy Cross will be held on Wednesday, January 3rd, 2024 at 6pm. Please register for this class from the Virtus website. No walk-ins will be admitted. Please contact Tricia Clarke at 631-265-2200 x112 for more information.



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Christmas 2023

To the People of God of the Diocese of Rockville Centre:

Merry Christmas to you and your families!

In recent years at Christmas, I have meditated on the relationship between the Nativity of the Prince of Peace and the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

I have been especially inspired by Pope Francis' analysis of the Parable of the Good Samaritan in the second chapter of his 2020 encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*. It is powerful and provocative, and I would recommend it for your mental prayer.

The short phrase in the Christmas Gospel narrative in the second chapter of the Gospel of Luke reads: "She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

"No room for them in the inn." No Good Samaritan stepped up to help the Holy Family. They were ignored and treated perfunctorily and impatiently. Some passed them by. Some pretended not to notice their plight.

Remember too that in the Parable of the Good Samaritan an "inn" is also mentioned. Luke 10 reads: "But a Good Samaritan while traveling came near him, and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn and took care of him."

The inn that the Holy Family approaches on the way to Bethlehem is a sign of rejection and indifference.

The inn in the Parable of the Good Samaritan is a sign of the Good Samaritan's compassion and commitment to go the extra mile and to make sure that the wounded man is taken care of until he is completely healed.

Contemporary literary criticism might very well emphasize that the use of "inn" by the Gospel writer in both the Nativity in Luke 2 and the Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10 is not by accident.



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

In a sense, the phrase “there was no room at the inn” in the Nativity foreshadows and connects with the phrase in the Parable of the Good Samaritan describing the callous indifference of both the priest and the Levite toward the wounded man on the side of the road: “[H]e passed by on the other side.”

As Pope Francis says in *Fratelli Tutti*: “Each day we have to decide whether to be Good Samaritans or indifferent bystanders.”¹

Our Lady, St. Joseph and the unborn Christ Child experienced the reality of people who decided to be indifferent bystanders.

The Christmas Gospel narrative from Luke 2 poses a question which is posed again later in the Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10.

Will we be Good Samaritans?

Or will we be indifferent bystanders?

As the Holy Father reminds us, we make that choice every day.

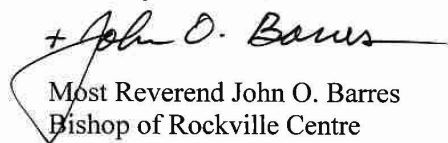
May our prayer, silent contemplation and creative family catechesis of the Nativity scene help us to be instruments of a Nativity Mystery. May the Good Samaritan Gospel revolution of humility, charity, mercy, tenderness and peace unite us in solidarity with the sick, the poor and the suffering, especially in the Middle East, Ukraine and all war-ravaged areas of the world.

May our commitment to “holiness and mission” bless our contemplative Synodal listening and our Eucharistic Revival and Evangelization.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and your families!

May the Light and Love of the Christ Child animate and guide our global Catholic Missionary Spirit on this Christmas night and throughout the New Year.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend John O. Barres
Bishop of Rockville Centre

¹ Francis, encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, October 4, 2020: AAS 112 (11) 969-1074, at no. 70.

TAKE A CHANCE!

Winter Windfall

For many years the Cash Calendar was a part of the Holy Cross routine, and this fundraiser provided some additional financial support to the parish. At this time, it is unlikely that we have enough parishioners attending Mass on a weekly basis to support a monthly drawing, so we will continue as we have done for the past few years with our quarterly drawing.



- \$10 per ticket
- Tickets are available for purchase through December, January and February.
- Drawing will be held **February 29**.

This is the pay scale which will be offered:

- * 1 Prize @ \$250
- * 2 Prizes @ \$100
- * 10 Prizes @ \$50
- * 15 Prizes @ \$25



- This formula was based upon selling 250 tickets @ \$10 each. If more than 250 tickets are sold, the number of prizes will be increased.
- Please use the tear-off tickets below. You may return your entries by placing them in an envelope and depositing it in the basket on weekends, or returning them to the Parish Office.

Thank you for your support!

Winter Windfall

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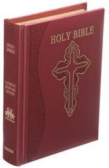
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