

Holy Cross Catholic Church

Fourth Sunday of Advent & the week of Christmas

December 21, 2025



Parish Staff

Pastor

Father Michael Hendershott,
S.T.L.

Pastoral Care of the Sick

Deacon Stephen May
(865) 221-1076

Parish Secretary

Rebekah Snyder
(865) 429-5587

office@holycrosscatholicchurchtn.org

Resource Manager

Michael Landree
resources@holycrosscatholicchurchtn.org

Office Hours

Monday-Friday

9:00am-2:00pm

Gift Shop Hours

Monday-Friday

9:00am-2:00pm

Weekends

After all Masses



Mass Schedule

Tuesday-Friday

12:00pm

Saturday

5:00pm English
7:00pm Español

Sunday

8:00am English
10:30am English

Confession

Saturday

3:00-4:00pm
6:30-6:55pm

First Saturday

8:30-9:30am

Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament

First Friday 1:00pm until
10:00am Saturday

A Note from the Pastor

Dear Parishioners and Friends of Holy Cross,

Blessed Fourth Sunday of Advent—the Lord is near! We celebrate His coming this week on Christmas. There are many beautiful traditional customs that help us commemorate Christ’s coming at Christmas. One of these is the St. Andrew Novena prayer that we customarily prayed 15 times per day from the feast of St. Andrew on November 30 until Christmas.

Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold. In that hour, vouchsafe, O my God! to hear my prayer and grant my desires, (mention your intentions here) through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and of His Blessed Mother. Amen.

As we light the last purple candle on our Advent wreath, we recognize that the heavenly light of the Son of God comes into the world while the earthly daylight of the sun begins to reflect that reality with longer days. At Christmas, the Advent wreath is sometimes decorated and becomes a Christmas wreath, hanging upon the door or wall to recall our preparation and signify that our house has been prepared as a home to receive Christ’s coming. A Christ candle can be decorated and lit in place of the Advent candles. The Irish used to put a candle in the window to show that their house had been prepared for the coming of Christ, sometimes being a sign that Catholics lived in the house and welcomed the sacramental coming of Christ in the Mass into their homes when the Mass was illegal due to persecution. When asked about the candle, they would say that it was a sign of welcome for Joseph and Mary when they were looking for a place to stay.

On Christmas Eve, the **Vigil of Christmas Mass** (our 7:00pm Mass) prepares us for the coming of Christ as the Gospel recounts the “begots,” who begot whom in the genealogy of Christ.

On Christmas Day, there are three Mass texts that present the three “births” of Christ. The first one is the **Mass During the Night** (our 12:00am Midnight Mass) known as the “**Angels’ Mass**” because the Gospel presents to us the angels’ message to the shepherds that the Christ Child had been born *physically* in Bethlehem.

The Second Mass of Christmas is the **Mass at Dawn** (our 8:00am Mass) known as the “**Shepherd’s Mass**” because the Gospel focuses on the response of the Shepherds to go worship the Savior, and therefore commemorates Christ’s birth *spiritually* in the hearts of the shepherds by faith.

The Third Mass of Christmas is the **Mass During the Day** (our 10:30am Mass) known as the “**Mass of the Divine Word**” because the Gospel presents Christ’s *eternal* birth as the Word from the side of the Father.

In contemplating these three “births” or comings of Christ, may we rejoice to receive Him into our hearts this Christmas and spread that love, joy, and peace of Christmas with those around us. On behalf of Holy Cross Catholic Church, may you all have a very blessed and merry Christmas, and may the Holy Infant King reign in our hearts all year long!



Meet Our New Office Staff

We are continually improving our parish office to better serve the needs of our parish. This week, our Resource Manager, Michael Landree, installed a new phone system so that calls to the office can be more easily received and directed by our Parish Secretary, Rebekah Snyder. Emergency sacramental calls can be forwarded directly to Father Hendershott's cell phone. We are grateful to our new staff for their hard work and dedication to serve God by serving Holy Cross. By way of introductions, here are their photos, short bios, and job descriptions. Welcome to Holy Cross!



Rebekah Snyder is our new parish secretary here at Holy Cross. She is a Tennessee native and graduated from Knoxville Catholic High School. Rebekah has been discerning her vocation to consecrated life since her senior year, amidst many health difficulties. She grew up playing tennis almost everyday with a group of girls training to go professional. She still enjoys playing tennis and all other racquet sports. She has always loved art, graphic design, classical music, and reading. She has been in choirs since elementary school and currently sings in a parish choir. Rebekah first discovered her love for serving in a parish setting through volunteering. She found it fulfilling to get to put her love for graphic design into practice through creating flyers and newsletters. When a secretary job opened up in the Diocese, she was grateful to God for another opportunity to serve Him in that way. She loves to be a part of God's salvific mission through the sacramental life of the Church. She considers it a privilege to witness and facilitate the faithful's drawing near to the Lord and His drawing souls to Himself. She finds her new role highly conducive to her discernment of a vocation to active religious life.

Our parish secretary, Rebekah Snyder, serves as receptionist to receive general questions about Mass times and intentions, parish events, sacramental records and blessings, parish registration, and meetings with the pastor, as well as bulletin and pulpit announcements.



Michael Landree is our new Resources Manager and he is very thankful to serve our parish. He's a native Tennessean living in his family's homestead from the 1780s in Blaine; Mike was born and raised in Memphis. He's a graduate of UT Knoxville and Christian Brothers University in Memphis where he received his BBA and MBA, respectively. Retiring as a LtCol from the Marine Corps after almost 29 years, Mike served in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo, North and East Africa, Okinawa, and many other countries during his service. Mike is a cradle Catholic with seven children and two grandchildren who are his main focus outside of the Church. His hobbies include military history, antique vehicles, shooting, outdoor adventures, and leadership development of young men. Mike was motivated to work for Holy Cross out of a sense of love for the Church and a desire to serve God with all his mind, heart, soul, and body.

Our resource manager, Michael Landree, serves to organize maintenance, security, personnel including volunteers, and gift shop needs. He handles purchasing of materials and supplies, invoices, contracts, projects, policies, reimbursements, Safe Environment and insurance paperwork.

We are grateful for the help and support of the Diocese of Knoxville Chancery as we went through the hiring process to find the most qualified candidates to serve Holy Cross. The HR Director from the Chancery, Maura Lentz, came to our parish to join Father Hendershott and John Jabaley, the chair of our Parish Finance Council, to conduct interviews of multiple candidates for both positions after we received resumes for more than two weeks. John recommended and Maura affirmed the hiring of Rebekah Snyder as Parish Secretary and Michael Landree as Resource Manager. Thank you for your service as humble coworkers in the vineyard of Christ!

Mass Intentions & Readings

Please see updated Christmas Eve Mass time

† Denotes deceased

Saturday of the Third Week of Advent <i>Isaiah 7:10-14, 9-11, Luke 1:26-38</i>	Saturday, December 20	5pm †Melvin & †Roberta Haines 7pm For the People of Holy Cross
Fourth Sunday of Advent <i>Isaiah 7:10-14, Romans 1:1-7, Matthew 1:18-24</i>	Sunday, December 21	8am †Jimmy Owens 10:30am DellaSantina Family
Monday of the Fourth Week of Advent <i>1 Samuel 1:24-28, Luke 1:46-56</i>	Monday, December 22	No Mass
Tuesday of the Fourth Week of Advent <i>Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24, Luke 1:57-66</i>	Tuesday, December 23	12pm Patricia Berry
Wednesday of the Fourth Week of Advent <i>Genesis 49:2, 8-10, Matthew 1:1-17</i> <i>The Nativity of the Lord</i> <i>Isaiah 9:1-6, Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-14</i> <i>Isaiah 62:11-12, Titus 3:4-7, Luke 2:15-20</i> <i>Isaiah 52:7-10, Hebrews 1:1-6, John 1:1-18</i>	Wednesday, December 24	7pm †Anne Wright
St. Stephen the Protomartyr <i>Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59, Matthew 10:17-22</i>	Thursday, December 25	12am †Rosamaria Perez 8am †Leo Shields 10:30am Michael Carbone
St. John the Beloved <i>1 John 1:1-4, John 20:1a and 2-8</i>	Friday, December 26	12pm Marianne Dizon
Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph <i>Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14, Colossians 3:12-21, Mt 2:13-15, 19-23</i>	Saturday, December 27	5pm †Jorge Luis Crespo 7pm For the People of Holy Cross
	Sunday, December 28	8am †Rick Cunningham 10:30am †The Forgotten Souls in Purgatory



Pray for the Living & the Dead

Oremos por los Vivos y los Muertos

Recalling that praying for the living and the dead is one of the seven spiritual works of mercy, let us pray for one another, especially for those in need of our prayers.

Recordando que orar por los vivos y los muertos es una de las siete obras espirituales de misericordia, oremos unos por otros, especialmente por aquellos que necesitan nuestras oraciones.

In your charity, please pray for: Madelyn Exposito, Russel Qualantone, Frank Aparicio, Teresita Fajardo, Adrian Hernandez, & Nicolas Hernandez

If you would like to submit the name of a loved one to be prayed for, please contact the parish office. Names will be included for one month, unless noted otherwise.

Si desea enviar el nombre de un ser querido para que se ore por él, póngase en contacto con la oficina parroquial. Los nombres se incluirán durante un mes, a menos que se indique lo contrario.

Announcements

Faith Formation & OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults)

There will be no Faith Formation or OCIA on December 24 or December 31 due to Christmas break.

Mass Music Update *Actualización sobre la música en la misa*

We will be returning to the Latin Gloria that Father Ron Stone introduced to the parish. During Advent & Lent, we will be learning the Kyrie, Sanctus, & Agnus Dei that go along with this Mass setting. The scores and mp3 recordings for the Kyrie & Gloria are available on our website. If you would like these texted to you, please text "Mass Parts" to (865) 771-4929.

Retomaremos el Gloria en latín que el Padre Ron Stone introdujo en la parroquia. Durante el Adviento y la Cuaresma, aprenderemos el Kyrie, el Sanctus y el Agnus Dei que acompañan a esta misa. Las partituras y las grabaciones en mp3 del Kyrie y el Gloria están disponibles en nuestra página web. Si desea recibirlas por mensaje de texto, envíe un mensaje con la palabra "Partes de la Misa" al (865)771-4929.

Bible Study

There will be no Bible Study on Thursday, December 25, 2025 or Thursday, January 1, 2025.

Diocesan Employment Opportunities

The Diocese of Knoxville Chancery Office is seeking a **Coordinator of Youth Ministry** and an **Administrative Assistant to the Office of Youth and Young Adults**.

Please see the diocesan website for detailed job descriptions at <https://dioknox.org/employment>

Send cover letter and resume to Maura Lentz at mlentz@dioknox.org

Upcoming Events

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2025:

time updated

7pm English Mass

Christmas Day

December 25, 2025

Midnight Bilingual Candlelight Mass

8:00am English Mass

10:30am English Mass

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Holy Day of Obligation

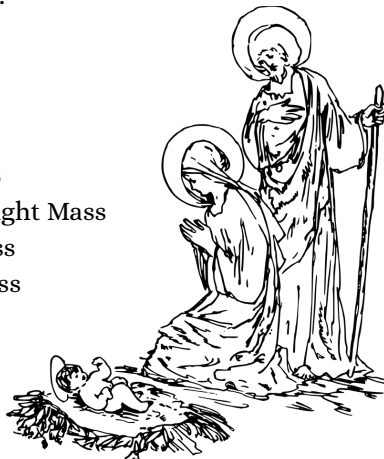
December 31, 2025

5:00pm English Mass

7:00pm Spanish Mass

January 1, 2026

10:30am English Mass



Weekly Events

Bible Study

Join our Pastor in a contemplative study of the Word of God in Sacred Scripture on Thursdays at 9:30am in the Family Life Room. Father Hendershott provides scriptural commentary as we read through Genesis and meditate on the Providence of God through salvation history.

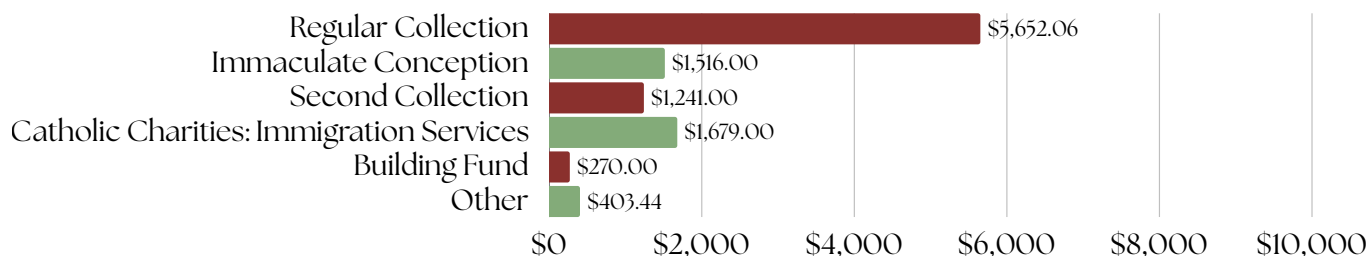
High School Youth Group Escuela Secundaria Para Grupo Juvenil

Grades 9-12 meeting on Tuesdays from 6-8pm in the Family Life Room. All high school and soon to be high school students are welcomed to attend. There will always be food provided and fun activities to do. For more information, contact Nick Sisto at: nlsisto@wlvlaw.net

El grupo de jóvenes de secundaria, de los grados 9 -12 se reúnen los martes de 6pm a 8:00pm Siempre va a ver comida y diversión. Alentamos a todos nuestros estudiantes de escuela secundaria y futuros estudiantes de escuela secundaria que asisten. Para obtener más información, comuníquese con Nick Sisto.

Stewardship

December 13/14



Since on average 3 out of 5 Mass attendees are visitors, we invite our guests to consider a sort of “timeshare” stewardship with our parish. Our website has a donation link, and donations can be set to match *the time you share with us*.

As our monthly expenses are \$25,000, please consider Holy Cross in your donations and in your will.

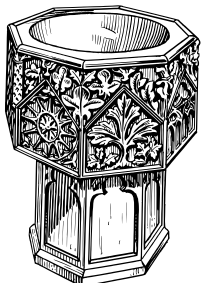
You are being enriched in every way for all generosity, which through us produces thanksgiving to God, for the administration of this public service is not only supplying the needs of the holy ones but is also overflowing in many acts of thanksgiving to God...

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

2 Corinthians 11-12, 15

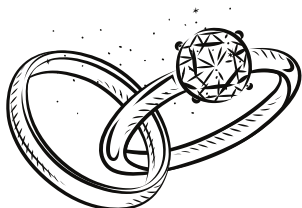
Sacramental Preparation

Baptism



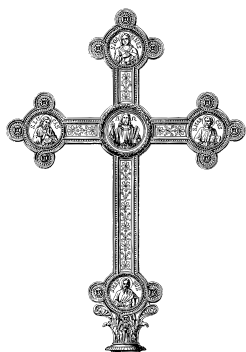
Congratulations on your newborn! In order to prepare for baptism, parents and god parents need to attend baptismal preparation classes before the proposed baptism date.

Si necesita información para bautizos en español, por favor comuníquese con el señor Alejandro Mondragón, El está encargado de la preparación para los bautizos. Su numero de teléfono es: (865) 227-9380.



Matrimony

Congratulations on your engagement! Please contact the parish office to make arrangements for your marriage at least four months before your desired wedding date.



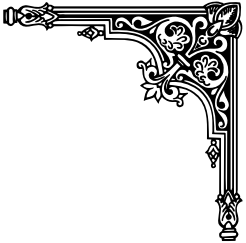
Catholic Faith Formation Classes

We have Faith Formation classes on Wednesday nights 6:30-7:30pm. Our religious education teachers prepare children in grades K-12 to receive their sacraments. For more information, please contact our Director of Religious Education, Gianfranco, at gdellasantina@yahoo.com.



Are you interested in becoming Catholic?

Holy Mother Church welcomes you! For more information, please contact our OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation for Adults) teacher, Tylor Starkey, at t.starkey88@gmail.com.



Bulletin Notes

Bulletin Submission Deadline

Fecha límite para la presentación de boletines

Please submit requests for weekend bulletin or pulpit announcements to the Parish Office email address by 5pm on Monday.

Por favor, envíen las solicitudes para los avisos del boletín o los anuncios desde el púlpito del fin de semana a la dirección de correo electrónico de la oficina parroquial antes de las 5 de la tarde del lunes.

Advertising Opportunity

Oportunidad publicitaria

If you would like to advertise your business on the back of our Holy Cross bulletin & provide a donation to help cover the weekly printing costs, please contact the Parish Office.

Si desea anunciar su negocio en la parte posterior de nuestro boletín de Holy Cross y hacer una donación para ayudar a cubrir los costos de impresión semanales, comuníquese con la oficina parroquial.

