

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.*

**If God is for us,
who can be against us?**



Romans 8:31

Come and pray with us!

2nd Sunday of Lent - February 25, 2024

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

Upcoming Mass Intentions



Week of Sunday, Feb. 25, 9AM Masses

Mon. Bob DeFilippis
Tue. Vincent Mattera
Wed. Neal & Concetta Romano
Thu. Maria Conte

Saturday, March 2, 5PM Mass

Kevin McBride, Joseph Ficarola

Sunday, March 3, Third Sunday of Lent

8:00 AM Michael Larkin
9:30 AM People of the Parish
11:30 AM George Stratos

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.

FIGHT MY BATTLES/SURROUNDED #2

by Father Michael

As was the case last week, this second Sunday of Lent always tells the same story each year. Today we hear about the Transfiguration of Jesus. There is an element of mystery when we read the transfiguration. There are many details given, but they don't completely clarify what happened to Jesus and the disciples on the mountain. Exactly how did Moses and Elijah appear? We don't know, but all the accounts of that story include that detail. Rather than becoming lost in what we can't explain, it is better to understand that for those who were there this was a holy and powerful moment. As Peter says so beautifully, "Rabbi, it is good that we are here!" They carried those miraculous moments in their hearts for a long time after they came down and returned to their usual routines. It became a point of reference in understanding Jesus. But he told them not to share the story until he had risen from the dead.

On some level, I think all of us would welcome a profound and prayerful experience of God. As much as we would like, we cannot create or schedule those moments on our own. They are gifts from God that we cannot control. However, there are times when we can try to create a prayerful environment that readies our hearts, should God speak to us in a meaningful way. We can create these prayerful environments in our individual lives, and we can create them for our parish community.

This weekend at Mass we are doing something a bit unusual. The opening song will take on a different flavor than it usually does. It's simply a song, but it seems to embody an energy that makes itself abundantly present. The song that we will sing is entitled "Fight My Battles/Surrounded" written by Elyssa Smith. As I mentioned previously, the Pastoral Team first heard this song last year when we attended the Religious Education Congress in California. For all of us, there was something engaging, uplifting and stirring about the song. All of us thought it would be wonderful if we could bring the energy and spirit back home to Holy Cross. It took some time and planning to bring it to life. I pray that it allows God to speak to your heart in a way that makes his presence real. I am grateful to our music ministry in working so hard to musically lead us in our prayer.

Powerful experiences of God should not be limited to the first disciples or those who can travel across our country. God's presence is to be shared by all. We are trying to create an environment here at Holy Cross that helps to foster a moment of prayer and a moment of grace. Allow the power of the broken, crucified and Risen Lord to touch your heart. We too share in a great mystery. Allow that gift to come to life that you too may say, "Lord, it is good that we are here."

Our next Holy Hour will be Saturday, March 2, from 3:45-4:45 PM in the Worship Area. The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick will be offered after the 9:30 Mass on March 3.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Weekly Calendar

- Monday, February 26th** 4 - 6 PM
 • SPECIAL NEEDS Atrium
- Tuesday, February 27th** 10 AM
 • IN STITCHES Fr. Joe Room
 • LEV. 2 RECONCIL. 5:30 or 7PM Wor. Ar., Atr.
 • RCIA 7PM Fr. Joe Room
- Saturday, March 2nd** 11 AM
 • LEVEL 2 RECONCILIATION Wor. Ar., Atr.
 • HOLY HOUR 3:45-4:45PM Worship Area
- Sunday, March 3rd** After 9:30 Mass
 • ANOINTING OF THE SICK Worship Area
 • CHILDREN'S LITURGY 11:30 Mass Fr. Joe Room
 • BAPTISMS 1PM Worship Area

Scripture Readings for March 3, 2024



- + Exodus 20:1-17
- + 1 Corinthians 1:22-25
- + John 2:13-25

Celebrants for Next Weekend's Masses, March 2nd/3rd



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



Banns of Marriage First Time

- Jacqueline Verre & Adam Barrett
 AnnMarie Luisi & Sean Yorke
 Pamela Ghigliotti & Darin Mihalik



Girl Scout Sunday

Tell your Scouting friends...All Are Welcome
March 10th, 2024 9:30 Mass

Scouts should arrive 15 minutes early—Uniforms/Sashes for scouts & leaders
 Contact Kim Loh Bodor Akjl23@optonline.net or 516-996-2297

*Please let us know how many scouts & leaders will be attending by **March 1st** so we have enough reserved seating for your group.*

A Message from Parish Outreach

The American Red Cross along with the New York Blood Center are facing an emergency blood shortage. They are experiencing the lowest number of people giving blood in the last 20 years. Blood and platelet donations are needed now to help alleviate the shortage and ensure lifesaving medical procedures proceed without delay. **Can you give the gift of life?**

If you would like more details on how you can help or how to donate, please contact <https://www.nybc.org> or call (800) 933-2566 for more information. Thank you.

Below, please find where you can donate in the next few weeks.

- ◆ St. Patrick R.C. Church, Smithtown—03/21/2024 from 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- ◆ Bohemia Donor Center, 3125 Veterans Memorial Hwy.—Multiple Dates

An Evening for Men

Wednesday, March 6 @ 7:00PM

Fr. Michael will lead this evening which invites us to name the brokenness and battles of our lives. Witness talks will be offered by fellow parishioners. We will acknowledge and celebrate that the great battles of our lives, in fact, bring us into greater union with our Savior.



An Evening for Women

Wednesday, March 13 @ 7:00PM

Jude Pickel and Michele Hall will lead this evening which looks at the story of the Woman at the Well. Through her journey we will connect with the struggles and battles of our own lives, which can truly be transformed by the love and acceptance of our Lord.

An Evening for All

Wednesday, March 20 @ 7:00PM

Parishioner Cristian Murphy will lead this evening which celebrates the gift and wonder of MERCY and how it can bring us to peace and new life. This will be an evening of visual images and stories that unite us in the Paschal Mystery of Christ's dying and rising.

LITURGY BYTES

Managing the Kids at Mass



Please keep coming! We so enjoy the families attending Mass with their children each week. I am sure it is a chore getting everyone ready. In speaking with parents over the years, many find it difficult to manage the children at Mass, be able to participate themselves, and be ready to guide their child or children as to why we do things the way we do them!

Here are a few general suggestions, and please feel free to pass them on to others with children.

- A. Some preparation is always helpful. Explain that your family attends Mass because it is an amazing experience. We are transformed, being physically and spiritually united with Christ. Take a look at YouTube for some short videos for young people which will also help the cause!
- B. Since the Mass or Eucharist means “thanksgiving,” why not ask the children before Mass, or on the way to Mass, to name one thing for which they are thankful.
- C. If you arrive early, try a scavenger hunt — ask them to find certain things in Church, like candles, the book that the Priest prays out of, or the book he reads from on the altar.
- D. After Mass is over, either in the car or walking home from Church, unpack what they saw or heard at Mass.
- E. If you have not already done it, find times during the week to pray as a family. Mealtimes are the easiest and best place to begin. This way the children see that the family prays together and is thankful outside of Church, but the most important prayer is attending Mass all together.

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

Attention: Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors and Ushers

Sign-ups to assist with Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter Masses will take place on the weekend of March 2nd and 3rd after all the Masses.

PARISH OUTREACH

Eat Simply...So Others May Simply Eat

Lent offers us a unique period of time to evaluate our life journey as a follower of Christ. We are encouraged to assess if this journey has led us to an improved understanding and deepening of our relationship with our Lord, with our neighbors, and with our brothers and sisters of the world community.



For the last 33 years, we at Holy Cross have embraced our Lenten Project Eat Simply So Others May Simply Eat as a way to raise our consciousness to the significant needs of our struggling friends. We willingly sacrifice larger or better meals for simpler meals during Lent. Our joint effort to **EAT MORE SIMPLY SO OTHERS MAY SIMPLY EAT** unites us in a special way with one another and also with those who are struggling on Long Island.

We encourage you not only to participate in this program, but also to discuss it at the dinner table with your children and family members. Many of us are not consciously aware of the number of people that are struggling and hungry right here in our own area. During 2023, our Outreach pantry served an average of 115 people each month.

The Lenten envelopes marked, **EAT SIMPLY...SO OTHERS MAY SIMPLY EAT**, will be available throughout the weekends of Lent. We suggest that you place the envelope in a prominent place in your kitchen as a reminder of how you and your family will be uniting yourselves with our struggling neighbors and with the starving of the world. We encourage you to reflect, discuss and to decide how you will eat more basic meals during Lent. Perhaps you have a favorite simple recipe to share. We'd be happy to put it in the bulletin for fellow parishioners to try.

Each weekend or whenever you choose during Lent, you may place your envelope in the basket on the pillar by the altar or in the collection basket. The monies donated will be used to help those who come to Parish Outreach for assistance. We are continually grateful for the very generous response of our parishioners of Holy Cross in donating money, food, and supermarket gift cards, which enables us to meet their needs.

PARISH OUTREACH

Long Island Cares Food Drive

Who are the hungry on Long Island? We share some facts compiled by Long Island Cares:

- Approximately 234,000 people on Long Island suffer from food insecurity– including 65,000 children.
- Approximately 40% of food-insecure Long Island households are above the poverty level but don't make enough to keep up with the high cost of living in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, making them ineligible for nutrition assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- Food-insecure children are more likely than their peers to experience behavioral issues, reduced ability to learn social skills, and impaired cognitive learning – even permanent brain damage.
- The health effects of hunger range from lack of stamina and increased illness – which increases missed work time – to feelings of hopelessness and despair.
- Seniors who are hungry experience depression and anxiety. They are also at increased risk for illness, disease, and even premature death.

As we have done for the last few years during Lent and as part of our Baptismal call to live out the Beatitudes, our parish will sponsor a food drive on behalf of Long Island Cares. Long Island Cares is an organization that collects and delivers food to more than 600 community-based agencies in Nassau and Suffolk. In a typical year, it distributes over 7 million pounds of food.

Please bring your non-perishable food items to Mass on the weekend of **March 9th-10th** and place them in the large boxes in the Atrium.



We thank you for being a community that consistently stocks our own food pantry, reaches out to our surrounding communities and finds ways to assist our global family (through Heifer International).

PARISH OUTREACH

Outreach Food Pantry

Next Saturday and Sunday, **March 2nd/3rd**, will be our monthly Food Drive for our Parish Outreach Pantry. The following items would be most helpful:

- Canned Fruit
- Laundry Supplies
- Paper Towels
- Boxed Potatoes
- Cleaning Supplies
- Pasta Sauce in Jars
- Dishwashing Packets



Please don't forget to check expiration dates! It will greatly assist the volunteers who stack the pantry with your donated goods. Thank you!

Homebound Ministry

Homebound Ministers—We invite you to join this vital ministry!

Can you see yourself ministering to those who are homebound? Can you see yourself sharing a half an hour a week visiting, praying, and delivering the Eucharist to those who are, at times, forgotten? Our Homebound Ministry is growing, and we need your help! A small-time commitment and a loving heart are all that are needed. We invite you to be part of this vital Parish ministry that supports and ministers to those who are unable to join us at Sunday Mass. We are asking for your help in serving those we are called to serve. The impact you will make on a person's life is far beyond the time given. If you are interested, please contact the Parish Outreach Office at 631-265-2200 ext. 113 for more information and any questions you may have. Thank you!

Are you or someone you know in the parish, homebound or anticipating an operation or treatment of cancer? We are eager to know, in a more personal way, our parishioners who are homebound or hospitalized. Often, we do not hear of a person's illness or inability to join us for Sunday Mass. We need your assistance and invite you to help us see those in need and make the connection to our loved parishioners. Please call 631-265-2200 ext. 113 or stop by Parish Outreach to let us know of these parishioners who are special to us.



MINISTRY TO THE
Homebound

PARISH OUTREACH

Homebound Ministers to the Sick - Thank you!

While I have been involved with various ministries at my parish, for the longest time I paid zero attention to homebound ministry to the sick and dying. That was until I needed them. My parents, who were very elderly, were in need of spiritual support. They would normally be regular church goers, every Sunday, but due to a decline in my dad's health they depended on a lay person to come and distribute Holy Communion, first in their home and later in their nursing care facility. It meant the world to them both.

My wife and I came to see how vital these volunteers are firsthand. We also saw how comforting the visits were. Because of this need and the shortage of ministers, my wife responded by volunteering for this ministry at our parish. I tag along with her as she goes every other Sunday to a local nursing home. My job is to light the candle and pray along. While doing this I am fighting a very strong aversion to nursing homes.

I have seen elderly hands shake in anticipation of receiving our Lord with such deep reverence and gratitude for the fact that Christ has finally come to visit them in their need. I saw one holy woman who had cancer, who for various reasons was not able to receive on previous visits, get to receive Jesus again in the Eucharist. No one was more grateful; she was all smiles. Later that week she passed away into the arms of the same Jesus.

Once while my wife was saying the prayers for one of the residents, there was a blind man asking for water in the next bed. "Can I have water please?" I saw the jug and a cup on the table next to him, so I poured him a cup and guided his hand to hold it. He drank it down and said, "more" as he held out the cup in my general direction. I was reminded of Mother Theresa, when asked why she picked up the maggot infested people from the dirty Calcutta streets and cradled them so close, she responded, "When I look into their eyes, I only see Jesus." And here was a man saying the words of Christ as he hung on the cross, "I thirst."

I'm not even the homebound minister. I'm just some guy that would rather not be there. I'm just the guy who lights the candle and prays along. Then Jesus in disguise had to break into my situation! What else could I do? I had to give him water, and let me tell you, it was more of a blessing for me than for him. On that day, I felt like I was more than just the guy tagging along with a wonderful, caring person. I have learned through this experience that the Spirit of service is real, Jesus' love is real and Jesus in the Eucharist is real.

It has been incredible to witness this ministry so close up and to see the spiritual power of the Real Presence in the lives of people who would otherwise be forgotten. If you are feeling a nudge, please inquire within your parish. We need more people in Homebound Ministry.

Thank You Homebound Ministers. I see you.

Gary Sullivan (adapted)

Catholic365.com

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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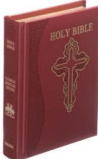
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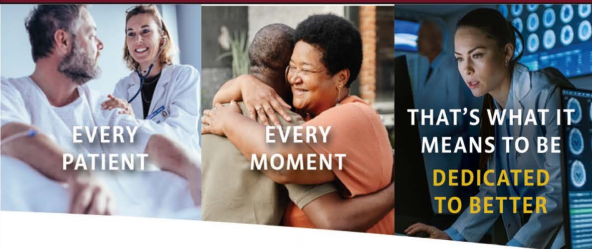
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