

# Parish News

Here is your weekly update. There are also attachments for this week.

Thank you for all the families that participated in the December 24th Children's Mass. It was wonderful to see all the children as shepherds and angels.

January 1<sup>st</sup> is a Holy Day of Obligation -The Solemnity of the Mary Mother of God.  
There will be no Vigil Mass on December 31<sup>st</sup>. Mass will be at January 1<sup>st</sup> @ 10am

## **Conversation Series**

We are happy to announce a brand-new Conversation Series. We will meet once a month on the first Monday of the month in the Cow Palace

This coming Advent on December 2<sup>nd</sup> @6PM we will start off by watching and discussing the first part of the moving about the Eucharist.

Hope you can join us for this new and exciting spiritual, education opportunity open to all

## Stewardship-

Operating expenses for the Parish on a weekly basis are \$6,900.00 Collection.

Stewardship for 1/8/24

Ordinary \$5835.44

Online giving for November \$1,952.31

Cathedraticum \$321.00

## Parish Giving-

The Parish is pleased to introduce “Enhancing Stewardship through Electronic Funds Transfer. It is convenient no more searching for a checkbook or Sunday morning stops at the ATM. To excess simply Log on the parish website [www.sacredheart-saintmary.org](http://www.sacredheart-saintmary.org) and click on the Parish Giving

Log and follow the easy registration instructions. It is Secure.



Hope Appeal 2025

The Assessment for the Parish is \$32,143.00

Currently received as of 12/4/24 we have collected \$25,297.02



As always, I like to share the deep traditions and meaning of our Church. What a great way to learn as a family and learn more about this great Faith of ours. If you would like to learn more, please click the hyperlinks.

It surprising that many have already taken down their Nativities, Christmas trees and decorations but Christmas is not over. It does not end until January 12<sup>th</sup> after the Baptism of our Lord per the USCCB.

The liturgy, or public worship, of all Christian churches is governed by a yearly calendar that commemorates the main events in salvation history. In the Catholic Church, this cycle of public celebrations, prayers, and readings is divided into six seasons, each emphasizing a portion of the life of Jesus Christ. These six seasons are described in the "General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar," published by the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship in 1969 (after the revision of the [liturgical calendar](#) at the time of the promulgation of the *Novus Ordo*). As the General Norms note, "By means of the yearly cycle the Church celebrates the whole mystery of Christ, from his incarnation until the day of Pentecost and the expectation of his coming again."

The liturgical year begins on the First Sunday of [Advent](#), the season of preparation for Christ's Birth. The emphasis in the Mass and the daily prayers of this season is on the threefold coming of Christ—the prophecies of His Incarnation and Birth; His coming into our lives through grace and the [sacraments](#), especially the [Sacrament of Holy Communion](#); and His Second Coming at the end of time. Sometimes called a "little Lent," Advent is a period of joyful expectation but also of penance, as the liturgical color of the season—purple, as in Lent—indicates.

The joyful expectation of Advent finds its culmination in the second season of the liturgical year: [Christmas](#). Traditionally, the Christmas season extended from First Vespers (or evening prayer) of Christmas (before Midnight Mass) through Candlemas, the [Feast of the Presentation of the Lord](#) (February 2)—a period of 40 days. With the revision of the calendar in 1969, "The Christmas season runs," notes the General Norms, "from evening prayer I of Christmas until the Sunday after Epiphany or after 6 January, inclusive"—that is, until the [Feast of the Baptism of the Lord](#). Contrary to popular celebration, the Christmas season does not encompass Advent, nor end with Christmas Day, but begins after Advent ends and extends into the New Year. The season is celebrated with a special joy throughout the [Twelve Days of Christmas](#), ending with the [Epiphany of Our Lord](#) (January 6).

## Events at other Parishes in our area

Please remember we are all a Catholic Community and need to support each other.

Mary, Mother of our Savior Parish invites all teens in the Greater Utica Area to join us for Youth  
Ministry Nights:

Who: Teens in grades 7 thru 12 from the Greater Utica Area

Where: Mary Mother Of Our Savior Parish, Seton Center, 2 Barton Ave, Utica (look for the  
welcome flag)

When: Monday evenings 6:30PM-8:00PM  
(following the school calendar)-Start back on January 6th

[www.motherofoursavior.org](http://www.motherofoursavior.org)

Our Youth Ministry Nights (YMN) consist of games and snacks, followed by a short faith message. Then the teens form small groups to talk about that topic in a safe, honest, authentic way with their peers. This is a highlight of the night, to hear from peers about the faith, to share doubts and questions and to be lifted up and encouraged in their faith in God, all guided by an adult core team member. Then we go to the chapel for a short prayer service and end with an awesome dinner! We also make sure to include social nights once a month. Social Nights may include: Movie Nights, Camp Fires, Holiday Parties, Trips/Teen Outings like GetAir, Retreats, Service Opportunities and more...

*For information please reach out to Brittany Wilcox: [bwilcox@syrdio.org](mailto:bwilcox@syrdio.org)*

Utica Newman Catholic  
Christian Fellowship

For registered College Students/Utica Area

For questions Contact Campus Minister, Pat Gillick @

[Uticanewmandoutreach@syrdio.org](mailto:Uticanewmandoutreach@syrdio.org)

Free Pizza and Wing Dinner after every 4pm Sunday Evening Mass

Our Lady of the Rosary Campus

Food for thought

*What if you woke  
up TODAY with  
only the things you  
thanked God for  
YESTERDAY?*



Class restart January 12, 2025



Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturday 3:15PM prior to Mass

Weekdays 12:15 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday Friday.  
There will be no Mass on Thursday

Let's remember that as Catholics, the importance of attending Sunday Mass. At Mass we stand at mystically at the foot of the cross and witness for ourselves the same self-sacrifice of Jesus, in an unbloody manner. Mass is a celebration of this sacrifice. It is the active participation of all that come together in the place of worship.

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus Mary & Joseph

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or 1Dm 20-22, 24-28

Responsorial Psalms: PS 126: 1-2, 3, 4-5

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Col3-12-21 or 3:12-17

Gospel: LK: 2:41-52

While these are wonderful reflections, please remember that they are not to be a substitute for the wonderful sermons of Father or Deacon Kirk at Mass.

As always, I try to find wonderful reflections for this week's Gospel reading. I let the Holy Spirit guide me.



This week I found 2 thoughtful reflections for this week's Gospel reading

### **A reading from the gospel according to Luke 2:41-52**

41 Every year his parents used to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover.

42 When he was twelve years old, they went up for the feast as usual.

43 When the days of the feast were over and they set off home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing it.

44 They assumed he was somewhere in the party, and it was only after a day's journey that they went to look for him among their relations and acquaintances.

45 When they failed to find him they went back to Jerusalem looking for him everywhere.

46 It happened that, three days later, they found him in the Temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them, and asking them questions;

47 and all those who heard him were astounded at his intelligence and his replies.

48 They were overcome when they saw him, and his mother said to him, 'My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.'

49 He replied, 'Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?'

50 But they did not understand what he meant.

51 He went down with them then and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority. His mother stored up all these things in her heart.

52 And Jesus grew in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and with people.

### **Reflection: Family and Growing up**

The gospel reading above tells us about the "lost" of the child Jesus in the temple and His finding by His parents. As we can see, Mary and Joseph were very religious and dedicated parents. They have complied with the Jewish tradition to visit the holy temple of Jerusalem especially during the Passover

holidays. At 12 years old, Jesus traveled with His parents to Jerusalem, a distance of over 100 kilometers from Nazareth, most probably on foot! Today, churches are everywhere yet many parents could not even visit much less with their kids.

Indeed, it is rare nowadays to see whole families attending church services. Let us pray for families to be together not only during mealtimes but also in the church. Let us also pray for parents to take care of their children. May they be like Mary and Joseph who will never allow their children to get lost, not only physically but also emotionally and spiritually.

Jesus lived under the authority of His parents. In other words, He was obedient to them. Here is the Messiah submitting Himself to the authority of human beings! In our modern age, many people despise the idea of submission. Let us look up to Jesus, the Savior, to reclaim the value of obedience. Also, it is high time that we reemphasize children the need for them to be obedient.

The year is about to end and in several days we will be changing our calendars. This means we are growing older. We may have been promoted and saw an increase in salary and investment. We may have gained more friends. The question is, “Are we growing in wisdom, in stature and in favor with God and with people?” In other words, are we maturing in our faith journey? Is our relationship with God growing deeper?

Here are a few suggestions on how we can grow in “wisdom, in stature and in favor with God and with people”:

1. Be active in church activities especially in listening to the word of God. Spend more time to be in the “Father’s House to do the “Father’s business”.
2. Always remember that obedience is better than sacrifice (1 Samuel 15:22-23). Let us always be reminded to obey the commandments of God.
3. Like Mary, let us keep the Word of God in our heart and ponder on them.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> reflection from US Catholic

The image of the holy family—Jesus, Mary, and Joseph—calls us to reflect on the enduring beauty and struggles of family life. I am drawn to two worlds that may seem distant from each other, but which share a common longing for connection: the vibrant villages of Africa and the bustling cities of America. In African villages, families gather under the shade of baobab trees, sharing wisdom, stories, and laughter as children play barefoot in the dust. Across the ocean, in modern American cities, families connect around dinner tables, on weekend outings, or during the few precious hours they can carve out in their busy lives. Though continents apart, families in both spaces and across the globe strive for the same thing: homes rooted in love, joy, and faith.

Yet today, families face challenges like never before. Parents juggle careers, children navigate the distractions of technology, and the demands of modern life often leave little room for deep connection.

As Pope Francis reminds us, “Perfect families do not exist, but they should always be places where love, forgiveness, and joy thrive.” His words speak to families struggling to balance unity with personal freedom, who yearn to find moments of peace amid the whirlwind of daily life. Families are, and will always be, sacred spaces where God’s grace can turn hardship into hope.

The Feast of the Holy Family offers us a path forward, pointing us to virtues that can transform our homes into sanctuaries of love. The first reading from Sirach calls us to honor and care for our parents, especially in their vulnerability. In a culture that often prizes independence, this wisdom reminds us of the beauty of interdependence. Strong families embrace the sacred duty to care for one another and, in doing so, reflect God's love for the world.

St. Paul's letter to the Colossians deepens this call. He challenges us to clothe ourselves with compassion, humility, patience, and forgiveness—virtues that are essential in any home. Whether in an African village or an American suburb, families encounter misunderstandings and brokenness. Yet, rooted in God's love, families can reconcile, heal, and grow. The challenges we face can become opportunities for grace, where wounds are transformed into moments of mercy and unity.

The Gospel of Luke takes us into the heart of the Holy Family's own trials. When twelve-year-old Jesus stays behind in the temple during the Passover feast, Mary and Joseph face deep anxiety. Their worry mirrors the fears and struggles of parents today. Yet they approach the situation with faith, and when they find Jesus among the elders, are amazed at his wisdom. Jesus, in turn, chooses obedience and returns with them to Nazareth, modeling the delicate balance between personal freedom and the unity of family life. His trust in his parents and their care for him shows us that family bonds are strengthened through mutual respect and understanding.

The Holy Family was not exempt from challenges. They faced uncertainty, displacement, and fear—yet they placed God at the center of their lives, creating a home filled with love, faith, and forgiveness. Their example invites us to do the same. In our own homes, whether they stand beneath a baobab tree or in a city apartment, we are called to create sanctuaries of light and peace.

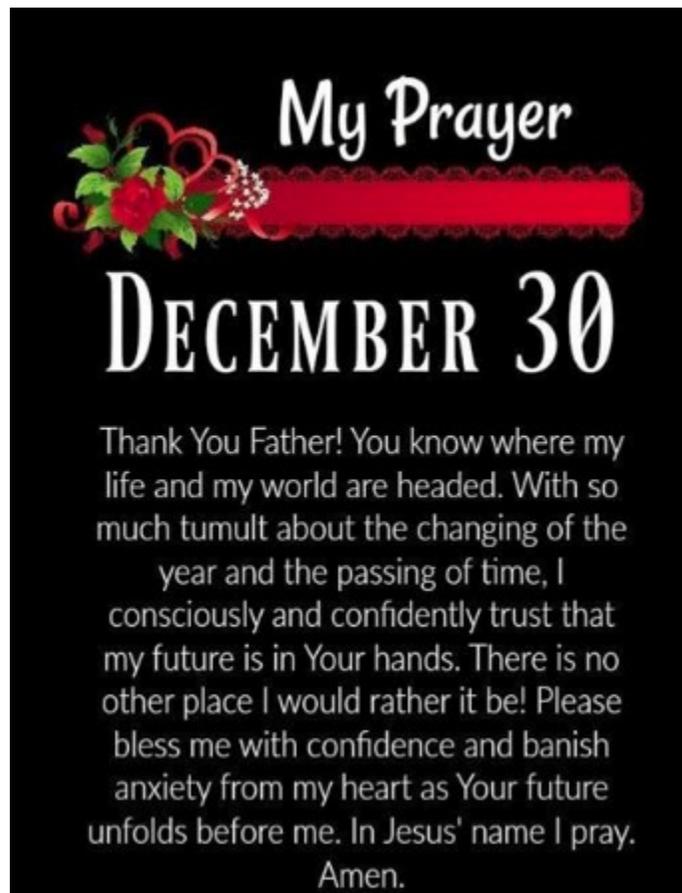
The Feast of the Holy Family is more than a celebration; it is a call to action. It reminds us that family life, though imperfect, is sacred. It is in our families that we learn to forgive, to grow, and to love as God loves. May we, inspired by Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, build homes where faith takes root, forgiveness is freely given, and love flourishes. In a world longing for connection, let our families—wherever they may be—reflect the enduring and boundless love of God.

**This week's Saints of the week:**

The saints are models of human excellence, perfected by the life of Christ and the communication of his Spirit. They demonstrate in their lives how to really live and how to really die. They consistently point to the horizon of love which leads to the fulfillment of all human desire: eternal communion with the Holy Trinity

January 2<sup>nd</sup>-Memorial of Sts Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church: January 4<sup>th</sup> -Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious

Prayer is such an important part of our faith. As December is coming to an end these 2 prayers seek volumes for the end of the year.





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