

SAINTS FOR THE WEEK

Monday, January 1
Solemnity of Mary, the Holy
Mother of God

Tuesday, January 2
Saints Basil the Great and Gregory
Nazianzen, Bishops and Doc-
tors of the Church

Thursday, January 4
Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton

Friday, January 5
Saint John Neumann, Bishop

MARY, MOTHER: REFLECTION AND WONDER

In a quiet, humble setting of a stable, Mary, the Mother of God, cradled her newborn son. This moment was the culmination of the angelic announcement and the miraculous conception. She had given birth to a healthy, vibrant child, a reality that alone was enough to stir deep reflection and wonder. The simplicity of the scene is interrupted by the arrival of shepherds. These were not men of high standing or scholarly wisdom, but rugged, working individuals, the very kind society often overlooks.

Yet, it was to these shepherds that angels appeared, messengers of God proclaiming the birth of Mary's child. This divine choice reveals

a profound truth about the nature of God's kingdom, where the lowly are exalted and the marginalized are the first recipients of the good news. Mary's reaction to these events is a testament to her faith and her role as a model for all believers. Faced with an extraordinary situation—a group of shepherds animatedly recounting an angelic visitation—Mary does not succumb to confusion or fear. She remains calm and collected, an anchor amidst a sea of wonder and mystery.

Her response is not one of dismissal or alarm, but of contemplation and acceptance. Even with a faith as robust as hers, the unfolding events were far from ordinary. Yet, she embraced them with a heart open to God's mysterious ways. This teaches us a valuable lesson about faith: it does not negate confusion or uncertainty; rather, it provides a framework within which we can reflect and seek understanding, even when God's ways seem beyond our comprehension.

text and image from: <https://young-catholics.com/530/solemnity-of-mary-the-mother-of-god/>



WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

We are blessed to have you worship with us as we nurture each other in faith. While visiting our community, we humbly ask you to consider investing in our parish offeratory and Diocesan Appeal to help ensure our parish and Diocese can be one of your partners in faith. Thank you!

DIOCESAN APPEAL

As you plan your budget, consider a pledge. Use your bank's Bill Pay feature to set up automatic payments or use envelopes on the back table (Please change date to 23-24).

<https://thediocesanappeal.org/>



Holy Cross Parish

DECEMBER 31, 2023

Feast of the Holy Family, B

Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14

Psalm 128

Colossians 3:12-21

Luke 2:22-40

THE PROPHETIC HOLY FAMILY

Kingdom of God people are history makers. They break through the small kingdoms of this world to an alternative and much larger world, God's full creation. People who are still living in the false self are history stoppers. They use God and religion to protect their own status and the status quo of the world that sustains them. They are often fearful people, the nice proper folks of every age who think like everyone else thinks and who have no power to break through, or as Jesus' opening words put it, "to change" (Mark 1:15; Matthew 4:17).

How can we really think that Mary—if she thought like any good Jewish girl of her time was trained to think—could possibly be fully ready to hear, to speak, or to live out God's message? She had to let God lead her outside of her box of expectations, her comfort zone, her dutiful religion of follow-the-leader (a feature of all religions at their lower levels). She was very young and largely uneducated. Perhaps theology itself is not the necessary path but instead simply integrity and courage. Nothing anyone said at the synagogue would have prepared Mary or Joseph for this situation. They both had to rely on their angels! What proper bishop would trust such a situation? All we know of Joseph is that he was "a just man" (Matthew 1:19), probably also young and uneducated. The circumstance is a total affront to our criteria and way of evaluating authenticity.

So why do we love and admire people like Mary and Joseph, and then not imitate their faith journeys, their prophetic courage, their non-reassurance by the religious system?

Like the prophets we have met this year, Mary and Joseph trusted their encounter with God and acted accordingly:

These were two laypeople who totally trusted their inner experience of God and followed it to Bethlehem and beyond. There is no mention in the Gospels of the two checking out their inner experiences with the high priests, the synagogue, or even their Jewish Scriptures. Mary and Joseph walked in courage and absolute faith that their experience was true, with no one except God to reassure them they were right. Their only safety net was God's love and mercy, a safety net they must have tried out many times, or else they never would have been able to fall into it so gracefully.

For Reflection

- ★ How can we transform our homes into sanctuaries that reflect God's love and faithfulness, as shown by the Holy Family?
- ★ How does my participation in the Church contribute to the manifestation of God's love and mercy in the world, following the example set by the Holy Family?

from: <https://email.cac.org/t/d-e-vkhbty-tdduxulkd-f/>; image: <https://young-catholics.com/3090/the-feast-of-the-holy-family-year-b/>

Holy Cross Parish

96-98 Main Street
PO Box 118
Morris NY 13808

holycrosschurch@gmail.com

MISSION

To care for the poor, abandoned, and the marginalized.

SCHEDULE

Mass: Sunday, 8:30 a.m.

Liturgy of the Word: Tuesday, 10 a.m.

PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAM

Parish Leader

Matthew Tabone (360) 559-4098

Trustees

Michael Stensland (607) 783-2764

Richard Meyers (607) 263-5588

Parish Pastoral Council Chair

Kerry L. Mess (607) 386-1951

Parish Pastoral Council Members

Dana Mochovciak, Jenna Turner, Carol Tyson, Marguerite Webster

Liturgical Ministry

Marguerite Webster (607) 263-5478

Faith Formation

Daphne Thompson (607) 263-2410

Ministry to the Homebound

Matthew Tabone (360) 559-4098

Jenn Spivey (207) 539-5094



DECEMBER 31, 2023

Celebrant

Rev. Chris Welch

Lector: Marguerite Webster

Eucharistic Minister: Carol Tyson

Mass Intention

For Peace on Earth

If you would like to request an intention for a mass, simply call the office to schedule: (607) 263-5143.

Pray for

- ✘ the deceased members of our parish and their families and friends
- ✘ the sick, their caregivers, and all who have asked for our prayers, especially Sr. Theresa Ahern MSBT, Amy O'Brien, John O'Brien, Tom DeLaurentiis, Jo Franklin, Aggi Huff, Louisa Joy, Lynn Joy, Maureen Joy, Rebecca Joy, Michelle Lee, Teresa Meyers, Clara Murphy, Diane Neczesny, Maria Papendrea and sister Camella, Karina Tabone and (welcome to) new baby Thomas Tabone, Joe and Carol Tyson, Lorraine Tyson, Fr. Chris Welch, John Zaleski
- ✘ all the men and women of our parish family serving in the military and all first responders and emergency personnel: Ryan Barry, Jim Barry, Meghan Barringer

WELCOME TO HOLY CROSS PARISH! CURIOUS? BEING CALLED?

RCIA is the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults into the Catholic faith.

For more information, go to myrcia.org.

Holy Cross Parish RCIA Contact:

Maureen Joy (607) 263-5132

Pope Francis's intention for December: For people with disabilities to be at the center of attention in society and institutions to value their participation

Engage in Living Community

Keeping Our Community Warm One Brick At A Time

Catholic Charities is conducting a fundraising campaign to help with emergency assistance to individuals and families who need help with heat and utility costs. It is selling bricks for a fireplace, which will be displayed in the front windows of Catholic Charities on Main Street in Oneonta. As a community member, please consider sponsoring this fundraiser by purchasing a paper brick for the fireplace. Bricks are \$25.00 each. If you would like to purchase a brick, you can stop down to a Catholic Charities office, located in Cobleskill, Oneonta, or Sidney, Monday, Wednesday, or Friday, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 1:30-4:00 p.m. and Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 1:30-6:30 p.m., or you can mail a check to the agency at: Catholic Charities, 176 Main Street, Oneonta, NY 13820. One hundred percent of the money raised will be used in your local community to help keep children, seniors and adults warm this winter.



Office for Discipleship Formation

invites you to join us for a presentation by

Fr. Richard Fragomeni

- a virtual reflection on

the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul:

Christ's Call to Paul and Us.

registration via QR

or call 518-453-6670

January 25, 2024

[3 - 4:30 pm via zoom webinar]



Upcoming Events

01/01: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, mass 10 a.m., St. Mary's Oneonta

01/02: Liturgy of the Word, 10 a.m.
Bible study, "Praying the Names of God" after mass

01/07: Coffee Hour after mass, taking down Christmas decorations

01/09: Liturgy of the Word, 10 a.m.
Bible study after mass

01/14: Religious Education, Parish Pastoral Council meeting in rectory

01/16: Liturgy of the Word, 10 a.m.
Bible study after mass

01/21: Service for Christian Unity Sunday, January 21, 3 p.m. (See below.)

01/25: Christ's Call to Paul and Us. See lower left information box.

CELEBRATE CHRISTIAN UNITY

We host the Service for Christian Unity, January 21 at 3 p.m. We need:

- 2 readers + strong male voice (Gospel)
- 2 collection ushers (food pantry)
- Refreshments after the service

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2023

Morning Mass Attendance: 45

Collection: \$1,160.00

Christmas Eve Attendance: 91

Collection: \$2,063.00