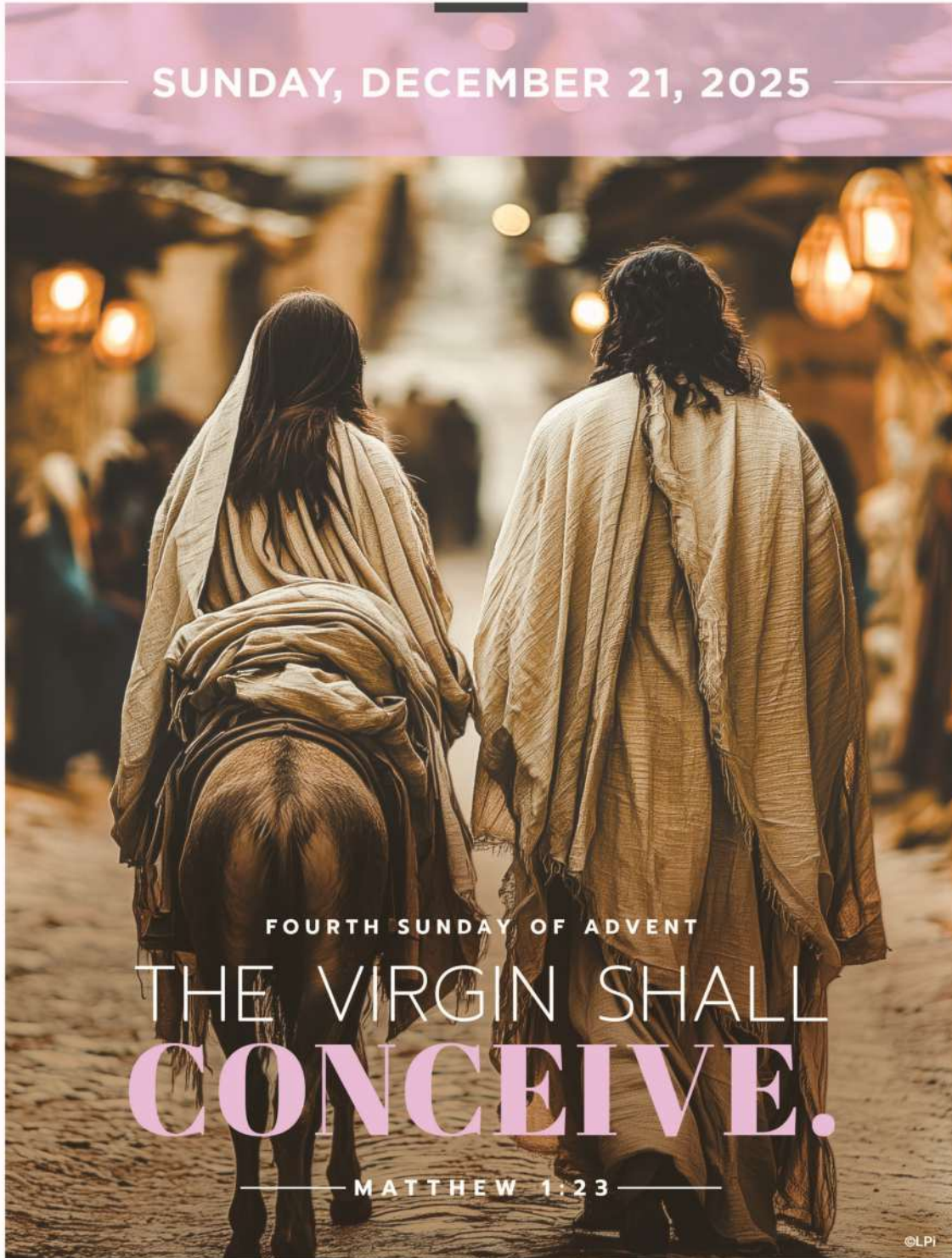


SAINT MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

"Send, O Lord, Holy Apostles into Your Church."



THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS IS OFFERED:**DAILY MASS**

8:00 a.m. Monday through Saturday, June - August

7:30 a.m. Wednesday from start of school year until May

***SATURDAY VIGIL MASS**

5:00 p.m.

***SUNDAY MASSES**

8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m.

THE PARISH OFFICE IS OPEN - DOOR #3**OFFICE HOURS:****MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY****8:30 A.M.- 4:00 P.M.****DEVOTIONS:****DAILY ROSARY**

7:30 a.m.

8:00 a.m. on Wednesdays from the start of the school year until May

7:00 p.m. Wednesday Evenings

DAILY DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET; INFANT JESUS OF PRAGUE

8:30 a.m.

8:00 a.m. on Wednesdays from the start of the school year until May

LAUDS;

7:15 a.m. on Sunday mornings

ADORATION

Perpetual Adoration available at Old St. Mary.

Please contact the Parish Office for the code.

RECONCILIATION/CONFESSIONS:

Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. - 7:45 a.m.

Saturday 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

First Saturdays 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

PARISH DIRECTORY

Pastor: Fr. Joe Gasta

Parochial Vicar: Fr. Welbert Suarez

708-326-9307 frjose@stmarymokena.org

708-326-9304 frwelbert@stmarymokena.org

Deacons:

Deacon Peter Manning

Deacon John Rex

Deacon Kevin Plankinton

Deacon Dave Stanton

Parish Office:

Parish Secretary, Karen Dilger

Business Manager, Stephen J. Warunek

708-326-9300 deaconpete@aol.com

708-326-9300 deaconjohn@stmarymokena.org

708-326-9300 deaconkevin@stmarymokena.org

708-326-9300 deaondave@stmarymokena.org

708-326-9300 Parish Fax Number 708-326-9301

708-326-9305 secretary@stmarymokena.org

708-326-9309 swarunek@stmarymokena.org

Maintenance Supervisor, Gerardo "Gerry" Iniguez

Morning Maintenance, Thomas Pritchard

Director of Faith Formation, Megan Murray

Assistant Director of Faith Formation, Danielle Kuboushek

Assistant Director to the Clergy/Program Coord., Erica Sestak

Director of Religious Education, Tami Brongiel

Assistant Director of Religious Education, Suzy Olsen

RE Office Assistant, Kathy Brzeszkiewicz

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708-326-9302 jberardi@stmarymokena.org

708-326-9354 mjung@stmarymokena.org

bulletin@stmarymokena.org

815-953-7228

708-326-9311 lclark@stmarymokena.org

708-326-9310 pperry@stmarymokena.org

zhabib@stmarymokena.org

School Office:

School Secretary, Charlotte Catchings

School Principal, Michele Alday-Engelman

School Assistant Principal, Michelle Huizinga

Marketing & Enrollment, Danelle Bernas

708-326-9330

708-326-9332 office@stmarymokena.org

708-326-9348 mengelman@stmarymokena.org

708-326-9347 mhuizinga@stmarymokena.org

dbernas@stmarymokena.org

RCIA - Interested in becoming Catholic? Please contact the Director of Faith Formation at 708-326-9313.**BAPTISMS** - Baptisms are usually scheduled the first and third Sunday of the month at 12:15 p.m. following 11:00 a.m. Mass. Please contact the parish office to make arrangements for the baptismal preparation class.**MARRIAGES** - Weddings need to be scheduled at least 6 months in advance upon approval of a priest. Remember to secure the church date before the reception hall. Please stop in the parish office to begin this process.**REGISTRATION** - New to St. Mary? Please stop in the parish office to complete our registration form or visit our website at www.stmarymokena.org.**ANointing OF THE SICK** - Please contact the parish office at 708-326-9300.

Mass Intentions

Monday, December 22

8:00am: Paul Pepper

Tuesday, December 23

8:00am: Salvatore and Rosario Sturino,
Diana Nash, Mary Ann Cullen, Bill Phelan,
The DiNaso family, The Hungerford family,
Guy Cesario III, Harriet Whitely

Wednesday, December 24

8:00am: Helen Bienik, Sue Rizzo,
Sue and Rich Houlihan

Friday, December 26

8:00am: Carmine and Marietta Cesario

Saturday, December 27

8:00am: Ercole and Innocenza Sturino
5:00pm: Allen Budney, Joe and Pat Lynch,
Leonard Kuboushek, Michelle Gleason,
Joseph R. Marconi, Ma Guadalupe Iniguez

Sunday, December 28

8:00am: Ercole and Innocenza Sturino
9:30am: Gus Lattyak, Anne Grabowski
11:00am: Scott Reiter
6:00pm: The Jachmiak family

PRAY FOR THE SICK

Dan Albrecht, Brett Anderson, Joe, Austin, Tammy Balamut, Lisa Barber, Lisa Bernhard, Florence and Gino Bondi, Agnes Breslin, Alan Brown, Darlene Broadhurst, Rachel Butler, Brian Butler, Francis Bulow, Brenda Castile, Dolores Castro, Bonnie Caper, James Caper, Michael Carey, Monica DiGiovanni, Janet Drobick, Vincent Felice, Barb Finn-Figliulo, John Finili, Bradley Frank, Marcia Frank, Mary Ann Franson, Debbie Geren, Bonnie Gondek, Richard Grabenhofer, Colleen Grabenhofer, Jerry Grabowski, Kelly Hampton, Natalie Haran, Emma Harrison, Jeremiah Hartmann, Bobbie, Howie, Mary Ingala, Daniel Izzo, Richard Junge, Les Kazmierczak, Sherley Keene, Joseph Kerke, Hattie Kerke, Diane Klootwyk, Beverly Klosowski, Richard Kolovitz, Jan Kosmatine, John Kurator, Joseph Kurczewski, Fr. Roger Kutzner, Jennifer Naril, Dan Lahy, Andy Lihosit, Chet Lockwood, Vernadine Lumpkin, Jay Lutsky, Shirley Lyons, Terrence McKenna, Jack Manuszak, Robert Margalus, Jeanne Matug, Bill Maynard, John McGeehan, Joelee McMaster, Thomas Meehan, Heidi Meekma, Janice Melisi, Ginny Meyer, Rich Milkeris, Isabella Miller, Angel Munoz, Pat Murphy, Sue Murphy, Lisa Hunt Nichols, Jim Narel, Celine Narel, Geraldine Nykaza, Kenneth O'Gradney, Irene Okoniewski, Callie Olson, Bruce Omastiak, Matthew Orr, Bob and Jackie Pasqualoni, Ed Polzin, Janelle Portman, Rosemary Purcell, Dave Racine, Eileen Redican, Eduardo Reyes, Sean Rio, George Rohrer, Judy Roque, Barbara Rusin, Joseph Santiago, Midge Saunders, William Schlieman, Dan and Brenda Schmiedel, Diane Schoneich, Marie Shaw, Wendy Sifuentes, Karen Singer, Barbara Smith, Brandon Smith, Phyllis Stanton, Geoffrey Sullivan, Tom Sullivan, Joshua Swarez, Victor Tamosaitis, Terri Kelso-Tamer, Tiffany Theresa, John Turas, Judy Turas, Marion Wallis, Kathy Wereldsma Leo Wilczek, Tim Weber, Jodie Weber, Jonathan Weber, Dan Wolf, Jerry Wolff, Diana Woods, Karen Yaeger, Kathleen Yonker

May God grant them healing!

Please Pray for our Faithfully
Departed Brothers and Sisters

John Skarbek,
Guy Cesario III
Carol Horn



*Eternal rest grant unto them and let
perpetual light shine upon them!*

God Bless Our
New Parishioners

The Doud family,
The Anastopoulos family



Almighty God, watch over and protect our
nation's military members and
their families. Take them into your most gracious
protection. Amen.

SSG Jarred Andras, ARNG
PFC Jenson Andras, USMC
Capt Lukasz Bokun, ANG
Lt Col Joseph A. Budzyn, USAF
TSgt Loretta Caplinger, USAF
E3 Colette Gagen, USN
ET2 Nicholas Gambino, USCG
PFC Noah Genz, USA
CPT Andrew Jacobs, USA
MIDN Isabella Judeh, USMMA
CPT Kevin Kelly, USA
PV3 Devin Klinger, USA
Cpl John P. Morrison, USMC
Sgt Cody Nicks, USAF
PO3 John O'Brien Nolan, USN
MAJ Steven Pieczynski, USAF

SSG August Pintarro, USA
PFC Joshua Poplin, USA
E-3 Sydney Quatrochi, USAF
Cpl Ryan J. Schwartz, USMC
MA3 Greg Siegmund, USN
CPT David Skrzypiec, USAR
LT Kevin Skrzypiec, USN
Sgt Luke Swiatek, USMC
LCDR Nicholas Swiatkowski, USNR
Maj Jennifer Tenumah, USAF
CPT Vincent R. Teodoro, USA
Cpl Blanton Vego, USMC
PO3 John David Villaseñor, USN
MAJ Bryan Welch, USA
MMN3 Peter Weygandt, USN
CPT Christopher Zolner, USA

IF YOU WOULD LIKE THE NAME OF SOMEONE CURRENTLY SERVING
IN THE MILITARY PUBLISHED HERE, PLEASE EMAIL THEIR
NAME, RANK, AND BRANCH OF SERVICE TO BOB CORNEJO,
BCORNEJO@STMARYMOKENA.ORG.
THANK YOU.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Monday, December 22

7:00 a.m. Confessions
 8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)
 6:00 p.m. SPRED Meeting (Fatima)
 6:30 p.m. Rosary (Church)

Tuesday, December 23

7:00 a.m. Confessions
 8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)
 6:30 p.m. Adult Choir Rehearsal (Church)

Wednesday, December 24

5:00 a.m. Fit Shepherds (Church Grounds)
 7:00 a.m. Confessions
 8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)
 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass (Church)
 4:15 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass (Church Hall)
 6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass (Church)

Thursday, December 25

12:00a.m. Midnight Mass (Church)
 8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)
 9:30 a.m. Mass (Church)
 11:00a.m. Mass (Church)
 12:30a.m. Mass (Church)

Friday, December 26

7:00 a.m. Confessions
 8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)
 8:30 a.m. Adoration for Increased Vocations (Church)

Saturday, December 27

7:00 a.m. Fit Shepherds (Church Grounds)
 8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)
 3:30 p.m. Confessions (Church)
 5:00 p.m. Mass (Church)

Sunday, December 28

7:15 a.m. Lauds (Church)
 8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)
 9:30 a.m. Mass (Church)
 11:00a.m. Mass (Church)
 12:30a.m. Baptism
 6:00 p.m. Mass (Church)
 6:00 p.m. Youth Ministry (Guadalupe)



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

1) THE PARISH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
 FROM WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24TH
 THROUGH FRIDAY, JANUARY 2ND IN
 OBSERVANCE OF CHRISTMAS AND NEW
 YEAR'S. WE WILL REOPEN THE MORNING
 OF MONDAY, JANUARY 5TH AT 8:30 A.M.

2) MORNING CONFESSIONS WILL BE
 CANCELLED ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25
 AND WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1ST.

3) MASS WILL BE CELEBRATED AT 8:00 A.M.
 ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24TH AND
 WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31ST.



From Your Pastor

My dearest parishioners,

I greet you with love and peace in the name of Jesus!

Even though we are still in the Fourth Sunday of Advent, I want to wish all of you a very warm and joyful Merry Christmas in advance. Christmas is coming very soon, and with December 25th fast approaching, many of us are already feeling the excitement and preparing our hearts for the birth of Jesus. Although Advent reminds us to slow down, to listen, and to wait with hope, our hearts cannot help but look forward to Christmas and everything it brings. Most of the time, when Christmas arrives, our thoughts naturally turn to the gifts we might receive. We wonder what our loved ones will give us, or we hope that maybe someone will remember us with a small present. There is nothing wrong with this. Gifts are a beautiful way of showing love. But this Christmas, I would like to invite you to look at things a little differently. Instead of thinking first about what we will receive, let us ask ourselves what we can give not only to one another, but especially to the newborn Child Jesus.

The gifts Jesus wants from us are not bought in stores. They do not need wrapping paper or ribbons. They come from the heart: *A simple act of kindness toward someone who is lonely or hurting can be a gift. A moment of generosity, helping someone in need, sharing what we have, or giving our time can be a gift. Offering forgiveness to someone who has caused us pain is a powerful gift. Showing love to our families, our neighbors, and even to those who may be difficult to love is a gift that truly reflects the spirit of Christmas.* These are the gifts that make Christmas real. These are the gifts that bring healing, peace, and hope to our community.

As we approach this holy season, may the spirit of Christmas fill your homes, heal your relationships, and bring you deep and lasting joy. A Blessed Advent and an early Merry Christmas to you and your families!

Send, O Lord, Holy Apostles into Your Church!

With love in Christ,

Fr. Joe Gasta, RCJ
Pastor

THERE ARE TWO HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION COMING UP!

Solemnity of Christmas: December 25th

Christmas is a Holy Day of Obligation, regardless of the day on which it falls, because, after His Passion and Resurrection on Easter, this is considered the most important part of His life on earth.



HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION ARE DAYS ON WHICH WE ARE OBLIGATED (OR REQUIRED) TO ATTEND MASS. SUNDAYS ARE CONSIDERED HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION, ALONG WITH A FEW SOLEMNITIES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. THESE FEW SOLEMNITIES CENTER AROUND THE MOST IMPORTANT MOMENTS IN OUR FAITH.

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God: January 1st

This Solemnity falls on the last day of the Octave of Christmas. The date was decided as a way to **honor the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary**, without whom Christ's birth would not have been possible.

AN OCTAVE IS A PERIOD OF EIGHT DAYS WITHIN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S CALENDAR. THIS 8-DAY PERIOD IS A WAY TO EXTEND THE CELEBRATION OF A PARTICULAR SOLEMNITY OR FEAST.

It is through the Blessed Mother that Christ was brought into this world. For this reason, **we turn to the Blessed Virgin Mary in prayer to ask for her intercession.** Just as Christ's life was made possible through His Blessed Mother, so our prayers might be brought to Christ through her, as well.



These Solemnities are Holy Days of Obligation! Make sure to attend Mass on these days in order to recognize these celebrations, which honor our Lord and His Blessed Mother.

Wednesday, December 24

4:00 p.m.

4:15 p.m.

Church Hall

6:00 p.m.

Thursday, December 25

12:00 a.m. (Midnight)

Carols sung by choir beginning at 11:30 p.m.

8:00 a.m.

9:30 a.m.

11:00 a.m.

12:30 p.m.



CHRISTMAS MASS

at St. Mary, Makena



December 27 - December 28: Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

	Saturday, 5:00 PM	Sunday, 8:00 AM	Sunday, 9:30 AM	Sunday, 11:00 AM	Sunday, 6:00 PM
Lector	Pamela DeGregorio Ted Kopczynski	Antoinette Bria Susan Rizzo	Guy Cesario Karen Dilger	John Brett Bob Cornejo	James Nowak
Eucharistic Minister	Peter Baker Bob Gombas Andy Lihosit Lora Oldham	Kathleen Orr Marvin Orr Stefanie Walthier Christine Weeks	Lin Austin Joe Austin Frank Dundek Pam Sanders	Michael Crowley Joanne Eckel Patti Pertchi NOT FILLED	Karen Haugh James Nowak Judy Siegmund
Altar Server	Seamus McGarry Charleigh Widelski Scarlett Widelski NOT FILLED	Hannah Johnston Gerard Sima NOT FILLED NOT FILLED	Frankie Fulton Grace Fulton June Fulton Lucas Pilon Noah Pilon	Caleb Marietta Christopher Pienkos Cody Pienkos NOT FILLED	McKenna Griffin Daniela Lacny NOT FILLED
Usher	Mary Ann Braasch Jim Grady Maurice Helm Mark Miron James Palermo Tom Siemieniec Joe Toman	Chris Cichowicz Ed Dorey Rich Gavillet Roy Mueller Gregory Santry	John Delladio Ed Dorey Joanette Kulesa Jim Kulesa Diane Mucia Phillip Sparacino	Ed Dorey William Farhat David Larson Sandra Tome Gladys Weber	Gabriella Carens Linda Drake Maggie Knable NOT FILLED
Greeter	Mary Ann Braasch	Denise Mueller	Ed Dorey	Ed Dorey	Ed Dorey Linda Drake
Live Stream			Eugene Satrun		

Serving God as an Altar Server is a wonderful way for a child to grow in faith as well as in responsibility, friendship, and other virtues. At St. Mary, we are blessed with an amazing team of Altar Servers. We thank you for giving up your time to serve the Lord and St. Mary. We also thank our wonderful team of Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Ushers, Greeters, and Live Streamers for their dedication and outstanding service.

If you are assigned and are unable to serve, please request a substitute via the Scheduler.



Bishop Hicks' Column, Dec. 2025



**Finding Hope Behind Bars:
Becoming Disciples Who Make Disciples in Unexpected Places**

We celebrate Advent and Christmas as seasons of light and joy, yet sometimes the brightest hope appears in the places we least expect. Over the years, I have found that ministering to those in prison is one of the most unexpected ways to live out the call of my pastoral letter MAKE to be disciples who make disciples.

My first encounter with prison ministry goes back to my volunteer year in Mexico in 1989. A female catechist invited me to join her in visiting a large prison. I remember the surprise of walking in with barely any formal checks and feeling a bit baffled and nervous about how I would get out. Yet what stayed with me most was her simple reminder: *"They all have names. They are often forgotten, but if you become a priest, remember they exist. See the face of Christ in them!"*

Years later, as a seminarian accompanying Cardinal Bernardin to the Cook County Jail for Christmas Mass, I saw that same spirit of discipleship. He had no family in Chicago, yet he found joy in bringing the Eucharist to those often forgotten. He showed me that prison ministry is not simply a duty but a moment of grace. It is a chance to be a disciple who brings Christ's hope to others.

Someone once told me that one of the humbling aspects of ministering in prisons is that the people you serve can never repay you. You do it simply because Christ calls us to recognize His presence in them. In that pure act of service, we quietly plant seeds of faith in hearts that society often overlooks.

Two weeks ago, I had the privilege of celebrating the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and First Holy Communion for four inmates at the Joliet Detention Center. Their deep desire and reverence reminded me again of that woman's wisdom from years ago. They have names, they exist, and they are just as worthy of God's grace. After the Mass, each newly minted Catholic offered a testimonial, thanking those

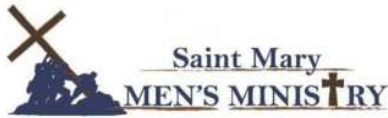
who brought Christ to them and sharing how lost they felt before being introduced to God and the Church. Their desire to cling to hope and live out their newfound faith inspired me deeply as we gathered in that makeshift prison chapel.

Let me highlight the ministry of the growing number of laypeople, deacons, and priests in our Diocese who are living out this call and bringing Christ's love to the incarcerated. And they do it with no fanfare. Truly, no one is writing them thank you notes or sending them gifts for their ministry. We as a Church and as a Diocese should be proud that so many are putting their faith into action through this ministry.

In Catholic social teaching, we uphold the dignity of every human being, even those who have sinned or been cast aside by society. As Jesus says in Matthew's Gospel: *"Whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me."* This is the heart of our mission. To see Christ in the prisoner, the hungry, the thirsty, the unborn, the immigrant, the person with disabilities, the stranger, and all in need. It is a true Christian hope. It is the conviction that Christ is with us always and that every person is worth seeing, knowing, and loving in His name.

In a few weeks, I will celebrate Christmas Mass at the DuPage County Correctional Facility. As I prepare for that Mass, please know that I will carry your intentions with me in prayer. Also, join me in prayer as together we carry that hope not only into the prisons but into every place where Christ's light is most needed. Our homes, our parishes, our workplaces, our neighborhoods, and all the hidden corners of our lives and our world.

May we never overlook the unexpected places where God's grace, hope, and light are waiting to break through and transform us all. For when we see the face of Christ in every person we meet, we fulfill the mission of being disciples who MAKE disciples.



All men are invited to join us for our next meeting

**SATURDAY,
JANUARY 24**

Double Header Meeting:

**A Brief History of the
Diocese of Joliet**

with Jim Lynch



**Grow in Faith and Fellowship:
The Power of Small
Group Formation**
with Bob Cornejo

**8am Mass - 10:30am
St. Mary, Mokena
Church Hall**

Breakfast served--RSVPs encouraged!
SMPmensministry@gmail.com



*Congratulations to the
Kermer family on the baptism of their daughters
Eleanor Ruth
and
Margaret Millie*



EXODUS

Exodus 90 is a ninety-day program for men.

The main reason men make an Exodus is this:
they want to grow.

Closer to God, their spouse, children, and
friends. Closer to that man that God has called
them to be.

We begin on January 5, 2026!

To learn more or join other men from
St. Mary Parish, email Kyle at
kyle.r.dodge@gmail.com

Giving 

**Rooted in Gratitude
Giving with Grace**

**Support our ministries this fall
through faithful generosity.**

**The Offertory for
December 7th**

Online Giving	\$20,587.90
Envelopes	\$25,036.71
	<hr/>
	\$45,624.61

Budget \$34,000
Thank you so much for your
generosity!

Online Giving

Give your
gift today.
Scan the QR
Code



Youth Ministry Upcoming Events



**For the battle
belongs to the Lord.**

1 SAMUEL 17:47

Steubenville Sign Up

**Graduating 8th Graders through
Graduating High School Seniors are
able to sign up and join us for an
incredible weekend of faith,
adoration, and community with
thousands of teens from across the
midwest.**

**June 26th -28th
Benedictine University
Lisle, IL**



**Next Junior High Meeting Will be
after the New Year Starts!
Thank you for a great first
semester.**

Contact Youth Minister, Matt Jung, with any questions.

mjung@stmarymokena.org



Youth Ministry

Soul to Soul Coaching Presents
Catholic Speed Dating
 Ages 21ish-39 ish

St. Priscilla's Church
 Chicago, IL
 January 24th
 5:00pm

REGISTER HERE



Save the Date

St. Mary Mokena

FAMILY Day

An Opportunity to
 Grow in Faith at Every Age

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1
12-3 PM

All parishioners, regardless of age, are warmly invited to an afternoon filled with faith-based activities, a shared meal, and memories made together at St. Mary's!

- ✓ Lunch all together as a Parish Family
- ✓ Split into age groups (adult, teen, grade school, and nursery) for an age-appropriate talk or activity
- ✓ End with a communal time of prayer

Online Advent Resources

FORMED


 MARY OF NAZARETH
daily.formed.org/advent

Hallow


hallow.com/advent

relevant radio

relevantradio.com/advent

ASCENSION
 The Faith Formation Leader


ascensionpress.com/frmikeadvent

ADVENT CALENDAR
 Pray • Listen • Reflect
 relevant radio

Young adults:

*You are formally invited to
 the Fourth Annual*

EPIPHANY BALL

Saturday, January 3, 2026

ST. PETRONILLE PARISH LIFE CENTER
 LIVE MUSIC | DANCING
 DRINKS | APPETIZERS | DESSERT

Formal Attire Required

Presented by:
 CATHOLIC SPORTS
 ST. PETRONILLE PARISH
 NOTRE DAME PARISH

<https://catholicsports.net/chicago-sports-blog/epiphany-ball>



THE
ABUNDANT
CATHOLIC



February
6th - 8th

YOUNG ADULT THEOLOGY OF THE BODY CONFERENCE

- FOR SINGLES, DATING, ENGAGED AND
MARRIED COUPLES

LOCATION

WARWICK ALLERTON
HOTEL,
CHICAGO, IL

COST

\$150 USD

**Total conference weekend
not including accommodation
and food**

2026 edition

Join us for a transformative gathering of singles,
dating, and engaged couples committed to diving deeply
into Theology of the Body - the profound teaching of
Pope St. John Paul II.



S P E A K E R S



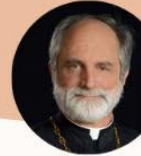
MELISSA KRUPP
Mother, Wife, Catholic
Coach, & Founder of The
Abundant Catholic



NICHOLAS KOEPFEL
Certified by the Theology of the
Body Institute, Master of Studies
in Marriage and Family, ITI -
Austria, Executive Director -
TOB Educators



MARIA COSCELL
Theology of the body
speaker and specialist, TOB
Curriculum Author.



FR. THOMAS LOYA
Eastern Rite Catholic priest,
International TOB speaker,
Co-founder of The Tabor
Life Institute



MONICA BRAUN
Author and Founder of Soul
to Soul Coaching, creator of
the Intentional Dating and
Discernment Method



**REGISTER
HERE**

GOT ANY QUESTIONS?

Please contact Nick Koepfel
at tobeducators@gmail.com

**"FRIDAY NIGHT MATT MORDINI
OF THEOLOGY OF DANCE.
SATURDAY NIGHT CONCERT
WITH MIKE MANGIONE"**



www.monicamariebraun.com



ST. MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Open House Dates

January 15, 2026 from 5:00 - 7:30 PM
VIP Sneak Peek Night

and

January 25, 2026 from 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Open House & Tours

Both events will be an outstanding opportunity for prospective families to take private tours led by SMS teachers, staff, administration, clergy, students, and alumni. These tours provide an inside look at the vibrant academic and community life at St. Mary Catholic School. RSVP is required.

The St. Mary Difference

- Rooted in Catholic values, we welcome families of all faiths
- Will County's Largest Catholic Elementary School
- Rigorous Academic Curriculum
- High School Readiness with Advanced Algebra
- Multi-Student Discount
- Safe & Loving Place to Learn



For additional questions, contact Marketing & Enrollment Coordinator Danelle Bernas at dbernas@stmarymokena.org.

ADOPT A CONFIRMATION CANDIDATE

**NAMES AVAILABLE ON
NOVEMBER 1ST
ON THE KIOSK IN THE NARTHEX**

*Pray for them
as they prepare
to become
fully initiated
into the
Catholic Church*



*Sponsored by
the Religious
Education
Office*

HERE'S HOW:

- Pull a name from the jar in the narthex; it will have the date of their Confirmation
- Pray with their name as often as possible with any prayer you prefer (rosary, novena, etc)
- Write them a personal note to be given to them on the day of their Confirmation

(Note cards are available in the R.E. office if you'd prefer.)

Christmas Star

RE VOLUNTEER EPIPHANY
DINNER



2026

Let's make this season bright

SAT JANUARY 3, 2026 | 6:00 P.M.

You and a guest are invited to attend

RSVP online by Dec. 19

Provide any food allergies and # attending



**\$15 grab bag gift
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CCW Christmas Party 2025!



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

The **Officer Meeting** Tuesday, December 23 at 7:00 p.m. has been cancelled.

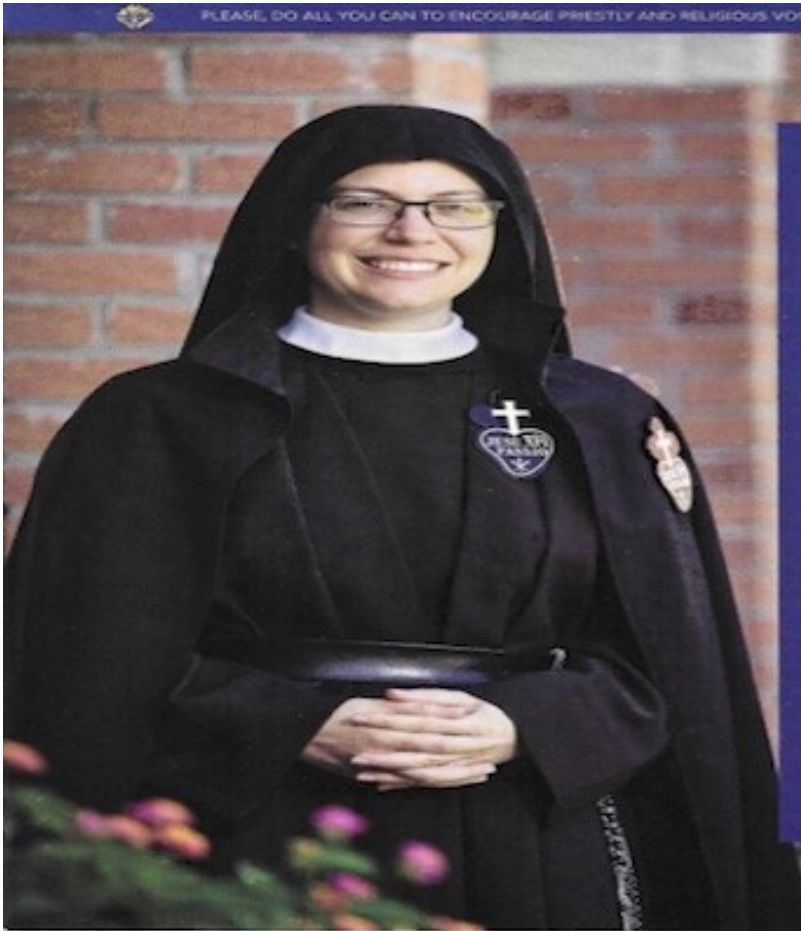


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'Jesus crucified does not disappoint.'

From a young age, I desired to be noticed by Jesus in a particular way. By age 13, Good Friday left me with an ache to suffer with the crucified Lord. At age 16, I read the Song of Songs and declared, "I want a love like that." Jesus became my first love. Though I was open to religious life, I also loved the idea of marriage.

In college, I replaced Jesus as the center of my life with the man I thought I'd marry. Deep down, I felt Jesus' claim on my life and fought against him for it, in restless pursuit of a tangible spouse.

But Jesus brought me to surrender. In the Eucharistic presence of the divine bridegroom — "the fairest of the sons of men" (Ps 45:2) — the attraction of all earthly bridegrooms faded away. Jesus gave himself entirely for me on the Cross; I now yearned to give my whole self to him.

Today, as a Passionist nun, I stand at the foot of the Cross, wedded to Redeeming Love. Jesus crucified does not disappoint. He is the fairest bridegroom of all.

Sister Maria Faustina Carmichael
Passionist Nuns of St. Joseph Monastery
Whitesville, Kentucky

Thomas L. Murphy, P.C.



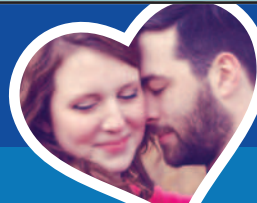
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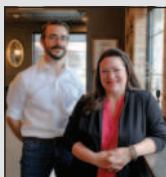
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