



# St. Mary's Parish



## Mass Schedule:

Monday through Friday  
9:00 AM

Saturday Vigils  
5:00 PM  
7:30 PM

Sunday  
7:30 AM  
9:30 AM Family Mass  
(*C.L.O.W. Sept. - May*)  
11:30 AM Choir Mass

Holy Days: Announced

## Advent Adoration Schedule:

First Friday, 9:30 - 10:30 AM  
Advent Wednesdays, 7 - 8 PM.

## Our Mission:

*"To know Christ and to make Him known."*

8 Church St., Holliston, MA 01746

Website: [www.stmarysholliston.com](http://www.stmarysholliston.com)

Email Address: [St.marys1870@gmail.com](mailto:St.marys1870@gmail.com)

Rectory Phone: (508) 429 - 4427

Religious Education Phone: (508) 429 - 6076

Dear Visitors: Welcome! We are delighted that you chose to worship with us this day. Please introduce yourself to the priest, and if you are interested in becoming a member of the parish then please register through our website or by calling the rectory. Please also be aware that for generations it has been the custom at St. Mary's to kneel together for a silent Hail Mary at the end of Mass. Please join in!

## Advent Confessions:

Wednesdays, 7 - 8 PM  
Saturdays, 12 - 12:45 PM.

**Anointing of the Sick:** Any time by appointment. Please call as soon as you are aware of a serious illness or upcoming surgery.

**Baptism:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month. To register for Baptism Preparation call 429-4427.

**Marriage:** Please call at least 6 months in advance of your desired wedding date.



# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Members of the St. Mary's Parish Family,

Today marks the Third Sunday of Advent, known also as "Gaudete" or "Rejoicing" Sunday. Today the purple of Advent penitence is lightened by the white of anticipated Christmas joy. The rose color thus created represents subdued rejoicing, or relieved repentance. The rose color of today's Advent Wreath candle and vesture reminds us that Christians are first and foremost a Rejoicing People - a community of believers filled with joy by the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Even in the very midst of Advent - a season of penance for sins - we pause to remember the goal toward which these efforts are leading, which is nothing less than salvation.

Spiritually, Gaudete Sunday calls us to embrace joy in the midst of sorrow. Life is rarely free of difficulty, and the world often seems overshadowed by suffering. Today's liturgy invites us to see beyond our struggles, to the unshakable truth that God is with us in the midst of them - rose in the midst of purple.

Saint Peter of Alcantara once wrote, *"Do not be afraid of the darkness; it is there that God's light shines most brightly."* These words remind us that true joy is not the fleeting happiness of comfort or success. It is a deeper, resilient gladness rooted in God's abiding love. Even when life feels heavy, even when the world seems bleak, we can rejoice because the Lord draws near to us in humility. He comes in the fragile form of a child, bringing fresh hope to our hearts.

Today's message of joy in the midst of sorrow is especially poignant for those of us who have lost loved ones. We are filled with sorrow at their passing. But we also have the joy of knowing they are not gone forever, but only hidden from our sight for a time. One day, by the grace of Jesus, we will meet them again in glory.

Later today, we will have the special joy of celebrating Lessons and Carols. Music has a profound role in expressing joy. Think of the angels singing to the shepherds on the night of Christ's birth, proclaiming, *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests!"* Their song announced the Savior's arrival and lifted hearts in hope and praise. Sacred music continues this holy work - lifting our spirits and allowing us to encounter God's presence in beauty and light. I encourage you to invite friends and neighbors to share the joy at Lessons and Carols today!

This past Friday, December 12, we celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, remembering the appearance of the Blessed Virgin Mary to the Mexican peasant Juan Diego on Saturday, December 9, 1531. When the local bishop doubted Juan's account and demanded proof, the Virgin instructed Juan to fill his cloak with roses growing nearby. When Juan then returned and opened the cloak before the bishop, the roses fell out to reveal a glorious image of the Blessed Mother imprinted on the cloak's lining. This image, whose manufacture modern science has been unable to explain, is still venerated today. Since Mary chose to appear to an uneducated and poor man like Juan Diego, her Guadalupe image reminds us of God's special love for the lowly.

Last weekend many at St. Mary's imitated Our Lady by reaching out to visit the lives of the poor through the annual "Give A Gift program." 783 presents were donated, destined for needy families in two Roxbury parishes. **(Photos Below).** This was an 11% increase from last year, and our highest gift giving level ever recorded! *"The Lord hears the cry of the poor,"* says Sacred Scripture. And it was truly beautiful to see the people of our parish doing the same. In responding to those in need, we emulate what God Himself did 2,000 years ago - when He heard the cries of a world lost in the darkness of sin and sent His Only Son to be our light and our hope.

In His Service and Yours,





# A Festival of Lessons and Carols

at St. Mary's Church in Holliston



## TONIGHT

Sunday, December 14,

5:00 - 6:00 PM

Join us for an Advent and Christmas  
celebration through scripture and music!

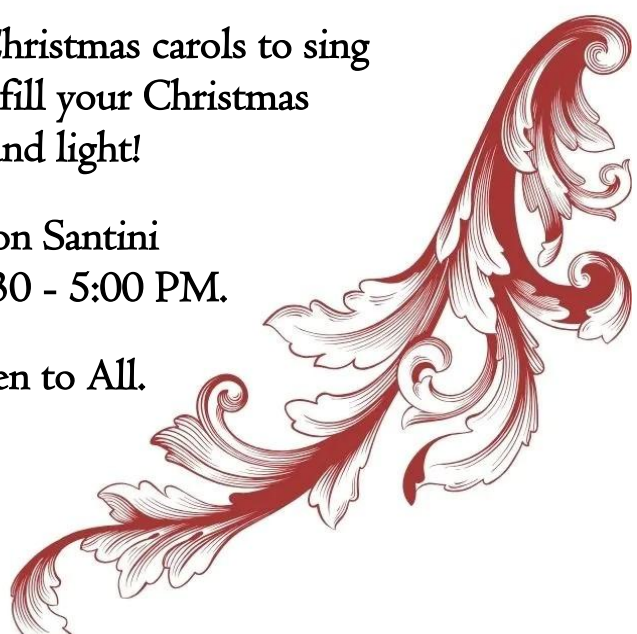
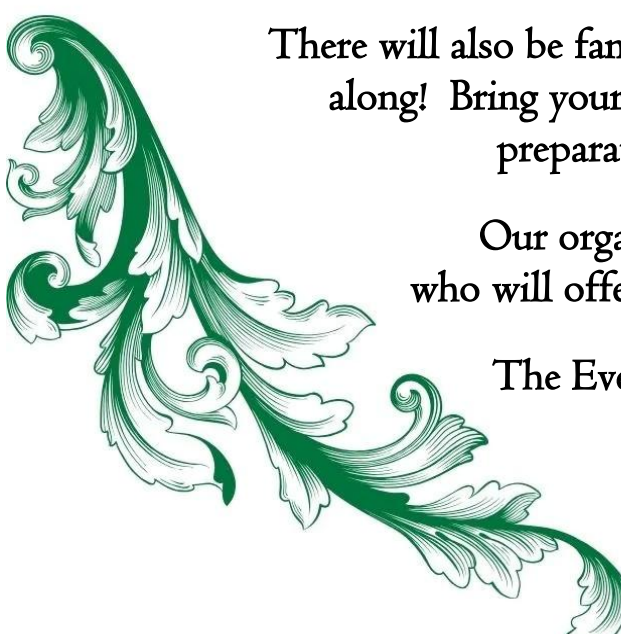


This year's Lessons and Carols will feature St. Mary's Choirs under the direction of Abbey Kelley-Lanser. The program will include choral music by Praetorius, Mendelssohn, Rutter, and more.

There will also be familiar, traditional Christmas carols to sing along! Bring your whole family and fill your Christmas preparations with beauty and light!

Our organist will be Brandon Santini who will offer a recital from 4:30 - 5:00 PM.

The Event is Free and Open to All.





## **THIS WEEKEND ~ THE COOKIE WALK!**

**December 13 and 14 after all Masses.** After all Masses, long rows of tables will be set up in Fr. Haley Hall - tables loaded down with over 2,000 delicious homemade cookies baked by St. Mary's Middle School Youth Group Members. For \$8, you may purchase an empty cookie bag, then "walk" down the rows of tables and select a dozen cookies which MSYG youths (wearing plastic gloves) will place in your bag. All proceeds will benefit the poor of Haiti, a deeply impoverished nation rocked by political collapse, horrific gang violence, and multiple natural disasters.

## **FINAL WEDNESDAY ADVENT CONFESSION**

**AND ADORATION: December 17, from 7 - 8 PM in the church.** Be forgiven, be at peace, be in His True Presence. Clear and quiet your soul from all that has come between you and God by making a good Confession - especially if it has been a while. Confession is a healing encounter with Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. The Lord's mercy, healing and grace are given to us through this encounter. In it Jesus also strengthens us to resist future or ongoing temptation. The Sacrament of Confession is a moment of accountability for us and before the Lord. The Lord's forgiveness and mercy is infinite. Nothing we have done or could do can ever separate us from experiencing God's forgiveness through this sacrament.



### **Wednesday, December 24, Christmas Eve Masses**

**4:00 PM Simultaneous Masses in the Church  
and in Fr. Haley Hall \***

**5:30 PM Mass in the Church**

**7:30 PM Mass in the Church**

**11:00 PM Mass in the Church**

\* Please be aware that the two 4 PM Masses are very crowded and parking is quite difficult. As good neighbors, please avoid parking in the Congregational Church's parking lot. Come let us adore Him!

### **Thursday, December 25, Christmas Day Masses**

**9:30 AM Mass in the Church**

**11:30 AM Mass in the Church**

### **~ CHRISTMAS COLLECTION ~**

The Christmas Collection supports the retirement, healthcare and financial needs of priests of the Archdiocese of Boston. We encourage you to please give generously on behalf of the priests that have devoted their lives to faithfully serving God and the people of the Archdiocese of Boston. Thank you!



## 2025 ST. MARY'S PARISH GRAND ANNUAL UPDATE

*"What return can I make to the Lord for all He has done for me?"* Psalm 116

<b>2025 Grand Annual goal to cover operating expenses:</b>	<b>\$150,000.00</b>
<b>Grand Annual parishioner support received to date:</b>	- <b><u>\$124,646.00</u></b>
<b>Parishioner support still needed to reach 2025 Grand Annual goal:</b>	<b>\$ 25,354.00</b>
<b>% of 2025 Grand Annual achieved to date:</b>	<b>83 %</b>
<b>% of St. Mary's families who have now made their Grand Annual gift:</b>	<b>56 %</b>



**Have you  
made  
your gift?**

As the Grand Annual continues, contributions may be placed either in the gold G.A. envelope you received in the mail, or in a separate envelope clearly marked "Grand Annual." G.A. envelopes may be mailed to 8 Church Street or dropped through the Rectory Office Door Mail-slot. Any collection basket passed at Mass may also be used.

As explained in the special mailing to all parishioners, the \$150,000 goal will fund staff salaries, the Industrial HVAC Unit Replacements for the Parish Center, Exterior Church and Rectory Painting and Repairs, the Handicap Door System Installation and more. Your generous support will assure the financial health of our parish continues.

**Thank you for your support of this most important annual collection!**

**PARISH STAFF:**

- Rev. Mark J. Coiro, Pastor
- The Xaverian Fathers, Weekend Assistance
- Deacon John D. Barry, Permanent Deacon
- Deacon Ronald A. Dowding, Permanent Deacon
- Deacon Martin Breinlinger, Senior Deacon
- Mrs. Fran Crespi, D.R.E., Grades K-7
- Mrs. Lisa Dufault, HS Youth Minister
- Ms. Abigail Kelley-Lanser, Organist, Director of Music
- Mrs. Mary Beth Harris, Parish Secretary
- Mrs. Jennifer Burgett, Religious Education Secretary
- Ms. Mary Sanning, Business Manager
- Mrs. Najat Whalen, Sacristan
- Mr. Billy Hanson, Parish Facilities
- R & R Landscaping, Cemetery Care

**LAST SUNDAY'S PARISH OFFERTORY:**

Automatic Giving:	\$ 5,706.00
WeShare:	\$ 4,878.45
Envelopes:	\$ 12,830.00
<b>Total Offertory:</b>	<b>\$ 23,414.45</b>

Thank you for making up any missed weekly parish support. The fiscal health of your parish depends on it. Kindly consider switching to WeShare at <https://stmarysholliston.com/how-to-give/>.

**WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS:** *"We know of a threefold coming of the Lord... in the first He came in the flesh, in the last He will come in glory, and in the present He comes in spirit. Advent invites us to attend to all three."* - St. Bernard of Clairvaux

**MASS INTENTIONS:**

<b>Saturday</b>		<b>December 13</b>	Vincent and Joan Mullen
	5:00		
	7:30		Paul Greeley
<b>Sunday</b>		<b>December 14</b>	
	7:30		Don Marden
	9:30		People of St. Mary's
	11:30		Emelia Bourque
<b>Monday</b>		<b>December 15</b>	
	9:00		Claire Medwid, 7 <sup>th</sup> Anv.
<b>Tuesday</b>		<b>December 16</b>	
	9:00		Patrick McDonald
<b>Wednesday</b>		<b>December 17</b>	
	9:00		Anne Shyne
<b>Thursday</b>		<b>December 18</b>	
	9:00		Departed Members of the Stahl Family
<b>Friday</b>		<b>December 19</b>	
	9:00		Paul T. Shea
<b>Saturday</b>		<b>December 20</b>	
	5:00		Holten Hewitt
	7:30		Bob Herrick
<b>Sunday</b>		<b>December 21</b>	
	7:30		People of St. Mary's
	9:30		Joan Elwood Renaccio
	11:30		Paul Brunaccini and Clare Maguire

**NEWSLETTER COLLATING THIS MONDAY:**

Please join us tomorrow, Monday, December 15 from 9:30 AM to 1:00 PM in Fr. Haley Hall to assist in our collating of the January Newsletter. All are welcome and needed!

# FOR OUR YOUTH!



## HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP ~ TGIF (Teens Gather In Faith):

We meet for our seventh Advent study meeting today, Sunday, December 14 from 3 - 4 PM in Sister Ricci House. The teens' reflections and eagerness to open their hearts has been such a gift!

**JOIN US TONIGHT, Sunday, December 14, from 7 - 9 PM**  
at ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH CENTER HALL at 145  
HOLLISTON STREET, MEDWAY for our fourth TGIF  
Meeting (bring a friend)!



STMARYS\_TGIF

**NOTE THE VENUE AND TIME CHANGE!** TGIF is open to all teens in Grades 9 - 12. For more information, contact:  
[st.marystgif1870@gmail.com](mailto:st.marystgif1870@gmail.com).



## Our 2026 Mississippi Mission Trip Dates: Sunday, July 26 - Sunday, August 1, 2026.

Parents/Guardians of interested teens are asked to join us at the start of our December 14 TGIF Meeting to hear Jessica Reynolds from Repair and Replenish Retreat Missions. Official Sign-Ups and deposits will be due at this meeting. Information was emailed last Friday, December 5 and hard copies were mailed on December 8 to registered TGIF teens!

**YOU'RE  
INVITED**

**PARENTS**



**MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP:** Our next Meeting is Sunday, January 11, from 6:30 - 8 PM. Our next event is the Caroling Trip this Friday, December 19. All those signed up should be dropped off at the Fatima Shrine Chapel at 5:30 PM. Music, Santa Hats, and Pizza will all be provided. Remember, pick up is at 8:30 PM at the Fatima Shrine. Let's spread some Christmas cheer!

**ANNUAL MIDDLE SCHOOL LUAU DANCE:** Save the date! Friday, January 30, 7 - 9:30 PM. Any and all 6th, 7th, or 8th Grade Middle School Students are invited to attend. The dance is sponsored by St. Mary's Youth Ministry but is open to all Middle School Students from anywhere!

**TODAY'S WORD FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLERS:** Today's Second Mass Reading, James 5:7 - 10, encourages believers to be patient, to trust God's timing, and to stay strong even when life feels difficult or unfair. For Catholic middle schoolers, this passage reminds you that not everything in life changes as quickly as you want it to. Just like the farmer in the Scripture waits for the rain and the harvest, you are called to wait with hope - whether you're praying for something, trying to grow in virtue, or facing challenges with friends, school, or family. God is working in your life even when you can't see the results right away. Patience isn't just sitting around; it's choosing to trust that God hears you, knows you, and is guiding you.

James also urges believers not to complain about one another, because God wants us to build each other up, not tear each other down. Middle school can be a time when friendships change, misunderstandings happen, and frustrations rise quickly. This passage invites you to pause before responding, to choose kindness even when you're annoyed, and to remember that every person you meet is loved by God. James points to the prophets as examples, people who stayed faithful even when they were misunderstood or treated unfairly. You can follow their example by staying close to Jesus, practicing patience, and living your faith with courage and compassion every day.



**WINTER CEMETERY CLEANUP:** In preparation for the winter season, please remove all plant, chime, birdfeeder and ornamental hangers from your Cemetery

Lots. With the ground becoming frozen, these can be very dangerous if broken or leaning into the right of way of funeral vehicles. Please also remove all benches, unless it is a stone bench that serves as a headstone. **All listed items still remaining will be removed on Monday, January 5, 2026.**

**LIBRARY CHRISTMAS BOOKS:** There is a selection of Advent and Christmas picture books in the Library under the window. Traditionally told nativity stories with beautiful illustrations, as well as unique stories told from a different perspective, but all faithful to the story and message of Christ's coming. Also, Christmas music on the shelf!

**ST. MARY'S MOM'S PRAYER GROUP:** Join us this Tuesday, December 16, from 9:45 - 11:00 AM, in Fr. Haley Hall as we pray together, read reflections according to the liturgical season, and share prayer intentions. During the school year, children of all ages are welcome and there are toys and coloring activities available. For more information, please contact Lauren Onak at 954-803-9942.

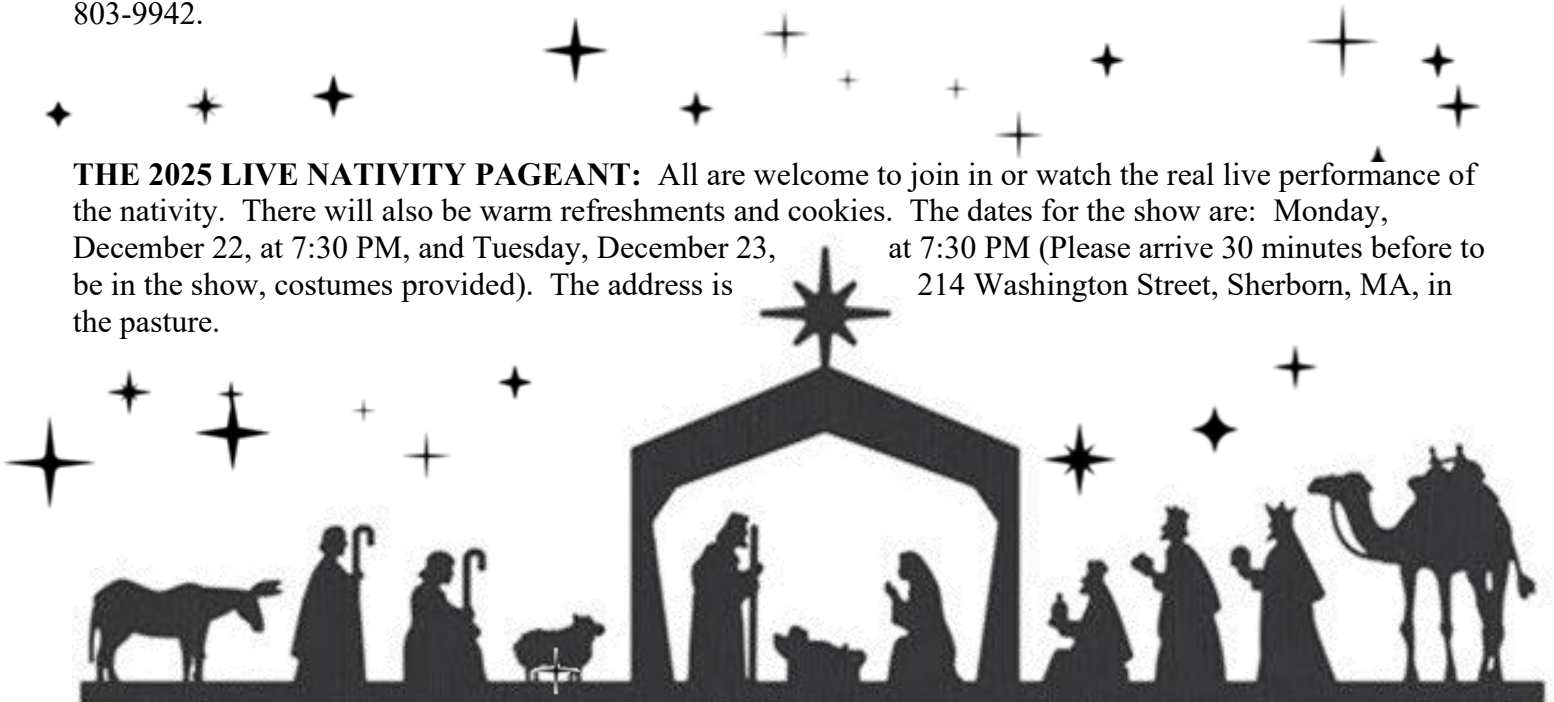
**ROSE FOR LIFE:** The Rose this week is sponsored by Liz Theiler in memory of George and Emelia Bourque. Please join her in prayer for an unborn child. Sponsor a Rose by emailing [st.marys1870@gmail.com](mailto:st.marys1870@gmail.com).

**ST. MARY'S MARRIAGE FELLOWSHIP:** Our next reflection is this Thursday, December 18, from 6:30 - 8:00 PM in Sister Ricci House.

This is a parish ministry that provides opportunities for married couples to support and encourage each other as we grow spiritually and live in accordance with God's plan for marriage. The ministry meets monthly for fellowship and a brief reflection on topics related to marriage, raising children, faith formation and service. Whether you are newly married or have been together for many years, we'd love to meet you! Free onsite childcare will be provided for young children. Please plan to bring an appetizer or dessert to share and be certain children have already eaten dinner. For questions or comments, please contact the Nunes/Onak Families at: [stmarysmarriagefellowship@gmail.com](mailto:stmarysmarriagefellowship@gmail.com).

**FATIMA SHRINE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS DISPLAY:** The Xaverian Missionaries will hold their traditional Christmas Lights Display from Thursday, December 11 to Saturday, December 27, from 5 to 9 PM. Hot chocolate and treats are provided for visitors. All are most welcome!

**THE 2025 LIVE NATIVITY PAGEANT:** All are welcome to join in or watch the real live performance of the nativity. There will also be warm refreshments and cookies. The dates for the show are: Monday, December 22, at 7:30 PM, and Tuesday, December 23, at 7:30 PM (Please arrive 30 minutes before to be in the show, costumes provided). The address is 214 Washington Street, Sherborn, MA, in the pasture.



**CLOW ~ CHILDREN K-6 ~ CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD:** Today, December 14, the children will be dismissed to the Lower Church Hall to listen and learn what Jesus teaches us in the Gospel. Please note: Younger children must be accompanied by their parents and able to sit and engage in the lesson. Older children are welcome to assist the adult leaders.



**CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD:** Group "A" Meets today, Sunday, Dec. 14 at 8:00 AM in Sister Ricci House. Last

Sunday, December 7, Group B children learned that an angel told Mary that she would have a baby. What an unusual way to receive some good news! Clay figures of Mary and the angel as well as a model of Mary's house were used to help children visualize the story. The children were also introduced to a new Practical Life work today: polishing silver. This work is very satisfying as results dramatically show a tarnished cup or bowl become shiny once again. CGS home resources are below.

<https://www.cgsusa.org/discover/cgs-approach/cgs-in-the-home-parent-resources/advent-for-families/>

DAY	CLASS	CLASS
Sun., Dec. 14	CGS-A at 8:00 AM GR-1 at 8:10 AM GR-4 at 10:45 AM	GR-5 at 10:45 AM GR-6 At home class
Mon., Dec. 15	GR-8 at 7:00 PM	
Tues., Dec. 16	GR-4 at 4:00 PM GR-5 at 4:00 PM	GR-6 at 4:00 PM GR-7 at 7:00 PM
Wed., Dec. 17	GR-2 at 4:15 PM GR-4 at 4:00 PM	GR-7 at 7:00 PM
Thur., Dec. 18	GR-8 at 7:00 PM	
Sun., Dec. 21	CGS-B at 8:00 AM GR-2 at 8:10 AM GR-2 at 10:45 AM	GR-3 at 7:55 AM GR-3 at 10:45 AM GR-6 at 4:00 PM
Mon., Dec. 22 to Fri., Jan. 2	Christmas Vacation	
Sun., Jan. 4 2026	CGS-A at 8:00 AM GR-1 at 8:10 AM GR-4 at 10:45 AM	GR-5 at 10:45 AM GR-6 at 4:00 PM

**GRADE 2 FIRST PENANCE REVIEW:** There will be three Scheduled Penance Reviews for the Grade 2 children. Parents may bring their children to one of the other sessions if their child is unable to meet their assigned day for the review. Monday, January 5 at 4:30 PM for the 8:10 Sunday Classes. Tuesday, January 6 at 4:30 PM for the 10:45 Sunday Classes. Wednesday, January 7 at 4:30 PM for the 4:15 Wednesday Classes.

**THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS NATIVITY:** The third rehearsal for the Christmas Nativity will be Saturday, December 21 at 9:00 AM for Grade 1 - 4 Children in Fr. Haley Hall. The Nativity takes place at the 4:00 PM Christmas Vigil Mass on Saturday, December 24.



**GAUDETE SUNDAY:** The third Advent candle and priest's vestments are a ROSE color and are the expression of "JOY". Christ desires that our hearts be filled with joy. Let us Celebrate Christ's promises by living each day with love.

**CONFIRMATION PROGRAM 2025-2026:**  
**Grade 7 Confirmation I:** Meets on Tuesday, December 16 or Wednesday, December 17 at 7:00 PM in Fr. Haley Hall.  
**Grade 8 Confirmation II:** Meets on Monday, December 15 or Thursday, December 18 at 7:00 PM in Fr. Haley Hall.  
**Grade 9/10 Confirmation:** Meets on Tuesday, January 6 or Wednesday, January 7 at 7:00 PM in Fr. Haley Hall.

**GR-2 FIRST PENANCE SERVICES ~ WILL BE OFFERED ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 9 AT 6:30 PM AND SATURDAY, JANUARY 10 AT 10:30 AM.** Children preparing to receive the Sacrament of First Penance have been signed up at the Parent Meeting back in October.

**GR-2 TEACHER MEETING ON THE HOLY EUCHARIST:** Monday, January 12 at 7:30 PM in RM 3 - 4. Attendance is important to review the new Ignatius textbooks.

