

# Merry Christmas!

For ever | will sing the goodness of the Lord. (Ps 89)



## **Devotion to The Sacred Heart**

Our Church has proclaimed a Jubilee Year to celebrate the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which **begins this December 27th**, and will end on June 27<sup>th</sup> 2025 which is the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart. We can increase our faith by prayerfully meditating on the apparitions of the Heart of Jesus to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, who was a devout

French nun. Of course, Christmas is the time of year where we look to the Holy Family, and celebrate the union of the three hearts: the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and the Most Chaste Heart of St. Joseph. Regarding Our Lord, St. Margaret Mary once wrote, *And He [Christ] showed me that it was His great desire of being loved by men and of withdrawing them from the path of ruin that made Him want to manifest His Heart to men, with all the treasures of love, of mercy, of grace, of sanctification and salvation which it contains, in order that those who desire to render Him and procure Him all the honor and love possible might themselves be abundantly enriched with those divine treasures of which His heart is the source (Revelations of Our Lord to St. Mary Margaret Alacoque). St. Margaret Mary, pray for us!*

“Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things and the God of peace will be with you.” (Phil 4:8)

## **Symbolism of the Christmas Creche**

**A starry sky:** His closeness brings light where there is darkness.

**The landscape:** Ancient ruins are visible signs of fallen humanity. Jesus has come to restore the world and our lives to their original splendor.

**Other figures:** Shepherds, blacksmiths, bakers and musicians all speak of everyday holiness, the joy of doing ordinary things in an extraordinary way.

**The Three Kings:** Magi come to Christ by a long route but return home telling others of their encounter with Jesus and reminding us to spread the Gospel.

## **Blessing of a Christmas Manger or Nativity Scene**

In its present form, the custom of displaying figures depicting the birth of Jesus Christ owes its origin to St. Francis of Assisi, who made the Christmas Creche or manger for Christmas Eve of 1223. The blessing of the Christmas manger or nativity scene may take place on the vigil of Christmas or at another suitable time. When the manger is set up in the home, it is appropriate that it be blessed by a parent or another family member.

### **All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:**

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

**R/.** Who made heaven and earth.

One of those present or the leader reads a text of sacred Scripture, for example, Luke 2:1 (lines 1-8 or Isaiah 7:10 (lines 10-15, the birth of Emmanuel).

**Reader:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**R/.** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

### **The leader prays with hands joined:**

God of every nation and people,

From the very beginning of creation you have made manifest your love: when our need for a Savior was great you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. To our lives he brings joy and peace, justice, mercy, and love.

Lord, bless all who look upon this manger; may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus, <https://www.usccb.org/prayers/blessing-christmas-manger-or-nativity-scene>.

**Our Savior is Born!**

## THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF Elmdale, Upsala and St. Francis : MARY & SAINTS ACC

**Parish Office**  
308 South Main St., P.O. Box 249  
Upsala, MN 56384  
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320 573 2132



### **St. Edward's, Elmdale St. Mary's, Upsala St. Francis of Assisi, St. Francis**

**Pastor:** Fr. Jimmy Joseph  
(320) 573-2975 : triparishcom@gmail.com

Sister Mary Pat Burger :  
St. Francis Rectory: (320) 573-2203

#### **PARISH OFFICE:**

308 South Main Street,  
P.O. Box 249, Upsala, MN 56384  
(320) 573-2132 : 238catholic@sytekcom.com  
Website: [www.238catholic.org](http://www.238catholic.org)

#### **Bookkeeper:** Randi Klasen

Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 8 am - 12 noon

#### **Office Secretary:** Jessie Johnson

Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8 am - 4pM

Please update the office if your phone or address changes.

#### **RECONCILIATION SCHEDULE**

Saturday: St. Francis: 3:30 pm - 3:45 pm

Sunday: St. Mary: 7:30 am - 7:45 am

St. Mary: 9:30 am - 9:45 am

#### **PRAYER LINES**

Karen Liebsch 573-4127 & Kathy Koehn 573-2363 (SM)

Judy Theisen 573-2933 & Joyce Koopmeiners 573-2728(SF)

Sally Schleper 573-2127 (SE)

#### **MINISTRY TO THE SICK & HOMEBOUND**

Holy Communion can be brought to you or a loved one at home. Please contact the Central Office if needed.

#### **SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE**

Couples need to begin preparations with Fr. Jimmy nine months in advance and must call him before setting the marriage date.

#### **SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

Contact the office before the desired date.

## **Merry Christmas!!!**

With the Birth of Jesus at midnight, a new era dawned for humanity, the era of light and freedom. Jesus is the greatest liberator of mankind. In his mission statement, Jesus announced the salvation for everyone (Lk 4:18). His Gospel is the most powerful liberating force and it is revealed through Humility of all around Him: Joseph, Mary, Angels and Shepherds.

After Mary and Joseph, the first humans to see Jesus were the shepherds. They could receive this grace because they were humble and among the last and outcast. Referring to the attitude of the shepherds, the Pope Francis says, “If we love God and care for our brothers and sisters, we walk in light; but if our heart is closed, if we are dominated by pride, deceit and self-seeking, then darkness falls within us and around us.”

This Christmas, let us feel the joy of the promise of our Savior Jesus Christ: **“Do not be afraid.”** Let us turn the threats and challenges we perceive over to God. Let us feel peace and joy in our lives and in our communities. Let us feel hope for our salvation and truly join the proclamation of the multitude of the heavenly host: **“Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”** *Praying for all your intentions and Wishing you all a Merry Christmas!*

Fr. Jimmy



**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**December 24, 2023**



**Weekend Masses: Fourth Sunday in Advent**

Saturday 12/23	<i>Saint John of Kanty, Priest</i>	
4:00 p.m. St. Francis	For the People	(SF) <b>EM of HC:</b> Janelle Roerick, Brittany Harren c, Colleen Harren c, <b>Lector:</b> M J Boeckermann, <b>Servers:</b> Volunteers, <b>Gifts:</b> Dennis & Deb Koopmeiners, <b>Ushers:</b> Mark Moorman & Syl Tschida
Sunday 12/24		
8:00 a.m. St. Mary	For the People	(SE) <b>EM of HC:</b> Jerry Theisen, Joan Theisen c, Jim Bartkowicz c, <b>Lector:</b> Mike Heisick <b>Servers:</b> Volunteers, <b>Ushers:</b> Nick Schleper, <b>Greeters:</b> Raymond Kokett, <b>Gifts:</b> Mark & Kaye Nienaber
10:00 a.m. St. Mary	+Joe, Elaine & Mark Schumer	(SM) <b>EM of HC:</b> Dave Scholz, Renee Scholz c, Volunteer c, <b>Lector:</b> Mary Frie, <b>Servers:</b> Riley Klasen & Wyatt Klasen, <b>Ushers:</b> Patrick & Lisa Zabinski, <b>Greeters:</b> Dave & Mary Hollenkamp <b>Gifts:</b> Mike & Randi Klasen, <b>Bank:</b> Mike Klasen
Christmas Eve 12/24		
4:00 p.m. St. Francis	+Donald, Elizabeth & Duane Herzog	(SF) <b>EM of HC:</b> Rosanne Voss, Rebecca Schmidt c, M J Boeckermann c, <b>Lector:</b> Jane Keppers, <b>Servers:</b> Volunteers, <b>Gifts:</b> Mike & Shelly Harren, <b>Ushers:</b> Mark Moorman & Syl Tschida
Christmas Day 12/25		
8:00 a.m. St. Mary	For the People	(SE) <b>EM of HC:</b> Jim Wensmann, Julie Wensmann c, Jerry Theisen c, <b>Lector:</b> Jim Bartkowicz <b>Servers:</b> Volunteers, <b>Ushers:</b> John Kokett & Raymond Kokett, <b>Greeters:</b> Megan Wensmann, <b>Gifts:</b> Dan & Barb George
10:00 a.m. St. Mary	+Darwin Binek	(SM) <b>EM of HC:</b> Christine Weber, Amanda Lampert c, Jan Kilian c, <b>Lector:</b> Chantelle Frie, <b>Servers:</b> Emily Ripplinger, <b>Ushers:</b> Matt & Rhonda Ripplinger, <b>Greeters:</b> Mary Frie <b>Gifts:</b> Nathan & Laura Ripplinger, <b>Bank:</b> Judy Michels

**Weekday Masses**

**Tuesday 12/26:** 6:00 p.m. St. Mary, *St. Stephen, The First Martyr*  
 ~Special Intentions for our families -G & MJ Boeckermann  
**Wednesday 12/27:** 8:00 a.m. St. Francis, *St. John, Apostle & Evangelist*  
 ~ Living and Deceased Members of the SF Men's Society  
**Thursday 12/28:** 8:00 a.m. St. Francis *The Holy Innocents, Martyrs*  
 ~ +Arnold Czech  
**Friday 12/29:** 7:30 a.m. St. Mary, *St. Thomas Becket, Bishop & Martyr*  
 ~ Leo & Catherine Hartung -Patrick & Lisa Zabinski

Spend time with Jesus in Adoration!



2nd Tuesdays  
 St. Francis of Assisi 7am -7pm  
 Thursdays  
 St. Mary's 12 - 9 pm.

**Please note:**  
 There will only be one Mass for the Solemnity of Mary (see below).

**Weekend Masses: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph**

Saturday 12/30		
4:00 p.m. St. Francis	+Edmund & Delores Roerick ~Roerick Family	(SF) <b>EM of HC:</b> M.J. Boeckermann, Brittany Harren c, Colleen Harren c, <b>Lector:</b> Jim Scholz, <b>Servers:</b> Volunteers, <b>Gifts:</b> Lloyd & Judy Lashinski, <b>Ushers:</b> Mark Moorman & Syl Tschida
Sunday 12/31		
8:00 a.m. St. Mary	+Maxie & Irene Molus	(SE) <b>EM of HC:</b> Julie Wensmann, Volunteer c, Jim Bartkowicz c, <b>Lector:</b> Jerry Theisen <b>Servers:</b> Volunteers, <b>Ushers:</b> Jim Wensmann & Justin Wensmann, <b>Greeters:</b> Volunteers, <b>Gifts:</b> Brian & Tracey Hartung
10:00 a.m. St. Mary	For the People	(SM) <b>EM of HC:</b> Chantelle Frie, Christine Weber c, Volunteer c, <b>Lector:</b> Jan Kilian, <b>Servers:</b> Alayna Weber & Lauryn Weber, <b>Ushers:</b> Mary Frie, <b>Greeters:</b> Mikel & Julie Nelson <b>Gifts:</b> Dave & Renee Scholz, <b>Bank:</b> Mike Klasen
Solemnity of Mary 1/1		
8:00 a.m. St. Mary	+Arnold Czech	(SE) <b>EM of HC:</b> Jim Wensmann, Joan Theisen c, Jerry Theisen c, <b>Lector:</b> Jeff Czech <b>Servers:</b> Volunteers, <b>Ushers:</b> Brent Prokott & Andrew Prokott, <b>Greeters:</b> Raymond Kokett, <b>Gifts:</b> Brad & Crystal Hartung

**All Cluster News**

**Faith Formation: Dec. 27th**

K-6: Home Lesson-  
 The Holy Family and Epiphany  
 2nd grade: No home lesson  
 Enjoy the Christmas season!

**Youth**

**Job Opening**

We have a job opening for a Youth Director. Fill out an application on the website, call the Parish Office or let Fr. Jimmy know.

**Knights of Columbus Free Throw Contest**

Sunday, January 14th  
 Upsala Senior High Gym  
 Registration: 12:30 p.m.  
 Contest begins: 1:00 p.m.  
 Open to Boys and Girls ages 9-14

**Knights of Columbus Meeting**

We will meet on January 9th at 7:30 p.m. St. Mary's, Upsala

**A Gift from your Parish**

You will find a book "Beautiful Eucharist" in the entry of church. Please take one for your family and grow in your faith this year! Merry Christmas from Fr. Jimmy and Staff.

**WEEKEND COLLECTION**

**December 17, 2023**

**St. Edward:** Adult: \$1,845 Loose: \$108, Christmas Flowers: \$25  
 St. Edward Fire Fund: \$500,  
 Christmas: \$290, Retired Rel.: \$20  
**Total: \$2,788**  
**St. Francis:** Adult: \$2,345, Loose: \$65, Votive: \$ 275.40, Retired Rel: \$30, Christmas: \$315, Christmas Flowers: \$25, Solemnity of Mary: \$35 **Total: \$3,090.40**  
**St. Mary:** Adult: \$2,550, Loose: \$112.01, Christmas Flowers: \$180, Christmas: \$100 **Total: \$2,942.01**

**Pray for us:**

Raymond Kurowski, Florence Kurowski, Margaret Carlson, Ken & Pat Euteneuer, Ron Dingmann, Kristy Brezinka, Donna Scholz, Kathy Hennek, Marjorie Lehner, Carol Langner, Judy Gerads, Rose Binek, Jim Negen, Marlene Vornbrock, Roger Thell, Alan Schumer, Gary Larson, Helen Heisick, Ron Leners & Geraldine George



**Stewardship as a Way of Life:**

"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" – Luke 1:28  
 After Jesus, we look to Mary as an ideal steward. Her entire life was lived in obedience to God's call. Mary teaches us to live with joy for all we have been given. Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, Mary reflects the light of Christ. Like Mary, we are called to reflect Christ's light to the world through our gratitude and generosity.

**Called to the Priesthood**

"Do not be afraid, for you have found favor with God." Consider following Christ more closely as a priest or in consecrated life. Talk to your priest or reach out to the Vocation Office: Fr. Doug Liebsch, Julie Jacobs 251-5001 or Jacobs@gw.studio.org

"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God" (1 Jn 4:7-11)

**Dinner Theatre**

Upstage Players to present the dinner theatre Bingo Spells Murder by Robert Mattson January 12th & 13th at St. Mary's in Upsala. Tickets are \$30 and includes a 3-course meal with choice of baked chicken or roast beef. Contact Lisa at 320-250-2676 to reserve tickets. Deadline is December 28th. A show and dessert presentation will be held on January 14th at 2:00. No reservations are needed for the dessert presentation. More information can be found at upstageplayers.org.

**Thank you**

So many have blessed us with their talents and ministries to make this Advent season of waiting & preparation so special and to help us begin our new year: decorators, church maintenance and cleaning, funeral luncheon volunteers, opportunities for giving such as Box of Joy, The "Thanks" Giving Tree, Upsala Senior Center Visits, Faith Formation teachers, Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers, Musicians and Choir, Lectors, Servers, Ushers, Greeters, Gift Bearers, all who volunteered to help in any way with the St. Edward church fire refresh and repair, ACC and finance Council members, Money Counting Ladies, The Knights of Columbus, Adoration prayers, Fr. Jimmy for his ministry and God who sent his only son to save the world! May God bless your families and keep travelers safe.

The Christmas season goes until Monday, January 8th. Keep your decorations up and keep celebrating!