

800th Anniversary of the Nativity Scene

Catholics will have the opportunity to obtain a plenary indulgence from **Dec. 8th, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to Feb. 2, 2024**, the feast of the Presentation of Jesus Christ in the Temple. The key to this spiritual privilege lies in prayer before a Nativity scene at a Franciscan church, such as the Poor Clares' Monastery in Sauk Rapids whose Nativity scene will be in place until Feb. 2nd. Just follow the signs to the Chapel (open 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mass is at 7:00a.m. daily). No reservation necessary but call the sisters (320) 251-3556 with questions. The tradition of the Nativity scene was inspired by St. Francis himself, who crafted the first one in Greccio. Italy, in 1223 symbolizing the profound mystery of the Incarnation.

During the feast of St. Francis of Assisi on Oct. 4th, the faithful gathered at the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi, Italy. The occasion honored the beloved Italian saint and the 800th anniversary of the approval of the Rule of St. Francis, alongside the inception of the Nativity scene in Greccio. As part of the celebration of this Franciscan centenary, the Conference of the Franciscan Family sought the approval of Pope Francis for a plenary indulgence by "visiting the churches run by Franciscan families throughout the world and stopping in prayer in front of the Nativity scenes set up there." The Apostolic Penitentiary welcomed the request, and Pope Francis granted the faithful the opportunity to receive this indulgence under the usual conditions: a plenary indulgence will be granted to anyone who prays in front of a nativity scene (kneeling or standing), prays an Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be and the Creed, detaches themselves from all sin and takes part in sacramental confession, holy communion and prayer for the intentions of the Pope.

9 Days for Life Novena: Jan. 16-24

Join us in praying for the protection of human life. Each day's intention is accompanied by a short reflection and suggested actions to help build a culture of life. Visit: <https://www.respectlife.org/> to sign-up.

Vespers for Life: Jan. 21st

Join Bishop Neary in remembering all children aborted since 1973 with this Service including music, prayer, scripture and reflection. Monetary donations will go to Mother Mary's Fund to assist pregnancy resource centers in the Diocese of St. Cloud.

3:30 p.m. Rosary & 4:00 p.m. Vespers Church of St. Anthony, 2405 1st St. N. St. Cloud, MN 56303

March for Life: Jan. 22nd

10:30 a.m. Prayer Service at the Cathedral of Saint Paul.

Noon to 1:00 p.m. March to the Minnesota Capitol.

Buses are being coordinated in several locations. To sign-up visit: <https://stcdio.org/event/march-for-life-2024/>

Catholic Men's Conference: Feb. 24th

This event will be held at St. Francis Xavier in Sartell. This year's theme is "Sharing our Eucharistic Journey" with keynote speaker Fr. Tim Donovan from the Diocese of Orange, CA. Other speakers include Fr. Matthew Crane, Deacon Mike Benda, and Deacon Ed Shoener from Scranton, PA. Find more details and register at <https://stcdio.org/event/catholic-mens-conference-2024/>.

Pastoral Letter on the Eucharist

In light of the National Eucharistic Revival, an initiative of the U.S. bishops aiming to inspire, educate and unite the faithful in a more intimate relationship with Jesus in the Eucharist, Bishop Neary was moved by the Holy Spirit to write his very first pastoral letter, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." His hope is that everyone will read the letter during this Parish Year of the Eucharistic Revival and that the people of God deepen their love and understanding of the Eucharist. There are some suggestions inside the letter about how to host small groups to learn and study together. For more information and to download the PDF of the pastoral letter, visit www.stcdio.org/2023-pastoral-letter.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has designated January as *National Poverty Awareness Month*

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

Parish Office
308 South Main St., P.O. Box 249
Upsala, MN 56384
238catholic@sytekcom.com
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

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.

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

It is a long-standing tradition on the feast of Epiphany, to bless Chalk to be used to mark our homes, asking God's protection upon the home and on all who live and visit there. For the blessing, the chalk is used to mark the following symbols over the doorway of the home.

20+C+M+B+24

The letters have two meanings. They are the initials of the traditional names of the three Magi: Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar. They also abbreviate the Latin words for "**Christus Mansionem Benedicat,**" that means, "**may Christ bless this dwelling.**" The crosses represent the protection of the Precious Blood of Christ, whom we invoke, and the holiness of the three Magi sanctified by their adoration of the infant Jesus. Please use the following prayer when you mark the symbols over the doorway.

God of heaven and earth, you revealed your only-begotten Son to every nation by the guidance of a star. Bless this house and all who live in here. May all who come to our home this year rejoice to find Christ living among us. Fill us with the light of Christ, that our concern for others may reflect your love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2024!

"What is happening in the heart of man? What is happening in the heart of humanity? It's time to stop. We are all children of one heavenly father, we belong to the same human family and we share a common destiny. This brings a responsibility for each to work so that the world becomes a community of brothers who respect each other, accept each other in one's diversity, and takes care of one another," the Holy Father Pope Francis expressed his feelings seeing the violence in the world. Let us keep praying for Peace in the world. May the Child Jesus, the source of Peace, bless us all abundantly! Wish you all a bright and fruitful Year 2024, filled with health, peace and joy which the Child Jesus alone can give us.

THANKS...


Again, I want to thank all of you who have given so generously of your time, your talent and treasure to beautify our Churches and grounds for Christmas, and to all those who have shared their faith in our liturgies and ministries to welcome Christ, our Savior. Thank you very much for your kind support and prayers in this season and throughout the year.

Fr. Jimmy

The Epiphany of the Lord

January 7, 2024

Weekend Masses: The Epiphany of the Lord		
Saturday 1/6		
4:00 p.m. St. Francis	† Gene Lange ~Dan & Rita Lange	(SF) EM of HC: Janelle Roerick, Rebecca Schmidt c, Rosanne Voss c, Lector: M J Boeckermann, Servers: Volunteers, Gifts: Jim & Tammy Lehner, Ushers: Mark Moorman & Syl Tschida
Sunday 1/7		
8:00 a.m. St. Mary	† Jordan Wensmann ~Jim & Julie Wensmann	(SE) EM of HC: Jerry Theisen, Joan Theisen c, Peggy Frieler c, Lector: Tracey Hartung, Servers: Volunteers, Ushers: Bob Brezinka & Ralph Schleper, Greeters: Megan Wensmann, Gifts: Steve & Kathy Blonigen
10:00 a.m. St. Mary	For the People	(SM) EM of HC: Jan Kilian, Amanda Lampert c, LeAnn Beneke c, Lector: Tom Kilian, Servers: Emily Ripplinger, Ushers: Beau Ripplinger & Nathan Ripplinger, Greeters: Randy & Jane Tretter, Gifts: Matt & Rhonda Ripplinger, Bank: Tom Kilian

Weekday Masses		
Monday 1/8	<i>The Baptism of the Lord</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">Spend time with Jesus in Adoration!</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2nd Tuesdays</u> St. Francis of Assisi 7am -7pm <u>Thursdays</u> St. Mary's 12 - 9 pm.</p> <p>Pray for us: Raymond Kurowski, Florence Kurowski, Margaret Carlson, Ken & Pat Euteneuer, Jim Negen, Ron Dingmann, Kristy Brezinka, Donna Scholz, Kathy Hennek, Marjorie Lehner, Carol Langner, Judy Gerads, Rose Binek, Marlene Vornbrock, Roger Thell, Alan Schumer, Gary Larson, Helen Heisick, & Geraldine George</p>
No Mass		
Tuesday 1/9		
6:00 p.m. St. Mary	† Claude Yurczyk	
Wednesday 1/10		
8:00 a.m. St. Francis	† Norbert & Josie Roering ~SF Men's Society	
Thursday 1/11		
8:00 a.m. St. Francis	† Ethan Gerads	
Friday 1/12		
7:30 a.m. St. Mary	† Arnold Scholz	

Weekend Masses: Second Sunday in Ordinary Time		
Saturday 1/13	<i>St. Hilary, Bishop & Doctor of the Church</i>	
4:00 p.m. St. Francis	† Irene Lashinski ~SF Christian Mothers	(SF) EM of HC: Judy Theisen, Bob Thiesen c, Alice Westrich c, Lector: Rebecca Schmidt, Servers: Volunteers, Gifts: John & Marsha Rakotz, Ushers: Mark Moorman & Syl Tschida
Sunday 1/14		
8:00 a.m. St. Mary	For the People	(SE) EM of HC: Julie Wensmann, Jim Wensmann c, Jim Bartkovic c, Lector: Jeff Czech Servers: Volunteers, Ushers: Jeron Wensmann & Jim Czeck Greeters: Volunteers, Gifts: Brent & Sandy Prokott
10:00 a.m. St. Mary	† Linus Lehner	(SM) EM of HC: Amanda Lampert, Christine Weber c, Cindy Koehn c, Lector: Kim Koehn, Servers: Alayna Weber & Lauryn Weber, Ushers: Darren Lange & Mitch Lange Greeters: Dave & Mary Hollenkamp Gifts: Mitchell & Brooke Kingston, Bank: Judy Michels

<p>WEEKEND COLLECTION Dec. 31-Jan. 1, 2024 St. Edward: Adult: \$520 Loose: \$186, Christmas: \$50, Fire Fund: \$1,015, Solemnity of Mary: \$160, Funeral Lunch: \$25, Total: \$1,956 St. Francis: Adult: \$335, Loose: \$123, Christmas: \$115, Solemnity of Mary: \$80, Total: \$653 St. Mary: Adult: \$1031, Loose: \$324, Votive: \$110.50, Funeral: \$30, Christmas: \$230, Solemnity of Mary: \$300, Total: \$2025.50</p>	<p>December ONLINE CONTRIBUTIONS St. Edward: \$250 St. Francis: \$405 St. Mary: \$610 Sign-up for Online Contributions by filling out a form on our website or by contacting the Parish Office to have a form mailed or emailed to you. Thank you!</p>
--	--

All Cluster News

Faith Formation: Jan. 10th

K-6: Home Lesson
 Authority and Obedience
 7-10 & Conf. Class 7-8:30 p.m.

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.

Rural Catholic Middle Ages

Singles Group: Jan. 13th

Join us for prayer, topical information, discussions, and social activities for people ages 30-60 who are looking to socialize with other single adults. We meet at 7:00 p.m. on the second Saturday of each month at All Saints-St. Mary's Church basement in Holdingford (on River Street). Call or text Janel at 320-290-2877 for information.

Diocesan Festival of Families:

Join in a new Diocesan event designed specifically for families on February 11th, at Sacred Heart in Sauk Rapids, the day will include a free carnival, parent sessions, a children's session, teen session, Mass with Bishop Neary, and much more! Register at: <https://stcdio.org/event/festival-of-families/>.

Banquet of Love:

The Eucharist as Weekly Marriage Enrichment Online Classes *Banquet of Love* is an online 12-part course that helps you make practical connections between the Eucharist and your marriage. As a gift to couples and a support for parishes and ACCs, Bishop Neary purchased the license for anyone in the diocese to use this series at NO COST. The license includes 18-month access to the entire course material, online video modules and printable PDFs for each session. It can be offered to couples to use on their own or as part of small faith sharing groups. For more information, visit www.stcdio.org/banquet-of-love.

The Art of Conversation

Art Gallery

Our community would like to start a family-friendly art gallery to bring people together for the purpose of having conversations about Jesus. Local people of all ages would display their work in shows that would change monthly. The Stearns Bank, Upsala is willing to give the space next to the bank rent-free, with the stipulation that what ever remodeling done can easily be reversed back to office space. We need volunteers to help with the remodel, host shows etc. The Community Covenant Church is leading the way. Contact: Pastor Steve (218) 428-8010 if interested.

Totus Tuus Leaders

Do you know of any college-aged young adults who are ready to take their faith to the next step? Invite them to apply to be a Totus Tuus Team Leader. Application deadline is March 15th. Visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/>

Upstage Players Dinner Theatre

Bingo Spells Murder by Robert Mattson Jan. 12th & 13th at St. Mary's in Upsala. Tickets are \$30 with choice of baked chicken or roast beef. Contact Lisa at 320-250-2676. A show and dessert presentation will be held on Jan. 14th at 2:00 p.m. No reservations are needed for the dessert presentation. Visit: upstageplayers.org.

St. Francis' News

Journey with Jesus to Calvary

Christmas has just past but we have to start thinking about the 2024 Journey with Jesus to Calvary Performances. Palm Sunday is on March 24th. If you had a speaking part and want to do it again call Bob 573-2933. If you want a speaking part or want to be a part of this year's performance come to the planning meeting at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 14th in the St. Francis Church basement. If you cannot make the meeting but would like to help in any way-call Bob.

Baby Shower for Jesus

All are welcome to donate wish list items at St. Francis Parish in the Bassinet through January. Proceeds will go to ELEVATE (Pregnancy & Family Resource Center.) Current needs are: baby hygiene kits, clothes 18 months and up, socks neutral colors, diapers sizes 3 thru 6, white onesies, car seat covers, bath towels and gift cards to Walmart and Target. A Blessed Thank You in advance from St. Francis Christian Women.

Thank you to the Freeport State Bank president James J. Hemker for donating a \$1000 gift to St. Francis of Assisi!