



St. Mary's Catholic Church
Pontiac, Illinois
December 17, 2023

ST. MARY'S CHURCH
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
119 E. HOWARD ST., P.O. BOX 374
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS 61764

Phone: 815-844-7683 Fax: 815-842-4345

Parish & School Website: www.stmaryspontiac.org

Facebook: St. Mary's Parish-Pontiac

PASTOR: Fr. Joseph A. Baker

fjrbaker@stmaryspontiac.org 309-657-0966

PERMANENT DEACONS:

Dcn. Jim Wallace servant518@outlook.com

Dcn. Ray White deacon.ray@stmaryspontiac.org

PARISH SECRETARY/BOOKKEEPER: Patti Zehr

zehr.patti@stmaryspontiac.org

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR: Danielle Gill

gill.danielle@stmaryspontiac.org

EVANGELICAL CATHOLIC COORDINATOR: Margo Law

law.margo@stmaryspontiac.org

MUSIC DIRECTORS: Marie Kane, Merryn Krenz,
& Kathy Schulz

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday 9:00 am to 12 noon and 1:00-4:30 pm

Closed on Friday afternoons Memorial Day to Labor Day

MASS TIMES:

Saturday 4:00 pm Sunday 7:00 am & 9:30 am

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 7:00 am

Thursday 8:15 am when school is in session

CONFESSION TIMES:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 6:25-6:55 am

Wednesday 12 noon - 1:00 pm

Saturday 2:30-3:30 pm

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL:

414 N. Main St., Pontiac, IL 61764

Phone: 815-844-6585

Principal: Mrs. Karen Jones, jones.karen@stmaryspontiac.org

Facebook: St. Mary's School

Instagram: [stmaryspontiac](https://www.instagram.com/stmaryspontiac)

ST. MARY'S FOOD PANTRY: 401 E. Water St. Open to

Livingston County residents every Thursday from 12 noon to 3 pm.

Phone: 815-844-FOOD(3663)

SCRIP: SCRIP is now an electronic only format using the RaiseRight app or at www.raiseright.com. If you do not have an online account and would like to set one up, please contact Taryn Tissiere at tissiere.taryn@stmaryspontiac.org or 815-979-7663.



STEWARDSHIP

Collection last Sunday: \$15,475.73

Retired Religious Collection was \$1,193.00.

Building Maintenance Fund Collection: This weekend.

THANK YOU to those who regularly support our parish.



Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 16

4:00 p.m. Irene Fraher

Sunday, December 17 (Third Sunday of Advent)

7:00 a.m. Parish

9:30 a.m. William Crowley

Monday, December 18

7:00 a.m. Fr. Michael Bies

Tuesday, December 19

7:00 a.m. Jerry Reilly

Wednesday, December 20

7:00 a.m. Mary Rittenhouse

Thursday, December 21 (St. Canisius)

8:15 a.m. Jean Jones

Friday, December 22

7:00 a.m. Paul Rittenhouse

Saturday, December 23 (St. John of Kanty)

4:00 p.m. Bernie Cassady

Sunday, December 24 (Fourth Sunday of Advent)

7:00 a.m. Keith & Rose Mills

9:30 a.m. Parish

Sunday, December 24 (Christmas Eve)

4:00 p.m. Mary Jo Murphy

8:00 p.m. Parish

Servers for Saturday, December 23

4:00 p.m. Volunteers

Servers for Sunday, December 24

7:00 a.m. Volunteers

9:30 a.m. Volunteers

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION: The Adoration Chapel is open each weekday, Monday-Friday from 8am until 8pm and Saturday from 8am until 3pm. If you would like to spend an hour with Jesus or share an hour with someone, please contact Darlene DeMattia at 815-674-2375 or the Parish Office at 815-844-7683.

BAPTISM PREP CLASS: If you are looking to have your first child baptized or are expecting your first child and would like to be prepared for the sacrament of Baptism when they arrive, please call the parish office at 815-844-7683 to reserve your spot. Baptism preparation classes will take place on the **third Thursday of each month at 6:00pm**. *Please do not ask godparents until the class has been attended, as this will be a topic that is covered.

MASS AT LOCAL NURSING HOME: Mass will be offered at Accolade Health Center on **Friday, December 22 at 9:30am**.



THANK YOU TO KAREN PEISSIG:

Karen Peissig has recently decided to step away from her role as DRE at St. Mary's. Karen has run our CCD program for 25 years and has put tremendous effort into catechizing many of our children. Thank you, Karen, for everything you've done for our parish. After the New

Year, I'm happy to report that Angela Mote, who has been working closely with Karen already, will be stepping into the role of coordinating CCD. Angela will be assisted with this by Cece White. Thank you to both Angela and Cece.

**ST. MARY'S CHURCH
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS**

**CHRISTMAS &
4TH SUNDAY
OF ADVENT
OBLIGATION:**



While next Sunday is December 24, Christmas Eve, it is also the 4th Sunday of Advent. Catholics are, therefore, obligated to attend a Mass for Sunday as well as one of the four Christmas Masses (two on Christmas Eve and two on Christmas Day). Essentially, the easiest way to fulfill your obligations are to attend one Mass on either the evening of December 23 or the morning of December 24 as well as one additional Mass either on the evening of December 24 or the morning of December 25. Simply attending one Mass on the evening of December 24 does not fulfill the obligation for both Christmas and the 4th Sunday of Advent. All of that said, though, there is one odd caveat. To fulfill one's Sunday obligation, you only have to attend Mass at some point on Sunday, so going to one of the Christmas Eve Masses does count for your Sunday Mass, even if you don't attend one of the Sunday morning Masses. In that case, though, you are still obligated to attend an additional Christmas Mass on the morning of December 25. Attending both Christmas Eve Masses would also satisfy your obligations. Confused yet?! We can all look forward to next year when Christmas is on a Wednesday.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS will meet **Wednesday, December 20 at 6:30pm** in the Our Lady of the Rosary Room of the parish hall.

LEGION OF MARY: Want to tell the world about Jesus through Evangelization? Become a disciple. Join the Legion of Mary **every Thursday at 7:00pm** in the Parish Center. Please use the back door.

CGS ATRIUM CAN USE old Christmas cards with sacred images. They can also use scrapbooking paper with classic or solid design, embroidery scissors, crafting felt of all colors, and Catholic religious items received in the mail, but no longer wanted. There will be some cutting work for parishioners if you want to watch for Ziploc bags in the back of church in the coming weeks. Thank you for your support of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd at St. Mary's!

SCRIP FOR CHRISTMAS: Just a reminder that SCRIP orders are now placed through the app Raise Right. The program has moved to 100% electronic. When you are shopping, you **MUST** select "E-cards" **ONLY**. Any orders for physical gift cards will not be processed. For any questions, email Taryn Tissiere at tissiere.taryn@stmaryspontiac.org

LIFE LINE SCREENING: Have you ever thought about the following?
 I want to see my grandchildren grow up.
 I want to continue living independently.
 I don't want to be a burden on my family.

Preventive screenings can help and we have partnered with Life Line Screening to provide these valuable screenings. The mission of Life Line Screening is to provide advance, yet affordable and convenient health screenings that supplement your traditional healthcare. They can help make you aware of a previously silent, unrecognized problem that can now get treated at an early stage, or confirm that you are on the right path and should continue your healthy habits. Don't let heart disease and stroke get in your way of the life you love. These 4 vital screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. Register by calling toll free 1-844-591-7160, text the word "circle" to 216-279-1607 or online at <https://llsa.social/HC>



JESSE TREES in the front corners of the church will have new ornaments added each week symbolizing the Old Testament people "waiting" for the Messiah. Packets at the doors of the church will name the Old Testament symbols for the four weeks of Advent and the Bible verses which explain them. Pick up a packet and take it home to read the verses indicated for each day of Advent with your family.

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS: Baskets are at the doors of the church for those wishing to donate non-perishable food items or paper products to the St. Mary's Food Pantry.

ADVENT PENANCE SERVICES THIS WEEK

St. Mary-Pontiac Tuesday, Dec. 19 at 6:30pm
St. Joseph-Chenoa Wednesday, Dec. 20 at 6:30pm
Sts. Peter & Paul-Chatsworth Thursday, Dec 21 at 6:30pm
Extra priests will be on hand to hear individual confessions.

OTHER CONFESSION TIMES THIS WEEK

Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri: 6:25-6:55am
Wednesday, Dec 20: 12noon-1pm
Saturday, Dec 23: 2:30-3:30pm

CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES

Pontiac 4:00 & 8:00 pm
Lexington 4:00 pm
Odell 4:00 pm
Dwight 4:00 pm
Flanagan 6:00 pm
Chenoa 8:00 pm

CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES

Pontiac 7:00 & 9:30 am
Odell 8:00 am
Lexington 9:00 am
Chatsworth 10:00 am
Dwight 10:30 am
Chenoa 11:00 am

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS may once again be purchased in memory or in honor of a loved one. Please place your money and the form below in an envelope marked "Christmas Flowers" and place it in the collection basket. Please print names as you want them to appear in the bulletin.

IN MEMORY OF _____

IN HONOR OF _____

YOUR NAME _____

Poinsettia 6 1/2 inch pot \$10.00 Poinsettia 7 inch pot \$15.00
 Poinsettia 8 inch pot \$20.00



2024-2025 REGISTRATION



Kindergarten and PreK4 registration for new families begins January 10, 2024.

We are...

- combining Catholic faith and teachings with academic excellence.
- providing a safe and welcoming environment for all students.
- partnering with parents in the faith formation of their children.
- setting high standards for student achievement.
- preparing students to be productive citizens and future leaders.
- instilling the value of service to others in our students.

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

Why choose us?

- Full, state private school recognition
- Certified teachers
- Scholarships available
- PK - 8 building, one class of each
- Eureka math curriculum, which has been the most successful amongst Diocesan schools
- Music, Art, PE, and Computers
- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program
- Teacher-Student Ratio 1:14
- Flexible tuition payment plans

LITTLE DISCIPLES PRESCHOOL

Why choose us?

- Full-day 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Combined 3 and 4-year old classroom*
- Certified teachers
- Structured and creative playtime
- Music, Art, PE, and technology
- Minimum one hour daily rest time
- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Program
- Teacher-Student Ratio 1:10
- Flexible tuition payment plans

*Age as of September 1.

CONTACT US TODAY:

St. Mary's School
(815) 844-6585
school.stmaryspontiac.org



ENCOUNTERING THE EUCHARIST

So submissive was he to her care that the door that slammed in her face in Bethlehem also slammed on him. If there was no room for her in the inn, then there was no room for him. As she was the ciborium before he was born, so she was his monstrance after Bethlehem. To her fell the happy lot of exposing, in the chapel of a stable, the "Blessed Sacrament," the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ. She enthroned him for adoration before Wise Men and shepherds, before the very simple and the very learned.
~Venerable Fulton J. Sheen

Lord Jesus, I ask You to take away anything that strips me of joy. I want to experience life as You want me to--filled with joy and gladness. Help me to rejoice in all circumstances, especially when I receive Your Body and Blood in Holy Communion.

Prayer taken from: Meditations after Holy Communion-Guided Meditations for Every Sunday and Other Holy Days

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday (1/21): After 7am Mass Coffee/Doughnuts/Eucharistic Video in the MPR (old gym)

St. Mary's School
Annual Fund Drive
is underway and we've
already raised more
than \$25,000!

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Please help us reach
our \$36,000 goal!
school.stmaryspontiac.org



St. Mary's Church uses Flocknote to keep our parishioners informed of special Masses and events and any changes or cancellations that may occur. If you do not receive texts or emails from us, there are two ways to sign up. Text the word PONTIAC to 84576 OR click the Flocknote link at the bottom of the homepage of our website: church.stmaryspontiac.org

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION AT ST. MARY'S: Have you felt a desire to grow closer to God through prayer and the sacramental life of the Church? Do you sense a nagging tug to take a step toward greater devotion and love of Jesus, His Church, and the Blessed Mother or maybe you just need a pick-me-up in your life with God? If so, *Spiritual Direction* might be something for you. *Spiritual Direction* is an ancient practice in the Church in which one Christian meets with another to discuss his/her personal life with God with the goal of growing in intimacy and relationship. While many priests and religious offer Spiritual Direction, we're also blessed here at St. Mary's to have a parishioner, Mary A. Billington, who is a licensed Spiritual Director, having graduated from the Cenacle of Our Lady of Divine Providence School of Spiritual Direction in Florida in 2010. Mary is trained in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola, a specific form of direction in the Church, and is passionate about helping others grow deeper in knowledge and love of Jesus. If this is something that speaks to you, reach out to Mary at (815) 674-7197 or jmbill82@gmail.com. To learn more about the practice of Spiritual Direction, take a look at spiritualdirection.com, a website run by the Avila Institute, a Catholic movement dedicated to the spiritual formation of the faithful.

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READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 17, 2023

Sunday	Third Sunday of Advent Is 61:1-2a, 10-11; Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28
Monday	Jer 23:5-8; Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19; Mt 1:18-25
Tuesday	Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17; Lk 1:5-25
Wednesday	Is 7:10-14; Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6; Lk 1:26-38
Thursday	Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a; Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21; Lk 1:39-45
Friday	1 Sm 1:24-28; 1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd; Lk 1:46-56
Saturday	Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14; Lk 1:57-66
Sunday	Fourth Sunday of Advent 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29 Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-38

HOSPICE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Come volunteer with OSF Hospice! We have a variety of opportunities that help serve our patients and their families. Available opportunities: visiting with patients, crocheting prayer shawls, sewing fidget blankets, office help etc. Training is provided. For more information on requirements or to obtain an application please call 309-451-5925 Ext 7 or email Mary.Cox@osfhealthcare.org.



St. Mary's Parish is now offering Online Giving.

Online Giving can be used to give to:

- Sunday Offering
- School Collection
- Food Pantry
- Building Maintenance Fund
- Memorials/Gifts
- School Annual Fund
- Scholarships

Start giving online today!

1. Visit our website at www.stmaryspontiac.org and click on the online giving link.
2. Create an account.
3. Schedule your gift. Gifts given via checking or savings account have no service charge. Debit and credit card gifts will be assessed a 3% fee.

Please prayerfully consider giving online. If you have any questions, contact the parish office at 815-844-7683. Online Giving is provided by Our Sunday Visitor, a Catholic not-for-profit organization serving parishes for more than 100 years.

**PRAYER INTENTIONS OF THE
HOLY FATHER FOR DECEMBER**

For persons with disabilities: We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.



**CATHOLIC
SPIRIT RADIO**

7 days a week, 24 hours a day! Catholic Spirit Radio broadcasts EWTN and local programming for you! It's lively, entertaining, and informative. Catholic Spirit Radio is on 89.5 FM and 92.5 FM, and now on 88.3 FM in the Pontiac area, and online at

www.catholicspiritradi.com We would like to thank the following local businesses for underwriting the efforts of Catholic Spirit Radio: Knights of Columbus Council #854, Baby Bulls Restaurant & Lyons-Sullivan Realty. If you would like to support CSR, please contact Jerry LoPiccolo at 630-514-6221.

ROSARY ON CATHOLIC SPIRIT RADIO: Everyday at 4:30am and 8:30pm.

MASS IS BROADCAST EACH MORNING AT 7AM

Catholic Spirit Radio has a new free app.

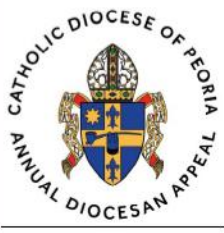
They upgraded so that listeners with newer phones, tablets, and other listening devices can access Catholic Spirit Radio programs and podcasts. Go to Google Play or Apple App store to find the new app:

Catholic Spirit Talk Radio.

New App - Same Quality Catholic Programs!

FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY:

Single Catholic Women 20-35: Franciscan Sisters invite you to in-person and on-line Discernment Events designed for you. Discover your calling and purpose. Visit <https://fsc-calledtobe.org> or contact Sr. Julie Ann 920-323-9632.



**2023 ANNUAL
DIOCESAN APPEAL**

Thanks to all who have made a pledge to the Annual Diocesan Appeal. No gift is too small. If you have not yet made a gift to the ADA, we invite you to do so today. Every dollar raised to make our goal supports important diocesan services and every dollar raised over our goal will be returned to the parish.

**This year's goal: \$89,801
Pledged to date: \$66,613.22 (as of Dec. 5)**

**ST. MARY'S CHURCH
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS**

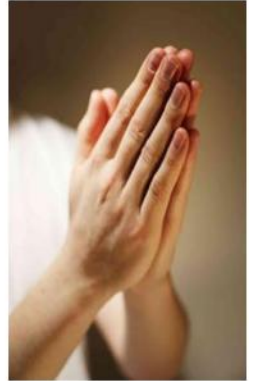
PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH & SCHOOL FAMILIES THIS YEAR

We ask everyone to pray for specific church and school families each weekday.

A list will be published here in the bulletin and in the newsletter you receive in the mail.

Please remember these families in your prayers each day for them to grow in their faith this year.

Mon Dec 18	Mark & Kelli Trainor Family, Isaac & Cameron Mackinson Family
Tues Dec 19	Mary Lou Tronc Family, Palmer, Callum & Eva Masching Family
Wed Dec 20	John Trainor Family, Beckett Legner Family
Thurs Dec 21	Pat & Vicki Trainor Family, Briggs Yantis Family
Fri Dec 22	Albert & Anne Trost Family, Bryson Hall Family
Mon Dec 25	Joseph & Lindsey Trainor Family, Smith & Stella Doran Family
Tues Dec 26	Steve & Sue Trainor Family, Eli & Ava Faber Family
Wed Dec 27	Debra Trost Family, Lydia & Owen Kelly Family
Thurs Dec 28	Zac & Stacie Travis Family, Kevin & Jack MacZura Family
Fri Dec 29	Joyce Trunk Family, Sara Murphy Family



MAY GOD BLESS ALL OUR FAMILIES EVERY DAY!

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For further information, please call the parish office.

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Greg Kurtenbach
State Farm Agent
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- FAIRBURY
- PONTIAC



"Ask a Knight what you can do for the Parish."

Pontiac KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS Council #854
www.KofC.org

Grand Knight: Bill Bertram
(815) 690-7072
Fr. Joseph Baker, Chaplain
www.facebook.com/kofc854Pontiac

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sboone@diocesan.com



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