



Glory
to the
NEWBORN
King

St. Mary's Catholic Church
Pontiac, Illinois
December 24, 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 6:30-6:50 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: \$15,705.00

Building Maintenance Fund Collection was \$2,106.00.

THANK YOU to those who regularly support our parish. We
now offer Online Giving through our website. Check it out at
www.stmaryspontiac.org



Mass Intentions

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

Monday, December 25 (Nativity of the Lord)

7:00 a.m. Sergio Mangubat

9:30 a.m. Fr. Tim Hirten

Tuesday, December 26 (St. Stephen)

7:00 a.m. COMMUNION SERVICE ONLY

Wednesday, December 27 (St. John)

7:00 a.m. COMMUNION SERVICE ONLY

Thursday, December 28 (The Holy Innocents)

7:00 a.m. Rita Bolen

Friday, December 29 (St. Thomas Becket)

7:00 a.m. Lillian Christesen

Saturday, December 30

4:00 p.m. Frances Russow, Pat, Jeanne, Roseanne,
Theresa & Kay Lyons

Sunday, December 31 (Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph)

7:00 a.m. Parish

9:30 a.m. Patricia Smith

12:00 midnight For a Healthy, Holy & Happy 2024

Servers for Saturday, December 30

4:00 p.m. Madyson Herkert, Samantha Salinas

Servers for Sunday, December 31

7:00 a.m. Volunteers

9:30 a.m. Jonathan, Zach & Grace Becker

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION: The Adoration Chapel is
open each weekday, Monday-Friday from 8am until 8pm and Sat-
urday 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.

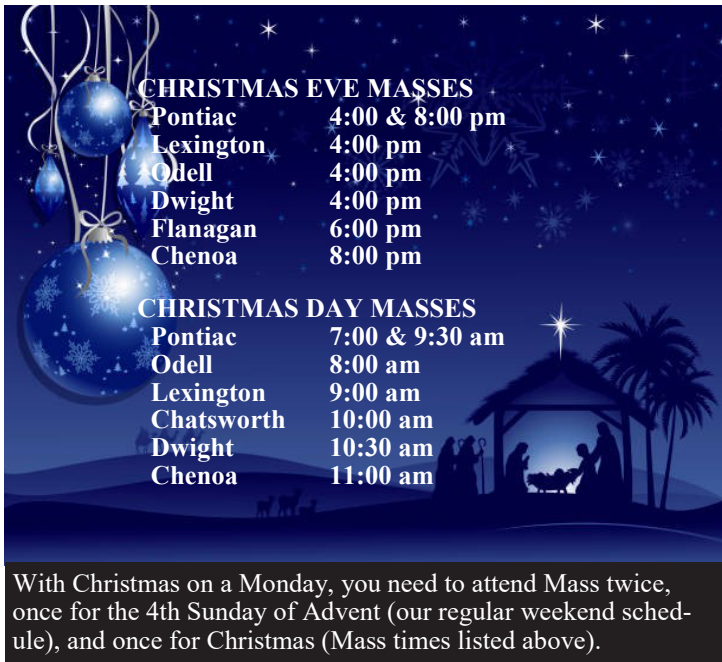
BAPTISM PREP CLASS: If you are looking to have your first
child baptized or are expecting your first child and would like to be
prepared for the sacrament of Baptism when they arrive, please call
the parish office at 815-844-7683 to reserve your spot. Baptism
preparation classes will take place on the **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.

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.

CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY SEWING CIRCLE will meet
Thursday, December 28 from 9am to 12:30pm in the parish
hall

**PLEASE NOTE: THERE WILL BE COMMUNION SERVICES
ONLY ON TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY WHILE THE PRIESTS
ARE GONE VISITING THEIR FAMILIES FOR CHRISTMAS**

ST. MARY'S CHURCH
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS



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

With Christmas on a Monday, you need to attend Mass twice, once for the 4th Sunday of Advent (our regular weekend schedule), and once for Christmas (Mass times listed above).

**ENCOUNTERING
THE EUCHARIST**



You were not nearer to the Blessed Virgin during the nine months she carried you in her womb than you are to me when you rest on my tongue at Holy Communion. You were no closer to the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph in the caves at Bethlehem or the house at Nazareth or during the flight into Egypt, or at any moment of that divine family life than you are to me at this moment - in the tabernacle. Saint Mary Magdalene was no closer to you when she sat at your feet at Bethany than I am here at the foot of this altar. You were no nearer to your apostles when you were sitting in the midst of them than you are to me now, my God. How blessed I am!
 ~St. Charles De Foucauld

Lord Jesus, I need Your help each day to prepare for Your coming. Give me wisdom so I will be prepared for Christmas, each Eucharistic encounter, and Your appearance at the of my life.

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)

Dear Parishioners,
 I'd like to take a moment here to wish you a very Merry Christmas!



While Christmas is among the most joyous days and seasons in the Church, it can also be the most stressful and challenging season for us personally. On a more global scale, this year it seems an increasing number of people are concerned with the various challenges facing parts of our world, not the least of which is the ongoing war in Israel and Gaza, directly impacting the birthplace of our Savior, Bethlehem, in the Palestine-controlled West Bank.

How can we have joy in the midst of such chaos? Well, I'll come back to this, but if you'll permit me, I'd like to share with you the poem titled *Pretty Ugly* which was sent to me some years back. Please make sure you read all the way to the end:

Pretty Ugly

I'm very ugly
 So don't try to convince me that
 I am a very beautiful person
 Because at the end of the day
 I hate myself in every single way
 And I'm not going to lie to myself by saying
 There is beauty inside of me that matters
 So rest assured I will remind myself
 That I am a worthless, terrible person
 And nothing you say will make me believe
 I still deserve love
 Because no matter what
 I am not good enough to be loved
 And I am in no position to believe that
 Beauty does exist within me
 Because whenever I look in the mirror I always think
 Am I as ugly as people say?

(Now read the poem from the bottom up)

I've always enjoyed this creative poem because it shows that sometimes a slight change of perspective can make all the difference. Now going back to the challenges so many of us face individually and our world face universally; I'm not naive in thinking the solutions are easily found. But I do know this: at Christmas, we marvel that God comes to save us. He doesn't leave us alone. Left to ourselves we would be pretty hopeless, figuratively we might say pretty ugly, but we're not left to ourselves, and He makes all the difference in this troubled world! He is the Prince of Peace. He is born in Bethlehem, and if there is a lack of peace, it's because He has not been born into the hearts of men and women. So I wish you a Merry Christmas and whether you're externally happy, sad, angry, scared, annoyed to be with family, or thrilled to have loved ones together, none of us are alone because today God is born as a baby in the stable. He continues to live in our world and if we let Him, in our lives as well.

Lastly, I'd like to invite you to think of coming to adoration at St. Mary's next Sunday, December 31, from 9pm to 12am, followed by Mass at midnight. This is an opportunity to spend all or part of the final three hours of 2023 with Jesus, thanking Him for the blessings of the past year. As the clock strikes midnight, champagne corks will be popped, dancing and partying will occur throughout the world, but at St. Mary's I'll begin the year by offering a Mass, praying for a healthy, holy, and happy 2024. If you're planning to be awake, can you think of a better way to start the New Year?

Blessings and Prayers, *Fr. Joe*



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

ST. MARY'S CHURCH
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS



**CHRISTMAS
FLOWER
MEMORIALS**

Our Parents & Son-Jim & Laura Wallace
Jay & Geraldine Hynes-Judy Hynes
George & Marcy Harback, Steve & Theresa Kamnikar-
Bob & Julie Harnack
Timothy, Martha & Patrick Linskey-Their family
Art Drach, Eva Schweitzer-Barb Drach & family
Jerry & Jo Reilly, Ernie & Mary Lou Charlier, Merle & Kathleen
Kane-Bob, Karen & Mary Jo
Mildred & Tom Cuttill, Ben Erickson-Their family
Phyllis & Pat Mullen, Kevin Patrick Casson-Jorj Ann Casson, Jacie &
Steve Friel, Buck & Megan Casson, Mila & Jett
Clem & Ruth Benedino, Benedino & Bennington Families-
Linda & Betty
John & Marcella James, Marie Sancken-Andy & Shirley
Keith & Rose Mills-Bob & Stephanie Kennedy & family
Jim & Rosie Duffy, Rita Dean, Terri Henton, Ann Tolch-Steve, Joan,
Katie & Braden, Kevin & Maeci
John & Johnny-Lynn DiNardi
Our Parents-Gary & Val Wellman
Patricia Ann Lyons-Owen Lyons
Jerry Pike, John & Dolores Waldschmidt, Mary Verdun, Molly Bellot-
Their families
Bernie Cassidy-Janet & family
Bill Ashcraft & McKinly Retter-Joyce Ashcraft
Hank, Agnes, Dick & Jim Masching, Bob & Jean Jones, Tim Murphy,
Chad Ores-Betty Murphy Family
Charles & Ruth Schopp-Their family
Tijuanna J. Kisela-John Kisela
Butch & Rosie Schulz, Clint & Gayle Mills-Ron & Kim Schulz Family
Tom Harmon, Clarence, Luetta, Steve & Tim Maubach-Sandy Harmon
Chuck Wright-Rita Wright
Paul & Mary Trainor-Paula Trainor Rosenbaum
Our Parents-Dick Hatzer Family
Fr. Jerry Verdun & Lori Bristow-Gary & Sheila Eggenberger
Elsie & David Fry-Arlene & family
John W. Schaefer, Laurence Duffy Family-Rita Schaefer Family
Bednar & Shea Families-Jim & Pat Bednar
Joseph Matthew Wesselhoff-Debi, Bob & family
Jim Cahill-Donna Cahill
Campagna Family-Harlan Greeneberg
McCarty & McBeath Families-Vicki & Dawn McBeath
My Parents-Joan Bolen
Ed Behrendt & Jerry Duffy-Mike Linskey
Betty Giordano-Paul Giordano
Bill, Jan & Randy-Their family
Our Family-Kevin & JoAnn Lower
Bugs & Martha Vitzthum-Their family
John & Kathryn Vicars, Patrick Vicars, Howard & Bernadette Wille-
John & Katie Wille
Paul & Charlotte Huffman, Janet Corrigan-Roger & Paula Corrigan
Michael, Alice & Angelo Ganta-Rice Family
DeLores & Mervyn Schweigert, Jane Smith-
Bryan, Susan & Alyssa Schweigert
Paul & Mary Rittenhouse & Sellmyer Families-Carol & Mike Gray
Our Oma Bianca Gill, Ursula Nichols, Ray & Gloria York, Ray &
Lucille Ames-Chan & Danielle Gill & family
Deceased members of Wilkins & Brown Families-
Harold & Bernie Brown

Harry & Irene Vitzthum-Their family
Jo & Ron Schultz, Ernie Ledford-Gene & Sue Ledford & family
Joe & Lena Leach, Lebo Family-The family
Dave, Pat & Michael Smith-Family
Frank Wynant-Shirley
Raymond Grove, Chuck Porter, Kathryn Grove, Michael Duncan-
Their family
Kenny Cramer, Dorothy Tjelle-Diane, Craig & family, Chris & family
Rockie Rodino, Lois Steimle, Kristin Walters-Their family
Deceased Benedino & Seiler Families-Marilyn Benedino
Vince, Betty, Kathy, Tim, Colleen & Amber Murphy-Their family
Martha Linskey-Mary Lynn Schopp
Lee & Irene Ramsey-Grandchildren
Marian Dixon-LeAnn & Greg Dixon
John F. Heenan, Shirley Stevens, Pat Heenan, Mr. & Mrs. Phillip
Heenan, Mr. & Mrs. Emmett Heenan-Mike & Tom Heenan
Grandpa Crowley, Aunt Jan, Uncle Randy-
N,M,C,M,M,R,P,S,K,C,K,L,B,C,H,P,L,R,W
Paul & Betty Folks-Their family
Lori Duffy-Anonymous
Our deceased family members-David & Mary J. Billington
Mr. & Mrs. Lyle Kriehauser. Michael Kriehauser, John Archie
Kriehauser-Regina & Keli McGuire
John Panno-His family
Quentin & Helen Stoeckel, Wayne & Bernadine Denaple, Mary
Stoeckel Stelow, Larry Russell-Mark & Tricia Stoeckel
Gene Swartz, Irene & Richard Gunnar Sr., Richard Jr., John,
Edward & Louise Gunnar-Douglas & Patricia Swartz
Roger, Bernice & Everett Edwards-Their family
Kay & Marion Vill-Nieces Frances Becker & Shirley Wynant
Monty Ford-Charlotte Ford
Earl & Selma Simpson-Harry & Pat Simpson
Larry & Ron Kennedy-Jan, Craig, Jodi, Peyton & Tyson
Gerre & Vic Reyniers-Paula, Josh & Ryan
Ray & Dorothy Broerman, Ann Miller, Becky Catalano, Jim
Broerman, Sylvester Broerman-Broerman Family
Pat & Bill Rich-Bill, Sherri, LeAnn & Greg
Helen & Herman Vill-Daughters
Lyle, Mary, Michael & John Kriehauser, Oakley, Betty & Jeanette
Smith-Paul Kriehauser Family
Lois Knopp-Margo



**CHRISTMAS
FLOWER
HONORS**

Don Dean, Paul & Toni Tolch-
Steve, Joan, Katie & Braden, Kevin & Maeci
Grandma Crowley-N,M,C,M,M,R,P,S,K,C,K,L,B,C,H,P,L,R,W
Jane Greeneberg-Harlan Greeneberg
My Family-Joan Crowley
Ed & Marijona Corrigan-Roger & Paul Corrigan
Alzina Porter-Her children



ST. MARY'S CHURCH
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 24, 2023

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
Monday	The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Vigil Mass: Is 62:1-5; Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 or Mt 1:18-25 Mass During the night: Is 9:1-6; Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13; Ti 2:11-14; Lk 2:1-14 Mass at Dawn: Is 62: 11-12; Ps 97: 1, 6, 11-12; Ti 3: 4-7; Lk 2: 15-20 Mass during the Day: Is 52:7-10; Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18 or Jn 1:1-5, 9-14
Tuesday	St. Stephen Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 & 8ab, 16bc & 17; Mt 10:17-22
Wednesday	St. John, Apostle and Evangelist 1 Jn 1:1-4; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Jn 20:1a & 2-8
Thursday	Feast of Holy Innocents 1 Jn 1:1-4; Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7cd-8; Mt 2:13-18
Friday	St. Thomas Becket 1 Jn 2:3-11; Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6; Lk 2:22-35
Saturday	1 Jn 2:12-17; Ps 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10; Lk 2:36-40
Sunday	The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Gn 15:1-6, 21:1-3; Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 or Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9; Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 or Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19; Lk 2:22-40

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 jmbill83@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 spiritual formation of the faithful.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY: Are you a local business owner? In the coming months, St. Mary's School will host our annual Kevin Casson Memorial Basketball Tournament, the St. Mary's DrawDown, and the SMS Scramble Golf Outing. These fundraising events, sponsored by our Teacher-Parent Organization (TAPS), are great ways for your business to advertise. Contact Director of Development, Danielle Gill at gill.danielle@stmaryspontiac.org for more information.

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.catholicspiritradiocom 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.

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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>

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 CHURCH
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS**

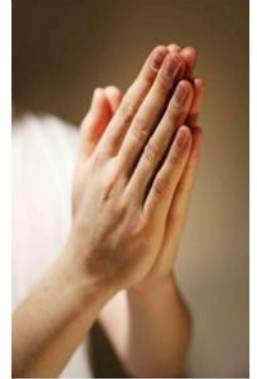
PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH & SCHOOL FAMILIES THIS YEAR

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 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 |
| Mon Jan 1 | Mike Vallow Family, Gemma Bagnell Family |
| Tues Jan 2 | Don Verdun Family, Marcos Borrego Family |
| Wed Jan 3 | Nick Vogt Family, Angelene Wertz Family |
| Thurs Jan 4 | John Vanek Family, Ben Ehrgott Family |
| Fri Jan 5 | Don & Susan Verdun Family, Leo Kapper Family |



MAY GOD BLESS ALL OUR FAMILIES EVERY DAY!

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Consider Remembering Your Parish in Your Will

For further information, please call the parish office.

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