

*Joy*



*Advent*

© Diocesan

**St. Mary's Catholic Church**  
**Pontiac, Illinois**  
**December 15, 2024**

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](http://www.stmaryspontiac.org)

Facebook: St. Mary's Parish-Pontiac

ADMINISTRATOR: Fr. David Sabel  
[fr.david.sabel@gmail.com](mailto:fr.david.sabel@gmail.com)

PAROCHIAL VICAR: Fr. David Whiteside  
[frdwhiteside@gmail.com](mailto:frdwhiteside@gmail.com)

PERMANENT DEACONS:  
Dcn. Jim Wallace [servant518@outlook.com](mailto:servant518@outlook.com)  
Dcn. Ray White [deacon.ray@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:deacon.ray@stmaryspontiac.org)

PARISH SECRETARY/BOOKKEEPER: Patti Zehr  
[zehr.patti@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:zehr.patti@stmaryspontiac.org)

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR: Danielle Gill  
[gill.danielle@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:gill.danielle@stmaryspontiac.org)

EVANGELICAL CATHOLIC COORDINATOR: Margo Law  
[law.margo@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:law.margo@stmaryspontiac.org)

MUSIC DIRECTORS: Marie Kane & Merryn Krenz,

**OFFICE HOURS:**

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

**MASS TIMES:**

Saturday 5:00 pm Sunday 7:00 am & 9:30 am

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 7:00 am

Tuesday 5:30 pm

Thursday 8:15 am when school is in session

**CONFESSION TIMES:**

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 6:30-6:50 am

Tuesday 5:00-5:25 pm

Wednesday 12 noon -1:00 pm

Saturday 3:45-4:45 pm

**ST. MARY'S SCHOOL:**

414 N. Main St., Pontiac, IL 61764

Phone: 815-844-6585

Principal: Mrs. Karen Jones, [jones.karen@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:tissiere.taryn@stmaryspontiac.org) or 815-979-7663.



**STEWARDSHIP**

**Collection last Sunday: \$13,455.15**

**Building Maintenance Fund Collection:** This weekend.

**Retirement Fund for Religious Collection** was \$1,289.00.

**THANK YOU** to those who regularly support our parish.



*Mass Intentions*

**Saturday, December 14 (St. John of the Cross)**

5:00 p.m. Parish

**Sunday, December 15 (Third Sunday of Advent)**

7:00 a.m. Keith & Rose Mills

9:30 a.m. Chuck & Mary Landrus

**Monday, December 16**

7:00 a.m. 9th ann Jim Masching

**Tuesday, December 17**

5:30 p.m. Frank & Marie Corrigan Family

**Wednesday, December 18**

7:00 a.m. John Kennedy Sr.

**Thursday, December 19**

8:15 a.m. Jerry Reilly

**Friday, December 20**

7:00 a.m. Henry & Gerri Eppel

**Saturday, December 21 (St. Peter Canisius)**

5:00 p.m. Jim & Mary Bertrand

**Sunday, December 22 (Fourth Sunday of Advent)**

7:00 a.m. Parish

9:30 a.m. Laura Schilling

**EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:** The Adoration Chapel is open weekdays, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 8am until 8pm and Saturday from 8am until 3pm. On Tuesday, Adoration is in the church from 8am to 5:30pm. 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. *We could especially use additional people for Adoration on Tuesdays in the church.*

**BAPTISM PREP CLASS:** If you are looking to have your first child baptized, parents need to attend a Baptism preparation class which takes place on the **third Thursday of each month at 6:00pm**. Call the parish office at 815-844-7683 at least one week in advance to reserve your spot to help us prepare. \*Do not select godparents until the class has been attended, this topic will be covered.

**MASS AT OSF ST. JAMES HOSPITAL** is offered every **Wednesday at 11:30am**. All are welcome to attend.

**MASS AT LOCAL NURSING HOME:** Mass will be offered at The Pointe on **Friday, December 20 at 10am**.



Visiting us for the weekend? Gone for the weekend or the winter? Forgot your envelope? Not a registered parishioner and don't get envelopes? Use this QR code to access Online Giving for recurring or one-time gifts to the Church, School, Food Pantry and Building Maintenance collections. Your gifts are greatly appreciated!



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

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS** will meet **Wednesday, December 18 at 6:30pm** in the Our Lady of the Rosary Room.

**ATTENTION LADIES IN YOUR 20'S AND 30'S:** Join us the **third Wednesday of every month** for fellowship as we work our way through the Gospel of Luke in 2024. Come to as few or as many as you can make. If interested or if you have any questions, text or call Kate Harrold at 815-848-1705.

**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.

**ST. MARY'S YOUTH GROUP:** All students in Grades 8 through high school Seniors are invited and encouraged to join us on **Sunday, December 15 from 6:30-8pm** in the youth group room of the parish offices for some time in fellowship, faith and fun. Jamie Woolford is offering her time and talents to the youth group while we search for new leadership.



**GONZAGA YOUTH RETREAT!** Get ready for an unforgettable experience! The Gonzaga Youth Retreat is happening right here at St. Mary's! This overnight retreat is open to all 8th graders through high school seniors from Saturday, January 4 at 10am until Sunday, January 5 at 3pm. The cost is just \$25. Applications are available in the back vestibule of church. For any questions or concerns, reach out to Jamie Woolford at woolford.jamie@stmaryspontiac.org or call/text 815-674-4061.

**DO YOU FEEL CALLED TO LEAD OUR HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH?** We are in need of an individual, or perhaps a married couple, to lead our high school youth group program. If interested, or if you have any questions, please contact Fr. David.

**ADULT EDUCATION/OCIA (RCIA):** Classes will be offered on **Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8pm in the parish hall.** This program is designed for:

- Anyone who is contemplating joining the Catholic Church
  - Non-Catholics who have questions or concerns about Catholicism
  - Catholics who would like a review of authentic Catholic teaching
- Our goal is to prepare all participants to apply Christian virtues to their daily lives and establish a basis for our beliefs. Please plan to join us for any, or all, of our upcoming classes.

**Jan 14 Christian Prayer, Sacramentals**

**EXTRA ORDINARY MINISTERS TO THE HOMEBOUND NEEDED:** If you are a current Extra Ordinary Minister, would you prayerfully consider ministering to the homebound and those in our local nursing homes? We currently minister to 95 people and we need more help. Would you consider taking a few names to visit once a month in their homes, or visit one nursing home once a month and distribute to residents? If you can help out, or if you have any questions, please contact the parish office at 815-844-7683.

**FOOD DONATIONS NEEDED FOR FUNERAL DINNERS:** If you would be willing to provide a side dish or dessert for a funeral dinner when called upon, please contact the parish office at 815-844-7683 to volunteer. You do not have to be a member of the Women's Guild to help with this ministry.



**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. Joseph-Chenoa Tuesday, Dec. 17 at 6:00pm**  
**St. Mary-Pontiac Wednesday, Dec. 18 at 6:30pm**

Extra priests will be on hand to hear individual confessions.

**OTHER CONFESSION TIMES**  
**Mon, Wed & Fri: 6:25-6:55am**  
**Wednesday, Dec 18: 12noon-1pm**  
**Saturday, Dec 21: 3:45-4:45pm**

**CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES**

<b>Pontiac</b>	<b>4:00 &amp; 8:00 pm</b>
<b>Lexington</b>	<b>4:00 pm</b>
<b>Dwight</b>	<b>4:00 pm</b>
<b>Odell</b>	<b>4:00 pm</b>
<b>Flanagan</b>	<b>6:00 pm</b>
<b>Chenoa</b>	<b>8:00 pm</b>

**CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES**

<b>Pontiac</b>	<b>7:00 &amp; 9:30 am</b>
<b>Odell</b>	<b>8:00 am</b>
<b>Lexington</b>	<b>9:00 am</b>
<b>Dwight</b>	<b>10:30 am</b>
<b>Chenoa</b>	<b>11:00 am</b>

**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

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



Join us for our upcoming monthly Holy Hour for Vocations which will include time for quiet prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament, group prayers for Vocations, and will conclude with Benediction.

**Thursday, December 19 at 6:30pm**

Our diocese and our world need many good, holy priests and consecrated men and women, in addition to faithful marriages, to continue God's mission on this earth. Please join us to pray for all vocations.

**PEW CARDS:** Please leave the new pew cards in the book racks with the missalettes so the church appears less cluttered. **DO NOT** put the pew cards in the clip hooks. Thank you for your co-operation.

**LOST & FOUND:** There are quite a few Lost & Found items to be reclaimed. If you have misplaced a hat, gloves, eye glasses, etc., please check the basket in the back vestibule near the St. Patrick statue.



**TEACHERS NEEDED AT ST. MARY'S SCHOOL  
Second Grade Teacher, Third Grade Teacher,  
Jr. High Language Arts/Literature Teacher,  
and a Full Time Paraprofessional/Teachers Aide**

Teacher applicants must have a valid Illinois teaching certificate. We are seeking Teachers who know and love Jesus. We seek someone with a desire to make disciples of their students and grow in discipleship with other staff. Candidates must portray abilities of healthy teamwork among colleagues along with a desire to share their knowledge and love of Jesus with students and staff. Please send 3 letters of recommendation and a copy of your transcripts, along with your resume and cover letter to Mrs. Karen Jones, St. Mary's School, 414 N. Main St. Pontiac, IL 61764 or you may email these items to: [jones.karen@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:jones.karen@stmaryspontiac.org)

**ST. MARY'S SCHOOL 2025-2026 REGISTRATION DATES**

Kindergarten and PreK4 registration for current SMS families begins: 1/13/25  
Kindergarten and PreK4 registration for new families begins: 2/3/25  
PreK3 registration for current families begins (if spots are available): 5/1/25  
PreK3 registration for new families begins (if spots are available): 5/19/25

**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 Parent-Teacher Organization, are great ways for your business to advertise. Contact Director of Development, Danielle Gill at [gill.danielle@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:gill.danielle@stmaryspontiac.org) for more information.

**VOLUNTEER GRANTS & MATCHING GIFTS AVAILABLE:** Do you or a family member work for Caterpillar or State Farm? Employees of Caterpillar and State Farm are eligible to participate in a volunteer service match program. For every 10 hours of volunteerism at St. Mary's School, the Caterpillar Foundation will give a \$100 grant to the school. For every 40 hours volunteered at SMS, State Farm will give \$500 to SMS. Perhaps you work for one of these companies and volunteer at the concession stand. Or maybe a grandparent is employed at Cat or State Farm and helps in the lunchroom or library. Additionally, State Farm, Caterpillar and Exelon have a matching gifts program for donations made to St. Mary's School. For more information, contact Danielle Gill at [gill.danielle@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:gill.danielle@stmaryspontiac.org). Thank you.

**ATRIUM NEEDS:** The children of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd would greatly appreciate your holy cards and images for their prayer work in the Atrium. Any size or kind will do, including Easter or Christmas cards. Various charitable organizations often send unsolicited items in the mail, and we would put them to good use! Donations can be left at the school office. **THANK YOU!**

**QUICK DRAW WINNERS:** Congratulations to the November winners in the SMS Quick Draw Raffle: **Gina Keneipp, Katelyn Casner, Cindy Krummick, John Wolf and Ava Lind.** Thank you for your support of St. Mary's School!

*The St. Mary's School  
Annual Fund Drive  
is underway and we have  
already raised 76%  
of our goal!*

*YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!*



**Please help us reach  
our \$41,000 goal!**

[school.stmaryspontiac.org](http://school.stmaryspontiac.org)



## ENCOUNTERING THE EUCHARIST

It is in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, that Christ Jesus works in fullness for the transformation of men.  
*From: CCC 1074*

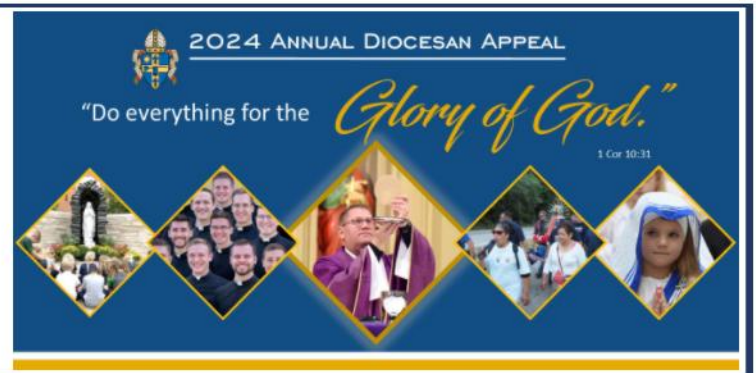
The Eucharistic team and parish office staff have paired up to bring you weekly Advent reflections videos from Bishop Cozzens. Just go to the church website: [church.stmaryspontiac.org](http://church.stmaryspontiac.org) and click on the *Formation Tab* and then click *Encountering the Eucharist* to find these reflections. Also, we have provided copies of Eucharistic Prayer Companion for Advent from the National Eucharistic Revival. They can be picked up at the doors of the church. May you have a happy and holy Advent.

## 2024 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: \$80,751**

**Pledged to date: \$73,882 (as of December 5)**



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](http://church.stmaryspontiac.org)

## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT: NOT READY? NO PROBLEM!

While Advent is a beautiful time to prepare for the coming of the Lord, we often get so caught up in all the things we do to prepare for Christmas that we forget Advent all together. The readings remind us that in spite of the stress we may feel thinking about how close Christmas is, we are called to rejoice for the Lord is near.

The stress we feel may be from fear: Fear that I won't get the shopping done by Christmas, fear that people won't like the gifts I bought, or fear that I forgot someone that should be on my list. But did you ever notice how much easier it is when you have someone to shop with you, or write the Christmas cards, or decorate the tree? "Shout for joy...fear not!" says the prophet Zephaniah in the first reading. (Zeph 3:14) He tells us the Lord is not coming to punish us for waiting till the last minute to put up the tree. The prophet says the Lord is in our midst, we are not alone. "He has turned away your enemies" (Zeph 3:15), enemies like fear, doubts, and loneliness.

And as if that wasn't good enough, he says that the Lord rejoices over us! How many times have you wondered if you could ask the Lord for help? Zephaniah reminds us that the Lord is happy to help. And St. Paul says the same thing in the second reading: "Have no anxiety at all...make your requests known to God." (Phil 4:6) That is where Advent comes in. We can look forward to the Lord's presence in our lives. We can be confident of his love for us. That is why faith and hope are central to the theme of Advent. Our faith in God's love for us gives us hope that he will support us in our weakness and fill us with the joy he has over us.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH  
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS

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

**For pilgrims of hope:** We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthens our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in our daily lives, and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 15, 2024**

Sunday	Third Sunday of Advent Zep 3:14-18a; Is 12:2-3, 4, 5-6; Phil 4:4-7; Lk 3:10-18
Monday	Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a; Ps 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9; Mt 21:23-27
Tuesday	Gn 49:2, 8-10; Ps 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17; Mt 1:1-17
Wednesday	Jer 23:5-8; Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19; Mt 1:18-25
Thursday	Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17; Lk 1:5-25
Friday	Is 7:10-14; Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6; Lk 1:26-38
Saturday	Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a; Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21; Lk 1:39-45
Sunday	Fourth Sunday of Advent Mi 5:1-4a; Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19; Heb 10:5-10; Lk 1:39-45



Seven days a week, 24 hours a day! Catholic Spirit Radio broadcasts EWTN and local programming for you! It's lively, entertaining, and informative. 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 LoPiccalo at 630-514-6221.

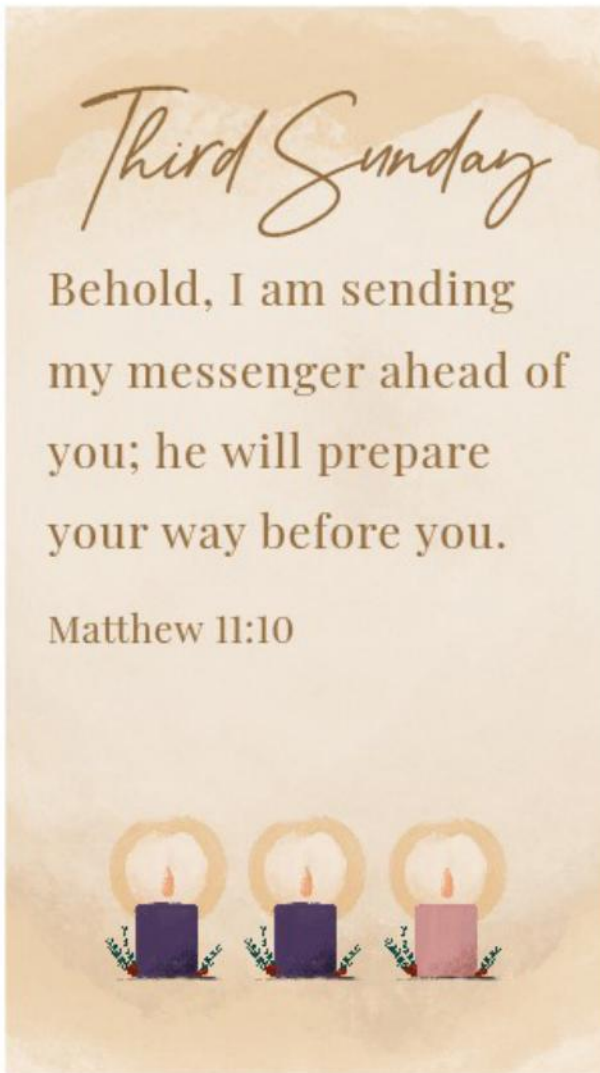
**ROSARY ON CATHOLIC SPIRIT RADIO:**

**Everyday at 4:30am and 8:30pm**

**MASS IS BROADCAST EACH MORNING AT 7AM**

**CATHOLIC SPIRIT RADIO NETWORK  
PILGRIMAGE TO MOTHER ANGELICA'S SHRINE OF  
THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT IN HANCEVILLE, AL  
AND EWTN STUDIOS IN IRONDALE, AL  
MONDAY, AUG. 18 to THURSDAY, AUG. 21, 2025**

\$1,100 per person includes tour bus transportation, 3 nights double-occupancy in a hotel, all meals on Tuesday and Wednesday, breakfast on Thursday, snacks, water and entertainment on the bus. Only 40 seats available. Early-bird special: Reserve your seat before January 31, 2025, with a deposit of \$500, and receive \$100 off the total price. Any remaining balance is due May 31, 2025. For more information, contact parishioner Jerry LoPiccalo at 630-514-6221 or Father David Sabel.



**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](http://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.



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

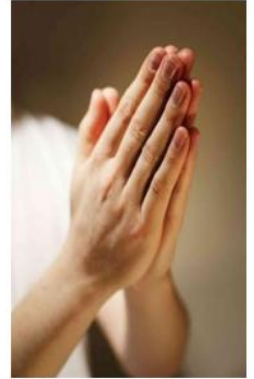
**PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH & SCHOOL FAMILIES THIS YEAR**

*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 16   | Mick & Amanda Lauritsen Family, Jane Larkin Family           |
| Tues Dec 17  | Margo Law Family, Sue Ledford Family                         |
| Wed Dec 18   | Alicia Legner Family, Janine Leonard Family                  |
| Thurs Dec 19 | Erik & Grace Limberg Family, Beth Legner Family              |
| Fri Dec 20   | Jane LoPiccalo & Suzanne Gullo Family, Marge Loughran Family |
| Mon Dec 23   | Bill Legner Family, Larry & Lucille Limberg Family           |
| Tues Dec 24  | Mike Linskey Family, Dan & Sami Legner Family                |
| Wed Dec 25   | Doris Legner Family, Dolores Locke Family                    |
| Thurs Dec 26 | Raymond & Christian Logan Family, Ed Legner Family           |
| Fri Dec 27   | Elizabeth Legner Family, Robert & Beth Limberg 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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