

## Did You Know!

Often we get criticism for “adopting” the pagan ritual of bringing tree branches and trees indoor during the winter or season of Advent and Christmas. The criticism is that we adopted pagan customs. The fact that most people ignore is that God created the universe and made everything that is good. If the pagan tradition of bringing evergreen branches contained something good – the hope of eternal life and the awaiting the joy of spring – then we should adopt it as it matches with the eternal truths of awaiting God’s return and the hope of new life that comes through Jesus’ birth, death, and Resurrection. The Catholic Church is malleable enough to adopt customs and cultures that are good and express the same ideas as our faith.



Please consider a memorial for your loved ones to the Holy Cross Cemetery instead of flowers.

*THANK YOU!*



### *Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament*

"God is everywhere, in the very air I breathe, yes everywhere, but in His Sacrament of the Altar He is as present actually and really as my soul within my body; in His Sacrifice daily offered as really as once offered on the Cross,"

- *St. Elizabeth Ann Seton*

### **Pray for our Seminarians**

Lord Jesus, we ask your special blessing on those preparing for the priesthood in our seminaries. We pray that they will grow in faith, hope and love. Give them courage and perseverance and be their constant companion as they prepare to serve you and your people with the fire of your love. Make them holy as you are holy. Amen.

Dillon Armstrong, Kaleb Mitchell, Riley Helgoe, Brett Rotz, John Cooney, Jamie Severson, Anthony Olmes, James Semling, Carter Anderson, Shae Bills, Lane Buus, and Matt Keck

Pray for vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life.

### **Prayer Chain**

Unless requested otherwise after one month prayer request names will be removed from the prayer chain:



Elaine Graveley, Bob Masolo, Chris and Fran Wright, Ed and Jean Boucher, Mary Alice Upton, Martin and Margy Clark, Clara Boster, Shanna Montonario, LaReissa Swenson, Jenny Schaubert, Kadence Saxton, Tom Grewell and family, Alex Bakken, Millie Sullivan, JL and Janet Jones, Vince Boster, Paulette Obrigewitch, Nicole Ito

### *Finance Council members:*

Tacy Swanton, John Rauser, Tim McAlpine, Max Peace, and Chris Wright-meet quarterly.

### *Pastoral Council members:*

John Bleile, Michael Fiset, Jesse Swenson, Mary Ellen Schnur, and Karee Eichinger-meet third Tuesday of the month.

### **Holy Cross recommends that the following be respected:**

#### **Christian Burial:**

Notice should be made with the priest before arrangements are made with the funeral director.

#### **Social Hall:**

Our Social Hall and kitchen may be rented out for special events.

**Please call the office for information for any of the above notices: 406-266-4811.**



## Christmas

### **Weekday Mass Schedule:**

Mass: Monday and Tuesday 9:00a

Adoration: Monday 9:30a

### **Weekend Schedule:**

Confession: Sunday 3:30-4:15p or by appointment

Mass: Sunday Mass 4:30p

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:30a to 12:00p

# Holy Cross Parish

December 24, 2023

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# Merry Christmas

When we think of Christmas, what image comes to mind? For most people, it's the image of the baby Jesus in the manger with Mary, Joseph, and the animals surrounding him. This tender and beautiful image brings joy and happiness. The image of the Christ child laying in his manger gives a hopeful feeling that God is with us. This God, who came to us as a human, wants to continue to be with us. He doesn't threaten us with punishment or sit behind a bench as our judge but looks at us with his loving and kind eyes calling us to himself. As beautiful as the image of the baby Jesus in the manger is, it surprisingly doesn't encourage us to come to stay with him. How often, after seeing this image, do we feel like we want to come close to Jesus? How often do we have an urge to touch him or pick him up and hold him? Do we want to approach the manger and spend time with him? Most of us leave the image on the wall or keep them as a decoration and don't even think about coming near to spend time with Jesus.

Why are we not willing to approach Jesus? For some, he is a cause for fear. Some people feel unworthy to come to Jesus or feel like they have done too much evil in their lives and that God will punish them. Others recognize the majesty of God as something too great and so they are afraid; God is simply too much for them for them. For these people God came as a child, a baby, a helpless human who cannot cause harm. Throughout the entire Bible, God has continually called people to himself that he may show them his love. The greatest act of his love was his coming as a human so that we would not fear his love. Some people, conversely, already feel like they have a strong relationship with him and that they have no need to approach the manger. They feel their lives are ordered to God and they live good and holy lives. If they are not careful, they too can ignore the invitation of Jesus to come and spend time with him. It doesn't matter how good we may think we are if we never spend time with God; the God who just wants to spend time with us.

Without us, the manger is lonely. Out in the middle of the field, separated from the local town, no entourage of people to worship him, lays the baby Jesus awaiting his beloved people to come and visit. He doesn't mandate it, there's no command or consequence for not visiting. Just an invitation. A hand that reaches out to us, eyes that follow us drawing us in, a heart that beats for love of us. So challenge yourself this Christmas season to spend time with the baby Jesus. Realize that God came to spend time with you so that you may spend time with him. He desires you; he wants you. He doesn't require us to be a certain way or demand perfection. He simply wants us.

Fr. Cody Williams

## Scripture Readings



Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph  
12-31-2023

Reading 1: Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14  
Psalm: 128:1-2, 3, 4-5  
Reading 2: Colossians 3:12-21 or 3:12-17  
Gospel: Luke 2:22-40 or 2:22, 39-40



MASS	Schedule
Monday December 25	Mass 8a Mary Hooks RB Greg Field's family No Adoration No Catholicism 101
Tuesday December 26	No Mass
Wednesday December 27	No Mass
Thursday December 28	No Mass
Friday December 29	No Mass
Saturday December 30	No Mass
Sunday December 31	Confession 3:30p Mass 4:30p Parish Family No RE

### Ministry Schedule

Sunday December 31, 2023

4:30pm

Greet:

Eichinger Family

Lector:

Debbie Miller

Gifts:

Wickens Family

EM:

Karen Simonich and Nikki Weiss

Money Counters:

Karee Eichinger and Kristi Gersch





# Christmas Party

Come join us in celebrating our Savior's birth!  
Sunday, January 7th 5:45-7:00pm

DINNER, GAMES & FUN AT HOLY CROSS PARISH FAMILY NIGHT



## ~A gift at Christmas~



The book *Beautiful Eucharist* is available on the table in the vestibule for each household of Holy Cross Parish. Please take one for you and your family to read and better understand the true meaning of the season now and always. Merry Christmas!



# CREATED GOOD

## Townsend Community Family Night

DINNER  
PROVIDED



FOR THE  
WHOLE  
FAMILY

Let's explore the goodness of our humanity through activities and events that focus on being created in God's image.

**When:** 1st Sunday of every month  
5:45-7:00 pm

**Where:** Holy Cross Parish Center  
101 S. Walnut St.

**Jan. 7th:** Christmas Party

**Feb. 4th:** What do I do with my life?

**March 3rd:** What does it mean to be forgiven?

**April 7th:** Easter Party

**May 5th:** How do I make strong relationships?

## FREE EVENT



Mondays 7-8:30

The next topic is "The Liturgical Year: Celebrating Jesus' life" on Monday, January 8th. The notes are posted on the website and a livestream version is available. If you would like to join the livestream version, send an email to [frcwilliams@holycrossmt.org](mailto:frcwilliams@holycrossmt.org).

## Catholicism 101

Do you know someone who is interested in learning about Catholicism? Would you like to know your faith a little better? Then, this series is for you!

Mondays 7-8:30

Schedule of the topics on the bench in the entryway.

A livestream option for Catholicism 101 will be available on Mondays from 7-8:30 and on Thursdays from 6:30-8. Please invite your friends and family members who are interested in learning more about the Catholic faith. All are welcome!