



Open our hearts, O Lord, to listen to the words of your Son.

MINISTER SCHEDULE FOR THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD
JANUARY 2nd & 3rd

5:30 PM MASS

Deacon Barney Rodriguez
 Lector: H. M. Kreitz
 Lay Ministers: N. Centeno & V. Centeno
 Greeters: B. Goonan & C. Ramm
 Altar Servers: S. Proctor, M. Cruz, A. Cantu & A. Lambert

7:30 AM MASS

Lector: M. Hoelscher
 Lay Ministers: P. Engbrock, P. Cameron & K. Cameron
 Greeters: J. Hattermer, R. Bruggman & J. Bruggman
 Altar Servers: R. McNeal, A. Federle, B. Mosmeyer & S. Mosmeyer

9:15 AM MASS

Lector: B. Roeder
 Lay Ministers: L. Grygar, K. Bartz & J. Bartz
 Greeters: J. Talasek, A. Pechal, W. Wilde & E. Wilde
 Servers: S. Berumen, A. M. Berumen, M. Knight & T. Bennett

11:00 AM MAS

Lector: L. Edwards
 Lay Ministers: A. Mikeska, A. Payne & J. Dudley
 Greeters: D. Frei, K. Frei & N. Moreno
 Altar Servers: A. Marin, J. Ibarra, T. Kotalik & A. Atkins

THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

DECEMBER 31st & JANUARY 1st

6:00 PM MASS

Lector: D. Rendeiro
 Lay Ministers: H.M. Kreitz, P. Everett & M. A. Everett
 Altar Servers: M. Cruz

MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

DECEMBER 31st & JANUARY 1st (Continued...)

8:00 AM MASS

Lector: M.A. Everett
 Lay Ministers: P. Everett, P. Cameron & K. Cameron
 Altar Servers: D. Nguyen

12:10 Mass

Lector: J.A. Mason
 Lay Ministers: R. Schigut
 Altar Servers: V. Basile, A. Basile & Leslie Grygar

6:00 PM MASS Adoration will follow Mass

Deacon Barney Rodriguez
 Lector: L. Edwards
 Lay Ministers: T. Flores, J. Bartz
 Altar Servers: TBD

DECEMBER 27, 2015

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

December 28, 2015 - January 3, 2016

Monday	No Mass	
Tuesday	12:10 AM	Communion Service
Wednesday	7:00 AM	†Loney Montgomery
Thursday	7:00 AM	†Joe Head
	6:00 PM	†Billy Goonan
Friday	8:00 AM	†L. E. Talley
	12:10 PM	Evelyn Okruhlik
	6:00 PM	†Virginia M. Ramos
Saturday	7:30 AM	†Andrew Mireles
	5:30 PM	†Antone & Mary K. Kubacak
Sunday	7:30 AM	For the People
	9:15 AM	†Dorothy Tripanier
	11:00 AM	Living and Deceased Members of Caholic Life Insurance Branch

COMMUNION CALLS

JANUARY 3rd & 4th

N. & V. Centeno, B. McNeill, P. & K. Cameron, L. Grygar, K. & J. Bartz, H.M. Kreitz, P. Engbrock, A. Mikeska & A. Paynes



NOTE FROM THE PASTOR



Watch for Fr. Steve's weekly note to return next week.



Wishing you all a Blessed Christmas Season full of God's Love, Peace and Joy thought out the New Year 2016.

God Bless you all!

GOSPEL MEDITATION



In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus is separated from Mary and Joseph.

They return to Jerusalem searching for him and find him in the Temple teaching the scholars.

How do we stay attentive to the needs and desires within our family?

YOUR GIFT TO GOD

(DECEMBER 26th & 27th)

Sunday Collection	\$7,221.61
Sunday Collection (<i>Hand Delivered</i>)	\$4,000.00
Children Collection	\$ 52.63
Parish School	\$ 25.00
Retired Clergy Collection	\$ 44.00

Offering Envelopes



The Stewardship/ Collection Envelopes for 2016 can be found in the back of the church for those parishioners who have requested stewardship envelopes.

If you find any information with names or addresses that need updating, please contact the Parish Office. We will be happy to assist you. Your feedback and input is extremely important as it also helps us to update the parish database.

Thank you for your help in updating our database.

Happy New Year 2016!!!



WEEKLY ADORATION

Due to the Parish Advent and Christmas Season's scheduled events, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament has been suspended until January 6, 2016.

We invite you to prayerfully consider making the New Year 2016, the year you begin the family tradition of spending an hour with the Lord on a weekly basis....

PARISH OFFICE NOTICE



The St. Mary Catholic Parish Office Staff would like to wish everyone a Blessed Christmas Season and a Happy New Year 2016.

May the New Year be filled with God's Grace, Love, Peace and Joy! God's Blessings to all!

Please note the Parish Offices will be closed on Friday, January 1, 2016.

CEDARBRAKE RETREAT CENTER



The Cedarbrake Retreat Center in Belton is offering a "Healing Hearts" Retreat.

The weekend retreat is designed for women who have suffered any kind of sexual trauma.

- The retreat begins Friday evening at 6:30pm and concludes at 11:30pm on Sunday.
- The cost for the retreat is \$135 and includes 2 nights, linens, materials and meal.
- The next retreat will be January 22nd – 24th.

For more information and to register, call (254) 780-2436 and ask for Beverly.

YOUTH MINISTRY



The Diocesan Catholic Youth Conference (DCYC) will take place on January 29 - 31.

Please contact Linda Noe at 512-949-2464 or linda-noe@austindiocese.org



FALCON'S CORNER

Calling all St. Mary's

Catholic School Alumni

Save the Date: January 23, 2016
You are invited as our guest to our

First Alumni Dinner

Come and visit old friends and relive the wonderful memories of St. Mary's Catholic School

Visit www.stmarys-temple.org

Important Date to Remember

Mon. Jan 4th *School reopens: 3rd Quarter begins

MEN INVITED TO CONSIDER DIOCONATE



Have you recently become aware of a desire to deepen your faith life, but not sure why? Do you feel that your heart is being moved inexplicably in a new or bold way lately? Have you felt of late a greater need to know Christ more intimately, or a growing desire to follow Him more fully, for some unknown reason? For no apparent reason, has your awareness increased recently of the needs of the materially and spiritually poor – and perhaps even sensed a greater desire to respond? Do you live a mature faith, love the church, and follow church teaching, but have a nagging sense that there's something missing?

If you answered yes to some of these questions, and you are a man between 30 and 57, the Holy Spirit might be calling you to explore the permanent diaconate. Does that possibly excite you? Scare you? Puzzle you? Whatever your reaction, talk to your pastor about what's going on in your heart. He'll help you decide next steps.

The diaconal formation class of 2022 will begin forming in January 2017. Inquiry sessions are scheduled (in Spanish and English) from 2-5pm at these locations:

Jan. 17

St. Mary's -701 Church Rd, Brenham 77833

Feb. 14

Our Lady of Guadalupe, 707 S. Sixth St., Temple 76504

For more information, call: (512) 949-2459 or email diaconateformation@austin.org

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION & ADULT FORMATION



Classes for the second semester begin on Wednesday, 6 January 2016. We meet in the Church as usual and proceed to classes.

ATTENTION ADULT FORMATION

We have exciting news! On Tuesday, January 19, 2016 we are beginning an exciting new scripture study on the Acts of the Apostles. Jeff Cavins will be our guide on video.

Call the church office at 773-4541 during regular business hours or Mrs. Edwards at 778-8692 for more information or to register.

As the bells ring in the New Year we thank our God and Father for the blessings we have received in time past and ask for health and prosperity in the years to come for our benefactors and all of our students and their families!

ST. MARY'S CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE



CHRISTMAS 2015

The Nativity of the Lord

Saturday, January 2nd & Sunday, January 3rd
Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord

Vigil Mass at 5:30pm

Masses at 7:30am, 9:15am and 11:00am

Saturday, January 9th & Sunday, January 10th
Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

Vigil Mass at 5:30pm

Masses at 7:30am, 9:15am and 11:00am

GOSPEL MEDITATION

The star guided the Magi to seek the "newborn king of the Jews."

- Who serves as the light of God in my life?
- How does my life serve as a light of God leading others to find and encounter Christ?

WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF THE NATIVITY SCENE (CRECHE?)



FR. WILLIAM SAUNDERS

The story of the origin of the Christmas creche rests with the very holy man, St. Francis of Assisi.

In the year 1223, St. Francis, a deacon, was visiting the town of Greccio to celebrate Christmas. Greccio was a small town built on a mountainside overlooking a beautiful valley. The people had cultivated the fertile area with vineyards. St. Francis realized that the chapel of the Franciscan hermitage would be too small to hold the congregation for Midnight Mass. So he found a niche in the rock near the town square and set up the altar. However, this Midnight Mass would be very special, unlike any other Midnight Mass.

St. Bonaventure (d. 1274) in his Life of St. Francis of Assisi tells the story the best:

It happened in the third year before his death, that in order to excite the inhabitants of Greccio to commemorate the nativity of the Infant Jesus with great devotion, [St. Francis] determined to keep it with all possible solemnity; and lest he should be accused of lightness or novelty, he asked and obtained the permission of the sovereign Pontiff. Then he prepared a manger, and brought hay, and an ox and an ass to the place appointed.

The brethren were summoned, the people ran together, the forest resounded with their voices, and that venerable night was made glorious by many and brilliant lights and sonorous psalms of praise. The man of God [St. Francis] stood before the manger, full of devotion and piety, bathed in tears and radiant with joy; the Holy Gospel was chanted by Francis, the Levite of Christ. Then he preached to the people around the nativity of the poor King; and being unable to utter His name for the tenderness of His love, He called Him the Babe of Bethlehem.

Continued in next column...

...THE ORIGIN OF THE NATIVITY SCENE *continued...*

A certain valiant and veracious soldier, Master John of Greccio, who, for the love of Christ, had left the warfare of this world, and become a dear friend of this holy man, affirmed that he beheld an Infant marvellously beautiful, sleeping in the manger, Whom the blessed Father Francis embraced with both his arms, as if he would awake Him from sleep.

This vision of the devout soldier is credible, not only by reason of the sanctity of him that saw it, but by reason of the miracles which afterwards confirmed its truth. For example of Francis, if it be considered by the world, is doubtless sufficient to excite all hearts which are negligent in the faith of Christ; and the hay of that manger, being preserved by the people, miraculously cured all diseases of cattle, and many other pestilences; God thus in all things glorifying his servant, and witnessing to the great efficacy of his holy prayers by manifest prodigies and miracles.

Although the story is long old, the message is clear for us. Our own Nativity scenes which rest under our Christmas trees are a visible reminder of that night when our Saviour was born.

May we never forget to see in our hearts the little Babe of Bethlehem, who came to save us from sin. We must never forget that the wood of the manger that held Him so securely would one day give way to the wood of the cross. May we too embrace Him with all of our love as did St. Francis.

To all of the readers of Straight Answers, I wish you a very holy Christmas.

PRO-LIFE ACTIVITIES



Gabriel Project Angels are volunteers who work with those in need of emotional and spiritual support due to an unplanned pregnancy. There is a need for angels across the Diocese. The next Gabriel Project Angel training will be held at St. Paul Parish in Austin on January 9th from 9:00am to 5:00pm.

Register online or for more information, contact Mary Russell at (512)949-2488.