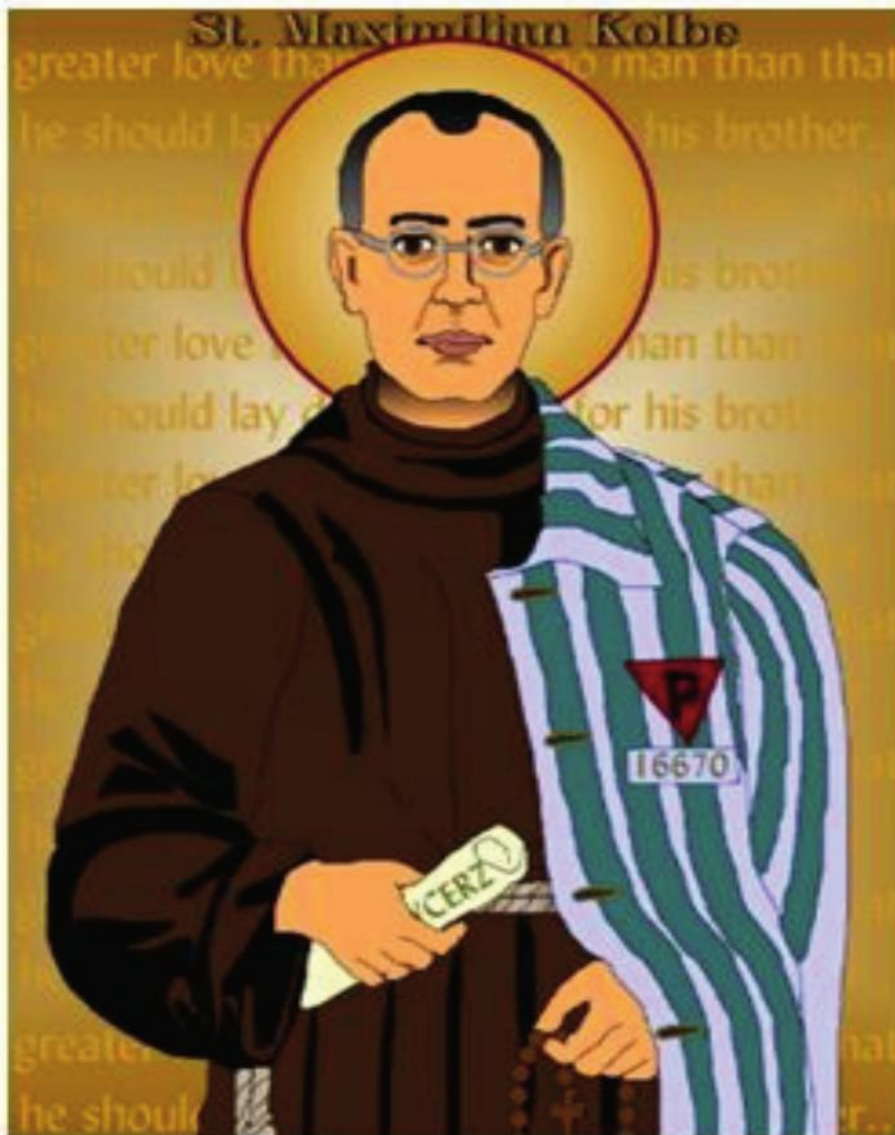


# ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

A Parish of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston



## Weekend Masses

Saturday 5 pm Vigil Mass

Sunday

8 am & 10 am

12 Noon

\*No 12 Noon Mass on Dec. 24 only\*

## Daily Mass

8:30 am Monday

6:30 pm Tuesday

8:30 am: Wed.- Friday

## Confessions

30 minutes prior to  
Tuesday 6:30 pm Mass

After Friday 8:30 am Mass

Saturday: 3 pm—4:30 pm

Or by appointment: 281-955-7324.

\*\*See pg. 10 for added  
confession times during Advent \*\*

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
DECEMBER 24, 2023

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS)  
DECEMBER 25, 2023



Parish Office Hours  
Monday – Friday 9 am – 5 pm

10135 West Road  
Houston, TX 77064

Parish Office: 281-955-7324

Fax: 281-955-7328

Email: [www.stmaximilian.org](http://www.stmaximilian.org)  
[stmaximilian@stmaximilian.org](mailto:stmaximilian@stmaximilian.org)



The Very Reverend Lawrence W. Jozwiak, E.V., J.C.L., Pastor  
Deacon Dennis Hayes • Deacon Steve Klak • Deacon John Naber  
Deacon David Persich • Deacon Matt Rust • Deacon Joe Weir

## OUR PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

*We are the Christian Community of Saint Maximilian Kolbe, a Catholic parish of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. Embracing our many and diverse gifts, we are united in Christ Jesus. Challenged by the teachings of Our Lord, and inspired by the example of our Patron, we strive to serve God, and to minister to others, in prayer, sacrament, faith formation, and charity.*

### PASTORAL COUNCIL

Janis Echeverria (Facilitator)  
 Patricia Fahy (Recorder)  
 John Garcia  
 Dennis Taylor  
 Esteban Teran  
 John Syzdek  
 Jeanette Coury  
 Leslie Escobar  
 Jan Hains  
 Edward Lock  
 Thomas Spjut

### PARISH STAFF

Mary Alice Greaney—Music Director  
 Molly Smith—Director of Evangelization & Catechesis  
 Chris Wuenscher—Coordinator of Youth Ministry  
 Janice Burns—Faith Formation Assistant & Baptismal Coordinator  
 Eileen Mace—Kolbe Kids EC Program Director  
 Beth Jones—Parish Business Manager  
 Phyllis Schoelman—Parish Secretary  
 Miguel Perdomo—Maintenance; [Open Position—Custodian](#)

### FINANCE COUNCIL

Sean Kennedy  
 David Ricke  
 Bob Charnock  
 Mark Kohlschmidt (Facilitator)  
 Evie Ornelaz  
 Thomas Nelson  
 Mauricio Antunez  
 Paul Hains  
 Rosa Elena Barragan-Ojeda  
 Madelyn Henderson

### SACRAMENT of BAPTISM:

**ADULT BAPTISM:** Adults who desire to become Catholic will participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA).

**INFANT BAPTISM** (under the age of 7 years old): We celebrate Infant Baptism on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month. Parents of infants to be baptized are to attend Baptismal classes, preferably before the child is born. Godparents are encouraged to attend but are not required.

### SACRAMENT of CONFIRMATION:

Adults and older youth who have not been Confirmed should contact the parish office.

### SACRAMENT of MARRIAGE

Couples who are considering marriage are to contact the parish office, at least six (6) months (preferably earlier) before the couple's projected wedding date.

### SACRAMENT of ANOINTING of the SICK:

Any Catholic who is to have surgery due to a serious illness OR whose health is seriously impaired due to a serious illness or old age should be anointed ASAP, preferably before going to the hospital. Contact ASAP a priest to schedule an anointing.

### Liturgy Corner for Weekend Masses 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

**Scripture readings:** Hymnal: #1001  
**Order of Mass:** Hymnal #166—#187  
**Gathering Hymn:** #395—O Come, O Come, Emmanuel  
**Gospel Alleluia**  
**Profession of Faith/Creed:** #174 or inside cover of hymnal  
**Preparation Hymn:** #886—Immaculate Mary  
**Holy, Holy, Holy**  
**Mystery of Faith**  
**Amen**  
**Lamb of God**  
**Communion Hymn:**  
 #415—My Soul in Stillness Waits  
**Sending Forth Hymn:** #420—Creator of the Stars & Night



### TODAY'S READINGS 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

**First Reading:** God responds to David's desire to build a temple, recounting His support & promising a lasting dynasty, establishing a peaceful kingdom & an everlasting throne for David's lineage. (2 Sam 7:1-14)

**Psalm:** I will forever sing of the Lord's promises & steadfast kindness, as He has pledged an enduring covenant with David, ensuring his lineage & throne for all generations. (Ps 89)

**Second Reading:** Glory to God, who strengthens us through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, revealing long-hidden mysteries, now shared with all nations to foster obedience of faith. (Rom 16:25-27)

**Gospel:** The angel Gabriel, sent by God, greeted Mary in Nazareth, proclaiming she would conceive Jesus, the Son of the Most High. Troubled, Mary wondered how, being a virgin. Gabriel explained the Holy Spirit's role & mentioned Elizabeth's miraculous pregnancy, affirming God's power. Mary humbly accepted, declaring herself the Lord's servant. (Lk 1:26-38)

**Weekend Homilies** are recorded & posted on our parish webpage:  
<https://stmaximilian.org/homily>



**December 24 & 25, 2023**

Dear Friends in Christ,

**Happy Advent Season!** This is a most unusual “4<sup>th</sup> Week of Advent” since it is only a half day of Sunday on Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> with Christmas Eve beginning this same Sunday in late afternoon. As you can see, the church is decorated already for Christmas, beginning with the 5 pm Saturday Vigil Mass for the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent. Why? It takes 25+ people and many hours of preparation & actual decorating time. There is no time to decorate on Sunday afternoon prior to the 4 pm Christmas Eve Mass. Plus, all the volunteers are busy doing personal things that day.

Thank you to all the 25+ people who decorated the inside of the church on Sunday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> after the 12 Noon Mass. This was the time most convenient to decorate. The decorations remained unlit until the 4 pm Mass on Christmas Eve. Thank you for all the 25+ people who decorated the outside of the church's campus on Saturday, Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Thank you especially to Theresa & Mike Sicola, as chairs of the Art & Environment Committee. They spend hours in preparation for Christmas, plus hours for other liturgical seasons. For instance, they primarily set up the Memorial Wall for All Saints / All Souls day & for the month of November; for the Immaculate Conception on Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>, for Our Lady of Guadalupe for the weekend of Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>. Plus, Theresa & Mike spent many hours getting all the Christmas decorations separated for different sub-groups of people to decorate (for the main tree in the sanctuary), trees in the narthex (entrance); the crèche (manger scene), flowers in front the ambo (pulpit), flowers for the Holy Family shrine upfront & shrine in the back of church, the chapel & its entrance, & other areas that need to be decorated. (If you have not made your Christmas flower donation, please do so.) Pray for Theresa & Mike for all their intentions in thanksgiving to their service.

**Merry Christmas!** Welcome to our parish community of St. Maximilian Kolbe as we celebrate the great event of the birth of Our Savior, Jesus Christ! How the angel said to the shepherds: “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord (Luke 2: 10-11).” How that birth changed forever the history of the world. How Jesus, the Son of God, became man, through the miraculous conception of Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. How Jesus grew in age & in wisdom, through His mother,

Mary, and his foster father, Joseph. How Jesus taught us the way to love, the way God loves. How His complete love for us was so great that He willingly carried the cross, suffered, died & rose from the dead, as He foretold.

Know you are always welcome here at St. Maximilian Kolbe. There are so many different beautiful realities of our parish community. For those visiting us who live nearby, come & see the uniqueness of our parish community.

Some might be wondering why there is no Midnight Mass here at St. Maximilian Kolbe? There has been a venerable tradition of Midnight Mass in the Church for years. But as with any tradition, things change. People's preferences change in time. At one time, Midnight Mass was revered & standing room only by so many of the faithful. But in recent years, the attendance at Midnight Mass has dwindled to less than half of capacity in so many parishes. What is now normally the most attended Christmas Mass in many parishes is the very first Christmas Eve Mass at 4 pm. That is the earliest time any Vigil Mass is to be scheduled, according to Rome.

The Roman Missal (the red book that the priest uses to celebrate Mass) was revised & updated in 2011. Prior to 2011, that book (called previously the Sacramentary) listed a Christmas Mass at Midnight. But with the 2011 Roman Missal edition, it calls for a Mass during the Night, not necessarily at Midnight. According to the Roman Missal, a Christmas Mass may be offered at the Vigil, at Night, or at Dawn or during the Day of Christmas.

In some of our parishes, a Midnight Mass is still offered. The last year our parish had a Midnight Mass was in 2013. Since 2014, there have been different times for that Mass at Night. Currently, our last Christmas Eve Mass is at 8 pm. That seems to satisfy most of the people.

Next weekend is our regular weekend Mass schedule for the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph. Then Monday, January 1<sup>st</sup> is the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. It is also a day that we are to pray for world peace! Since it falls on a Monday, it still remains a very holy day, a great solemnity to be celebrated, but the obligation to attend Mass has been dispensed due to the number of Masses back to back on the weekend & Monday. (The obligation to attend Christmas Mass is never dispensed, even when it falls on a Monday like this past week.) However, I challenge everyone to attend Mass because of the importance of Mary, as the Mother of God, & praying for world peace, as well as praying as we begin a new calendar year. I have added the Sunday 5 pm Vigil Mass on Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> for Monday's Solemnity & the 10 am Mass on Monday, January 1<sup>st</sup> (there is no 8:30 am Mass on this Monday only.)



St. Maximilian Kolbe, pray for us!

*Lawrence W. Jozwiak*

Fr. Lawrence W. Jozwiak  
Pastor

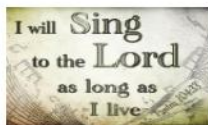
**“The Cross is the school of love.”**  
**“The most deadly poison of our time is indifference.”**  
—St. Maximilian Kolbe

**“There is no greater love, than to lay down one's life for one's friend.” John 15: 13**

## Liturgy Corner for Christmas Eve Masses



**Scripture readings:** Hymnal: #1004  
**Order of Mass:** Hymnal #166—#187  
**Gathering Hymn:** #439—O Come All Ye Faithful  
**Gloria** (inside cover of hymnal)  
**Gospel Alleluia**  
**Profession of Faith/Creed:** #174 or inside cover of hymnal  
**Preparation Hymn for 4 pm:**  
 #430—We have Heard on High  
**Preparation Hymn for 6 pm & 8 pm:**  
 O Come, Redeemer of the Earth  
**Holy, Holy, Holy**  
**Mystery of Faith & Amen**  
**Lamb of God**  
**Communion Hymn for 4 pm:**  
 #424—Hark! The Herald Angels Sing  
 #448—Away in a Manger; #441—Silent Night  
**Communion Hymn for 6 pm & 8 pm:**  
 The Table of Emmanuel; #441—Silent Night  
**Sending Forth Hymn:** #437—Joy to the World



### CHRISTMAS EVE READINGS

**First Reading:** A great light shines on those in darkness, bringing joy & freedom. A child, symbolizing peace & eternal rule, is born to uphold justice & righteousness forever. (Is 9:1-6)

**Psalm:** Sing a new song to the Lord, announcing His salvation & marvelous deeds to all. Creation rejoices, celebrating the Lord's coming to rule with justice & constancy. (Ps 96)

**Second Reading:** God's grace brings salvation, teaching us to renounce ungodliness & live righteously, as we await Christ's glorious return, who sacrificed Himself to redeem & purify us. (Ti 2:11-14)

**Gospel:** A census led Joseph & Mary to Bethlehem, where she gave birth to Jesus, laying him in a manger. Angels announced to shepherds the birth of Christ the Lord, bringing joy & peace. The shepherds witnessed a heavenly host praising God, marking the humble yet glorious beginning of Jesus' earthly life. (Lk 2:1-14)

### READINGS for the WEEK

**Monday:** The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)  
*For our 3 Christmas Eve Masses:* Is 9:1-6; Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13; Ti 2:11-14; Lk 2:1-14  
*Christmas Day:* Is 52:7-10; Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18  
**Tuesday:** Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Ps 31:3-4, 6 & 8, 16 & 17; Mt 10:17-22  
**Wednesday:** 1 Jn 1:1-4; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Jn 20:1 & 2-8  
**Thursday:** 1 Jn 1:5 2:2; Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7-8; Mt 2:13-18  
**Friday:** 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:** Sir 3:2-6, 12-14; Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5; Col 3:12-21; Lk 2:22-40

Pray for our blessings on our parish!

**Have you made a Christmas Gift to the Parish yet? See p. 8.**

p. 4

## Mass Intentions



### Saturday, December 23

St. John of Kanty

5 pm Carol Ann (Sissy) Geary †

### Sunday, December 24 4th Sunday of Advent

8 am Parishioners of St. Maximilian

10 am Mauricio & Elizabeth Antunez & family

\*\*\*No 12 Noon Mass today, this Sunday only\*\*\*

**Carols 15 minutes prior to all 4 Christmas Masses**

**Christmas Eve—Holy Day of Obligation**

4 pm Parishioners of St. Maximilian

6 pm Parishioners of St. Maximilian

8 pm Parishioners of St. Maximilian

### Monday, December 25 The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Holy Day of Obligation

10 am Parishioners of St. Maximilian

\*\*\*no 8:30 am Mass today\*\*\*

### Tuesday, December 26

St. Stephen

6:30 pm Charles Wiggins †

### Wednesday, December 27

St. John

8:30 am Ricardo & Elsa Celia

### Thursday, December 28

The Holy Innocents

8:30 am Michael Williams † Marie Williams †

### Friday, December 29

St. Thomas Becket

8:30 am Jearald Dyer †

### Saturday, December 30

5 pm Thomas Sakallah

### Sunday, December 31

The Holy Family

of Jesus, Mary & Joseph, New Year's Eve

8 am Parishioners of St. Maximilian

10 am Eddie Velasquez †

12 Noon Eulalio Peria †

### 5 pm Vigil Mass for Monday, January 1, 2024

Parishioners of St. Maximilian

### Monday, January 1, 2024

Solemnity of Mary,

the Holy Mother of God, New Year's Day

10 am Parishioners of St. Maximilian

\*\*\*no 8:30 am Mass today, this Monday only\*\*\*



### Ignorance of Scripture is Ignorance of Christ!

For the scriptures used at Mass every day & to hear a Reflection, go to: <https://www.usccb.org> Then click on the date of the readings you would like to read (in English or Spanish). Click on "Listen Podcasts" to hear the Word recited. Click on "View Videos" to hear a reflection. Click on "Get Daily Readings e-mails" to have the daily readings sent to your email. Or go to our parish website (<https://stmaximilian.org/>) to secure the readings.





The Mass

**Do This in Remembrance of Me, Part 25: A Deeper Look at the Homily**

**By Fr. Luke Spannagel: Step-by-Step through the Mass**

This week, we look more closely at the Homily. As the Diocese of Peoria teaches, the homily “serves as an integral link between the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Before the apostles recognized Jesus in the ‘breaking of the bread,’ he explained the Scriptures to them, ‘filling their hearts with a burning desire.’ The homily strives to kindle a fire of love for God and His Church. As a ‘bridge’ it draws us deeper into the mysteries we celebrate—most especially the mystery of the most Holy Eucharist” (*A Study of the Mass*, p. 9). So, as you can begin to see, the homily is really packed with a number of important goals!

**Inspiration from the Church Fathers** One of the earliest written descriptions of the Mass is from St. Justin Martyr, who was writing a little earlier than 165 AD. As he describes the prayers and meaning of the Mass, I am always struck by how similar they are to our celebrations today. It is a great testament to the guiding work of the Holy Spirit and continuity of our Catholic faith and liturgy. When St. Justin describes the homily, he talks about how the leader exhorts the people to imitate the good things they have just heard. All these centuries later, preachers are still following this same pattern. The priest may use different kinds of homilies for different circumstances, taking into account what the people are like, what they know already, what kinds of involvement they have, what types of concerns are currently happening on the local level, etc. All of these elements will affect both what the faithful need to hear and how well they will understand it and live it out each day. No matter what the circumstances, and no matter what the background of the people is like, all homilies really have one thing in common: Jesus Christ who died and rose for us and our life in him. A wise old seminary professor once said, “If you never say anything else in the pulpit except Jesus loves you and wants you to be with him, the main essentials will always be in every homily.”



**A Bridge Between the Two Halves** So, our focus should always be on Christ, his love for us, and what that means in our lives. We focus on Christ’s four-fold presence to us at every Mass: he is present in the Word of God, in the priest, in his assembled people, and especially in his Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist in a most unique way. We focus on Jesus through the Scriptures and God’s loving Word to his people. We focus on Jesus dwelling among us, offering himself for our sins, rising in triumph, and continuing to be with us through the Holy Eucharist. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1346, states: “The liturgy of the Word and liturgy of the Eucharist together form ‘one single act of worship’; the Eucharistic table set for us is the table both of the Word of God and of the Body of the Lord.” It is important to remember that the Mass is not just a sequence of unrelated events: it is a perfect unity in Christ. The first half helps us get to know God (and ourselves), nourishing our faith in God; the second half helps us unite with him in body and soul. The hope of the homily, then, is to help bring these two halves together so that the faithful can go out into the world and really live the life of Christ.

**For Reflection:**

1. Read about St. Peter’s first “homily” and its impact in the account from [Acts 2:14–41](#). Commit to more attentive listening to the homily the next time you participate in Mass, and ask for the grace to put the lessons of the homily into action in your own life.
2. On the journey to Emmaus, two disciples experience their hearts burning within when the Risen Lord Jesus interprets the Scriptures for them (see [Lk 24:13–35](#)). A Gospel acclamation preceding this Gospel passage implores, “Lord Jesus, open the Scriptures to us; / make our hearts burn while you speak to us.” Make this prayer your own as you prepare to participate actively in the Liturgy of the Word, including the homily.

**Source:** <https://www.eucharisticrevival.org/post/do-this-in-remembrance-of-me-part-25-a-deeper-look-at-the-homily>

**Liturgy Corner for 10 am**  
**Christmas Day Mass**

**Scripture readings:** Hymnal: #1006  
**Order of Mass:** Hymnal #166—#187  
**Gathering Hymn:** #439—O Come All Ye Faithful  
**Gloria** (inside cover of hymnal)  
**Gospel Alleluia**  
**Profession of Faith/Creed):** #174 or inside cover of hymnal  
**Preparation Hymn:** #430—Angels We Have Heard on High  
**Holy, Holy, Holy**  
**Mystery of Faith & Amen**  
**Lamb of God**  
**Communion Hymn:** The Table of Emmanuel #441—Silent Night  
**Sending Forth Hymn:** #437—Joy to the World

**CHRISTMAS DAY READINGS**

**First Reading:** The herald of good news brings peace & salvation, announcing to Zion, “Your God is King!” Sentinels cry out joyfully, witnessing the Lord’s restoration of Zion, & Jerusalem rejoices in God’s comforting redemption. (Is 52:7-10)  
**Psalms:** A new song celebrates the Lord’s marvelous actions & victory. His salvation & justice are revealed to all nations, demonstrating His faithfulness to Israel & the world. (Ps 98)  
**Second Reading:** God, who once spoke through prophets, now speaks through His Son, the heir of all & creator of the universe, who purifies from sins & is exalted above the angels. (Heb 1:1-6)  
**Gospel:** In the beginning, the Word was with God & was God. Through Him, all things were made, & He brought life & light to humanity. John the Baptist testified about this light. The true light, Jesus, entered the world He created, unrecognized by many. Yet, to those who believed, He granted the privilege to become God’s children. The Word became flesh, revealing God’s glory, full of grace & truth, & through Jesus, grace & truth were fully manifested. (Jn 1:1-18)

## p. 6 THIS WEEK AT ST. MAXIMILIAN

### Sunday, December 24 4th Sunday of Advent

Mass	Church	8:00 am
Mass	Church	10:00 am
***No Noon Mass today, this Sunday only***		

### Sunday, Dec. 24 Christmas Eve (holy day of obligation)

Children's Choir singing Christmas Carols		3:45 pm
Mass	Church	4:00 pm
Youth Choir singing Christmas Carols		5:45 pm
Mass	Church	6:00 pm
Police directing traffic at intersection lights after 4 pm & 6 pm Masses.		
Adult Choir singing Christmas Carols		7:45 pm
Mass	Church	8:00 pm

### Monday, December 25 The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) *Holy Day of Obligation*

Christmas Carols		9:45 am
Mass	Church	10:00 am
***No 8:30 am Mass today, this Monday only***		

### Tuesday, December 26

Legion of Mary meeting	Room 203	5:00 pm
Confession	Church	6:00 pm
Mass	Church	6:30 pm
Men's ACTS Retreat Music Practice	Room 203	6:30 pm
Communion & Liberation Wkly Mtg	Room 201	7:30 pm

### Wednesday, December 27

Mass	Church	8:30 am
Food Pantry	Higgins Building	3:30 pm
Rosary	Chapel	6:30 pm
Choir Rehearsal	Canticle Hall	6:30 pm
Men's ACTS Team Meeting	Room 212	6:30 pm
Evening Prayer	Chapel	7:00 pm

### Thursday, December 28

Mass	Church	8:30 am
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### Friday, December 29

That Man Is You!	Gajowniczek Building	5:30 am
Mass	Church	8:30 am
Confession	Church	9:00 am

### Saturday, December 30

Confession	Church	3:00 pm
Vigil Mass	Church	5:00 pm

### Sunday, December 31 The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

Coffee & Donuts	Gajowniczek Bldg	after Masses
Mass	Church	8:00 am
Mass	Church	10:00 am
Mass	Church	12 Noon

Vigil Mass for Jan. 1	Church	5:00 pm
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### Monday, January 1, 2024 Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Mass	Church	10:00 am
***No 8:30 am Mass today, this Monday only***		

## Keep Christ in Christmas!

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ings on doctrine, sacraments & bible, saints, books, movies, etc., there is something for every member of the family to help them grow closer to Christ & His Church.

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—Enter your name & email

You can also sign up for daily reflections to be sent to your email at <https://daily.formed.org/>

## New Year 2023-2024 Eucharistic Adoration Schedule

### Friday (December 29)

Repose the Blessed Sacrament at 8 am.

### Saturday (December 30)

No Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

### Sunday (December 31) New Years Eve

No Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

### Monday (January 1) New Years Day

No Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

### Tuesday (January 2)

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament  
Resumes at 8 am



**Spiritual Adoption -  
End of Month 9**

"Hello world!

It's my birthday!

- I'm a miracle!"

Thank you for praying  
for an unborn child in  
danger of abortion from  
March 25 (the annuncia-  
tion of Jesus in the

womb of Mary) through December 25<sup>th</sup> (Christ's birth).  
Your prayers have been heard by God.

From the moment of fertilization, a new creation, with  
a body & a soul, begins an existence that is eternal.  
Only God can create, & he doesn't make mistakes. Every  
human being is a gift, made in the image & likeness  
of God & dearly loved by Him.

When God, the father, placed Jesus in the womb of  
Mary, at that moment, Jesus received a body & soul.  
"At the Incarnation, the Son of God assumed a human  
nature composed of a rational soul & a body...In His  
human nature, Jesus is consubstantial with us, & is like  
us in all respects except for sin."

<https://www.catechism.cc/articles/life-begins-at-conception.htm>

This prayer campaign ends December 25, but con-  
tinuing to pray this prayer for another baby is en-  
couraged. "Jesus, Mary & Joseph, I love you  
very much. And, I beg you to spare the life of  
the unborn child, which I have spiritually  
adopted, who is in danger of abortion." Please  
also continue to pray for an end to abortion & the  
healing & reconciliation of all involved.

#### **Helpful Resources:**

**Pregnant or know someone pregnant who needs help?**

**Gabriel Project** - pregnancy & infancy - material help, net-  
working assistance, friendship, emotional and spiritual support  
[www.archgh.swoogo.com/GPinfo](http://www.archgh.swoogo.com/GPinfo), 713-225-5826, and/or **Hou-**  
**ston Coalition for Life** free pregnancy testing, free ultra-  
sounds, compassionate counseling, & more, 713-395-1330.  
[www.houstoncoalition.com](http://www.houstoncoalition.com)

**Adoption** 713-741-8728, or [www.newlifeadopt.com](http://www.newlifeadopt.com) **281-955-1001.**

**Jerome's Hope** - A support ministry for miscarriage, early in-  
fant death, prenatal diagnosis, or infertility. [www.archgh.org](http://www.archgh.org)  
Office of Pro-Life Activities, 713-741-8728.

Watch the amazing & medically accurate, animated video of  
human life from the moment of fertilization. [https://](https://babyolivia.liveaction.org)  
[babyolivia.liveaction.org](https://babyolivia.liveaction.org)

For more information, contact Karen at  
[kcomstock@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kcomstock@sbcglobal.net) or 281-639-1999.





**We Wish you a  
Merry  
Christmas!**



Join the parishioners who use Faith Direct for their parish giving. Visit [www.faithdirect.net](http://www.faithdirect.net), our parish code is **TX625** or call 866.507.8757 (toll-free) for more info; or go to <https://stmaximilian.org/give> OR use this QR Code to make a donation.



Concerned about your young child's Speech and Language development? Kolbe Kids' ECP has invited Amy Lerman, Speech and Language specialist from the Parish School to discuss, "Growing Language at Home and Making it Manageable". Please call Eileen Mace @ 281-970-0979 to reserve your spot for Tuesday, January 23rd from 10--11:30 am.

### Coffee & Donuts every Sunday,

Plan to join us for fellowship in the Education Bldg.

**There will not be coffee & donuts offered on Sunday, December 24th morning.**

**WE WELCOME YOU!**

We will not be able to accept clothing donations in the parish office. We simply do not have enough storage space. Please wait to bring your donations on the weekends noted below. Thank you.

### CLEAN-OUT YOUR CLOSETS!

Sponsored by:

***That Man is You!, Fishers of Men, & Knights of Columbus,***  
in collaboration with the ***Kolbe House's homeless outreach program.***

**We will be collecting used clothing items before & after all Masses the weekends of Dec. 30/31 & Jan. 6/7 for distribution to the Houston Downtown Homeless.**

**Special need for:**

**MEN'S JEANS, SHOES, COATS,**  
Hoodies, sweatshirts, socks, hats,  
gloves, blankets, etc.

The vast majority of downtown homeless are men, but we'll accept women & children clothing too. Anything not distributed will be taken to Cypress Assistance Ministries (CAM).

Call/Text Tom Comstock @  
(281)-380-0403  
with any questions.



## Respect Life in All Stages of Life

### Parish Offices are closed for the Holidays

The parish offices will be closed starting at Noon on Friday, Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> & all day on Monday, Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday, Dec. 26<sup>th</sup>, as well as Monday, Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Merry Christmas!**

**Happy New Year!**

May all our parishioners & their families have wonderful & blessed Christmas & New Year.

### All life is sacred & valuable!



### Christmas Flowers & Decoration Fund

Please be generous with your donation for the Christmas flowers & decoration fund. Thank you.

**Food Pantry is open Wednesdays at 3:30 pm**

### **WE NEED MORE FOOD!**

[FoodPantry@stmaximilian.org](mailto:FoodPantry@stmaximilian.org)

The pantry could use the following items: 7.5-15.8 oz canned pasta-Chef Boyardee, SpaghettiOs, 10-19 oz canned soup meals-chicken noodle, vegetable beef, etc., no "cream of" soups, ramen noodle soup, 14-15.25 oz canned fruit, 4 oz fruit cups, 5-12 oz canned tuna, 4-12.5 oz canned chicken, 4.6 oz Vienna sausage, 24 oz Hunts pasta sauce, 12-24 oz spaghetti, Hamburger Helper, Tuna Helper, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, body soap, & toilet paper. No outdated food products please. The Food Pantry is not able to accept any medications or alcoholic beverages.

### **We reached our 2023 mandatory amt:** **\$150,000!**

- Amount Paid so far: **\$164,209**  
(**\$14,209 paid over goal**)
- Amt pledged to be paid: **\$4,393**
- Amt paid + to be pledged: **\$168,602**  
**Amt. over mandatory amt: \$18,602**
- 401 donors out of 2163 households



## Year-End Giving Suggestions

As the end of the year approaches, we begin to reflect upon the many blessings bestowed upon us. The end of the year also provides a great opportunity to thank God for these blessings by gifting to St. Maximillian Kolbe. The benefits of income tax deductions, capital gains savings & other financial benefits are significant advantages that provide an incentive to make a gift at the year-end. A gift can also help support St. Maximillian for years to come.

There are many ways of contributing a gift; however, two of the easiest & most direct methods to give, are donations of cash & appreciated stock or other investments. As the holidays approach, reflect on making a gift in memory or honor of someone who has made an impact in your life.

You can also make other financially advantageous gifts such as real estate, life insurance, charitable remainder trusts, will/trust bequests & IRA/retirement accounts.

For more info on how you can help make a difference by contributing a year-end gift to St. Maximillian, contact Beth Jones via email at [elizabeth.jones@stmaximilian.org](mailto:elizabeth.jones@stmaximilian.org) or at 281-955-7324.

Note: Those who are 70½ or older can make a gift of as much as \$100,000 a year from their individual retirement accounts (IRA) directly to eligible charities without having to include any of the transfer as part of their gross income. The transfer must be made directly from the IRA to the organization. Transfers count toward that person's required minimum distribution for the year. Talk with your tax advisor for more info.

### Give the Gift of ACTS This Christmas!

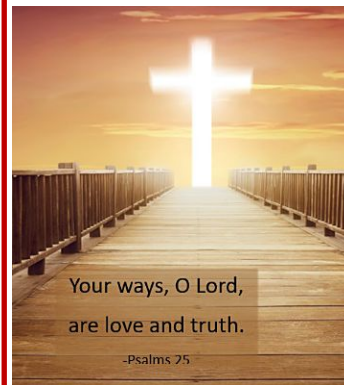
**Know someone who could really benefit from a life-changing spiritual retreat in the New Year?** Click the QR code to download a registration form or simply learn more about the **Men's and Women's ACTS Retreats at St. Max.** ACTS Retreats are a 3-day, 3-night Catholic lay retreat presented by St. Max parishioners from Thursday evening to Sunday noon Mass. Centering on core teachings concerning Adoration, Community, Theology and Service, they offer a spiritual journey that calls the soul to friendship in Christ and community. For more info, watch for sign-up tables after Masses in the weeks ahead or contact a retreat director below.

#### 2024 ACTS Men's Retreat | January 25–28

Retreat Director: Wayne Pelingon,  
713.966.9832

#### 2024 ACTS Women's Retreat | Feb. 15–18

Retreat Director: Valerie Delafosse,  
713.305.5578



**St. Maximilian  
Kolbe**

**Women's  
ACTS  
Retreat**

**Feb. 15-18,  
2024**

For more info, contact Retreat Director:  
Valerie Delafosse, 713.305.5578



## A Christmas Gift to the Parish

With consultation with the Finance Council, this year we are encouraging a Christmas parish donation toward our Social Concerns Fund. That fund is used toward the parish Food Pantry, Mission Yahweh, our monthly feeding the poor at Loaves & Fishes, etc. Since many people are hurting economically, it is appropriate for us to give a monetary Christmas gift to those people our parish ministries serve who are in need.



If you want to donate an additional Christmas gift to the parish beyond Social Concerns, indicate what project you might want your gift to go to, such as the new security / camera/ lighting system, the re-keying of all the buildings, the remaining cost of the pews, the future repainting of the chapel & parts of the church, the cost of new hand rails for the front of the church & education building, etc.



**Just as we give a gift to a family member or friend, consider giving a Christmas gift to our parish.**

**Make a donation for Social Concerns, put it in an envelope marked as a parish Social Concerns & put in the collection basket.**



This QR code will link you to our Faith Direct account where you can make ongoing contributions or a one-time contribution. It is quick, easy & efficient. Whether it is a parish contribution for a Christmas gift, or any other parish contribution, consider using this QR code.





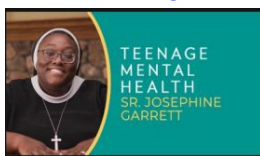


## DECEMBER 2023



Many people struggle with mental health during the holidays – isolation, lack of sunlight, fears & worries.

[Formed.org](https://watch.formed.org/videos/mental-health-leading-into-the-holidays) has some programs to help raise our awareness so that we can be reassured & get help, if needed. Please check out the program on Mental Health in the Holiday Season <https://watch.formed.org/videos/mental-health-leading-into-the-holidays>



Or for youth, there is a series about Teenage Mental Health <https://watch.formed.org/teenage-mental-health-with-sister-josephine-garrett>

Sit down as a family and watch Brother Francis retell the story of Mary & Joseph & the birth of Jesus: <https://watch.formed.org/videos/o-holy-night-the-king-is-born-what-christmas-is-about>



Spend just a few minutes during this busy holiday season with a reflection on the Holy Family as a model for all families. Listen to a message about how to strengthen your love for family during this holiday season. <https://watch.formed.org/videos/the-holy-family>

**The 4<sup>th</sup> Advent candle** represents “LOVE”, the ultimate love of God that He might send His only Son for us. Called the “Angel’s Candle.”, the fourth candle of Advent is lit the Sunday before Christmas, & it is the color purple, leading us to eagerly await the new Kingdom of God on earth. This Advent, light the fourth candle on Sunday, December 24, 2023. “And in the end, everything else will turn out to be unimportant & inessential, except for this: Father, Child, & Love.” St. (Pope) John Paul II



**No one, whether shepherd or wise man, can approach God here below except by kneeling before the manger at Bethlehem & adoring him hidden in the weakness of a new-born child.**  
(CCC 563)



Enjoy the Christmas & New Year holidays! Faith Formation classes resume Thursday, January 18, 2024 & Sunday, January 21, 2024.

Fall Spring Schedule Formation:

Many sessions open for Faith

- Sunday afternoons 2:30-4pm Grades Pre-K to 12
- Thursday evenings 6:30-8pm Grades Pre-K to 8
- Homeschool session Grades K-8

<https://stmaximilian.org/children-youth-faith-formation>

**Parents are the first teachers of their children in all things, especially in the ways of faith.**

DECEMBER							JANUARY							FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6						1	2	3
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29		
31																				

**Sunday Session 2:30p - 4p**  
PreK - 12th Gr.

**Thursday Session 6:30p - 8p**  
PreK - 8th Gr.



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

## STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION

That like Mary, our lives, too reflect Christ's light to the world through our gratitude & generosity.

**"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" – Luke 1:28**  
 After Jesus, we look to Mary as an ideal steward. Her entire life was lived in obedience to God's call. Mary teaches us to live with joy for all we have been given. Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, Mary reflects the light of Christ. Like Mary, we are called to reflect Christ's light to the world through our gratitude & generosity.

## Holiday Schedule

- Saturday, Dec. 23**—5 pm Saturday Vigil Mass
- Sun., Dec. 24 morning only: 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**  
 8 am & 10 am Masses  
 There will be NO 12 Noon Mass on this Sunday only.
- Christmas Eve, Sunday evening, Dec. 24:**
  - **4 pm, 6 pm & 8 pm Mass**  
 (15 minutes of carols before 4 pm: Children's Choir)  
 (15 minutes of carols before 6 pm: Youth Choir)  
 (15 minutes of carols before 8 pm: Adult Choir)
  - Police directing traffic at intersection lights after 4 pm & 6 pm Mass.
- Christmas Day, Monday, Dec. 25: 10 am Mass only.**  
 (15 minutes of carols before 10 am)  
 There will be NO 8:30 am Mass on this Monday only.
- Saturday, Dec. 30**—5 pm Saturday Vigil Mass
- Sunday morning, Dec. 31**—8 am, 10 am & 12 Noon  
Mary, Mother of God
- New Year's Eve, Sun. evening, Dec. 31**—5 pm Vigil Mass
- New Year's Day, Monday, Jan. 1**—10 am Mass only  
 There will be NO 8:30 am Mass on this Monday only.

## Confessions during Advent

- Saturday:** Dec. 23—8:30 am - 9:30 am
- Dec. 23—3 pm-4:30 pm
  - There will be no confessions on Dec. 24th.
- Or by appointment: 281-955-7324.**



## EXPOSITION of the BLESSED SACRAMENT:

To the side are days/times where help is needed.  
 To sign up, contact Susie Charnock @ 281-813-1492.  
*"So you could not keep watch with me for one hour?..."*  
*"Mt 26:40"*

## PRAY FOR OUR SICK

Lisa Abbott, Cynthia Aguirre, Lupe & Melissa Batey, Norma Bodin, Maria Bueno, Bill Carew, Rebecca Carter, Susie Charnock, Aurora Enciso, Rose Farris, Missy Fouts, Joseph Gallagher, Estrella Gonzalez, Elizabeth Anna Goodman, Soledad Haren, Georgia Hohensee, Maria Ibarria, Anne Jackson, Taylar Jackson, Madison Koopmann, Rachele Marchisio, Craig McKnight, Arma Morrison, Maria Mien Nguyen, Evie Ornelza, Richard Ornelaz, Rose Pennell, Marie Perez, Stan Petty, Irma Phillips, Walker Ponder, Marian Rearick, Delia Rodrigues, Alveraize Saizan, Maria Senjudo, Guillermo Stewart-Gaynor, Christine Swiech, Ken Switzler, Consuelo Estrada Torres, Ngoc Anh Uy, Debbie Vela, Linda Webb, Carolyn & Gary Webber, Frances Wooley, & Chuck Woodruff

**Invite others to come & worship with us for Christmas & New Year's!**

Since Christmas & New Years each fall on Mondays, **Power Hour of Prayer** will not take place on those 2 Mondays only!

## Weekly Devotional Prayer: All in the Chapel

Rosary, Divine Mercy & Prayers for different Vocations @ 7:20 am on Sundays.  
 Power Hour of Prayer @ 7 pm on Mondays.  
 Holy Rosary @ 6:30 pm on Wednesdays.  
 Evening Prayer @ 7 pm on Wednesdays.  
 Divine Mercy & Rosary @ 3 pm on Thursdays.

<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>12 Midnight—1 am</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>1 am—2 am *NO ADORER*</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>2 am—3 am</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>9 am—10 am</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>1 am—2 am</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>2 am—3 am</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>10 am—11 am</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>4 am—5 am</b>

Updated: 11/19/2023





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