



Saint Mary's Catholic Church

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH



PARISH COMMUNITY

Pastor

FR. CHRISTOPHER UHL, OMV
Bridge...College...Earthquake
cuhlomv@msn.com

FR. BENJAMIN UNACHUKWU, OMV
FR. LELAND THORPE, OMV
FR. DAVID BEAUREGARD, OMV
DEACON JIM SCHWARTZKOPF

PARISH OFFICE

Mon-Fri 8:30am to Noon & 1pm to 3:30pm
618-465-4284
Fax: 618-463-4637
VOICEMAIL & DROPBOX

SCHOOL OFFICE

618-465-8523
Middle School 618-465-9719
www.smsalton.com

MASS SCHEDULE

Weekdays & Saturdays:
6:30 am & 8:00 am

Saturdays: 5:15 pm
(for Sunday Obligation)

Sundays: 6:30 am, 8:00 am*, 9:30 am,
11:00 am & 5:15 pm

*8:00 am on Facebook Live Daily

Rosary: 7:30 am daily in the Church

Day before Holy Day: 5:15 pm
Holy Days: 6:30 am, 8:00 am
12:00 noon and 5:15 pm
(if announced)

First Friday of the Month: 5:15 pm

CONFESSIONS

First Friday Of The Month: 4:00-5:00pm
Saturday: 4:00-5:00pm & 7:00-8:00pm
Sunday: 4:45-5:15pm
AND BY APPOINTMENT

ANointing OF THE SICK

Please call the office if you or
a loved one needs to be anointed.
618-465-4284, and press 1

BAPTISMS

On Sundays after the 11:00 a.m. Mass
Please contact the Parish Office to
make an appointment.

MARRIAGES

To be arranged at least six months
before marriage. Call the Parish Office.

*Check out our Facebook page...
St. Mary's Catholic Church*

519 East fourth  Alton, Illinois

OBLATES OF THE VIRGIN MARY

WWW.STMARYSALTON.COM

St. Mary's Catholic Church

ALTON, ILLINOIS

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 24, 2023

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, December 25 – Christmas Day

6:30 am Florence Loyt
8:00 am D. Wayne Wagnont
9:30 am Anthony Geisent
11:00 am Patricia Timart

Tuesday, December 26

6:30 am Int of Theresa Roberts
8:00 am Joan Kellert

Wednesday, December 27

6:30 am Marilyn Hallidayt
8:00 am Int of Patricia Schaefer
Father Chris – The People of
St. Mary's

Thursday, December 28

6:30 am Rev. Joseph Meckelt
8:00 am Randy Hausmann†

Friday, December 29

6:30 am Roy Schrumpft
8:00 am Kathie Henderson†

Saturday, December 30

6:30 am Int of Monica Wendle
8:00 am Thomas Rathgeb†
5:15 pm Int of Ruth Ann Hellrung

Sunday, December 31

6:30 am Marsha Elaine Cobb†
8:00 am Int of Thomas Krpan
9:30 am Int of Mason Meyers
11:00 am Int of Rick & Terri Martin
5:15 pm Brian Mann†

Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields
and keeping the night watch over their flock.
The angel of the Lord appeared to them
and the glory of the Lord shone around them,
and they were struck with great fear.
The angel said to them,
"Do not be afraid;
for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy
that will be for all the people..."

The Christmas Gospel from Luke always reminds me of a television program that aired over fifty years ago. I am sure I watched it when I was 8 years old...and I am sure I watched it on a Black and White TV --- Charlie Brown Christmas --- it first aired in 1965. It is the typical story of Charlie Brown, who is put out by all the commercialism and superficiality of Christmas...and he finally cries out:

"Isn't there anyone who knows what Christmas is all about?" And here, Linus steps forward and proclaims this passage of the Gospel, finishing with "Glory to God in the highest..." It is the pivotal point of the program, and it really made the show. Charlie Brown Christmas was a great success, but like many successes there is a story behind the success.

Two of the three producers did not want the scripture --- Luke's Gospel read.

The other producer, Charles Schultz, the creator of Peanuts and Charlie Brown, insisted the Gospel passage remain in the script. The two opposing producers did not think the show was very good, as did the advertising executive that pitched the show...but they had to run it good or bad. And of course, it was good...and Linus was good...and he was spot on about what Christmas is all about, and his speech really made the show.

When we look at our readings on this Christmas Day, we hear of that promised Messiah...that Wonder-Counselor...that God-Hero...that Prince of Peace that is realized in the birth of Jesus. That promise Isaiah prophesied 700 years before the birth of Jesus. That promise made by God...and kept by God...

And like the setting in time, we are given in the Gospel --- Caesar Augustus was Emperor, Quirinius was governor --- those people existed.

And so did Jesus Christ...Son of God and Son of Mary.

He was truly born in Bethlehem...in poor conditions...but surrounded by the love of Mary and Joseph. Safe, warm, fed, loved, and one of us.

That makes a difference in every person's life. Through the Incarnation, we are given dignity as a son or daughter of God. With the grace...with the Light that came into the world in Jesus, we are given the wisdom and knowledge, and courage to say boldly:

Yes! I believe in life and in truth and in eternity...
Yes! I believe in the love and mercy Jesus brought us...
Yes! I believe in the Church and the sacraments and holiness...
And it gives a person the courage to say...
"That part stays in the script...I insist!"
That is what Charles Schultz said of Linus' Scripture passage...
It is what we can say: "That part stays in the script!"
This is what Christmas is all about --- "Do not be afraid..."

Fr. Chris



Please contact the parish office if you need prayers or want to have prayers said for a relative or friend. Several times a year when the list gets long, we will begin again with a new list after a notice in the bulletin; at that time simply let the parish office know if you still require prayers. Our new office emails are: carolyn@stmarysalton.com and marci@stmarysalton.com

Requests for Prayers

Please remember our brothers and sisters, who are in need of prayer.

Please remember our brothers and sisters, who are in need of prayer.

Chuck Hughes, Kay Barnett, Laura Wright, Kay Ansell, Richard Hudanick, Celeste Frasier, Sylvia Manns, Nancy Gonzales, Madison Krankel, Mary Miles, Joseph Fischer, Carol Henkhaus, Cheryl Whitten, Sarah Stirton, Chuck Pohlman, JoAnn Acheson, Roy Geisen, Toni Messinger, Sophie H., Mary Thompson, Ava Holt, Doug Manns, Joseph Gleason, Ann Reilly, Richard DuPatz, Jeff Vaughn, Levi McDonald, Allison Brakeville, Sydney Hosford, Christopher Taul, Ted Holt, Jana Howell, Michael Raymond, Mary Featherstone, Phil Pohlman, Randy Ledbetter, Margaret Schwegel, Sean Michael Donahue, Ellen Saville, Bob & Phyllis Rill, Leah Grace & Family, Linda Schafer, Mackenzie Haegele, Walter Gregory, Jenny Breden, Florence Sabaj, Terry Westfall, Rosemary Ruedin, Rollan (Jerry) Jouett, Stephen Jouett, Dolores Hill, Barbara Hill, James Eberhardt, Nancy Erickson, Kathleen Anderson, Matthew Cleland, Roy Kubicek, Amy Terhaar, Olga Kornukhova, Julie Huch, Jim Wicklund, Nina Greenwell, Rick Faccin, Meredith Ragsdale, Vince Walter, Joan Conrad, Diane Presnell, Rick Krumrey, Mary Roderfeld, Dennis Horn, Marilyn Schulz, Frank J. Mooney, Catharine Williams, Marge Ridder, Jennifer Allmond, Jessica Boyd, Jerome Carrigan, Mary Wuellner, Mike Klaus, Stella Schultz, Barb Loy, Todd Bailey, Alice Banghart, Fr. Dave Beauregard, OMV, Dr. Bob Hurley, Dan Cruz ... and all in our parish who need prayers that are unnamed here.

Holy Mary, help those in need, give strength to the weak, comfort the sorrowful, pray for God's people, assist the clergy, and intercede for religious. May all who seek your help experience your unfailing protection. Amen.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THESE AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES



Jordan Cook, Kris Drake, Kyle Gray, Brian Gehm, Alaina Gehm, Johnny Braun, Grant Wanamaker, Trenton Brown, Michael Lucas, Drew Hargus, Steven Layne Blair, Jr., Joseph Brakeville, Keith Johnson, Joseph Buehlman, Teresa Buehlman, Austin Knebel, Megan Schuette, Daniel Chartrand, Morgun Yogore, William Kerr, Alex Geisen, Matthew Gonzales,

Jacob Allen, Matt Jouett, Tamara Cardenas, Lisa Haegele, Kyle Ontis, Kaleb Denney, Caleb Rench, Danny Geringer, Samantha Gorman, Lane Oliver, Alexander Jaworski, Lance Perkey, Jonathan McCullough, Samantha Hoehn, Grace Gerhart, Trent Ward, Michael Cooke, Ed Maag, Luke Plunkett, Abby Linscott, Eddie Frieling, Avery Geisen, Ellanour Brass, Austen Goheen, Matthew Bazzell, J.C. Wuellner, Grant Haegele,

4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 ~ Romans 16:25-27 ~ Luke 1:26-38

FOCUS: God is the font of all blessings and salvation.

Today's readings make evident the goodness of the Lord, and that He is the source of all blessings. The Lord promises to build a house for David – one that will last forever. And from the lineage of David comes Jesus, God himself, to dwell among us. He is our shelter, our bodies are His temple, and His kingdom endures forever. We will soon celebrate the feast of his Incarnation and Nativity, while awaiting still, with joyful hope, the time when He will come again.

In the first reading, David ruminates on building a house for the Lord. However, the Lord reminds David how He has favored him and states that it is God who will build a house for David. In the second reading, Paul gives glory to Christ, acknowledging the prophets and wisdom through the ages that have all participated in this revelation. In the Gospel, the angel Gabriel announces that Mary will conceive a son – the Son of God – and Mary accepts the honor, saying, *may it be done to me according to your word.*

CHRISTMAS 2023 – THE VIGIL THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD – SOLEMNITY

Isaiah 62:1-5 ~ Acts 13:16-17, 22-25

Matthew 1:1-25 or Matthew 1:18-25

FOCUS: Jesus is our long-awaited Savior, who came to be with us always.

On this evening, when we anticipate the birth of our Lord, the readings focus on Jesus as the fulfillment of prophecy. Jesus' birth marks the culmination of God's promises to the people of Israel and the inauguration of a new age of salvation history. Jesus promised to remain with us always as Emmanuel.

Isaiah foretells that the Lord will rejoice in his people as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride. Paul preaches to the Jews that God has fulfilled his promise to Israel by sending Jesus, a Savior descended from King David. Matthew begins his Gospel with the genealogy of Jesus, and then tells the story of how Jesus' birth came about. Mary will conceive a child who will be named Jesus, *because He will save his people from their sins.*

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

PART ONE - THE PROFESSION OF FAITH

SECTION TWO – THE CREEDS THE WORLD WAS CREATED FOR THE GLORY OF GOD MAN

365 The unity of soul and body is so profound that one has to consider the soul to be the "form" of the body:²³⁴ i.e., it is because of its spiritual soul that the body made of matter becomes a living, human body; spirit and matter, in man, are not two natures united, but rather their union forms a single nature.

BANNS OF MARRIAGE

2nd announcement between
Jacob Buhs and Sydney Marshall

COMING SOON AT ST. MARY'S

Christmas Eve – begins with 4pm Mass Dec 24

Adoration Chapel Closed on Dec 25 & Jan 1

Open House at the Rectory – Dec 26

No Bible Study on Dec 26, next study is Jan 2

No Lanteri Guild Mtg during December

Next Baptismal Prep Class – January 7

Coffee & Doughnut Sunday – January 14



Rest in Peace

Your prayers are requested for the souls of

John Fitzgerald

and

Evelyn Hopkins

Mother of John Hopkins

and

Richard Beiermann

"May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace."



POINSETTIAS In Memory of...

D. Wayne Wagon, Rosie Baalman, Sandy Moehn, Harry Kulp, Dorothy Kulp, Barbara Ann Moehn, Nicholas & Juliana Moehn, Felix & Ceclia Pratte, Mayme & Flo Gradl, Mayme & Frances Hellrung, John & Mary Lou Luketich, Nick & Ivka Perica, Michael & Mary Ursch, Lind/Gvillo Families, George & Felicia Goeken, Valerie Lewis & Tammy Greco, Rill & Milford Families, Robert Emmett Kane, Deceased Members of Joehl/Bertier Family, Deceased Members of Soper/Adzima Family, Tom Gineris, Russ & Ilma Baggett, Thomas Baggett, George & Betty Hornsey, Bob & Dane Lorch, Marsha Elaine Cobb, Douglas Patrick, Clyde & Georgia Ann Kaufman, Philip & Phyllis Rapp, Sister Rita Ann Frey, Delia Fader, Louis Boucher, Brian Boston, Tony & Helen Boston, Marcella Lane, Zachary Hunter, Joseph & Edna Macias, Baby Michael Heublein, Roger & Bernice Ruedin, Terry Jackson, Dean Family, Bodger Family, Aery Family, Meeks Family, Pilarita Wilson Family, Toni Fry-Hilgert, James Hilgert, Alice Hilgert, Members of the Rickher & Stickling Families, Delia Fader (F.R.O.G.), K.E. (Dino) & Maureen Pars, Harold W. & Roberta (Bobbie) Wagner, Jackie St. Peters, Batchelor Family, Robert "Whitey" & Norma Hamilton, Joseph and Pauline Bayer, Joseph R. Bayer, Jr., Clarence & Martha Kulp, Clarence & Shannon Williams, Edmund & Margaret Norton, Elmer & Viola Childers, James & Bernadine Geisen, Samuel Geisen, Anthony Geisen, Robert & Jeanne Walters, Helen Kahney, Jeffrey (J.T.) Pace, Zorger Family, Christopher Cleary, Alman & Mildred Miller, Mr. & Mrs. John Hernandez, Mr. & Mrs. Albert Hurley, Godar/Molloy Families, Victor Goeken, Tony Corona Family, J. Michael Kane

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Sunday December 24 ~ Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent

6:30am, 8:00am, 9:30am, 11:00am

Christmas Mass Schedule: Sunday, December 24 ~ 4:00pm, 6:00pm,

8:00pm, Midnight [12:00am]*

Monday, December 25 ~ 6:30am, 8:00am*, 9:30am, 11:00am

*Midnight Mass and 8:00am Christmas Day will be livestreamed

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (New Year's Day):

Monday, January 1st ~ 6:30am, 8:00am*, 9:30am, 11:00am, 5:15pm

Oblate Christmas
Open House

December 26th
4pm to 7pm



St. Mary's Rectory
525 East 4th Street
Alton, Illinois

Join the Oblates of St. Mary's for a little Christmas cheer!
Our Open House will feature a tour of the rectory decorations,
chapel, common areas and of course, some Christmas cheer —
hot chocolate and treats...

ADORATION CHAPEL CLOSED ON...

The Adoration Chapel will be closed on Christmas Day, Dec 25, and the Feast of the Holy Mother of God, New Year's Day, Jan 1.

GREAT ADVENTURE BIBLE STUDY NEWS! IMPORTANT, PLEASE READ!

There will be no Bible Study on Dec 26. We return to the study in the New Year on Tuesday, January 2 with a little Christmas celebration: we will gather at 6:30pm and the study will begin at 7pm in the Parish Center. What a great start we've had to our Bible Study this year! See you in 2024 to continue our journey!

CHRISTMAS PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Closed Dec 25 & 26

Open Dec 27 & 28

Closed Dec 29

Open for regular hours again Jan 2.

If you have something to drop-off to the Parish Office while we are closed, please use the after-hours drop box located on the porch just below the Parish Office mailbox; we will be checking it. We will be monitoring our email. Please do not hesitate to contact us, if needed. *We wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!*

FIRST FRIDAY

This week is the First Friday and Saturday of the month of December, days on which we traditionally honor Our Lord and His mother through the Sacraments of Confession and Communion.

Masses: Fri. 6:30am, 8am, and 5:15; Sat. 6:30am and 8am

Confessions: Fri. 4:00-5:00 pm w/ Adoration in the Church; Sat. 4-5pm and 7-8pm.

BAPTISMAL PREPARATION CLASS

The next baptismal preparation class will be January 7 after 11am Mass. To register, please call the parish office, 618-465-4284.

2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Please take the time to pick up your 2024 Offering Envelopes! They are located in the basement of the church across from the Mary Ann Room. Be sure to pick up your box as soon as you can. Please ask an usher or a priest or another parishioner to help you if you cannot make it down the stairs. They will be glad to help.

LANTERI GUILD

There will be no meeting in the month of December. We will meet again the last Monday of January.

NOTE FOR THE DEC. 31 BULLETINS

The bulletin information for the rest of December has already been submitted. No new items can be accepted for the Dec 31 bulletin. Information for January bulletins can be submitted to carolyn@stmarysalton.com. Thank you.

CONGRATULATIONS, SISTERS!

Beginning this December 26, 2023, our Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George (FSGM) celebrate the 100th anniversary of their first arrival in the United States. Please pray for our Sisters during this jubilee year and wish them well!

CHRISTMAS PROGRAMMING WITH EWTN

Vatican events, musical concerts, special features, and children's programming for the entire season. For a complete schedule, go to ewtn.com/Christmas.

CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS

JUST A FEW LEFT IN THE PARISH OFFICE!

The 4th grade class is selling Christmas ornaments to raise funds for their field trip to Springfield, IL. The ornament is a beautiful silver Christmas tree; in the center is a gorgeous picture of our church altar at Christmas. The ornaments are \$7 each. If paying by check, please make payable to "St. Mary's School". Order forms are available in the back of church or in the Parish Office.



SUCCESS CARDS

St. Mary's 8th grade class is selling Success Cards. They are \$10 each. Includes so many local businesses! You can purchase Success Cards from both school offices, the Parish office, or your favorite 8th grader. They are good all through 2024!

HOME MASSES

We have celebrated many special "home Masses". At your winter family gatherings, please consider this unique and beautiful way to bless your family and/or bless a special celebration in your family. If you are interested in a home Mass, please contact one of the priests here at St. Mary's and we will arrange it.

FORMED NEWS!

St. Mary's has partnered with the Augustine Institute to offer free online access to grow in your faith and be inspired. It's called



FORMED. Discover new Advent and more as you and your family celebrate the Christmas season! There is programming for both adults and children.

What a great way to grow together in your faith and family life! To learn more, visit our FORMED page at www.stmarysalton.com/formed. If you don't have a FORMED account, you can create a free one through this FORMED link.

POOR BOXES

Please remember to support our St. Mary's Charitable Outreach Society and its efforts to help the poor and needy. Convenient offering boxes are located at the side entrance and the main entrance for your donations.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

If you are ill or preparing for surgery and would like to be anointed, please contact the Parish Office to schedule a time for this sacrament of healing (618)465-4284.

**** Please note that due to HIPAA policies, the hospitals are not able to notify us if you're admitted. Please reach out to us or have a family member reach out to us.**

Merry Christmas!



HELP WANTED

Marquette Catholic HS in Alton is seeking a qualified boys and girls varsity track and field coach. The candidate should possess good communication skills, is organized, experienced in individual and team development, and places an emphasis on sportsmanship. Interested applicants should email cover letter and resume to Marquette Catholic AD, Brian Hoener, at bhoener@mymchs.org

ST. MARY'S Adoration Chapel



<http://www.adorationpro.org/maryalton>

Adorers Needed:

Tuesdays: 8:00pm

Saturdays: 4:00pm, 5:00pm, 6:00pm

Additional Adorers Needed:

Mondays: 3:00pm, 5:00pm, 6:00pm

Tuesdays: 3:00pm, 5:00pm, 6:00pm, 7:00pm

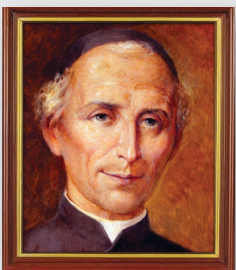
Wednesdays: 5:00pm, 7:00pm, 8:00pm

Thursdays: 3:00pm, 4:00pm, 7:00pm

Fridays: 5:00pm, 8:00pm, 9:00pm

Saturdays: 3:00pm, 7:00pm, 8:00pm, 9:00pm

Venerable Bruno Lanteri



*"Do not forget to raise
your heart frequently,
but gently and with
peace, to God. "*

Learn more and request prayers online:
www.omvusa.org/bruno-lanteri/



ALTON KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ACTIVITIES

Council Meeting - Jan 11, 7:30 pm, 717 State Street

Council Meeting - Feb 8, 7:30 ppm 717 State Street

Knights of Columbus District Free Throw Contest - Feb 11,
Noon - 2:30pm - Marquette Gym

UPCOMING EVENTS

National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows – Shrine Grounds and Visitors Center

From Nov 17 - Dec 31, 2023, 5:00pm to 9:00pm. Indoor activities closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The Way of Lights Display depicts the journey of Mary and Joseph as they travel to Bethlehem using over 1.5 million beautiful lights. This year, we have added colored lights to celebrate the birth of Jesus and continue to offer activities for young and old alike!

Cost: No charge for display, donations accepted and additional charges for some activities.

For more information, call 618-397-6700 or visit our website at <https://snows.org/wayoflights>

Way of Lights Run!

Shrine Grounds and Visitor Center, Jan 1, 2024, 5pm

Join in the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows annual 5k run and 1.5-mile fun as you welcome in the New Year!! What better way to start the year than going through this exciting course while surrounded by 1.5 million beautiful and breathtaking Christmas lights display! Cost: \$30.00 Run, \$20.00 for Walk if registered up by Dec 16. Additional \$5.00 per person starting Dec 17. For more information, visit <https://snows.org/wolrun/> or call 618-397-6700.



PRAYER CORNER

The Christmas Prayer

O sweet Child of Bethlehem, grant that we may share with all our hearts in this profound mystery of Christmas. Put into the hearts of men and women this peace for which they sometimes seek so desperately and which you alone can give to them. Help them to know one another better and to live as brothers and sisters, children of the same Father. Reveal to them also your beauty, holiness, and purity. Awaken in their hearts, love and gratitude for your infinite goodness. Join them all together in your love. And give us your heavenly peace. Amen. - Pope John XXIII

LITURGICAL ROLES

LITURGICAL MINISTRIES:

New schedules have gone out by email and through MSP.

If you are offline and need your schedule, contact the parish office. If you would like to discontinue or change ministries, also contact us and we will get you set up.

If you have lost access to your account, contact msp@stmarysalton.com for assistance.

WEEKDAY MASSES:

Servers and Lectors are welcome to resume all roles.

LIVE STREAMING SCHEDULE

<https://www.facebook.com/stmarysalton>

No account or login is required to watch
Mass at 8:00 am Daily

DEADLINE FOR BULLETIN ENTRIES:

On or before Tuesday at 3:30pm.

Please submit any bulletin requests (pending approval) to: Carolyn Simansky at carolyn@stmarysalton.com



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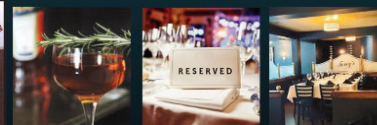
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dbartosiak@cjsco.com

St. Joseph Cemetery
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For pre-planning information, please call
Laurie Horn at the parish office 465-4284

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