

A NOTE FROM DEACON RICK

Once upon a time the Council of Camels were meeting to decide what to do with Wednesday. They were concerned that the day separating the beginning of the week and the end of the week was not fully appreciated.

Joe, the head of the council, came up with an idea. "Why not call it "hump day?" he suggested. The others agreed that this was a great idea. So, from then on, Wednesday became known as hump day. The day after which the week gets easier. Our burdens are lifted, our moods improve and we can coast into the ever-cherished weekend.

This Sunday my brothers and sisters we celebrate another hump day. It's called Gaudete Sunday and it's marked by the rose colored candle and vestments. Gaudete Sunday means that we are entering the second half of the Advent season. It's a brief respite from our penitence and a time to be joyful.

The rose color reminds us that when true repentance occurs, joyful obedience is the result. It represents lightness of heart and an unbreakable spirit even in the darkness.

This joy is something to be treasured and held close to our hearts. Because unlike happiness, joy comes from inside ourselves. Happiness, on the other hand is external. It may be caused by luck, good fortune, or other worldly pleasures. For example, we can feel happy when we receive a gift or an award.

If one of us were to win \$50,000 in the lottery, we'd be very happy. But if we were to start up a business and work hard to earn the \$50,000, we would experience joy.

Though the financial benefit is the same, the means make the final emotion different. In the end, it's the road we travel that determines whether our lives are happy or joyful.

We'll always appreciate winning a hard-fought battle more than something that comes too easily.

When we seek joy this way, we become connected to the ultimate joy. The joy that's represented by the rose-colored candle we light on Sunday.

It's Holy joy. The joy that can only come from God. Knowing that Jesus is coming to make his dwelling among us. And lead us by example.

But in the ANTICIPATION of His coming, we can also experience this Holy Joy. Just recall Christmas as a child when looking forward to opening the gifts was almost as good as sitting with our gifts already unwrapped.

The Joy that fills our hearts as we light this third Advent candle is in the deepest part of our soul. Since Holy joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, it's infused with comfort and wrapped in peace. It's an attitude of the heart and spirit that is sustained by our longing to get closer to our Lord.

In this longing lies hope and promise—a light at the tip of that candle- that makes all our heartaches bearable. We ache for something better because we believe it's possible.

In the midst of all the purple, the rose candle brings hope and a promise that the waiting is nearing an end. We are over the hump and God's promise is about to be fulfilled. And, in that lies unconditional Joy!

Deacon Rick

[Giving Portal](#)

PARISH LIFE CENTER

ST. MARY MAGDALENE PARISH



DECEMBER 2025 | FINAL ISSUE

BUILDING FAITH NEWS



Thank you to all the families who participated in Building Faith Together. It is through your incredible generosity that our Parish Life Center will become a reality! We couldn't have reached \$6.4 million without each and every one of you. If you haven't already done so, look for your butterfly in the Narthex – all participating families are represented.

BY THE NUMBERS

Amount Raised:

\$6.4 million

Households

Contributing:

540

Percentage

Participating:

27%

OUR PARISH

CAMPAIGN TEAM

WISHES YOU A

BLESSED ADVENT

AND A MERRY

CHRISTMAS!!!

As we approach the

end of the year, it is

an especially

opportune time for

charitable giving, if

you wish to use your

donation as a tax

write-off for 2025.

Questions? Contact us at plccampaign@stmm.me

Campaign pledge cards may be picked up at the Campaign table in the narthex, or you may make your donation online [HERE](#).

Helpful directions for donating online are found [HERE](#).

**Upcoming Events &
Mass Intentions**

Mass This Weekend

Click [HERE](#) to Live Stream our 9am Sunday

Schedule change: Starting on Dec 18, the Thursday Daily Mass will permanently move to 12pm noon. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday Daily Mass will remain at 9am.

Saturday Dec 13

10:30am- Confessions
5pm- Mass (The Sansone Family)
2nd Collection for Religious Retirement

Sunday Dec 14- 3rd Sunday of Advent

2nd Collection at all Masses for Religious Retirement
9am- Mass (Parishioners of StMM)
10:15am- Breaking Open The Word
11am- Mass (Herb Bischof †)
4:30pm- Apostello
6pm- Youth Mass (Kathleen McCann †)
6:30pm- Sunday Night Men's Bible Study
7:15pm- Edge / The Way

Monday Dec 15

9am- Mass (Joseph & Agnes Baker †)
10:30am- CSO Meeting
6:30pm- Family Rosary
8pm- Adult Pick-up Basketball

Tuesday Dec 16

9am- Mass in the Chapel (Seth Washburn)
6:15pm- Gather / ROCK

Wednesday Dec 17

9am- Mass (Anne Bianco)
9:50am- Morning Rosary with CSO

Thursday Dec 18

12pm- Mass (Patti Bryant †)

Friday Dec 19

9am- Mass (Elaine Lux †)

Saturday Dec 20

10:30am- Confessions
5pm- Mass (Mary Baker †)

Sunday Dec 21- 4th Sunday of Advent

9am- Mass (Parishioners of StMM)
10:15am- Breaking Open The Word
11am- Mass (Nicholas Cynajko †)

Monday Dec 22

9am- Mass (Concepcion Pineros De Benavides)
6:30pm- Family Rosary
8pm- Adult Pick-up Basketball

Tuesday Dec 23

9am- Mass in the Chapel (Anna & Jeronemo Araujo †)

Wednesday Dec 24- CHRISTMAS EVE

No Morning Mass
4:00pm- Mass (Parishioners of StMM)
4:15pm- Mass in Gym
7:00pm- Mass (Gerald & Joana Lehman)
12:00am (midnight)- Mass

Thursday Dec 25- MERRY CHRISTMAS

10:00am- Mass (Frank Manzella †)

Mass and our Daily Mass on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

*Please note that the schedule may occasionally change due to unforeseen circumstances, and we appreciate your understanding.

Music for Sunday Masses

Prelude: Gaudette

Gathering: Entrance Antiphon

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm:146 Lord Our God Come And Save Us

Preparation: Even So Come

Communion 1: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Communion 2: Great Are You Lord

Communion 3: Light Of The World

Sending Forth: Emmanuel

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This week's altar flowers are donated by:

Johnathan and Carrie

Tucker in honor of Henry's 5th birthday.

Take this opportunity to consider donating flowers to St. Mary Magdalene to beautify the altar and church for weekly Mass to honor our Lord. These flowers will be donated in honor of or in memory of your loved one. Click [here](#). For questions, contact floralministry@stmm.net



CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

CHRISTMAS EVE

WEDNESDAY DEC. 24

4:00 PM - CHURCH
4:15 PM - GYM
7:00 PM - CHURCH
12:00 AM (Midnight) - CHURCH

CHRISTMAS DAY

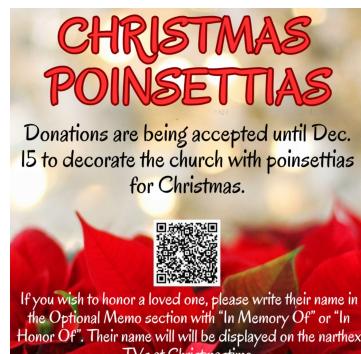
THURSDAY, DEC. 25

10:00 AM (Livestream) - CHURCH



Tuesday, December 16	10:30am- 12:00pm	St. Bernadette's Fuquay Varina
Tuesday, December 16	7:00pm-9:00pm	Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral, Raleigh
Wednesday, December 17	7:00pm- 8:30pm	St. Raphael, Raleigh
Thursday, December 18	10:00am- 11:30am	St. Michael, Cary

Ministry, Group, and Event Highlights



Parish Facility Manager

StMM is seeking a **Parish Facility Manager** to help keep our campus safe, welcoming, and running smoothly. This full-time role will oversee daily building operations, maintenance, repairs, and support for parish events. We're looking for someone who is organized, reliable, and comfortable managing both hands-on tasks and working with staff, volunteers, and contractors.

If you or someone you know has experience in facilities or maintenance and would enjoy serving our parish community in this important role, we invite you to learn more and apply through the Diocese of Raleigh employment page [HERE](#).

Christmas Poinsettias

Donations to the Floral Ministry are being accepted now through Dec. 15 to help decorate the church with poinsettias for Christmas. You may make your online donation [HERE](#).

If you wish to honor a loved one with your donation, please write their name in the optional memo section with 'In Memory Of' or 'In Honor Of.' Their name will be displayed on the narthex TVs at Christmastime.

Angel Tree's Toy Drive & Charitable Collections

This year, the Angel Tree ministry will accept donations for the Holly Springs Food Cupboard, Women That Care, Western Wake Crisis Ministry, Catholic Parish Outreach, and Gabriel Project. Donations will be accepted through December 13–14.

Thank you for your support and generosity!

Church News, School News, Ministries, Groups, and Events

Please click on the link for more information.

Church News

- Baptism Information
- Safe Environment Training for Volunteers
- OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation): For those looking to become fully

Ministries, Groups, & Events Continued

- Prayers & Squares Prayer Quilt Ministry
- Traveling St. John Vianney Ministry- sign up to pray for our priests.

initiated into the Catholic Faith.
Please click here to learn more.

- First Friday Eucharistic Adoration information may be found [here](#).
- Adult Faith Refresher & Confirmation Prep with Deacon Rick- Click [here](#) for more information.
- Divorced Catholics Seeking an Annulment- more information can be found by [clicking here](#).
- Join Father Mike on a Pilgrimage to Fatima, Lourdes, & Spain from 4/28/26 through 5/8/26.
- Our Sound and Video System Ministry needs help with Masses, Funerals, and Weddings. The hours and commitment level are flexible. Can you help us out?
- Breaking Open The Word is a new weekly Gospel discussion group that is held after the 9am Sunday Mass.
- The 2025 StMM Annual Stewardship Report and the 2025-2026 Quarterly Report are available on our website.
- Christmas Poinsettias -Donations are being accepted now until Dec.15 to help decorate our church with poinsettias at Christmastime.
- Parish Council Nominations are being accepted through Dec. 31. Please [click here](#) for more information about the nomination process.

School News

- Thinking about a Catholic education for your child? StMM school tours are now being scheduled.
- 2026-2027 School Year Applications are now being accepted.
- StMM 2nd Grade St. Nick Shoe and Sock Drive, December 5-12. [Click here](#) for more information.

Ministries, Groups, & Events

- Would you like to be an Angel for expectant mothers? Gabriel Project needs Walking Angel volunteers to

- Project Rachel Support Group - for hope and healing after abortion.
- Courage - A support group for those facing same-sex attraction.
- EnCourage- A support group for relatives of people who experience same-sex attraction.
- Walking with Purpose started a 22-week bible study on Sept. 4, especially designed for women to grow in faith and love for the Lord.
- Are you gluten-free due to a medical condition and need a low-gluten Communion Host? [Click here](#) to learn how to receive low-gluten Communion at StMM.
- Hearts on Fire, a charismatic prayer group with Deacon Dev, meets in the Church at 6:30pm on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month.
- StMM Book Club meets the first Wednesday of the month to discuss a selected reading. The next meeting is on Jan. 7. Everyone is welcome. [Click here](#) for more information.
- St. Mary Magdalene's marriage enrichment fellowship group, Chrysalis, provides space monthly for couples to grow in their love for God & their spouse. Childcare is provided.
- Catholic Senior Organization (CSO) meets the 3rd Monday of the month. The next meeting is on Monday, Dec. 15, at 10:30am
- A Bible study with Deacon Dev on the Book of Revelation began in Sept and meets approximately every other Thursday at 6:30pm. All are welcome to join at any time.
- Parish Athletics Spring Soccer and Baseball registration is now open.
- Lend a Hand to Moms in Need: Support Families Affected by SNAP & WIC Losses by donating to the Western Wake Crisis Ministry or Catholic Parish Outreach.
- Forward in Hope, a grief support group at StMM, will begin a new session in January.
- StMM Community Golf Outing hosted by Parish Athletics- Save the Date- April 20, 2026. Click for more information on how to register.

accompany women facing crisis pregnancies with prayer, practical assistance, and loving friendship.

- A heartfelt Thank You to everyone who helped make the Brunch for the Homeless a huge success. Please [click here](#) for more details about the event.
- To all StMM parishioners who were baptized in 2025- Fr Mike invites you to join a Celebration of New Life Mass on Sunday, Jan. 11, 2026. Please [click here](#) for more information and registration.
- The Columbiette rosary makers thank you for your support! They make each rosary with love and care, and they offer rosary repair, too!

• The Hallow Prayer App is offering StMM free access to their Pray25 Challenge during Advent. [Click here](#) to learn how to join.

• Let Your Faith Flow- Help Us Bring Clean Water to Uganda! St. Mary Magdalene is launching the Uganda Water Project to bring life-changing clean water to the people of Kicheche, Uganda.

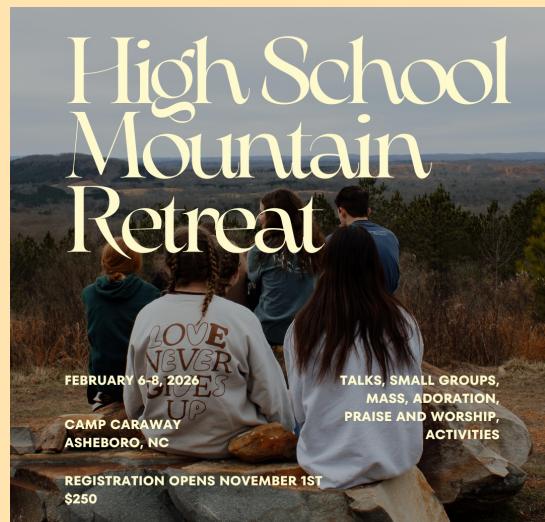
• Did you miss the Christmas Joy Revealed musical or want to experience the Wonder of Christmas Joy all over again? You may [click here](#) for a recording of this very special performance.

**FOLLOW StMM
ON SOCIAL MEDIA**



Faith Formation

[Click HERE for the 2025-2026 Faith Formation Calendar](#)



Registration for the High School Mountain Retreat opens on November 1. Please [click HERE](#) for more information and how to register.

Questions about Faith Formation:

GATHER (K-4th grade)- contact Suzanne Will at will@stmm.net or 919-657-4800 x7280

THE ROCK (5th & 6th grade)- contact Sarah St. Aubin at st.aubin@stmm.me or 919-657-4800 x7307

EDGE (7th & 8th grade)- contact Sarah St. Aubin at st.aubin@stmm.me or 919-657-4800 x7307

Apostello and the Way (9th-12th grade)- contact Niki Furnier at nfurnier@stmm.net or 919-657-4800 x7309

St. Mary Magdalene | 919-657-4800 | 625 Magdala Place | Apex, NC 27502 US

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