

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church
December 25, 2011-The Nativity of our Lord



St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, 1708 East Tenth Street, Merrill, Wisconsin 54452

Parish Directory

- Parish Office..... 536-2803
- Pastor — Father Michael McLain 536-2803 ext. 218
- Retired Clergy — Father Joseph Kleinheinz 536-2803
- Deacon — John Ramassini..... 453-3822
- Parish Secretary — Kris Leggett 536-2803 ext. 202
- Financial Assistant — Kay Berg..... 536-2803 ext. 219
- Parish Nurse — Kathy Graham..... 536-2803 ext. 214
- Parish Outreach/Evangelization — Sr. Dolores Lilla... 536-7487
- DRE — Joe Velie 536-2803 ext. 222
- DRE Assistant — Judy Warren 536-2803 ext. 220
- Music Director — Mary Ament..... 536-2803 ext. 230
- Adoration Coordinator/Liturgist — Mary Jo LeSage... 536-2803 ext. 213
- Building Maintenance Supervisor — John Hanson 536-2803 ext. 221
- Custodians — Chris Hanson/Patrick Koepke..... 536-2803 ext. 221
- Cemetery Sexton — John Hanson
- Trustees — Linda Peterson (Pastoral Council)
Jim Brickner (Finance Council)
- Stewardship Committee
- SFXP Council of Catholic Women — Rosemary Hunt... 539-3642
or Marion Perkins... 536-2602
- Liturgy Committee — Mary Jo LeSage
- Vocations — Kay Slewitzke/Betty Tubbin
- School Committee — Linda Peterson
- Religious Education — Lisa Hass
- School Principal — Jaclyn Behnke 536-6083
- School Secretary — Cindy Gennrich..... 536-6083
- Knights of Columbus — Dick Duginski, Grand Knight... 574-6190
- Public Relations — Susan Ryman..... sryman@uwm.edu

Parish Website: www.stfrancismerrill.org
Staff email addresses are listed on the parish website

- St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store..... 539-1131
- St. Vincent de Paul Outreach..... 539-2666
- St. Vincent Free Clinic..... 539-9566
- Merrill Community Food Pantry..... 536-4505

Mass Schedule

Weekend Liturgy

- Saturday..... 4:00 PM
- Sunday..... 8:00 AM & 10:00 AM

Weekday Liturgy

- Monday Communion Service..... 8:00 AM
- Tuesday..... 6:00 PM
- Wednesday..... 9:00 AM
- Thursday 9:00 AM at Church and 10:15 AM at Pine Crest
- Friday..... 9:00 AM

Reconciliation Times (and by appointment)

- Saturday..... 3:00 PM Tuesday..... 5:30 PM
- Wednesday... 8:15 AM Friday..... 8:15 AM

Parish Office hours: Mon-Thurs 8:00 AM-4:00 PM
Friday 8:00 AM-3:00 PM
(closed daily 12-12:30 for lunch)
Please check the Holiday schedule on page 7 for
office hours during Christmas and New Year's.

Low Gluten Eucharist (.01%) are available.
Please see Fr. Mike before Mass.

Come and Join us

Friends of Jesus Charismatic Prayer Group:

Tuesday at 7:45 PM following choir practice

Mom's in Touch:

Wednesday at 8:30 AM in the conference room

Eucharistic Adoration:

In "The Little Flower Chapel" every day, 5AM-1AM

Evening Prayer:

Wednesday at 5:45 PM in "The Little Flower Chapel"

Rosary:

Monday 7:40 AM (for the unborn), Tuesday 5:30 PM,
and at Pine Crest: Saturday 9:30AM

Little Knights Playgroup:

Friday at 9:30 AM in the cafeteria during school days

Welcome the Little Ones (WLO):

A Gospel reading and special lesson for
children ages 4-6 that meets every
Sunday during the 10AM Mass



THE SANCTUARY LIGHTS in "The Little Flower" Chapel
burn in honor of: **Joseph Blair & Genevieve Blair**

THE SANCTUARY CANDLE this week burns in honor of
Eileen Taylor. Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord. May
perpetual light shine upon her.

PRAYER CHAIN: Please call Kris at the
Parish Office with your prayer chain
requests. You may leave a message if
necessary. The messages are checked
daily even on weekends. Thank you.






SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK of December 25, 2011

- 25 SUN Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/
Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25
Midnight: Is 9:1-6/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14
Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20
Day: Is 52:7-10/Heb1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5,9-14
- 26 Mon Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Mt 10:17-22
- 27 Tue 1 Jn 1:1-4/Jn 20:1a, 2-8
- 28 Wed 1 Jn 1:5—2:2/Mt 2:13-18
- 29 Thu 1 Jn 2:3-11/Lk 2:22-35
- 30 Fri Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3 or Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19/Lk
2:22-40 or 2:22, 39-40
- 31 Sat 1 Jn 2:18-21/Jn 1:1-18
- 1 SUN Nm 6:22-27/Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21



We appreciate the advertisers who support our bulletin:
Woodland Court Elder Services, LLC
1102 South Center Ave, Merrill
715-536-3399

Weekly Schedule: December 26-January 1, 2012

<p>Monday 12/26 Parish Office Closed</p> 	<p>Tuesday 12/27</p> <p>5:00 PM SFX Open Hands Soup Kitchen in the cafeteria</p> <p>6:45 PM Family Choir</p> <p>7:45 PM Charismatic prayer group in Church</p>	<p>Wednesday 12/28</p>	<p>Thursday 12/29</p>	<p>Friday 12/30 Parish Office Closed</p> 	<p>Saturday 12/31</p> <p>4:00 PM Mass</p>	<p>Sunday 1/1</p> <p>8:00 AM Mass</p> <p>10:00 AM Mass</p> 
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LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULE

December 31-Jan 1, 2012

Readers:

4:00 PM Linda & Claire Peterson
8:00 AM Tom Huftel, Lukas Gessler
10:00 AM Kathleen Deates, Julie Bushor

Eucharistic Ministers:

4:00 PM Kevin Cohrs, Karla Raleigh
8:00 AM Joyce Sczygelski, Paul Proulx
10:00 AM Mary Ann VDG, Evelyn Lee, Jan Bares, Jim Arndt

Servers:

4:00 PM K. Peterson, Brant & Michaela Raleigh, K. Knott
8:00 AM Sarah & Emily Gessler, Grace Huftel
10:00 AM Jayda & Brooke Bushor, D. Deates, J. Burdick

Greeters:

4:00 PM Sharon Hofmann
8:00 AM Joe & Kathy Ziesemer Family
10:00 AM Alan & Marie Malm

Ushers:

4:00 PM D. MacSwain, C. Hartwig, G. Hartwig, Volunteer
8:00 AM T. Gessler, M. Hanson, I. Huftel, G. Pleski
10:00 AM L. Deates, J. Ruprecht, L. Ruprecht, S. Nelles

Ministry Schedules Also Available at
www.stfrancismerrill.org

If you are interested in being a Eucharistic Minister at Good Samaritan Health Care Center call Sue Kruger at 539-2187

MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST

Prayer Service at Park Place on Jan 1, 2012:
Sr. Dolores Lilla

ROSARY LEADER

No Rosary at Pine Crest on Saturday Dec 31, 2011
If you are interested in leading the rosary call the parish office

MASS INTENTIONS

Week of December 26, 2011

Monday— NO Scripture Communion Service

Tuesday

6:00 PM Intention: † Frances Huss
By: The Family

Wednesday

9:00 AM Intention: † Donald Lutzke
By: Byrdine Lutzke & Family

Thursday

9:00 AM Intention: Marianne Ball
By: Tom & Mary Ball & Family
10:15 AM (At Pine Crest) Intention: † Regina Roets
By: Sr. Paulette Bergs

Friday

9:00 AM Intention: † Art Perkins
By: Marion

Saturday

4:00 PM Intention: People of the Parish

Sunday

8:00 AM Intention: † Ben Yunek
By: Agnes Yunek
10:00 AM Intention: † Jordan Buehler
By: His parents

SCRIP SELLER SCHEDULE

December 31-January 1, 2012

FRONT TABLE

4:00 PM Lori McAllister
8:00 AM Patti Gessler
10:00 AM Hilde Hantke

BACK TABLE

Not available
Hannah Wendt
Barb A. Adams

FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEER

FOR THE WEEK OF December 25, 2011:
Mary Luterbach

Parish News



PASTOR'S CORNER Christmas Day

On behalf of the entire staff, school and parish, allow me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas. God has loved us so much that He sent us His Son.

We have prepared for the celebration of the Feast of the Nativity when God became man like us in every way but sin...because He loves us incredibly so. As we celebrate the children in our community that God has blessed us with, we also remember those who are no longer physically with us. They are missed, and they are loved. We know that they are with us in the Communion of Saints that we profess each Sunday.

May you enjoy your family traditions this holy season, and may the food and relationships you share with others help to build up the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth.

Merry Christmas, and to all a good night!

Peace and Love,

-Father Mike

SCRIP INFORMATION: "DID YOU KNOW?"

Did you know that the following local merchants accept SCRIP? Call Kris in the parish office to find out how to use SCRIP at these stores.

- Brickner's Park City
- Central Carpet
- Courtside Furniture
- Miller's Furniture
- Judy's Wedding
- Klug's Country Gold
- Thelma's
- The Guy Shop
- Merrill House of Music
- Ziesemer Photography
- Furniture and Appliance Mart
- Bob's 64 West



Kwik Trip, has extended their generous contribution of 9% until March 30, 2012! Remember that besides gasoline, Kwik Trip has eggs, milk, bananas, potatoes, a bakery, deli and more!

Thank you to **CHAMPS** for continuing to donate extra SCRIP cards for their restaurant at no charge!

Bulletin Deadline is Tuesday at 4:00 PM. You may email your item to: sfxp.parihoffice@gmail.com

Attention kitchen angels (You know who you are!): Our assistant school cook, Val Slewitzke, would like to thank all of the "angels" who helped fill in the kitchen while we were short-staffed. Whether you prepared food, served, or cleaned up, your help was greatly appreciated. Volunteers are always welcome in our school! Please just give the school office a call.

2011 DSA Donations: If you would like to contribute to the DSA for 2011, please have your payment to the parish office BEFORE December 30th, 2011. Any contributions to the DSA past that point will be for 2012 tax purposes.

2011 regular Contributions: All donations should be marked clearly and paid to the parish financial office as soon as possible. We want to close our books for 2011 timely and be able to get statements to you before the end of January. If you are unsure of how to handle a contribution for 2011, please contact Kay Berg in the parish financial office.

It's football season! Have you practiced your Hail Mary today? Pray the rosary with us in Church on Monday at 7:40 AM, Tuesday at 5:30 PM, and at Pine Crest Nursing Home on Saturday at 9:30 AM.

No Monday Morning Prayer Service on 12/26 and 1/2, due to the Holidays. We will resume on Monday 1/9.

We need everyone's help! At the end of mass would you please return the laminated card of Mass Prayers and Responses in the hymnal and place the hymnal carefully in the pew rack, spine down first. (Also, a big thank-you to the ushers who are working hard at keeping our pew racks looking neat and tidy.)

From the Gospel: For behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

He reveals to our small world
the incomprehensible,
inexhaustible,
limitless
God.
but
He is
someone
we comprehend,
who shares our exhaustion,
who freely makes our limits His own.
Mary birthed Him.
Come, let us adore Him!

SFX School News



The cover this week features our students celebrating Christmas with their annual Christmas Program. The entire school is shown in the top picture, and the bottom picture is our Kindergarten class. Shown above, our 3 year olds participate in the program for the first time. Thank you to all of our parents, staff, and especially our music director, Mary Ament.

Stewardship News

(The eighth article in a series from the International Catholic Stewardship Council's annual conference in Orlando, FL):



The past 7 weeks, I have written what I learned at the International Catholic Stewardship Conference. It literally changed how I look at stewardship of Time, Talent and Treasure. It literally changed my life and the life of my family. We are learning to give sacrificially in all that we do, not just at church, but in school and our jobs. We are trying to sacrifice other things to do our best, to do the right thing and to always show people we care! We are trying to be the best stewards we can be!

I want to thank all of the parishioners at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church for your support of Stewardship. A grant from Catholic Extension (the creators of our wonderful calendars) paid for all major expenses for the trip.

How can St. Francis Xavier become a parish of stewardship? It is going to take some work, but I am up for the task if you are. Please pray about your involvement...maybe it is hospitality? Maybe it is brainstorming ways in which we can be a church that welcomes not only newcomers, but EVERYONE who comes to worship with us. Maybe it is sitting on a committee to offer ideas, visioning, and direction in ways to get more volunteerism in your parish.

Have a Merry Christmas! And may 2012 be the year that you get involved in Stewardship at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church and School.

-Kay Berg, Director of Stewardship and Development

Welcome to the St. Francis Xavier Catholic Community!

Congratulations on the baptisms of:

Sophia Ann Wendt

Daughter of James Wendt & Victoria Ament



Religious Education News

Important Dates

The second semester schedule for Confirmation has been finalized. Secondly, the date for Confirmation has been finalized. It will be held during Mass on Sunday, May 6th at 1:00 pm. It will be here at St. Francis Xavier Parish. A mailing has been sent containing this information. The schedules are also posted in the front of church as well as the board across from the Religious Education office, and on our website.

Mass books for the First Communion children have been ordered containing the changes in the new translation. Mark your calendars! First Communion is April 22nd during 10:00 AM Mass.



United Way 2-1-1

Many people in our community continue to face challenges. Whether you need food or housing, or counseling to help with an emotional issue, the United Way 2-1-1 program is here to help you find the services you need. You can reach them simply by calling "2-1-1" 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. See the brochure in the back of Church for more information.

Save The Date!

Our seminarian, Patrick McConnell will be ordained a priest this summer. His ordination will be held at the Cathedral in Superior, WI at 4:00 pm on Sunday, June 3, 2012. We hope to have 2 or more bus loads of parishioners attending from our parish. Look for sign-up notices to be posted early next spring.

In addition, Patrick will celebrate 3 Masses of Thanksgiving the following weekend here at St. Francis Xavier. Those masses will take place at 4:00 pm on Saturday, June 9; and 8:00 am and 10:00 am on Sunday, June 10. We plan to have cake and coffee after the Saturday mass, donuts and coffee after the 8:00 am mass and a parish chicken dinner/pot luck after the 10:00 am mass. More information and requests for volunteers will be posted in the bulletin as the event draws nearer.

At this time, we are collecting donations to fund the Mass of Thanksgiving celebrations. Please send donations to Kris at the parish office, drop them in the drop box at the back of church, or put them in the collection baskets. Please label all donations "Patrick's Mass of Thanksgiving celebration". Checks should be made out to St. Francis Xavier parish.

Thank you for your support of our seminarian. We as a whole parish look forward to joining Patrick in celebrating this blessed and joyful sacrament!

-The Vocations Committee



*Christmas Flower Offerings have
been made in Honor of the
following loved ones....
Thank you for your generosity*



*Jane Bierman
Barbara Strasser
Adlord Talbot Family
Deceased members of the Rajek & Folta Families
Irving & Esther Hull
Ole Hanson
Isabel Hanson
Isabel Travis
Robert Wix
Albert & Cora Roszek
Peter Roszek
Josephine Lamond
Arleen Mattson
Jack VanOosterhout
Bill Caylor
Helen Germain
Stan Germain
Mike & Catherine VanDerGeest
Florence Schewe
Marwin Kanitz
Katherine & Harry Doering
Ellen Beyers
Bruce Bonkoski
Bob Mussell
Emerich & Russell Families
Deceased Family & Friends of Tom & Thelma Meyer
Wayne LaBorde
Mary V. VonRatz
Stephen Cupples
Joseph Proulx
Beatrice Proulx
Ray & Gloria's parents
Donald Lutzke
Charles Schatz
Gertrude Schotz
Marwin Carpentier
Catherine Rubbino
Frank & Katherina Steinfest
Eugene Steinfest*

*Norm & Edna Koch
Richard Koch
Clarence & Irene Kröll
Edgar & Leona Schield
Mitchell Freund
Chester Kamark Sr.
Deceased members of the Pfantz & Krueger Families
Edward & Frances Ott
Pat Storm & Mary Plamann
Wilbert & Viola Plautz
Deceased members of the Warren & Walenczyk
families
Irving & Esther Hull
Deceased family members of Joan & Louis Schroeder
Dorothy & Al Plier
Dianne Albinger
Deceased Family Members
Brannan Family
Brandl Family
Bert Hout
Linda Harris
Louis Bloechl
Robert Stimers
Frank B. Duginski
Ida Duginski
Walenczyk Family
Kommerding Family
David Lezotte
Anton & Elizabeth Carlson
Dorothy & Gerald Kretschmer
Geno & Florence Bosi
Herbert & Louise Neubauer
George & Marie Daul
Deceased members of Leo & Rosie Oknewski
Betty Rehwinkel
Leota Bradley
Grandparents and other relatives
Our parents and my brother*



FREE Catholic Extension Calendars!

2012 Catholic Extension Calendars are back, and thanks to Taylor-Stine Funeral Home and Waid Funeral Home they are free of charge. Pick up your 2012 calendar in the hall way on the way to the courtyard. Thank you to Taylor-Stine Funeral Home and Waid Funeral Home for their generous donations and support!

The Parish Office will have the following schedule during Christmas/New Year:

- Monday December 26th Closed
- Tuesday December 27th 8AM-4PM
- Wednesday December 28th 8AM-4PM
- Thursday December 29th 8AM-4PM
- Friday December 30th Closed
- Monday January 2nd Closed



The Solemnity of Christmas

God speaks in all manner of ways – ways as varied as the works of creation and the deeds of deliverance. God’s most powerful Word is “Jesus,” who pierces the darkness, illuminating the whole earth with his healing light. Some are unable to hear the message.



Others cannot accept the one who speaks of peace and justice. The Word of God is born in those whose ears are open.

God needs our voices, too. How beautiful are those who carry glad tidings of salvation to the oppressed! How healing are the words spoken to those who are held bound! How comforting are the arms that enfold those in pain! How wise are the ones who envision a future full of hope! Through our lips, all the ends of the earth will see the saving power of God.

Reflection: Am I faithful to the words of Jesus? What words of joy can I use to share the Good News of Jesus with others?

Prayer: Lord God, thank you for showing us your mercy by sending your Son to lead us to the Light. Amen.



Please pray for the sick, as well as those in hospitals and nursing homes. Call the parish office to register your loved one. We currently have no one on our list.

Parish Nurse Focus: Gifts of the Maji



We’ve all heard the story, “...And they fell down and worshipped him and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.” Gold seems like an obvious gift for a king, frankincense and myrrh? Both are gummy aromatic resins that come from trees.

In ancient times frankincense was more valuable than gold. It was used medicinally to treat many complaints including wounds, stomach ulcers, bleeding, and bronchitis. Its primary use was as an offering to gods. Since the tree was found in southern Arabia, a great route was created to ship the frankincense to Egypt, Greece, Persia, and Rome where it had great ritual value in consecrating their temples. It was called the “perfume of the gods”.

Myrrh was also considered a healing agent and was used for wound care, as a painkiller, to treat asthma, coughs, worms, and bad teeth. It’s most important use was in embalming and preparing the body for burial.

One writer concludes that gold signifies Jesus as true king, frankincense that he is true God, and myrrh that he is true man. May the gifts we present to Jesus on Christmas signify our love for him

Merry Christmas, Kathy Graham, RN

“It takes a great deal of courage to stand up to your enemies, but even more to stand up to your friends.” - J.K.Rowling

Notes from The Little Flower Chapel

Eucharistic Adoration



Jesus is the Reason for the Season! The reason that this is the season of gift giving is because Christmas is the day on which all creation was graced with **THE PERFECT GIFT**. Not able to be contained by the entire universe, Jesus contains Himself for love of us, two thousand years ago as a Babe in Bethlehem and today as the Bread of Life in the Eucharist. When we come to the Blessed Sacrament we come to Bethlehem, a name that means 'house of bread.' In the Living Bread come down from heaven the whole human race is offered the Gift of God received by a privileged few on that first Christmas Day.

Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament is truly our Emmanuel, a name that forever means 'God-with-us.'

The “Little Flower” Eucharistic Chapel is open 5 AM to 11 PM on Christmas Day. Currently, we have the following times open for a part-time or permanent adorer: Saturday at 2 PM and Sunday at 1 PM and 6 PM. Additional substitutes will be warmly welcomed. If one of these times fits into your schedule, please call Mary Jo at 536-2803 Ext 213.

