

PARISH PROFILE

St. Mary's is a large and dynamic parish. There are people here who have been in our parish family for decades, years, just a few months or even just a few hours. Join us for Mass, for refreshments after Mass and for other parish events. If you're already in our parish family, we invite you to get to know a few new people this year. If you've been away from the church, we invite you and welcome you "home" to our parish family.

NOT SO NEW

Karla Peiffer has been a parishioner for twenty-six years.

Why St. Mary's? We transferred from St. Patrick's Church to St. Mary's during Father Greiner's tenure. He was from our home parish and we wanted our son to prepare for First Communion with him.

Parish Activities: I have been a member of the Parish Council and Liturgy Commission for several years. I serve as secretary on the Parish Council and am involved in preparation of the church for the various liturgical services, including Easter and Christmas. I also volunteer as an usher and Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion at the 8:00 AM Mass and serve as the lead money counter for the Sunday and Holy Day collections.

Comments: Volunteering at St. Mary's has given me the opportunity to meet so many wonderful people and provided an avenue to serve my parish with the talent God has given to me.

REALLY NEW

Miriam Ard has been a parishioner since 2009.

Why St. Mary's? My fiancé and I had attended St. Mary's for Mass intermittently until about Christmas of 2008. After the new year we became engaged and decided that we loved St. Mary's, its priests and ministers, and the church community. Since we wanted to celebrate our wedding somewhere we enjoyed, we joined the parish officially. We have both gotten to know St. Mary's and really think of it as our own parish due in large part to the beautiful liturgies, the fantastic priests, and the wonderful guidance of Sr. Agnes.

Parish Activities: I was trained as both an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion and as a Lector prior to Christmas 2009 and have enjoyed participating more fully at St. Mary's in these two ministries.

Comments: As my fiancé and I grow in our lives together we are very thankful that we were guided to St. Mary's. Our marriage preparation with Sr. Agnes and our time spent in worship are things that we really value in our lives.

JUST PASSING THROUGH

Lavanya Vijayaraghvan was visiting at Christmas. **Why St. Mary's?** I had just finished my PhD thesis and was preparing to return home to India. I came to St. Mary's to attend the Christmas Mass with my friend Natalie and her sons before leaving. I'm not Catholic, but have had many discussions with Natalie and wanted to visit the church that is so important to her. I felt very welcome at St. Mary's. I was impressed with how the children were involved in the Mass on Christmas Eve. They made the Mass feel like a family gathering. I came back again for the Midnight Mass, where I felt a strong sense of worship and reverence. Midnight Mass was beautiful and the music was excellent!

THE CHRISM MASS

The Chrism Mass will be celebrated on March 22, at 5:00 PM, at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Davenport. During this Mass, Bishop Amos will bless the oil of catechumens, the oil of the sick, and the oil of chrism. These oils are blessed during the chrism Mass and then are distributed throughout the diocese for each parish to use in celebrating the sacraments. Since the bishop is the only minister in the diocese who may consecrate chrism, this Mass highlights his ministry and our union with him. He may not baptize and confirm everyone in the parishes of the diocese, but he will be symbolically present in the Chrism which the priests and deacons will use.

Here at St. Mary's we've recently seen 14 adults who were anointed with the oil of Chrism at their Confirmation on Christ the King Sunday and 17 infants anointed with the sacred Oil of Chrism when they were baptized. Many of us saw the new altars anointed with Chrism at the dedication of the new St. Patrick's and St. Thomas More churches in December. We have also seen many members of our parish receive the anointing of the sick in October. Our high school confirmation candidates will be anointed during their Confirmation on April 17th. Our Catechumens will be anointed when they are baptized and confirmed at the Easter Vigil.

Also at the Chrism Mass, all of the priests of our diocese come together with Bishop Amos to celebrate their ministry as diocesan priests. During the Mass, the priests renew their commitment of service to the bishop and to our diocese. We invite you to attend this Mass as an expression of appreciation for the invaluable service of the priests in our diocese.