

## January 2024 Update

Dear Friends,

Let me begin by praying for a **splendid New Year 2024** during which we might draw closer to God. Yes, we are stepping into the New Year of Grace not alone but with our Mother Mary who will lead us to Jesus as we celebrate the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God on the 1st day of the year. Because of her unique relationship with her Son Jesus Christ in the Incarnation and in Redemption, Mary is proposed to us as a model of perfect discipleship. Despite the many unknowns in her life, Mary looked to the future with peace and hope, knowing the One who called her is Trustworthy. As Kate Larson puts it: **“Contemplating the future can be scary. God has a plan for each of us, but God unfolds it little by little. None of us know the full picture or implications. Let us pray to have Mary’s trust, peace, and confidence as we contemplate the year ahead.”**

This year is very special to the Congregation of Holy Cross as we celebrate in gratitude the **150th Death Anniversary of Blessed Basil Moreau**, the founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross on **20 January**. **In 2018 on this same day we dedicated our beautiful sanctuary.** To mark both of these blessings, we will spend time in thanksgiving to God during **40 hours of Adoration beginning at 6 p.m. on Thursday, 18 January 2024**. This will **continue until 10 a.m. on Saturday, 20 January 2024**, when we will conclude **with a Holy Mass, followed by a luncheon.**

As we enter into the last year of the 3-year Eucharistic Revival, we will be hosting an **Exhibition** in the Holy Cross Hall beginning **14 January** about the **Eucharistic Miracles** that have occurred over the centuries. We will have **a blessing and inauguration of the exhibition** after the **11 a.m. Mass**. I pray that this time of grace will help increase our faith in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and enhance our participation in the Eucharistic celebrations.

This exhibition is the fruit of years of research by Blessed Carlos Acutis, a teenager from Italy who died from Leukemia shortly after completing this project. The individual exhibits are based on those he originally designed and created. **Blessed Carlo started cataloging these miracles when he was 11 years old.** At his request, his parents took him to all the places around the world where the miracles had occurred over the centuries. He catalogued over 136 Eucharistic Miracles that have been acknowledged by the Church as genuine, and he developed a website to

house a “virtual museum” of the miracles. The exhibits describing these miracles have traveled around the world, profoundly touching the hearts and faith of thousands. <https://sjescb.org/carlo-acutis>

Flourish Our Faith will host a 6-week long study program entitled: **“The Eucharist in Scripture,”** a study by Scott Hahn that examines the Biblical foundations of the Eucharist. It will begin on **Thursday, 11 January 2024**.

I am also happy to announce that we will make the **Children’s Mass Ministry** a recognized ministry in St. John’s. I am extremely grateful to Kathy Drake and Shamir Patel and their core team of volunteers who train the children for the 9 a.m. Mass. The children have been doing an astounding job. They are involved in greeting, lecturing, reading the prayers of the faithful, writing prayer intentions, collecting the offertory, and singing for the 9 a.m. Mass. We are so blessed not only by these children but also by their parents, whose commitment has been the backbone of the program. This ministry will be officially **inaugurated** on **21 January 2024**.

With the intention of enriching marriages among our married couples, we will be offering a **Marriage Enrichment retreat titled RE-FOCCUS** on **Saturday, 27 January 27th 2024** from **9 a.m. to 1 p.m.** Dr. Russell Frahm, the former Lutheran Pastor, will be the key presenter. He will help our married couples focus on the Five T’s of Marriage. All married couples are welcome. Thanks to Gregg and Janice Cheshire for coordinating this day of retreat. I encourage you to take time together as a couple for this Christ-centered, practical, and informal mini-retreat. Please come and reflect on your marriage journey, and commit even more to each other and together to God. A Continental breakfast and child care are provided. To reserve your spot, please contact Janice and Gregg Cheshire, FOCCUS and RE-FOCCUS coordinators, via text or phone: 321-213-1268.

You see, we will never have a dull day at St. John’s!

**On behalf of Fr. Vincent, the deacons, and the staff I wish you all very blessed New Year 2024!**

Let us now look at some important dates in the Month of January:

#### **JANUARY 2024 EVENTS AT SJE**

**Monday, 1 January – Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God.**

We begin each year with the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God, which invites us to imitate Mary, the most beloved and perfect disciple of the Lord, in her discipleship. We seek our Mother Mary's maternal protection for all of us and for our families.

- No 8:00 a.m. Morning Mass
- Masses to Celebrate the Mother of God will be held at:
  - **10:00 a.m.** in the Church
  - **4:00 p.m.** in **the Grotto** followed by **Rosary**.

Although this year Our Holy Mother's great Feast is not a Holy Day of Obligation, I strongly encourage you to come and pay Mother Mary the honor that is her due as the Mother of Our Lord and Mother of the Church, the one who preeminently brings us to Jesus.

**Wednesday, 3 January** – Rosary in the Grotto at **6 p.m.**

**Friday, 5 January** – First Friday of the month Mass at **8 a.m.** There will be a Holy Hour in the Church at **3:00 p.m.**

**Saturday, 6 January** – The Feast of Saint André Bessette is officially celebrated on 7 January; however, we celebrate it today because the 7<sup>th</sup> is a Sunday and a Special Solemnity.

- First Saturday Mass at **9:00 a.m.**
- **4:30 p.m. Vigil Mass for The Epiphany of The Lord.**

This is also **Outreach Weekend**, when we are invited to support all those parish Social Outreach programs I described in my weekly message from the 4th Sunday of Advent.

It is also the weekend when we are invited to support the **Diocesan Seminarian Program**.

**Sunday, 7 January** – **SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD.**

**\*\*Faith Formation Classes resume. SJE Kids** for children in grades K-5 will meet from **10:30 to 11:45 a.m.** in the classrooms. **The FIAT & Confirmation programs for high school students** (grades 9–12) will meet from **6:00 to 7:30 p.m.** in Holy Cross Hall. **\*\***

**Monday, 8 January** – **FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD.**

The Baptism of the Lord marks the end of the Christmas Season. **Congratulations to those who continued to honor and enjoy the spirit of Christmas by not putting away their Christmas decorations until today.**

**Tuesday, 9 January – Ordinary Time returns.**

Ordinary time will continue this year for just 5 weeks, until the 14 February, the day before Ash Wednesday. Then, we won't experience Ordinary Time again until after Eastertide.

**Wednesday, 10 January – Rosary in the Grotto at 6 p.m.**

**\*\*Anchored in Faith**, the Faith Formation Program for **those in grades 6-8, resumes** this day. We meet from **6:00 – 7:30 p.m.** in Holy Cross Hall. **\*\***

**Thursday, 11 January – Flourish Our Faith** resumes with a 6-week long study program entitled: "The Eucharist in Scripture," a study by Scott Hahn examining the Biblical foundations of the Eucharist.

**The weekend of 13/14 January – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time. The Eucharistic Miracles Exhibition** of Blessed Carlo Acutis will be blessed after the 11 a.m. Mass to mark the beginning of its display in our Parish Hall for parishioners and visitors alike to witness.

**Sunday, 14 January – Confirmation Parent Night of Reflection** begins at **6:00 p.m.** in the Fr. Patrick Peyton Room.

**Wednesday, 17 January – Rosary in the Grotto at 6 p.m.**

**Thursday, 18 January – 40 Hours of Adoration** to Honor the 150th Anniversary of the Death of **Blessed Basil Moreau** and the **Anniversary of the Dedication of our Church** begins today.

The 40 Hours of Adoration **STARTS** at **6:00 p.m.** on **Thursday, 18 January** and continues until **Saturday, 20 January.**

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins **Thursday, 18 January 2024.**

**Saturday, 20 January: Feast of Blessed Basil Moreau** and the **anniversary of the dedication of our church.** The 40 Hours of Adoration **ENDS** with **Mass** at **10:00 a.m.** **followed by a luncheon** in the Parish Hall beginning at **11:00 a.m.**

**Weekend of 20/21 January – 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time.**

**Wednesday, 24 January** – Rosary in the Grotto at **6 p.m.**

**Thursday, 25 January**– Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle.

**Friday, 26 January** – Join us in the evening for the **Kerygma Healing Service** at **6:00 p.m.** in the Church.

**Saturday, 27 January** – **RE-FOCCUS Marriage Enrichment Retreat** from **9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.** beginning in the Holy Cross Hall and ending in the Church with Adoration and a Penance Service.

**Weekend of 27/28 January** – 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time. In addition to our regular Mass schedule, there is a Tamil Mass at **1 p.m.**

Do not forget the **International Festival** to be held on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February starting with the 11 a.m. Mass.

Have a spectacular January 2024!

With love,

Fr. John