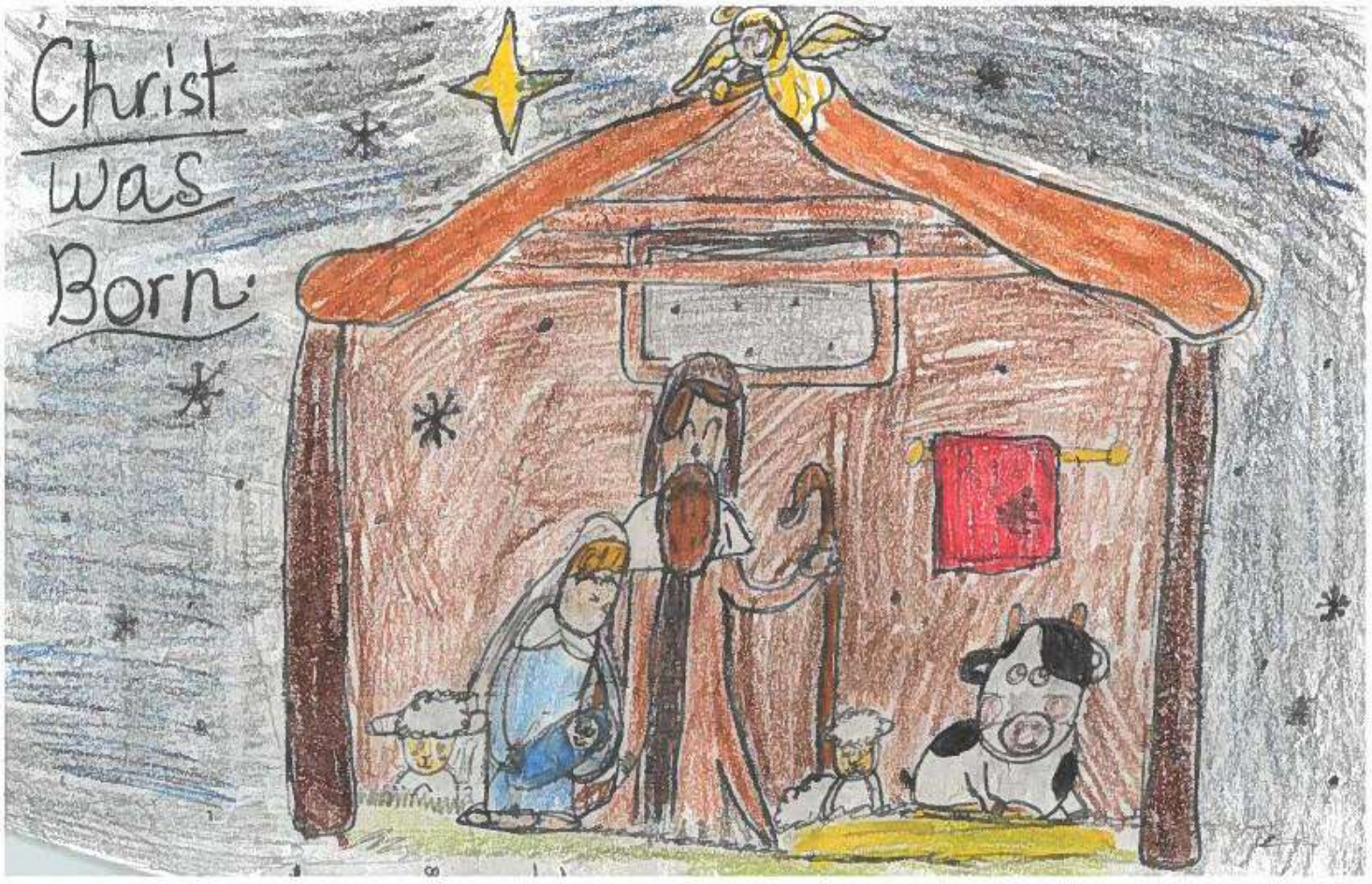
Saint Alphonsus

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

DECEMBER 25, 2022: THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD



Cover Art by Vivian T, 5th grader at Alphonsus Academy & Center for the Arts

"Do not be afraid;
for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy
that will be for all the people.
For today in the city of David
a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord." (Lk 2:10-11)

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Mass Schedule

Mon, Tue, Thur, Fri	8:30 AM
Wed	6:00 PM
Sunday	9 AM, 11 AM, 12:30 (Spanish) and 5 PM

Alphonsus Academy & Center For the Arts

Friday	8:30 AM or as announced

Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesday	6:30—7:30 PM

Confessions

Wednesday	6:30—7:30 PM
Saturday	11:00—11:30 AM

**Or call one of the priests for an appointment*

Novena to Our Mother of Perpetual Help

Wednesday:	5:50 PM

Worship

This Week's Readings

Sunday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 (2a)/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25
Night: Is 9:1-6/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14
Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20
Day: Is 52:7-10/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 [3])/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14
Monday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17/Mt 10:17-22
Tuesday: 1 Jn 1:1-4/Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12/Jn 20:1a, 2-8
Wednesday 1 Jn 1:5—2:2/Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7b-8/Mt 2:13-18
Thursday: 1 Jn 2:3-11/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6/Lk 2:22-35
Friday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5/Mt 2:13-15, 19-23
Saturday: 1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13/Jn 1:1-18
Next Sunday: Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 (2a)/Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21



Please Pray for the Sick

Dorothy Bonds
Jamie Wallett
Sandra Wilson
Monica Alexis Rios
Margaret Nichols
Maria Eisler
Tessa Sergent
Carolina Goldie
Diane Mareci
Fidel Mercado Chavez
Emilia Hurtado
Bernard Zapp
Rachel Schopp
Mike Madigan
David Birks
Celeste Soult
Carol Reckwerdt
Magdalena Gonzalez
Michael Aldape
Jane Christensen
Richard Meindl
William Ahearn
Janet Horvat
Frank G. Bauer
Al Corleone
Mary Perisin
Rita Longnecker
Cheryl Nester-Detweiler
Marla Alicea
Leon Wink
Judy Fredrickson
Tracy Duda
Jacob Duda

Giving Update

The bulletin went to press before the December 18 collection could be counted. The Jan. 1 bulletin will have the 12/18 & Christmas Offertory totals.

Please remember to help the poor. Donations to the poor box in the narthex go to our St. Vincent DePaul Society.

Joining St. Alphonsus Parish: St. Alphonsus welcomes all community members on their faith journey! Just moved in the area? Coming back to practicing our Catholic faith? You will want to learn about all the events going on at our parish. If you are not receiving our weekly parish newsletter in your email, contact Mario Serrano at mserranostals@gmail.com You can officially register to join the parish at www.stalphonsuschicago.org/visitors

Eucharistic Adoration: A Source for Peace: Sometimes our weeks can be quite hectic, making it hard to find quiet time to pray. If this sounds familiar, join us for Mass on Wednesdays at 6 PM., followed by Eucharistic Adoration from 6:30-7:30. This can be a great way to re-center yourself in God and experience the peace that only Christ can give.

Wednesday Evening Men's Vespers
All men in the parish are invited to pray with us every Wednesday evening from 8:00-9 PM in the sanctuary.



MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, December 25 (Christmas Day)
9:00 AM The People of St. Alphonsus
11:00 AM +Thomas Lynch
+Jose Espina Jr.
12:30 PM +Florentino Ornelas and Delfina Gutierrez

Monday, December 26
8:30 AM The People of St. Alphonsus

Tuesday, December 27
8:30 AM The People of St. Alphonsus

Wednesday, December 28
6:00 PM The People of St. Alphonsus

Thursday, December 29
8:30 AM The People of St. Alphonsus

Friday, December 30
8:30 AM The People of St. Alphonsus

Sunday, January 1 (New Year's Day)
9:00 AM +Gregory Duda
11:00 AM +Edward Marsalek Sr.
12:30 PM The People of St. Alphonsus
5:00 PM +Joseph Ruta

A Christmas Message From Fr. Bauer



There is so much to love about Christmas season. And we all have our favorites: cookies, cartoons, shopping, ornorations and decornaments, movics and musie... maybe it's listening to "Carol Of The Elves" or seeing what the "Bell On The Shelf" is up to.

There is also so much activity around Christmas, so much we do in preparation for it, the frenetic activity makes our head spin. Life then feels all upmix-switched. If that happens we can forget that the very word "holiday" is a contraction of the words Holy Day. As we celebrate the Nativity of our Lord, is there room for quiet reflection when we sing Silent Night?

I genuinely enjoy everything about our Advent preparations, and especially our Christmas celebrations. But like so many of us, the days leading up to the Holiest of Days is super busy, and making time for prayerful reflection takes concerted effort. However, I find the days after Christmas provide a wonderful opportunity to meditate on the spiritual beauty and transcendent joy that we have just experienced. In those days I am able to catch my breath -- I feel unencumbered as I imagine entering into the Cave of the Nativity, and listen to the Tiny Whispering Sound of the infant, the Author of Life, breathing so gently, sleeping in heavenly peace. It takes my breath away.

And it takes my stress away.

Even apart from the holidays, there are so many of us who have über-busy schedules. One of the gifts from celebrating the Holy Days of Christmas is a reminder that the one of the titles for Jesus is the Prince of Peace.

But if our ordinary lives are a regular whirlwind, experiencing a real sense of peace at Christmas is challenging, especially when the days leading up to it are jammed fuller than an overstuffed stocking. Which is why, for me, the days after Christmas provide not merely a temporary pause in activity, but a genuine spiritual renewal.

Through time spent visiting with Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds inside the Cave of the Nativity, I discover the secret of peace. It is a peace which echoes throughout the year because I can (and do!) revisit frequently. Each time I enter, I feel the warmth of the small campfire which melts coldness of a harsh world and illuminates the Cave. The Virgin Mary, smiling, places the newborn Prince of Peace in my arms. Swaddled in soft blankets, He yawns and snuggles up against my heart. And by doing so, a subtle, mystical inversion slowly unfolds: I grow in understanding that it is not I who hold Him, but that it is really He who is holding me.

In the Twelve Days between Christmas and the Epiphany, it is my hope and prayer for all of you that may God bless your mind and heart with a deep desire to enter the Cave and meditate on this mystery. May our Blessed Mother unmix or undo whatever is tangled in your life, that you can see how profound and beautiful it is that Christ is born to us. "And He shall be called Emmanuel, a name which means God is with us."

Rev. Steven Bauer
Pastor



Support St. Alphonsus This Christmas!

This Christmas season, we express our gratitude for the generous gifts received this time of year. We are continuously overjoyed at how our parish and school families come together to help each other. While you are planning your seasonal giving, show your gratitude for God's blessings in your life by making a special donation to our annual Christmas Collection. Your spirit of giving demonstrates a deep understanding of our mission, as we witness together, the miracle of incarnation.

A huge thank you to those that are already giving online. Please consider making St. Alphonsus an extension of your home and family when contributing.

www.givecentral.org/location/39/event/526

You can also text Joyful to (773) 570-7600

Christmas 2022

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

"The Word was made flesh, and he made his dwelling among us." These momentous words from the beginning of John's Gospel describe exactly what we celebrate at Christmas. Jesus, the eternal Son of God, has indeed come among us and become a part of our human family. He shared our joys and our sorrows. He came to know the full expanse of our human experiences, those that lift us up and those that cast us down. Through his death and resurrection, he has transformed our lives and our very world. The One born among us as Son of God and Son of Mary has given us a new birth in hope.

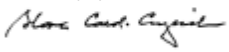
We know the challenges that marked his life from the very beginning. We recall how the Holy Family shared the plight of refugees, when they had to flee to Egypt to protect their newborn child from violence. These challenges find an echo in our world today. We see people flee the violence of war and oppression and crushing poverty. Their plight moves our heart to do whatever we can to alleviate their pain. Their story, framed within the story of the Holy Family, also reminds of the unfailing hand of God's providence that leads us and saves us. And that gives us joyful confidence.

Whatever the challenges we face as individuals and communities—from war, violence, disease, injustice, natural climate disasters—we do not lose hope. We know that the Word was made flesh and made his dwelling among us. He walks with us. He sustains us. He gives us a hope that will not disappoint.

Join me in prayer this Christmas season. Let us ask God to deepen our faith in the Incarnate Word. Let us ask God to renew our hope and lift us up when we are weary. Let us ask God to keep our hearts joyful in all circumstances, because we have come to know God's love for us.

God bless you and all your loved ones. As I celebrate the Eucharist in this Christmas season, know that I bring all of you to the altar with me.

Sincerely yours in Christ



Cardinal Blase J. Cupich

Evangelization Reflection

Recognizing God in Your Ordinary Moments— Being the Sign

I think the real challenge of evangelization in the modern age is the reality that pretty much everyone has already heard of Jesus Christ — or, at least, they think they have.

To our 21st-century eyes, the angel who shared news of the birth of Jesus with the shepherds had an easy job. All he had to do was announce it.

Our baptism compels us to do the same — to announce the coming of Christ over and over again, always and everywhere. But our audience is not a group of illiterate shepherds in ancient Judea. Our audience is a world that has heard so much about Jesus they often claim weariness of his name. So how do we do it? Continued on page 5

St. Alphonsus

Baptism

Choosing A Baptism Date - Most baptisms at St. Alphonsus are celebrated at 2:00 PM on Sundays. To request a date, please complete the Baptism Request form on our website (one form per child).

If your child is age 7 or older, please contact Erica Cook (ecook@stalphonsuschicago.church) for religious education classes.

Preparing For Baptism - First time parents are required to take our baptismal prep class. We hold this class once a month via Zoom, please rsvp in advance. Godparents are welcome to attend class at St. Alphonsus or at their local parish.

If you have already had a child baptized at St. Alphonsus, you need not attend the preparation session again, unless you would like to.

Godparent requirements - It is required to have at least one Catholic godparent who is confirmed and over the age of 16. Godparents are typically one male and one female. The maximum number of Godparents is two.

Contact **Kaitlin Holyk** for questions and inquiries.
weddings@stalphonsuschicago.church
773.525.0709

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day

Masses to celebrate the **Feast of Mary, the Holy Mother of God**

Saturday, December 31— No Vigil Mass

Sunday, January 1— Normal Mass Schedule

If you are traveling to be with family or friends over Christmas, join us on January 8, the Feast of the Epiphany. The Midnight Mass program will be repeated at the 9 and 11 AM Masses.





Reflection continued....

If we walk into a crowd of strangers and tell them we want to talk about Jesus, their reaction will probably be either "I already know about Jesus, thanks," or "I've heard of him, and based on the behavior of those who claim to follow him, I'm really not interested in hearing more."

Because in the end, our very lives are how we "announce his salvation" in the present day. We announce it in our actions to strangers. We announce it in our treatment of people who have wronged us. We announce it in our interactions with those who disagree with us.

How long had the coming of the Messiah been foretold to the Israelites? So long that, no doubt, many of them despaired of his coming altogether. So, God had to give them a sign: "You will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

Now we are the sign.

The world has heard of Christ by now. But have they all seen him? It's our job to show them.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

Faith Formation

Religious Education at St. Alphonsus



Our Religious Education program is a ministry to support children & families in deeper formation of our Catholic faith! We currently serve children in grades 1st - 8th. Two consecutive years of enrollment is required to participate in First Communion and Confirmation! Our program relies on the time & talents of volunteer parishioners to serve as catechists to our students. **We are currently looking for an additional 2nd grade catechist(s) to serve beginning in January 2023!** If you have any questions, please reach out to: ecook@stalphonsuschicago.church

Exploring the Diaconate



The Institute for Diaconal Studies (IDS) invites all men who feel the gentle nudge of the Holy Spirit to attend an Exploring the Diaconate session.
It is a time to pray, discuss, and learn more about the discernment process and the formation program that aspirants and candidates pursue. Please join us with your wives, if married, as we explore the potential of a vocation, engage in dialogue and pray in search of the next step. All are welcome to attend any of the sessions.

RSVP REQUIRED Contact Sr. Caroline Onuoha, DMMM at 847.837.4563 or conuoha@usml.edu

Exploring the Diaconate Sessions 7:30–8:30 PM

- Thursday, January 5, 2023 - Zoom
- Monday, February 6 - Zoom
- Tuesday, March 7 - Zoom
- Monday, April 24 - Our Lady of Ransom, Niles
- Tuesday, May 9 - Our Lady of Ransom, Niles

For more information contact Deacon Bob Puhala, bpuhala@usml.edu or (847) 837-4564 or visit usml.edu/ids. Application deadline for the 2023–2024 Aspirancy Path is July 15, 2023.

Are You Ready to Become Catholic?

Registration is open for The Rite of Catholic Initiation for Adults (R.C.I.A.) Each year we are blessed with several individuals who desire to enter and learn more about the Catholic faith. The RCIA program is the study of the Catholic Faith and the process of introduction into the faith community.

This class is offered for adults in three situations:

1. Un-baptized adults who desire to be baptized in the Catholic Church.
2. Baptized non-Catholic Christians who desire to be formally admitted into communion with the Catholic Church.
3. Baptized Catholics who have not yet been confirmed and desire to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Adult baptism (and if applicable, Confirmation and First Holy Communion) takes place at the Easter Vigil (Evening before Easter Sunday). It is one of the highest celebrations in the Catholic Church's liturgical year!

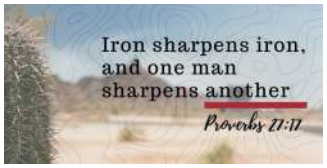
If you or someone you know is interested in taking the class, please contact our pastoral associate, Brooks Robinson at brobinson@stalphonsuschicago.church

Communio: A Men's Prayer Group

Men of the parish are invited to attend the Communio prayer group each Wednesday at 8 PM in the rectory chapel (come to the rectory side door at the southwest corner of the building at 7:55). It's a great way to take your spiritual life a step further as we enrich our knowledge of the faith, encourage each other in life's challenges, and grow in fortitude together. We chant the Liturgy of the Hours, share reflections on the upcoming Sunday gospel reading, followed by a social with refreshments, fellowship, and conversation.
All men of the parish are invited. For questions or more info, contact James Morrow, jemseoul@hotmail.com

St. Alphonsus Men's Group

Thursday Evenings

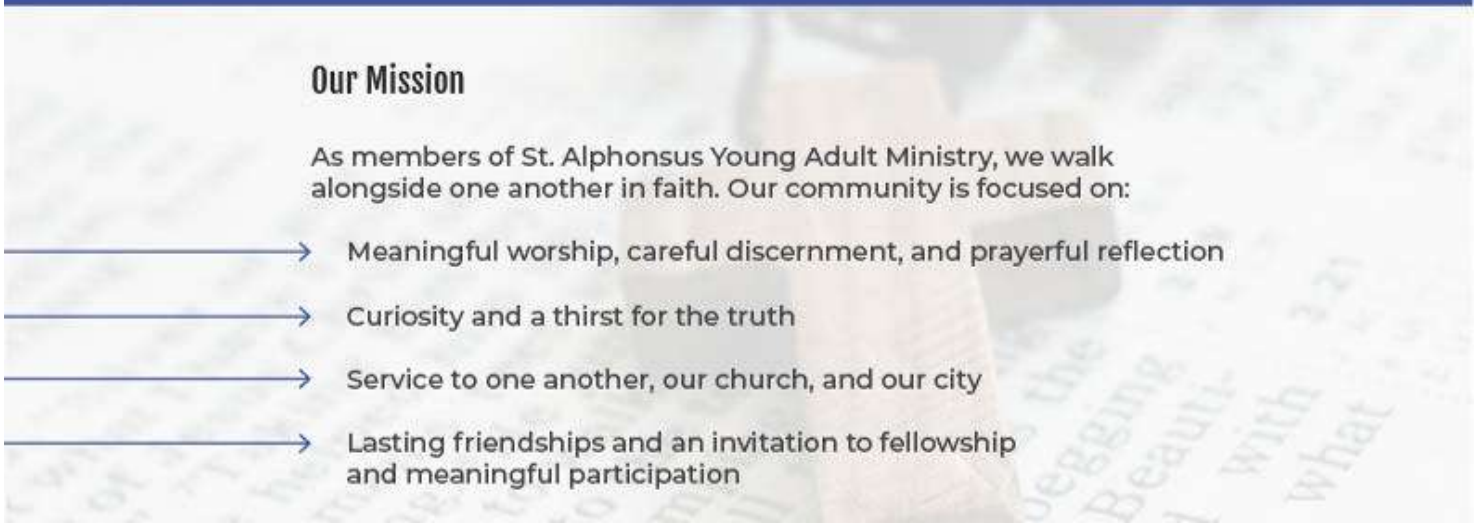


St. Alphonsus Men's group meets Thursday nights to pray the liturgy of the hours, have fellowship, and to propose challenging topics to discuss.

When great conversations happen, synergy that creates connections and helps values be shared develops. *Proverbs 27:17* describes this as two iron tools being sharpened and made more effective. The same applies with friends coming into contact, sharpening and encouraging each other to greater service.

We meet every Thursday night at 7 PM in the rectory. Food and drinks provided. All men are welcome, with most men being in their 20s and 30s. Access can be gained at the west facing rectory door in the parking lot. For questions or more information, contact Matt Duff at mduff527@gmail.com.

Young Adult Ministry (YAM)



The Young Adult Ministry (YAM) is one of St. Alphonsus' most active parish groups! YAM is led by a volunteer board and is guided by Pastoral Associate, Brooks Robinson. Stated simply, the ministry's mission is to help one another participate in Christ's mission, that we, as young adult Catholics, may be effective disciples, evangelists, and agents of charity in all that we do. YAM provides many social, intellectual, service, and spiritual opportunities for growth.

Visit the St. Alphonsus YAM Facebook page, *www.facebook.com/AlphonsusYoungAdult*
or contact the YAM board at *stalphonsusyam@gmail.com*

Catholicism, Ourselves, and Others: A Faith-Based Perspective on Mental Health



On Saturday, January 21, our St. Alphonsus YAM will be hosting Julia Hogan for a January day retreat. Julia is a licensed therapist, author, and speaker (www.juliamariehogan.com). She will be discussing mental health, our faith lives, and living a healthy and balanced life.

Julia has spoken at the SEEK retreat, Notre Dame, Deloitte, and many other places and we are excited to have her! The day will be filled with talks, small group discussions, adoration, music, and more!
Sign up online at www.givecentral.org/location/39/event/36002
The early bird price will be $50 until Jan 4th and $60 after. Walk ins are welcome!

Volunteer w/ Mission OLA!

Please support the good works of Mission of Our Lady of the Angels by volunteering with a big Confirmation Retreat on Saturday, February 11. They need small group leaders as well as help with registration, serving food, etc. You can sign up via a Google Doc link on our YAM Facebook page.

Retreat Name: I am the Bread of Life
Theme: The Eucharist is Jesus- why should I care and why does he care about me?
Main topics: Jesus, the Eucharist, mercy/reconciliation, the true desires of your heart

Save the Date— 3v3 Basketball



Our parish Young Adult Ministry will hosting its annual 3-on-3 basketball tournament at our AACA/St. Alphonsus gym on **Saturday March 11.** More details and registration to come in February!

St. Alphonsus Weddings

Visit us at https://www.stalphonsuschicago.org/marriage

Start by filling out the date request form on our website or request a tour of the church. Our coordinator will walk you through the steps to getting married in our beautiful church.

Package Details - The cost of the package is **$1,650** and includes:

- **Wedding Coordinator to assist with ceremony planning, rehearsal, and day-of coordination**
- **Catholic Couple Checkup pre-marriage inventory**
- **Altar Servers**
- **Music: Organist + Cantor**

Excluded from the cost of the package is Pre Cana, additional musicians/instruments, and gratuity if you so desire.

Getting Married Out of Town?
Other churches may require you to complete your file at your home Parish. We can help with that!

We will help you gather the necessary items needed to be married in the Catholic Church then we make sure it is sent through the Archdiocese 2 months before your wedding date.

Contact **Kaitlin Holyk** for questions and inquiries.
weddings@stalphonsuschicago.church 773.525.0709

Time, Talent, Treasure

To carry out our mission that God has graciously invited us to participate in, we must be stewards of the temporal goods. By giving up our time, talent, and treasure, we are able to respond to the call of our why in our "whats" and "hows." This means, we baptize, we see others face-to-face, we draw in, we invite in, we create spaces of deep hospitality that we are able to accompany others as they seek to discover how God has been already present to them. In other words, as Henri J.M. Nouwen reminds us in, *A Spirituality of Fundraising*, stewardship, fundraising, and generosity are all concrete ways we help the Kingdom of God come about. We invite you to join us in responding to the vocational call of our shared baptism. Please go to https://tinyurl.com/stalphonsusttt and consider the ways in which you may be generous with your time, talent, and treasure for the sake of the Kingdom of God and the mission with St. Alphonsus.



Walking With Purpose

Women's Group at St. Alphonsus— Tuesday mornings and evenings 9:30-11 AM or 6:30-8 PM



Come as you are. You are welcome here. Make authentic connections with other women! Refuel and Refresh! Learn more about God!

We live in a self-centered culture that all too often leaves us feeling empty and dissatisfied. A fuller view of God and His glory is the perfect antidote—find this during our journey through the **Beholding Your King** Bible study.

We'll study King David, select psalms, the temple, and many Old Testament prophets and see the ways in which they all point to the coming King of Kings, Jesus Christ. This Nine-Lesson Bible study is the second part of a two-part series and is ideally completed after *Beholding His Glory*.

** **Walking With Purpose is taking a break for winter. The new Beholding Your King bible studies will start up again on Tuesday February 7** Questions? Contact Susan Combes at suecombes@hotmail.com

Save the Dates!



May the Fourth at ACTC



This past year, our parish brought the original Star Wars to the big screen next door at the Athenaeum Center for Thought and Culture. Plans are in the works to continue this event in 2023 with a screening of Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back (1980)!

May the Fourth (invoking every fan's favorite pun) combines our pastor's unabashed affinity for the cultural phenomenon and fun activities for both kids and adults including a screening of a select Star Wars movie, trivia contest, and more! If you would like to help out and volunteer for this fun event, please contact Kaitlin Holyk at weddings@stalphonsuschicago.church

2023 St. Alphonsus annual Oktoberfest!

September 22, 23, and 24

The St. Alphonsus Oktoberfest is held annually on the last full weekend in September. It is the primary fundraiser for the parish, but mostly it is a great deal of fun! We celebrate the parish's German heritage with beer, homemade brats, and a variety of bands which appeal to a range of musical tastes. There is also a Kinderfest with games, crafts and entertainment for children, Craft Beer Nights Fri and Sat in the Festival Hall, a jumbotron for the Sunday games, and other surprises! Be sure to keep tabs on stalsoktoberfest.org for more info closer to the event.

Gospel Meditation



As we age, time seems to pass more quickly. Years seemingly fly by as one holiday flows into the next, January quickly becomes December and life maintains its hectic pace. What do we accomplish in all of that busyness? Perhaps technology is responsible for some of the frenzy, keeping us isolated in our social media worlds, communicating through texts rather than in person, and always connected to world events. We're over stimulated in many ways by information, noise, opinions, and ideologies. Yet, we still find the time to decorate our homes, purchase gifts, and plan Christmas gatherings. We know, however, that the true meaning of Christmas is not found in twinkling lights, beautifully adorned trees, perfectly set tables or exchanged gifts. We are being called to something deeper and more authentic.

Christmas reminds us to look for God along the way of our lives and not get distracted by the illusions around us. Our world's complexity can leave us feeling displaced, desperate, alone, neglected, and unimportant. Joseph and Mary felt that way too. In the midst of all that captures and intrigues us in our self-created virtual worlds, is this longing for the anchor of faith to keep us grounded and make sense of it all. Only faith can give us the perspective to see what truly matters in life. We discover our divinely blessed humanity. The uncertain and challenging journey to Bethlehem gives way to the tender moments of birth and its embrace. Christmas softens us and slows us down a bit. It shows us Jesus as the light who enlightens everyone. It shows us the truth.

The faith that comes from Christmas calms our fears and allows us to go into the nighttime of our lives courageously. We are never lost or alone. We need to stop and savor more of life's moments before they slip away in time. God is with us, loving us, and leading us where we need to be. God is born again and again in every soul willing to give birth to His presence. God connects us and provides us with a place where we feel safe and welcome: home. Merry Christmas!

Alphonsus Academy

Alphonsus Academy & Center for the Arts is our parish school. AACA was one of a select few to win the prestigious Blue Ribbon award in 2019 and is consistently rated one of the best Catholic Pre-K-8th schools in the city.

AACA provides a rigorous education combining academic excellence, an arts-integrated curriculum, and a strong Catholic foundation. Our unique approach ensures the development of the whole child in a community that believes that who our children become is just as important as what our children achieve.
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE DEFINED

In alignment with our Catholic beliefs and values, and our mission to educate the whole child, we define academic excellence as:

- Cultivating a climate of continuous improvement
- Teaching to clear learning goals for every student
- Building curriculum that is rooted in rigorous standards
- Developing social and emotional skills necessary for academic growth
- Challenging all learners to move forward on their own learning continuum.

For more information, visit our AACA website at https://www.alphonsusacademy.org/
or contact director of admissions and marketing, Mary Bodlak at mbodlak@aaca.school

At the Athenaeum

For over 100 years, the Athenaeum Theatre has stood as a cornerstone in the Lakeview neighborhood. It is Chicago's oldest continuously operating Off-Loop theatre. Management continues to bring in wide and varied lineups of talent in the performing arts ranging from stage actors, dancers, musicians, comedians, and podcast/ YouTube sensations. At The Athenaeum Center for Thought and Culture, we believe that beauty has the capacity to build up culture, transform society, and change lives. We hope to help you contemplate, encounter, and delight in beauty. **Check out all upcoming shows at the Athenaeum Center for Thought and Culture, visit athenaeumcenter.org/events/**

Safe Families For Children

As we prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus and reflect on the past year, much gratitude is in order. Thank you to our parish leadership team, parish staff, Young Adult Ministry, Knights of Columbus council 18185, 7/8th grade confirmation students, and countless parish families for making this ministry possible!

Since we began last June, our ministry has supported several local "host families" (volunteer families who host children) and "placing parents" (families facing crisis situations who reach out for support) by fostering relationships and providing material support. Safe Families works by building genuine relationships with these families, creating a robust support system that both helps during the current crisis and extends into the future.

As a symbol of our progress, check out the Safe Families Supply Closet in Festival Hall!

Thank you to everyone who has played a part in this incredible growth! Praise be to God for working through us to serve some of the most vulnerable in our community!

Want to learn more? Visit safe-families.org and reach out to safefamiliesstals@gmail.com



June 2022
Empty (but clean!) supply closet



December 2022
Fully-stocked, & actively serving our neighbors!

More News and Events

St. Alphonsus Adults 40 and Up



Do you feel you're missing a sense of community when attending mass? Would you like to meet those in the pews around you? Are you looking to form friendships with people of the same faith that are in your own parish?

You're invited to a Sunday Brunch after the 11 AM Mass on January 29, 2023 to do just this.
Come meet other adult parishioners and share a meal, coffee, bloody mary's and mimosas with this newly formed Adult Group....
For more information or to help with this event, please contact Amy Keefner, amykeefner@gmail.com

Eucharistic Ministers of Holy Communion



Our parish is in need of faithful Eucharistic Ministers of Holy Communion. EMHC's should be fully initiated and practicing Catholics having received baptism, confirmation, and first Eucharist. If you would like to volunteer for this important ministry at Mass, please contact Harvey Levin, harveylevin@rcn.com

Knights of Columbus News

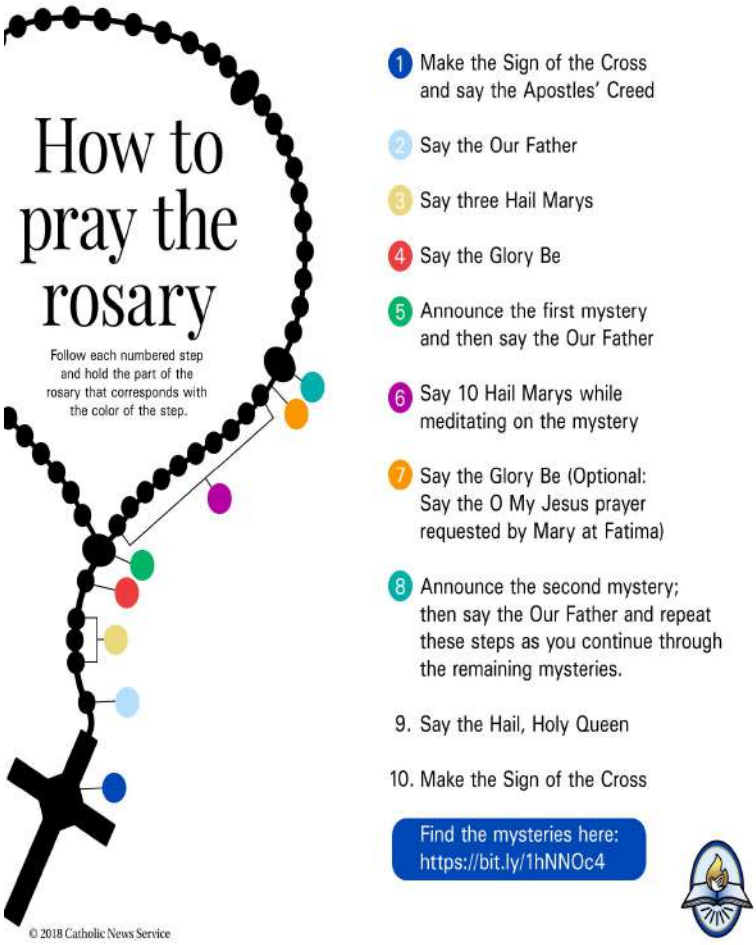
JAN 8, 2023, St. Alphonsus Parish BLOOD DRIVE -Reserve your donation time, bit.ly/JAN8StAlphonsus
Spread the word. Donations are needed.
*Donors who donate at our blood drive, Dec. 26 – Jan. 20, will be entered to win a Big Trip to the Big Game through an exclusive Roadtrips package! *

FEB 24-25, 2023 - St. Alphonsus Parish Men's OVER-NIGHT RETREAT led by Fr. Patrick Gorman at Joseph & Mary Retreat House, University St. Mary of the Lake Seminary, Mundelein, IL; retreat will begin about 8PM FRI evening and finish mid-afternoon on SAT, permitting return back home by SAT evening; will include Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, Confession, talk(s), rest, leisure time to walk around the lake. Fee of $128 includes dinner (available for late arrivals), one night's stay in individual room, breakfast & lunch. Please sign up at tinyurl.com/FEB-24-MENS-RETREAT
Open to Men's Club, Parishioners, YAM, AACA Dads & Friends-all men are welcome! Sponsored by Parish Knights

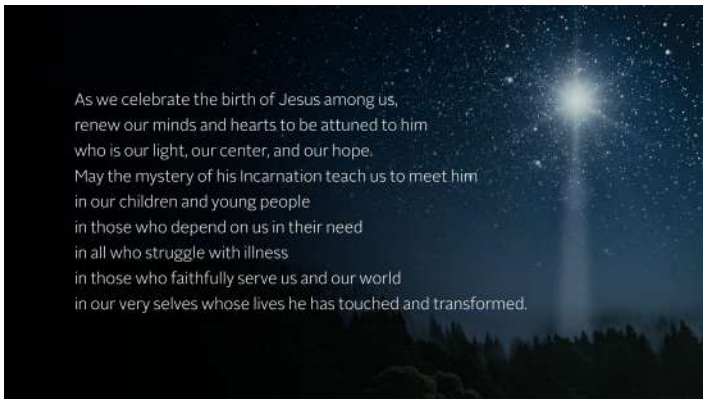
Helpful Household Hints by Harvey Levin

Why Lukewarm Coffee Tastes So Bad
Let's get the bad news out of the way first: Coffee that has gone lukewarm or cold is never going to be as good as it was straight out of the pot.
In fact, the moment coffee is brewed, its flavor begins to slowly degrade.
As your coffee sits, many chemical transformations take place that alter the flavor. For example, the compound furfuryl thiol, a primary component of that fresh, roasty aroma you smell when you walk into a good coffee shop, begins to conjugate: It sticks to other compounds in the brewed coffee, forming larger molecules that don't have an aroma.
At the same time, the coffee's mild-tasting chlorogenic acid lactones break down into chlorogenic acid, which lends the brew an unpleasant acidic taste.
These transformations can't be reversed, and they also can't be prevented by keeping your coffee insulated (coffee's flavor degrades because of time, not because of temperature loss). So, if you've let your coffee go cold, the rest of your cup won't taste the same as the part you drank when it was hot.
Does Microwaving Make Lukewarm Coffee Even Worse?
That being said, it seems a shame to toss a half-full mug of coffee. So how bad is it, really, to reheat your mug in the microwave?
The truth is that a gentle warm-up in the microwave, just to a standard drinking temp of 140°F, actually won't do anything to further compromise your coffee's flavor—the damage is already done. In other words, nuking your coffee doesn't have a negative impact on the way it will taste. (Be sure that your coffee doesn't get hotter than 140°F, though, or you'll start to evaporate flavor.)
The warmer temperature makes the flavor loss more obvious than it is in cold coffee, but if hotness is your main goal, go ahead and pop it in the microwave—it won't taste quite as smooth and robust as it did at first sip, but sometimes the quick caffeine jolt is worth sacrificing some flavor.
Another option if you're trying to salvage your cup? Pour your cold coffee over ice. Make coffee ice cubes for the ice coffee so the ice coffee will not be diluted and taste like brown water. Cold beverages are less aromatic than hot beverages, so the loss of flavor is not as apparent when the coffee is chilled.

Live the Liturgy— Inspiration



The true meaning of Christmas is not found in the twinkling lights, the beautifully adorned trees, or the exchanged gifts. It is revealed when we find God along the way of our lives, especially when we feel displaced, desperate, and alone. Fleeing from their home, Joseph and Mary cautiously made their way through the uncertain, complex, and dark paths to a longed-for place of safety and welcome. Not sure where to lay their heads, they created makeshift preparations for the birth of their child, the Son of God. God, who always was, is, and will be, without beginning or end is the one constant in life who sees us through difficult and scary times. Jesus is the light, which enlightens everyone, and comes into the world to show us the truth. It is joyful good news that calms our fears and allows us to go forth into the nighttime of our lives, courageously. This is the meaning of Christmas. We are never lost or alone. God is with us, loving us and leading us where we need to be.



Knights of Columbus



The Knights of Columbus are the world's largest Catholic fraternal service organization. Founded in the United States in 1882 by Father Michael J. McGivney, there are more than 1.8 million members in over 15,000 councils across the globe. Dedicated to the principles of Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism, the Knights of Columbus organize and participate in numerous charitable activities each year that are designed to benefit their parish communities, to help their brother Knights grow deeper in their faith as Catholic men, and to serve the needy and less fortunate in the world.

Our St Alphonsus Council of the Knights of Columbus is part of a collection of nearly 500 KofC councils in the State of Illinois, and over 75 councils in the Chicago Archdiocese. For more information on our order and their activities worldwide, please visit: *www.kofc.org*

Our council is named after the parish's namesake, St. Alphonsus. We were formed in October 2010, and spearheaded by then Pastor, Fr. James Hurlbert. The St. Alphonsus Council has a strong group of motivated Knights from all ages and walks of life, with our numbers now 100 strong and growing. Our council's main goals are: to rally the Catholic men in our community to a common and noble cause, to assist and defend our church, to serve our community, to encourage growth in faith and prayer in ourselves and in our friends and families, to become better men and fathers, and finally to meet like-minded men that share our same values and belief that you can be a man of the world while still having Christ at the center of your life.

We are always looking for new members, and would welcome the practicing Catholic men of the parish and surrounding community to join our ranks. There is usually a social following our meetings, which is open to all prospective members. To find out more information about the Knights of Columbus at St. Alphonsus, or to apply for membership, feel free to contact parishioner**, Carlos Medina** at cmedina15158@gmail.com or visit *www.stalphonsusknights.com*

Around the Archdiocese



Catholic Charities D'Vine Wine Tasting Fundraiser

Get tickets to one of the largest consumer wine tastings in Chicago-and help families facing homelessness. The annual D'Vine Affair is Sunday February 5 from 2-6 PM. Learn more and get tickets at www.catholiccharities.net/events/dvine-affair/



Exodus 90

Fraternity is an essential pillar of Exodus 90. The first day of this transformational program is January 9, 2023, and it ends April 8th. You can't go it alone, though, and you wouldn't want to. Start here to find other motivated men to outfit your band of brothers -- brothers that promise to help make you a better man and grow closer to God.

Join for a Chicagoland-wide "Find Your Fraternity" event at St. Mary of the Angels, Museum Room (1850 N. Hermitage Ave., Chicago, IL 60622) on **Tuesday, December 27th** from 7:00 - 8:30 PM. Learn more and RSVP at https://forms.gle/uidUgoZobPha1wCZ7



First Friday Club

For more info and tickets, visit **www.firstfridayclubchicago.org/events**

Heralded by her peers as a "natural change agent," Sally Blount has made her mark not only in the corporate world but in the field of academia—she served as dean at Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management for eight years. Her ability to pivot, helping organizations do more and better, has also served as a catalyst for her own faith journey, leading her to take on a new role as Executive Director and CEO of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago in 2020.

On January 6th, she will discuss the challenges that lie ahead for Catholic Charities in 2023.



Science, Science Fiction, and God

A Winter Conference for High School Students

January 21st
10am - 3:30pm
University of St. Mary of the Lake

- Join with hundreds of other teens from Chicagoland to explore Science, Art, and Faith
- Particiapte in "lightning round" talks that examine questions like:
  - If we discover aliens, should we baptize them?
  - Is Merlin a Scientist and is Luke Skywalker a Saint?
- Engage directly with speakers during "Office Hours"
- Learn the science behind prayer and enter into Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

More Information and Registration at:
newmanforum.org/conferences



The Lumen Christi Institute
for Catholic Thought

Cosponsored by the University of St. Mary of the lake, Mundelein; the Archdiocese of Chicago Vocations Office; the McGrath Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame; and the Society of Catholic Scientists

Contact

Sacramental Information

Contact our parish office (773) 525-0709 for information regarding celebrating sacraments including Baptisms (infant and adult), Reconciliation (confession), Eucharist (Communion), Confirmation, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick. For information regarding Funerals, please first contact the funeral director of your choice to begin making arrangements.

How to Offer a Mass Intention

Did you ever notice that every Mass said here at St. Alphonsus is offered for a special intention? The entire congregation prays for that intention during the petitions (Prayers of the Faithful) when we say, "For those who have died, and for the intention of this Mass: (named intention)"

You can make a Mass Intention request here. Masses are often offered for family, friends and relatives that have died. Praying for the dead is a Spiritual Work of Mercy. Offering a Mass for someone that has died is an especially comforting gesture to the family. Mass can also be offered to commemorate joyful occasions and to give thanks to God for blessings received.

The customary offering for a Mass here is $15. However, any amount that you would like to offer is completely acceptable. You can request Masses by visiting the Parish Office during office hours or calling the Parish Office at (773) 525-0709.

You can ***register in the parish*** by coming to the rectory office or going online at *www.stalphonsuschicago.org*. The advantage to registering is that we know who you are and can better plan our programs by knowing whom we serve.

Want *to find out what is happening in the young adult community?* Join the St. Al's Young Adult Listserv. We send out monthly emails to let people know about our upcoming events. To register for the listserv, contact *stalphonsusyam@gmail.com*

The ***Knights of Columbus*** are the world's largest Catholic fraternal service organization. For more information, visit *www.stalphonsusknights.com*

Our parish has received permission to once again host important sacraments. Please be patient as the pandemic created a scheduling backlog regarding Baptisms and Weddings. You can find more info at:

www.stalphonsuschicago.org/baptism

www.stalphonsuschicago.org/marriage

St. Alphonsus Social Media

Choose to participate in meaningful engagement! Having an attitude of engagement challenges us to love our digital neighbor as ourselves. You can find St. Alphonsus' Facebook and Twitter by going to the parish website and clicking the icons at the footer of the page.

Directory

Parish Office

1429 W Wellington Ave, Chicago, IL 60657-4121
(P): 773-525-0709 | (F): 773-525-3238
www.stalphonsuschicago.org
parish@stalphonsuschicago.church

Parish Office Hours:

9:00 AM— 5:00 PM Mon, Wed, Fri
9:00 AM— 7:30 PM Tue, Thurs

School Office

1439 W Wellington Ave, Chicago, IL 60657-4121
(P): 773-892-1397 | (F): 773-348-4829
www.alphonsusacademy.org

School Office Hours:

8:00 AM– 3:00 PM

Staff

Parish Staff

Rev. Steven Bauer, Pastor
Rev. Patrick Gorman, Associate Pastor
Brooks Robinson, Pastoral Associate
Brian Bloye, Director of Music and Organist
Erica Cook, Coordinator of Religious Education
Daniel Szymanski, Director of Operations
Mario Serrano, Parish Office Manager
Kaitlin Holyk, Sacrament Ministry Coordinator

School Staff

Gerit McAllister, Principal
Angela Kladis, Assistant Principal
Mary Bodlak, Director of Admissions
Caroline Jordan, Advancement Director
Kim Wallett, Secretary
Connie Del Toral, Administrative Assistant