



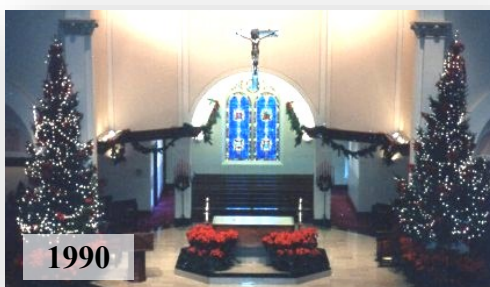
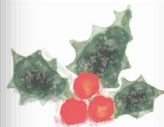
## FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE

We come together on the Fourth Sunday of Advent to pray our way into the festivities and celebrations of our Savior's birth. If you are traveling, I pray that your travels are safe, free from illness, and filled with the "Joy of Jesus" this Christmas season. If you are not traveling, I pray that you are able to join together in prayer with the guests, family members, parishioners, and friends that will grace the doors of the Church of St. Mary as we worship our newborn King and Lord. As Catholics we celebrate the season of Christmas. It is not possible to fill one single day with all of the feasts and celebrations that take a season to pray and to meditate upon each and every year.

Parishioners of St. Mary are very generous, not only to St. Mary's, but also to many other worthy causes, during the Christmas season as well as all year long. The financial support offered throughout the year, by your Christmas offering and an end of year gift to the Church of St. Mary are very much appreciated. God continues to bless the community of St. Mary's. We have welcomed 116 new families to our parish in 2022. We have said goodbye to parishioners who have moved closer to loved ones out of state.

The first church for St. Mary's, a wooden structure, was built in 1875. It withstood the weather and elements for 35 years and then had to be torn down. The second church was built in 1910, renovated in 1970 and expanded and enlarged in 1987. Over recent years, adjustments and improvements were made recognizable to the visible eye in the church and to things not as clearly seen such as the roofs, boilers, mechanicals etc. With the generosity of parishioners, we will continue to maintain and improve our church for current and future generations of worshippers.

For the past fifty years, as people of faith have come to welcome Jesus born in a manger as our Savior, celebrating the joy of Christmas, the interior of the church and sometimes the gym have been artistically, creatively, and wonderfully prepared by Lake Forest Flowers. Heartfelt thanks go out to John Looby and Eileen Looby Weber for their generous support to the Church of St. Mary. Below are pictures of some of the decorations that have enhanced our Christmas celebrations. Join me in praying that God may bless the Looby family for their commitment and dedication to the parish. We will all be blessed by the beauty of the creèche and altar decorations at Christmas because of the kindness, generosity and talent that the Loobys share with the parish at Christmas this year. You are invited to appreciate some of the altar arrangements that have been created over the years at our parish in the following photographs.



Please plan to worship with us over the Christmas season.

May God bless us with hope filled hearts this Advent!

*Fr. Mike Nacini*