

Upcoming Holy Day Masses:

Christmas

Monday, December 24th

4:00 pm *

Tuesday, December 25th

12:00 Midnight**

7:00 am

10:00 am

5:00 pm

*blessing of Nativity Scene at 3:45 pm

**Caroling begins at 11:30 pm

Extra Confession Times:

Monday, December 24th: 9:00 am to 12 Noon

Tuesday, December 25th: 4:00 pm to 4:45 pm

Always loved Midnight Mass but just can't handle that late hour anymore?

If you miss the glow of the Christmas lights and the candles, and how they pierced the darkness of night, give consideration to attending our Mass at Dawn. At 7 am, the stars are still shining in the sky; by the time Mass lets out, morning will have dawned. If you like a peaceful beginning to your Christmas, this Mass is worth setting your alarm for.

If you miss the choir, the solemn liturgy, and the grand processions that took place at Midnight, think about joining us for our High Mass at 10 am on Christmas morning. What a perfect way to experience what the day is really supposed to be about! We have a special choir assembled, special processions planned—and a full house would make the experience complete.

And of course, we will also have a High Mass at Midnight; still worth staying up for. There is nothing like it to take us back to that moment in time when most of the world slumbered—while a privileged few witnessed the great outpouring of God's grace. Music will be led by our adult choir, with carols and candlelight ushering in the joyous celebration at the stroke of 12.

No matter when you are able or inclined to attend, we hope that we get to share this celebration with you this year. Merry Christmas to one and all.

--Fr. Dietrich, Fr. Finn, Fr. Heaslip, Fr. Cooney

Mary, Mother of God

Monday, December 31st

4:00 pm

Tuesday, January 1st

8:00 am

12:10 pm

7:00 pm

To Saint Mary's Parishioners, Friends, and Benefactors:

Recently, a comment was posted on our Facebook page (full disclosure: I, myself, do not "do Facebook") expressing concern about the recent sale of property to the City of Lincoln, for what seemed to be an awfully small amount. I am sharing with the parish my email response to the gentleman who called into question this sale of land, as I know some people from the parish had seen it and were commenting on it as well:

Hello Ian. My secretary directed me to your Facebook comment; I wanted to give you an explanation.

First of all, I'm no real estate mogul or city "mover and shaker." I was relying on the expertise and advice of a group of people, assembled by the Diocese, to help guide me to the best decision possible. I was never actually told what the official appraisal of the property was; because of the nature of the lease, I have never been privy to that, as I am to our property here on K Street. I assume that the County Assessor's office values the property (as they do our property here on K Street) based not only on the land, but also on all the buildings on the property. Saint Mary's was leasing only the land; whatever was on the land was left to the discretion of the lessee.

Many in the parish have long wanted to get out of the lease agreement, since it provided very little to us financially, as it was drawn up in 1949. This past spring, the city expressed interest in purchasing part of the land. The biggest point of contention was the parking garage, which I'm sure is a large part of the higher valuation. While it may be valued as an improvement on the land, at this point it was becoming more of a liability: buildings are expensive to tear down, and heaven forbid you come across any asbestos or other environmental "issues" in the process. The land adjacent to the property had just been sold at about \$24 per square foot. I would have thought it would go for more, but it didn't. The city agreed to a slightly higher price per square foot, modified by the anticipated expenses of their tearing down the current garage eventually. Our choice was to accept the sale of the land or basically derail the city's plans, and still own the property when the lease reverts back to us in 2049, at which point we would have to do something with the garage, and that something would probably be pretty expensive. It is doubtful that any substantial improvements would be made on the property at this point, with the land and whatever is on it reverting back to us in thirty years. Selling it in 2049 with a crumbling garage would not have netted us much either—no doubt that the garage would have to come down first by that point. We determined that it was in the best interests of the parish to accept the city's offer and not risk having a property in 30 years that would be difficult to sell without substantial, and costly, improvements first.

If I entered into a bad deal for the parish, it was with the advice and consent of both our Parish Council and of people on the diocesan level who I believe have the expertise and who would not have consented to a "bad deal." I know that the valuation numbers make the deal look bad, but those numbers don't tell the story behind the long-term condition and disposition of the property.

--Fr. Dietrich

Missed a few weeks of tithing because of illness or travel? Or, perhaps just been particularly blessed financially this year and would like to offer more? Christmas is a great day to play "catch up" if you haven't tithed what you intended to Saint Mary's in 2018. For those who are wondering, yes, the Christmas collection stays in the parish; it does not go to the diocese or to any other cause or entity.