



**December 21, 2020** **Volume 73, No. 48**

Mass Schedule Please note: Reconciliation Saturday 7:00 – 7:15 AM, Saturday 3:30 – 3:45 PM , Missions, 20 minutes before Mass, or call the office for appointment.

<b>Monday</b>	7:30 AM	Richardton	+Ralph Messer
<b>Tuesday</b>	7:30 AM	Richardton	+Regina Feller For the Sick
<b>Wednesday</b>	7:30 AM	Richardton	+Gladys Melchior
<b>Thursday</b>	7:00 PM	St. Stephen	PARISHES
	10:00 PM	Richardton	+Zeno Erdle
<b>Friday</b>	8:00 AM	St. Thomas	Greg Meyer Family
	10:00 AM	Richardton	+Gaitte Gebhardt
<b>Saturday, December 26<sup>th</sup></b>	7:30 AM	Richardton	+Ronald Frederick
	4:00 PM	Richardton	PARISHES
	7:00 PM	St. Stephen	++Mr. & Mrs. Paul Zimmerman
<b>Sunday, December 27<sup>th</sup></b>	8:00 AM	St. Thomas	+Paul T. Meyer
	10:00AM	Richardton	+Beatrice Messer

**Mass Schedule and Ministers: Thurs. Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>, Friday, Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>, Sat. Dec. 26<sup>th</sup> & Sun. Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>**

<b>Thursday, December 24<sup>th</sup></b>	4:00 PM St. Stephen 10:00 PM Richardton	<b>Lector:</b> Kayla Zent <b>Lector:</b> Ben Bohn & Abby Lacher <b>Server:</b> Jaxon Lacher & Bradley Stockert
<b>Friday, December 25<sup>th</sup></b>	8:00 AM St. Thomas 10:00 AM Richardton	<b>Lector:</b> Tina Meyer <b>Lector:</b> Pat Dassinger & Alyssa Hoff <b>Server:</b> Camden Hoff
<b>Saturday, December 26<sup>th</sup></b>	4:00 PM Richardton 7:00 PM St. Stephen	<b>Lector:</b> Scott Bohn <b>Lector:</b> Michaela Mitchell
<b>Sunday, December 27<sup>th</sup></b>	8:00 AM St. Thomas 10:00 AM Richardton	<b>Lector:</b> Lisa Sickler <b>Lector:</b> Jack Wyckoff

Collections for December 13, 2020	St. Mary	St. Stephen	St. Thomas
Adults	4045.00	475.00	419.00
Plate	191.00	199.50	261.00
Children	2.00		
Total	4238.00	674.50	680.00

**ST. MARY PARISH**

**CHRISTMAS FLOWERS:** Donations toward the Christmas flowers can be put into a marked envelope and dropped in the collection or at the Office. Thank you for your help to make our church beautiful for Christmas.

**OUR SYMPATHIES:** to the family of Eva Rettig who died this past week. Funeral will be Tuesday, Dec. 29 @ 9:30. May she rest in peace and the Good Shepherd console her loved ones.

**CHRISTMAS EVE MASS:** is at 10:00 pm and Christmas Day @ 10:00 am. It sure would be nice to have a fuller attendance at these Masses to help make our Christmas more joyful. Perhaps more than ever we need to come together to celebrate and give thanks and praise to God. I thank in advance the extra musicians who will be adding their voices and instruments to our singing praise to God.

**THANK YOU SO MUCH:** to the crew that showed up to clean the church on Dec. 12. It was a good crew and lots of corners got cleaned, wood polished, windows cleaned, floors scrubbed, etc.

**A BIG THANK YOU:** to everyone who generously donated to the Caring Hearts Project sponsored by our Rel. Ed Confirmation students. Lots of families benefited from your charity. God Bless You!

**ELDER CARE MEAL DELIVERY:** Elder Care in Richardton is looking for a volunteer to deliver meals two days a month to homebound senior citizens. Please contact Maria Harasty @ 974-6592 for more information.

**ST. STEPHEN PARISH**

**CHRISTMAS EVE MASS:** for your planning Christmas Eve Mass will be at 7:00 pm...no program this year but feel free to still invite people to join us on Christmas Eve.

**ST. THOMAS PARISH**

**CHRISTMAS MASS:** will be at 8:00 am on Christmas Day...spread the word and invite people back to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

**ALL THREE PARISHES**

**PLEASE PRAY:** for those who are *seriously ill, terminally ill or in immediate concern:* Jim Gallagher, Ted Goelzer, Tillie Hauck, Susan Cook, Margaret Wiegler, Chuck Hoff, Katie Thomas Kautzman, Leo Stein, Troy Hoff, Larry Kostecky, Judy Hecker, Ray Stein, Gary Goetz, Dennise Miller and all those living with various cancers, those dealing with CO-VID19 in any way and those responding to the needs in our communities brought about by the virus.

**PARISH PICTORIAL DIRECTORIES:** We have a few extras available for \$20. We also have available the "History in Records" book, a history of the Baptismal, Marriage and Death Registers of Sts. Mary, Stephen, Thomas and Philipp parishes from their founding. It is over 100 pages in length and available for \$20 at the office or after weekend Masses. Books are available by mail for \$23.00; make checks payable to: St. Mary Parish. We also have Sympathy and Christmas cards (with pics from St. Mary) available.

**DON'T FORGET:** I will be in the St. Mary confessional Monday night Dec. 21 from 6-7 pm. I am also willing to accommodate you outside of those times. Call the office.

**CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS:** We have our "History in Records" books available as unique Christmas gifts. \$20 each. We also have a few extra Parish Directories for \$20 and St. Mary Christmas cards and Sympathy cards available at the Parish Office.

**REMINDER:** As the year draws to a close, you are reminded that year end donations **MUST BE RECEIVED BY DEC. 31.** *Even if you date your check before Dec. 31 and give it to us Jan. 1, we are LEGALLY REQUIRED TO RECORD IT FOR THE YEAR WE RECEIVE IT.* Thanks for your cooperation and generosity and...helping us to be honest. J

**OFFICE HOURS:** remain reduced these days, so be sure to call ahead if you need to see Pam or Fr. Thomas.

**PARISH WEBSITE:** [www.stmaryrichardton.com](http://www.stmaryrichardton.com). The weekly bulletin is included on the website and is normally posted on Mondays.

**MASSES:** *"the dispensation from the obligation to attend and participate at Mass on Sunday and Holy Days remains in effect until further notice for all who may be hesitant or afraid at this time to be in larger gatherings.... If you or anyone in your household is sick in any way or is one of the more vulnerable groups of persons at a higher risk of contracting the COVID-19, please stay at home until such time as you or that person is able to return to Church for Mass."* Further, "what we understand as 'social distancing' must be strictly kept by all priests, deacons and lay faithful at all times in all liturgical and sacramental settings."

Family households may sit together in 1 pew and all other persons must maintain social distancing; from front to back, in every Church every other pew is to be left empty.

Only the Precious Body will be distributed and may be received either in the hand or on the tongue.

Only ordained clergy are to distribute Holy Communion; no Eucharistic Ministers. Social distancing is to be maintained as you come forward to receive Holy Communion.

Lectors are to be used. Only 1 server is allowed and servers under 18 yrs of age must have written permission from parents to serve.

No Sign of Peace.

No Offertory procession but a collection is taken where long handle baskets are available. Baskets will be used for people who prefer to drop their offerings when they come or leave Mass.

Weddings and Funerals are permitted but maintaining social distancing. Vigil Services and Visitation are allowed in the funeral homes only; no funeral luncheons in parish facilities.

#### **FROM THE PASTOR:**

From the bottom of my heart I wish you all the greatest Blessings of this Holy Season! After these last 9-10 months we need the Blessings, Joy, Hope and Peace which only our Savior can give. Perhaps the pandemic still has deeper lessons and blessings for us. Remember how easily we saw those blessings/lessons early on?? Many spoke of better family time and bonding, deeper prayer, thankfulness for the Mass, quieter and simpler time with less distractions and busyness, a general attitude of gratitude, etc. How have we changed or slipped back into the old habits? May the simplicity of Jesus' birth help remind us of the continued need for prayer, quiet, simplicity and gratitude in our lives.

Thank you for your cards, gifts, prayers and remembrances; they do mean a lot to me and I do read each card. Know you are remembered in my prayers, at Masses and in thought. God bless each of you as you let our Savior into your heart and guide your life in his ways.

You may have received a letter from me (through the Diocese) regarding donating to your parish endowment. This is an initiative promoted by the Diocese to build up our individual parish endowments. This is a very good idea. Each parish in the Diocese has its own endowment (and some have their school, CCD or cemetery endowments as well) and at this time we are encouraged to make donations to help build the *parish* endowments. The endowments for each of our 3 parishes are quite small so what interest that does accumulate is reinvested. The endowments belong to the parish, not the Diocese and are really an investment in our future. Obviously, we do not know the future but we do know we will always have need for funds especially as our buildings and populations age. Just as our ancestors formed our parishes 120-125 years ago and our built our current churches in 1906, 1952 and 1973 and invested in the future of our parishes we too need to do the same for those who follow after us. Estate planning is also a good way to benefit our parish endowments. Thank you and God Bless you for your generous support of our future!

The annual parish calendars are available and extras will be left in the churches. Please take as many as you need, we have plenty. If you think of it say thanks to Jim Ladbury who has provided these calendars free of charge to us for many years...or offer a prayer or two for him and his family! The calendars are very nice and this year focus on Mary. Every household should have this Catholic calendar to reference and use. Enjoy!

*A letter came from Bishop Kagan recently regarding masks at Mass. He will not issue a mandatory mask requirement for Mass but leaves the decision to wear a mask or not, to individuals and pastors. So...if anyone feels they want to, or should, wear a mask to Mass, they are welcome to do so. We need to continue to be vigilant about protecting others, along with ourselves.*

If you are uncertain about what to do with your church envelope you can put it in another envelope and put it in the mail (332 2<sup>nd</sup> St. North Richardton, ND 58652), or drop it by the office. "Thanks so much" to those of you who are already doing this; it helps us a lot.

MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE AND GOD BLESS YOU!

Fr. Thomas, OSB

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- Dec. 20 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent  
Children's Liturgy of the Word @ St. Stephen
- Dec. 21 Confessions @ St. Mary 6-7 PM
- Dec. 24 CHRISTMAS EVE Masses: 7:00 PM @ St. Stephen  
10:00 PM @ St. Mary
- Dec. 25 CHRISTMAS DAY Masses: 8:00 am @ St. Thomas  
10:00 @ St. Mary
- Dec. 27 Holy Family Sunday
- Jan. 1, 2021 Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Holy Day of Obligation)  
Masses: Dec. 31 6:00 pm @ St. Stephen  
Jan. 1 8:00 am @ St. Thomas  
Jan. 1 10:00 am @ St. Mary

**Jan. 3**      **EPIPHANY**  
**Jan. 6**      **Rel. Ed classes resume**  
**Jan. 10**     **Baptism of the Lord & end of the Christmas Season**