

St. Joseph Catholic Parish ~ Milford, Iowa

December 6th, 2020 ~ Second Sunday of Advent

Pastor's Notes

Next Sunday, the 13th, our parish will have an open Advent Reconciliation Service from 1:00pm to 3:00pm. Because of the Coronavirus restrictions we cannot have the 'normal' service beginning at 1:00pm. You may come at anytime during those two hours to receive this Sacrament. With a year that has impacted our lives in different, unexpected ways, may this Sacrament of Forgiveness, healing and reconciliation bring a balance of peace and hope within our lives as we approach Christmas. In the words of St. John Chrysostom, *"Let no one mourn that he has fallen again and again; for forgiveness has risen from the grave."* Truly, a grace-filled Sacrament to prepare ourselves for Christmas and the end of a very unique year.

In the vestibule of our church is the "Mitten Tree" where you may place purchased gloves and mittens to be distributed to those children, families, individuals who are in need of such to keep warm. Thank you for your generosity. Our Knights of Columbus are taking food donations for their Annual Christmas Basket drive, providing needed food products for those individuals and families who are struggling. You may leave your food donations just inside the main canopy doors, placing them on the pew benches; or you may leave your donations in the blue basket just outside the parish office in the

hallway. On behalf of the Knights, thank you for your generosity and caring. In less than three weeks we will celebrate the great gift of our Christian faith, the coming of Christ Jesus. Most likely our Masses on Christmas Eve and Day—4:00pm, 6:00pm, Midnight, and 9:00am—will not be 'packed' as is the norm for this holy day with many concerned about the spread of the virus. Thus, our parish will have the church decorated the week before—poinsettias, Nativity Scene, sanctuary evergreen trees, lights, candles—enabling concerned individuals and families to participate and receive the Eucharist at a daily Mass in lieu of Christmas day. During these unusual social circumstances our parish of St. Joseph desires to remain welcoming, providing opportunities for parishioners and visitors to participate in the Eucharist (and communal prayer). Tuesday is the feast of the Immaculate Conception with Mass at 5:15pm. *"O Mary, you give assistance to everyone endeavoring to rise to God!"* (St. Bridget of Sweden) For your personal prayer there are Advent Prayer Sheets on the baptismal font in the back of church.

God Bless, Fr. Tim

Minister Schedule

Third Sunday of Advent

Saturday, Dec. 12 - 4:30pm

EMEs: Fr. Tim, Marlene Nelsen

Lector: David Johnson

Server: Jay Garcia, Loretta Halbu

Usher: KC's

Sunday, Dec. 13 - 8:00am

EMEs: Fr. Tim, Jeff Nelson

Lector: Darlene Moritz

Server: Ron Swartz, Bob Moore

Usher: KC's

Sunday, Dec. 13 - 10:00am

EMEs: Fr. Tim, Beth Lorch

Lector: Sara Laven

Server: Mark & Deb Johnson

Usher: Volunteers needed!

Mass Intentions:

Mon./Dec. 7:

7:30am Kay Ahrens

Tues./Dec. 8:

5:15pm Sindy Peterson

Wed./Dec. 9:

7:30am Beverly Sporrer

Thu./Dec. 10:

7:30am John Ney

Fri./Dec. 11:

7:30am Fr. John Vakulskas

Sat./Dec. 12:

4:30pm Tim Schmit

Sun./Dec. 13:

8:00am Norma Schmitz

10:00am Joan Langel



Faith Formation Notes from the desk of Sharon Mayer

I found something tucked away in a book that was on my shelf in my office. I don't know who wrote it or when, but the paper was yellowing so I am guessing it has been there awhile. It is written differently and gives us food for thought especially this year. I would like to share it with you. Maybe you have heard it or maybe even wrote it as it does not have a name attached.

"The BIBLE contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here Paradise is restored, heaven opened, and the gates of Hell disclosed. Christ is its grand subject, our good, the design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened at the judgement, and be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and will condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents."

Knights of Columbus will be delivering food baskets of non-

perishable items to shut-ins and less fortunate persons/families in our parish. To assist in this project, parishioners are asked to contribute food items to the tubs in the back of the church by Sun. Dec. 13th.

Please Note:

During Advent, the Tuesday Mass will be at 5:15pm rather than 7:30am.

Delicious Sugar Cookies

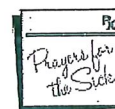
will be shared with those who attend Mass the weekend of Dec. 12 & 13, a gift of hospitality and welcome to our wonderful members and friends. Individual bags will be used to distribute two cookies to each family.

CDA Annual Layette Project

Catholic Daughters, St. Joseph Court of Our Lady of Las Salette invites parishioners to join us after Christmas and into January and February as we collect our annual layette, a worth cause we have sponsored for over 30 years. Items useful for 2-4 year olds such as board books, learning toys, etc., used most often in parenting classes. These items will be presented at our February meeting to Lakes Regional Hospital, as well as Birth Right and Catholic Charities in Spencer. We thank you for your contribution and will keep you informed as to the delivery of the gifts.



St. Joseph, pray for us.
Joseph, prudent and brave,
Joseph, obedient and loyal,
Pattern of patience,
Lover of poverty,
Model of workers,
Example to parents,
Pillar of family life,
Comfort of the troubled,
Hope of the sick,
Patron of the dying,
Protector of the Church,
St. Joseph, pray for us.



PRAY for these members: Bob Mulherr, Pat O'Brien, Jerry Delaney Family, Jean Elbert, Alberta Nolan, Nancy Crepeau, Mar Langel, Geneva Knudtson, Roger Wittrock, Rick DeMuth, Linda Higgins, Mary Ann Sigler, Denny and Alma Klute, Jerry Clark, Robert Rowland, Bill James, Marie Van Hofwegen, Ethel Wilson, Steve Painter, Ginn Yore, LaDonna Jansen, Dale Langel, Finley Brunsvold, Dee Bryant, Phyllis Hintz, Terry Abbas, Susan Robinsor, Leona Spieker.

PLEASE pray for these special persons: Harvey Bayter, Jr., Wayne Bellinghausen, Maxine Thompson, Lois Doran, Dale Gentry, Susan Barnes, Mike Cooper, Denny Daberkov, Louise DeWitt, Ray Langel, Kristin Meyer, Leo Trebbien, Kevin Wittrock, Charlotte Tiesler, Tailen Sturtz, Aimee Wallrich, Sar Springer, Jan Wolf, Peggy Price, Joan Mertz, John Bruening, Ann Willette, Ashlyn Clark, Jerry Wolford, Kami Svoboda, Darrel Wedeking, Dan Mulder, Leah Brevik, Colleen Mulder, Jamie O'Neill.

Advent Prayer Retreat - Two Candles

Call to Presence:

Almighty God,

Let your blessing come upon me with the lighting of the two Advent candles.

In the week before us, make me always aware of what is,

and just as aware of what ought to be. I ask this through Christ our Lord.

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 4:1-10

As water smothers fire, kindness quenches sin.

Refuse not the poor a livelihood nor tantalize the needy.

Fuel not the grievances of those already fiery-tempered.

Distract yourself not from the sick and silent-suffering.

Make no woman or man beg for dignity.

As God is, be parent to the orphaned and family to the bereft.

There is only one law: you must be kind.

If you seek mercy, you will find it in yourself—or nowhere ~Quietly Pause~

Reflection:

“When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives means the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving much advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a gentle and tender hand.

The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, . . . and face with us the reality of our powerlessness,

that is a friend who cares.” (Henri J.M. Nouwen, priest & spiritual author) ~Quietly Pause~

Intercessions:

O God, you joyfully embraced humanity for our sake. With gratitude I pray:

“Come, Christ our Savior.”

You come into the world to bring justice and peace:

“May justice and peace in our world be the fruits of justice and peace in my heart.”

You come in the face of the stranger:

“May I always have the eyes to see Christ in the unknown face.”

You come in the midst of contradiction and pain:

“May I reach out the gentle hand of Christ in situations beyond our understanding.”

You come in the broken body of humanity:

"May I always choose to soothe rather than condemn."

O God you come as one who is with us, our Emmanuel:

"May we be with and for one another,

in a spirit of solidarity and love with all God's people."

In silence I remember my family's wellbeing, and those who are struggling—

by name I call them out to You—and the daily intention:

Sunday, 6th	Genuine/MT 7:24,25 (St. Nicholas) for those who are struggling in their faith
Monday, 7th	Attentive/MT 9:29(St. Ambrose) for those called to the priesthood/religious life
Tuesday, 8th	Selfless/LK 1:38 (Mary's Immaculate Conception) for those couples newly married; those struggling in marriage
Wednesday, 9th	Honorable/LK 3:4 for those parents having their child baptized
Thursday, 10th	Determined/LK 5:19 for those doctors and nurses working with the dying
Friday, 11th	Persistent/MT 18:13 (St. Damasus) for those who are imprisoned, seeking rehabilitation
Saturday 12th	Flexible/LK 1:43 (Our Lady of Guadalupe) for those immigrants seeking a better life

~Quietly Pause~

Lord's Prayer

Concluding Prayer:

God, my Holy Companion,

I offer You each moment this day;

whatever comes—the unexpected challenges,

diversions from my plans,

the expectations and complaints.

I'd be grateful if You could keep me aware of my careless habits;

and between us, perhaps we can enliven the spirits of those I meet this day.

Whatever else, I trust we can cope with it together. Amen.

Thoughtful Consideration:

"Unless we make Christmas an occasion to share our blessings,

all the snow in Alaska won't make it 'white.'" (Bing Crosby)