

# Good Shepherd CLUSTER

Sunday, January 18, 2026  
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Dear Padre

January 18, 2026

***I thought only priests and bishops should distribute Holy Communion at Mass. In my parish, the priest allows laypeople to help him, and I thought laypeople couldn't because our hands are not consecrated.***

You're not the only person with this concern, so thank you for taking the time to write. The distribution of holy Communion has nothing to do with "consecrated hands." Ordinary ministers of Communion include bishops and priests, as you rightly identify, but also deacons and installed acolytes. Of the four ordinary ministers, only the hands of bishops and priests are consecrated. Laypeople are extraordinary ministers and are installed to help the priest so that everyone can receive holy Communion without long lines or wearying the (sometimes elderly) priest. Most extraordinary ministers of Communion approach this ministry very prayerfully.

Your question brings up the subject of the full participation of the laity in the Mass, which is part of a highly contentious theological discussion on social media. There is an unfortunate conflict between so-called "traditional Catholics" and "Vatican II Catholics" or, as they are often misrepresented, "Novus Ordo" Catholics. Some Catholics are led to believe that the "new Mass" is not authentic, even though it has been the ordinary form of the Mass for well over fifty years—that is, since the authoritative Second Vatican Council. Many good and faithful people suffer with doubt and anxiety as a result of this confusion. ●

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org

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### MONDAY

January 19  
Weekday  
1 Sm 15:16-23  
Mk 2:18-22

### TUESDAY

January 20  
Weekday  
1 Sm 16:1-13  
Mk 2:23-28

### WEDNESDAY

January 21  
*St. Agnes, Virgin and Martyr*  
1 Sm 17:32-33, 37, 40-51  
Mk 3:1-6

### THURSDAY

January 22  
*Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children*  
1 Sm 18:6-9; 19:1-7  
Mk 3:7-12

### FRIDAY

January 23  
Weekday  
1 Sm 24:3-21  
Mk 3:13-19

### SATURDAY

January 24  
*St. Francis de Sales, Bishop and Doctor of the Church*  
2 Sm 1:1-4, 11-12, 19, 23-27  
Mk 3:20-21

### SUNDAY

January 25  
*Third Sunday in Ordinary Time*  
Is 8:23-9:3  
1 Cor 1:10-13, 17  
Mt 4:12-23 or 4:12-17

## WELCOME TO THE GOOD SHEPHERD CLUSTER

HOLY FAMILY, NEW HAMPTON  
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, NW  
ST. BONIFACE, IONIA

313 W. Court St. New Hampton, IA  
Email Address: [clusters@gmail.com](mailto:clusters@gmail.com)

GOOD SHEPHERD  
PARISH OFFICE HOURS:  
MON.-THURS. 8 AM-4:30 PM  
FRIDAY 8 AM-NOON

VISIT US ON OUR WEBSITE  
[www.goodshepherdcluster.com](http://www.goodshepherdcluster.com)

### MISSION STATEMENT

*"As a Catholic faith community we strive to unite as a people of God whose life is centered in the Eucharist. We seek to live the Gospel message of Jesus Christ, called to be faithful stewards of God's gifts, growing in faith and attending to the spiritual and social needs of all."*

Archbishop Zinkula, asks us all to remember to keep the Journey In Faith initiative in our prayers. He has set the **second Wednesday of the month** as a special day of prayer when the Faithful of the entire Archdiocese will raise their voices as one people of God for the good and holy outcome of Journey in Faith. We encourage everyone to pray in any of your prayer groups, adoration times, or devotions for this intention.

## GOOD SHEPHERD STAFF

Hours: Monday-Thursday 8 AM-4:30 PM

Friday 8 AM-Noon

<b>Pastoral Office</b>	<b>641-394-2105</b>
<b>St. Joseph Community School</b>	<b>641-394-2865</b>
<b>St. John's School of Religion</b>	<b>641-394-2404</b>
<b>Pastor:</b> Rev. Chris Podhajsky	641-394-2105
<b>Principal:</b> Michele Nehls	641-394-2865
<b>Deacon:</b> Victor DeSloover	563-429-2773
<b>Cluster Business Manager:</b> Becky Ptacek-Havlik	
<b>Hispanic Minister:</b> Gustavo Jimenez	
<b>Interim Director Faith Formation:</b> Tara Underwood	
<b>Pastoral Assistant:</b> Gladys Christoph	641-330-9223
<b>Cluster Secretary:</b> Marcia Howe	
<b>Social Media:</b> Chris Vital	
<b>Custodian:</b> Dave Roethler	
<b>Music Director:</b> Michelle Lau	641-229-6589
<b>Adult Choir Director:</b> Ann Bennett	641-394-5407
<b>North Washington Choir:</b> Sharon Heying	641-330-7714
<b>Calvary Cemetery-Don Dixon</b>	319-290-4991
<b>St. Mary's, New Hampton-Mike Pickar</b>	641-430-2446
<b>St. Mary's, N. Washington-Jake Hackman</b>	641-330-6841
<b>St. Boniface-Dave Bonfig</b>	641-394-4703

## WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULES

St. Boniface & Immaculate Conception Parish

Alternate Saturday 6 PM Mass

Holy Family Spanish Mass 1st & 3rd Sunday  
11:30 AM

### *Saturday*

4 PM Holy Family, New Hampton

6 PM St. Boniface January 25  
Feb. 7 & 21

6 PM Immaculate Conception,  
January 17, 31 Feb. 14 & 28

### *Sunday*

8 AM & 10 AM Holy Family, New Hampton

## RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation from 3-3:30 p.m. Saturday in the Reconciliation Chapel at Holy Family, New Hampton. Reconciliation may be celebrated on request at St. Boniface, Ionia & Immaculate Conception, North Washington. Sunday Reconciliation from 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Reconciliation Chapel at Holy Family, New Hampton.

## Weekly Prayer & Faith Sharing & Ministry

1:30 PM-Rosary @ MercyOne Hospital Chapel on Tues.  
2-4 PM Sharing Room, Pastoral Office on Wednesday  
4 PM-Midnight-Holy Family-Adoration on Thursday  
9-11 AM Sharing Room, Pastoral Office on Friday  
9:30 AM-Coffee Talk after the 8:30 Mass in the Gathering Space  
9 AM Bible Study, Pastoral Office on Saturday

**SPOTLIGHT ON:** We wish to recognize and thank our Advertiser of the Week **Bank Iowa**. Please patronize our advertisers. Let them know you appreciate their support of the parish bulletin.

**Baptisms:** Please contact Deacon Vic DeSloover @ 563-429-2773.

**Marriage:** Please contact the priest at least six months in advance.

**Visiting the Sick or Anointing:** If you would like a visit from Fr. Chris, please contact the Pastoral Office at 394-2105. The hospital and nursing homes do not notify us unless a family member requests.

**PRAYERS for the SICK:** We ask the Lord Jesus to bless all those in sickness, in weakness & in pain. Please join us in prayer for: Dale, Yasmin Jimenez (Gustavo wife), Mary Wegner, Donna Leichtman Geerts, Ashley A. Boeding, Bob, Gary Grube, Lynn Bailey, Kevin Meissen, Bud & Patty Mowatt, Elizabeth Gomez Vasquez, Rhonda Dreckman, June Rosonke, Norbert, Alice & Tom Rasing, Louise Conry, Terry Lynn Rausch, Michele K, Bill Sinnwell, Joyce Lowe, Beatrice Miller, Patty Forkenbrock, all special intentions & cancer patients.

**PRAYER NETWORK:** For a prayer request, please call the parish office during the business day @ 394-2105 or after hours to Jan Gorman @ 641-229-6072, or Carol Schmitz @ 394-6072.

Please note: **Due to the length of our prayer list, we will list the special intentions for prayer for two weeks.** If you wish names to remain longer, please call the parish office 394-2105 & we will be glad to leave the names in for as long as needed. Thank you for your understanding.

**Military active duty-** SGT. Trevor J. Burgart, SGT Adam J. Burgart, Dylan Usher, Kaleb Macon, SGT. Andrew Kasuboski, SFC. Michael Messersmith, Adam Tieskotter, Michael Nosbisch, Staff Sgt. Nathan Schulz, Nichole Caldararo, Dustin Boeding, Paul Langreck

**REST IN PEACE:** Please remember those in your prayers who recently died: James "Jim" Bennett, Leon Vsetecka brother of Rick Vsetecka

## CLUSTER NEWS

**CONGRATULATIONS NEWLY MARRIED:** Luke & Carrie (Hanson) Schluetter. They were married last weekend at Holy Family by Fr. Chris Podhajsky. May God continue to bless you on your journey together.

**RECENTLY ENGAGED:** If you are newly engaged and will be getting married in 2026. We will have a Pre-Cana Day at **Holy Family on January 25, 2026.** If you have questions or like more information, contact Deacon Vic DeSloover at 563-429-2773.

**MASS SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY 12-23:** We will not have daily Masses during the week. Fr. Kurcera will have the weekend Masses on January 17 & 18. Fr. Chris will be traveling to the Holy Land & Jordan. Keep him in your prayers as he travels.

**BEAUTIFUL GIFT FOR YOU:** Good Shepherd Cluster members. Beautiful books on the Rosary and The Blessed Mother were ordered as a gift for you for Christmas. The book is a reflection on the Mysteries of the Rosary and the scripture passages that inspired them.

**CHRISTMAS ENVELOPE DONATIONS:** It was discovered after Contribution Statements were run that Christmas envelopes received during one of the Christmas masses were incorrectly posted to **Flowers - St Boniface rather than Christmas.** This has been changed in the church records. If you are in need of a new statement, please contact the office. I apologize for the error. -- Becky

**BIRTH-RIGHT:**The New Hampton Knights of Columbus Council 1697 will host a Birth-Right collection after the Masses on the weekend of January 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>. We look forward to and appreciate your support of this cause.

### COLLECTIVE MASSES

**HOLY FAMILY, JANUARY 18, AT 8 AM:** Madonna Flick, Midge Schlindwein, Duane & David Lynch, John & Margaret Shekleton, Rich, Mary Lou & Gerald Roethler, Cletus & Doris Ries, Alvin & Joanne Winter.

**HOLY FAMILY, JANUARY 25, AT 10 AM:** Ray & Bernice Felder, Mary Jean Martin, anonymous and Reynold & Imelda Unga.

**Let Us Smile  
Why didn't Noah go fishing?  
He only had two worms.**

**CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS:** You will be receiving Contribution Statements in the mail soon if you have not already received them.

- If your contribution for 2025 was less than \$250, then you did not receive a Contribution Statement. If you would like one, please contact the office and it can be printed for you.
- If you need one for a loved one that passed away in 2025, please contact the office.
- If all of your contribution was by means of trust, IRA distribution, stock sales, and/or grain sales, you will not receive a contribution statement. Your letter mailed at the time of your donation will be your recognition of your contribution.

THANK YOU ALL for your generosity in 2025!

**Moving Forward in Faith and Hope** The Archdiocese of Dubuque continues to move forward with its *Journey in Faith* pastoral planning process. The feedback and data collected from parishes are now being reviewed carefully. This process of discernment will continue through the coming months, with the final pastorate plan and clergy assignments to be announced this spring.

In July 2026, each new pastorate will begin an interim six-month Mass schedule as parishes discern how best to collaborate and flourish as joyful missionary disciples, centered in the Eucharist and united in faith.

Archbishop Thomas Zinkula expresses his gratitude for the ongoing participation and prayer of parishioners, clergy, and staff. He acknowledges that this time of change brings both hope and uncertainty, and he invites all to continue praying for one another and for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

As the Church enters a new year filled with promise, may it also be a time of renewal and deeper faith. For additional information and answers to questions, please visit [dbqjourneyinfaith.org/faq](http://dbqjourneyinfaith.org/faq).





# THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE ST. JOSEPH COMMUNITY SCHOOL



Join us as we celebrate Catholic Schools Week at St. Joseph Community School. We're diving into the richness of our faith, learning, and community, all wrapped up in a week full of fun, gratitude, and togetherness. Get ready for exciting activities, faith-filled moments, and opportunities to celebrate the joy and sweetness of being part of our Catholic school family. Stay tuned for more details as we journey together on this special adventure! We can't wait to celebrate with you!



## 26

Monday



### FOLLOW THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD:

WEAR - YELLOW/GOLD OR DRESS LIKE A TOURIST

Join us for Cocoa and Cozy Reads at the NHMU building on main street from 12pm to 2pm! Enjoy sweets, books and a warm drink!



## 27

Tuesday



### HEART OF SERVICE: Loving like the Tin Man

Bubble Gum Contest

Wear Silver or grey to dress like the Tin Man

## 28

Wednesday

### COURAGE OF FAITH: Bravery like the Lion

All School Activity during the day

Dress like a superhero or favorite saint

Family Night  
Bingo, Potluck,  
& Book Fair at  
5:30pm in Gym

## 29

Thursday

### BRAINS AND BELIEF: Wisdom like the Scarecrow

Whole School Sportsplex Day in Waterloo

Dress up in your #CSW26 t-shirt and activewear



## 30

Friday

### THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE ST. JOES Wear your Emerald City best!

VIP/Grandparents Day - Doors will open at 11:40am

\*Enter through the school entrance\*



## THANK YOU!

Thank you to all who have contributed to the Holy Family *Foundation for the Future* Capital Campaign!

With the pledged gifts and one-time gifts, we have met our goal of \$200,000.

Our new heating and cooling systems have been installed. We will be receiving some refurbished radiators this winter. The new carpet will arrive early next summer once School lets out. Finally, we are working on recognizing any additional projects that need to be completed.

## Holy Family Soup Festival

The Holy Family Soup Festival was retired in 2025. The committee is planning an Ice Cream Social on May 3, 2026 with a raffle and activities. More details will come later in Spring.

This change was made after the 2026 Budget envelopes were printed. All donations that are made in the Soup Festival budget envelope will to transferred to the Ice Cream Social event.



## Beauty In Christ

Archdiocese of Dubuque Women's Conference

# Grace for the JOURNEY



Kitty Cleveland



Kelsey Kaiser

### Speakers

# Saturday JANUARY 31

## 8:30am – 2:30pm

Join us for the 2026 Women's Conference  
**Beauty in Christ: Grace for the Journey!**

Gather with other faith-filled women in the IC Social Hall to participate virtually. Be inspired to know that His grace is enough!

For more information or to sign up contact:  
Kris Ward 563-568-7344 or Jodi Page 641-330-1646  
Or Gladys Christoph 641-330-9223

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Archdiocese of Dubuque Council of Catholic Women  
An affiliate of the

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
CATHOLIC WOMEN

THE CATHOLIC FOUNDATION  
IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF DUBUQUE

### Attend the 2026 Archdiocesan Women's Conference, Beauty in Christ:

Grace for the Journey  
Saturday, January 31, 2026,  
8:30 AM to 2:30 PM  
\*\*\*Doors open at 8:00 AM\*\*

Great Speakers! Great Company!

Come join us in a gathering with retreat  
and faith sharing vibes.

Lunch provided.  
Immaculate Conception Church, Charles City.  
Carpooling available.

#### Contacts:

Gladys at the office 641-394-2105  
Cell 641-330-9223  
or email [gchristoph9@gmail.com](mailto:gchristoph9@gmail.com)  
or Kris Ward 563-568-7344  
or Jodi Page 641-330-1646



## Now Hiring: Preschool Enrichment Staff Member

St. Joseph Community School is excited to announce an opening for a **Preschool Enrichment** team member! We are looking for a caring, energetic, and dependable individual who loves working with young children and helping them learn, play, and grow.

### Position Details:

- **Schedule:** Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays
- **Hours:** 8:00 AM - 3:30 PM
- **Role:** Preschool Enrichment (supporting students during extended learning and play activities)

### What We're Looking For:

- Someone who enjoys working with preschool-aged children
- A positive and patient attitude
- Strong communication and teamwork skills
- Reliability and professionalism
- Experience in childcare or education is a plus but not required

If you—or someone you know—would be a great fit for this role, please reach out to us for more information or to apply!

**Religious Education Teacher:** Good Shepherd Cluster, New Hampton, is looking for a person to fill our role of Religious Education Teacher. This role can be part-time or full-time. We are flexible. The part-time role will be responsible for preparing 9th and 10th grade students for Confirmation at St John School of Religion. This person will also be responsible for maintaining their teaching space and tracking registrations and fees. The full-time role will include the part-time role responsibilities and assist with teaching religion to elementary and middle school students at St. Joseph Community School. Weekends are required as needed for preparation of the sacrament(s). This person should be proficient with technology and the internet, be organized and able to meet deadlines. It is preferred that this person hold some theological education or related field. However, this is not required if you are the right person for this role. Please contact Fr. Chris Podhajsky at 641-394-2105 or [c.podhajsky@dbqarch.org](mailto:c.podhajsky@dbqarch.org)

**Pastoral Assistant** - Good Shepherd Cluster, New Hampton, is seeking a part-time Pastoral Assistant. This person must be a Catholic in good standing with the Church. This person will be responsible for initiating and administering programs and activities intended for faith formation (primarily adults), coordinating local involvement in larger events (Women's conference, Men's conference, World Day of Prayer, etc), and assisting in the planning of liturgical celebrations for major feasts. When needed, this person will also meet with families to assist in planning funerals for loved ones. This person will also be involved in ordering liturgical materials for the Cluster. This person should be proficient with technology and the internet, be organized and able to meet deadlines. It is preferred that this person have 2 years of experience in parish-based ministry. However, this is not required if you are the right person for this role. If interested in this position, please contact Fr. Chris Podhajsky at 641-394-2105 or email at [dbq141@dbqarch.org](mailto:dbq141@dbqarch.org).

## AREA NEWS & EVENTS

**WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND:** Married Couples. Would you like to relive the excitement, romance and passion from your honeymoon? Rekindle that spark on a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. For more information call Denise and Greg at 563-920-9419 or sign up at [wwme.org](http://wwme.org). Upcoming experiences are February 13-15 in Dubuque, April 10-12 in Marshalltown and October 9-11 in Epworth.

**COOKIES FOR CANCER:** January Special: variety pack 15/\$10. Or you may purchase gift certificates \$5.00 and up!!! Contact Rose Ann Schwickerath at 641-557-8530. Thanks for your support.

**PLUM CREEK OPEN HOUSE & RECEPTION:** New Hampton residents, Dave and Lydia Sproull, are showing their art work at Plum Creek Art in Fredericksburg from now through March. There will be a reception and open house at Plum Creek Art, 115 W. Main St., Fredericksburg, on Sunday, January 18, from 1 to 4 pm. All are welcome to meet the artists, see their many artistic creations and enjoy the refreshments. Please join us!

**LAWLER LIONS COWBOY MUSIC, HUMOR, & STORYTELLING along with a SWISS STEAK DINNER:** Friday, Jan. 23 & Saturday, Jan. 24, Starlite Ballroom in Lawler. Doors open at 5:00 p.m. Meal at 6:00 p.m. Show at 7:15 p.m. Proceeds benefit Chickasaw Event Center. \$30.00/ticket, advance only, available at the New Hampton Banks.

**SUPPORT GROUP:** Everybody Hurts, a non-profit group for suicide prevention and mental health awareness. The support group is for those who have lost someone to suicide. The meeting is Sunday, January 25, at 1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m. at St. John's School of Religion, 823 W Main St., New Hampton, across the street from the New Hampton High School If you would like more information or have questions, please contact Audrey Drewelow at 319-610-5873 or Dawn Heying at 641-330-4687.

**LAWLER LIONS PANCAKE & FRENCH TOAST & SAUSAGE BREAKFAST:** Sunday, Feb. 1, 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the Turkey Valley High School. Free will donation, Dine In or Carry Out. Proceeds to Lawler Lions Volunteerism Scholarship available to TV High School Seniors.

Come, Adore with us!



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- HEAR PRESENTATIONS ON BENEDICTINE WISDOM, PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE AND EUCHARISTIC ADORATION
- ENJOY THE QUIET BEAUTY OF OUR MONASTERY GROUNDS

SCAN HERE TO LEARN MORE!



*Contact me!*  
SISTER NANCY ROSE  
(660) 944-2221 EXT. 142  
VOCATION@BENEDICTINESISTERS.ORG  
WWW.BENEDICTINESISTERS.ORG  
31970 STATE HWY P, CLYDE, MO 64432

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by giving the

GIFT OF LIFE



## NEW HAMPTON COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE



Tuesday, Jan 27th

12:00pm - 5:30pm

Community Center  
112 East Spring Street | New Hampton



TEXT lifeserve to 999-777 | CALL 800.287.4903 | VISIT [lifeservebloodcenter.org](http://lifeservebloodcenter.org)



## 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

H	I	N	S	H	O	A	I	V	O	O	B	I	E
D	Y	I	O	I	A	S	V	T	A	A	N	R	O
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I	B	L	L	I	G	S	V	T	E	A	T	R	O
A	V	N	S	U	B	A	H	L	S	A	I	I	J
S	E	R	V	A	N	T	Y	I	A	I	R	H	R
I	L	N	O	I	T	A	N	B	O	S	C	T	I
I	G	N	A	J	R	A	B	A	I	L	R	E	H
R	O	V	A	T	V	L	I	G	H	T	G	L	T
V	A	C	S	R	O	V	I	V	R	U	S	O	R
B	O	I	O	T	R	I	B	E	S	T	E	N	R
B	R	S	S	S	S	N	R	J	R	V	L	L	V

EARTH  
 TRIBES  
 SERVANT  
 LIGHT  
 ISRAEL  
 SALVATION  
 LORD  
 STRENGTH  
 ISAIAH  
 JACOB  
 SURVIVORS  
 NATION  
 GLORY

Website Address:

<https://www.goodshepherdcluster.com>

Here you will find our  
 Recorded SundayMass, Schedules,  
 Calendars, Bulletins, Inspirational Stories  
 and so much more!!

**THE GOOD SHEPHERD CLUSTER**



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**BOEDING SPELTZ WERNIMONT Family Dentistry**  
 321 E Main St - New Hampton  
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**Advertising Space Available For Rent**  
**Contact Becky at Good Shepherd Cluster**  
**Pastoral Office 641-394-2105**

## GOOD SHEPHERD MASS SCHEDULE

**SATURDAY-JANUARY 17, 2026**

**WELCOME FR. KUCERA THIS WEEKEND!!!!**

**4 PM-Holy Family-Wayne Tenge**

**6 PM-Immaculate Conception-Tony, Agnes, Dale & Cheryl  
Lechtenberg, James & Geraldine, Rick & Rodney Lenehan**

**SUN., JANUARY 18, 2026-2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**8 AM-Holy Family-Collective**

**10 AM-Holy Family-James, Arlene, Rick, Roger &  
Glenda Holthaus**

**MONDAY-JANUARY 19, 2026**

Bulletin News Due at Noon-Send to [clustergs@gmail.com](mailto:clustergs@gmail.com)

**TUESDAY-JANUARY 20, 2026**

No Mass at Hospital Chapel

**WEDNESDAY-JANUARY 21, 2026**

**3 PM-NH Rehab-Prayer & Communion Service**

**6 PM-Faith Formation Classes @ Holy Family**

**THURS.-JANUARY 22, 2026**

**2 PM-Accura-Linn Haven-Prayer & Communion Service**

**FRIDAY-JANUARY 23, 2026**

No Mass

**SATURDAY-JANUARY 24, 2026**

**4 PM-Holy Family-Curtis Schwickerath**

**6 PM-St. Boniface-Jim & Joyce Cavanaugh**

**SUN.-JANUARY, 25, 2026 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**8 AM-Holy Family-Bob Weigel**

**10 AM-Holy Family-Collective**

# Good News!

**January 18, 2026**

*Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)*

**Isaiah 49:3, 5-6 / 1 Corinthians 1:1-3 / John 1:29-34**

ANN M. GARRIDO

**Of the many names Scripture provides** to help us ponder the mystery of Jesus, one of the most intriguing is the name that John the Baptist offers at the opening of today's gospel: "Behold the Lamb of God!" (John 1:29).

Scripture scholars debate what John means here. Is he alluding to the Passover lamb—that unblemished lamb whose blood the enslaved Israelites were to post over their doorways? The angel of death knew to "pass over" these homes. Perhaps John was saying that by Jesus' blood, the people would be freed from death.

Or was John thinking about the guilt offerings mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures when priests offered animal sacrifices to God as a way of seeking the removal of their sins? Leviticus mentions use of a scapegoat who would carry the sins of the people away into the desert. (See Leviticus 20–28.) Could John have understood that Jesus would bear the sins of the world?

Or did John have in mind the great constellation Aries, the ram, considered the prince of the stars of the sky, the center from whom all the other constellations were mapped in ancient times? Perhaps John was pointing out that Jesus was the center around whom heaven and earth revolve, like the ruling lamb mentioned in the Book of Revelation.

Today at Mass, when the host is elevated and you hear John's words again—"Behold the Lamb of God!"—take a moment to savor these words anew. ●

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January 11, 2026	Budget Report		
Parish	Holy Family	Immaculate Conception	St Boniface
Yearly Collection Needed *	\$627,787.00	\$48,667.00	\$42,091.00
Yearly Collection Needed to 01.11.2026	\$338,039.24	\$26,205.20	\$22,664.32
Needed Weekly Amount	\$12,072.83	\$935.90	\$809.44
Received Last Week	\$7,635.00	\$130.00	\$390.00
Year to Date Recd to 01.11.2026	\$340,419.46	\$18,472.44	\$20,920.00
Difference	\$2,380.22	-\$7,732.76	-\$1,744.32
Offertory	\$665.00		\$88.00
Hispanic collection			

\*This is the amount determined to balance each respective church's budget. This includes only the adult budget envelopes and not a reflection of the actual income statement.