

*Working Together To
Build the Kingdom of God*

Mass Schedule:

St. John the Baptist, Mount Vernon
Sunday, Wednesday and Friday - 8:30 am

Parish Confession:

Sunday at 8 am or by appointment

St. Isidore the Farmer, Springville:

Saturday, 5 pm - Tuesday & Thursday 8 am

St. John Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday:

8 am - 5 pm

Friday:

7 am - 3:30 pm

Pastor:

Rev. Andrew Awotwe-Mensah

Office: 895-6246

Email: DBQ137@dbqarch.org

Main Office: Secretary/Bookkeeper

Loraine Kula

Parish Office: 895-6246

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Director of Faith Formation

Linda Hansmeier: 895-6758

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Coordinator of Youth/Young Adult Ministry

De Wagner: 895-6758

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Coordinator of Music

Theresa Sundstrom: 563-451-2054

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Prayer Chain Contacts:

Thelma Rife: jtbr2@q.com

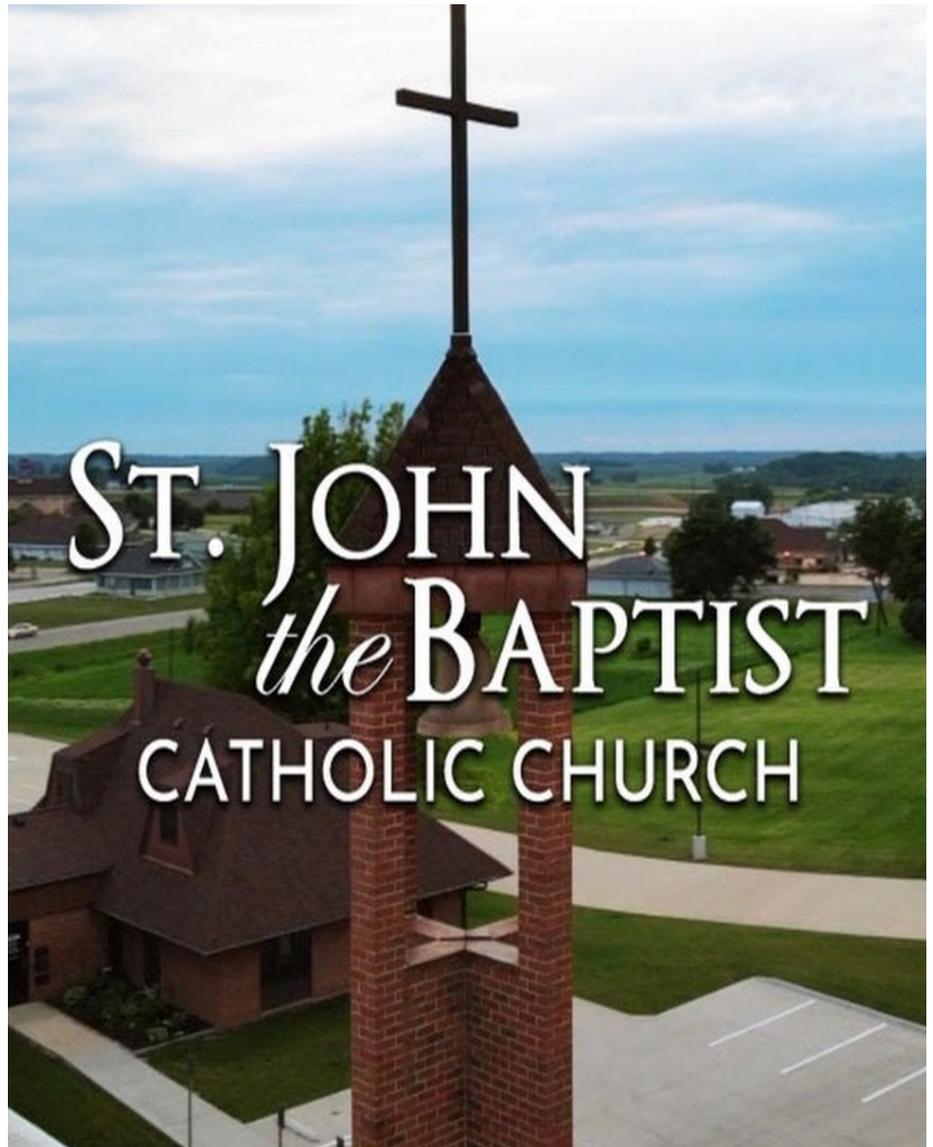
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Catholic Charities: 1-800-772-2758

Birthright: 319-393-3251 or 1-800-550-4900

*December 5, 2021
Second Sunday of Advent*



LISBON - MOUNT VERNON, IA
AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES
Web-site: <http://www.stjohnmv.org>

PARISH THEME: RETURN TO ME AND RENEW YOUR SPIRIT

To Our Parishioners and Friends

“All flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

A unique feature of Advent is its proclamation of the words of Isaiah: *“Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and This invitation to respond with joy and commitment, to ready ourselves to welcome the Lord who is Himself eager to enter our lives, society, and the world, set the tone for the great expectation of Advent.*

Isaiah enunciated these historic words to encourage and revive the faith of the Israelites who were suffering from alienation and separation from their homeland; they felt lost and cut off from their God, religion, and culture. Their thoughts and sentiments come to light in Psalm 137: 1-4, *“By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion ... for there our captors asked us for songs, our tormentors demanded songs of joy; they said, ‘Sing us one of the songs of Zion!’ How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?”* Amid the despondency and trepidation of ever returning to their homeland, with an unknown future ahead, Isaiah’s words ignited their spirits and prompted them to look forward with breadth of expectation and hope.

Presented to us on the second Sunday of Advent, these words provide us with a spiritual telescope to view how God’s love is expressed towards us in our daily experiences and blessings so that we may be hopeful. Along the same lines, together with the entire Advent season, they also challenge us to examine habits of the mind and body to see how we are faithfully preparing to meet the Lord.

I savor the following lines by Elizabeth Barrett Browning: *“Earth’s crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God; But only he who sees, takes off his shoes.”* Isaiah assures us that all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Christ comes to all of us. Advent, therefore, provides us with the spiritual infrastructure, the sharpening of our spiritual eyes to clearly see the cracks and the hills in our lives that need attention and repair.

The readings for this weekend shed light on the come-back character of Advent, urging us to prepare to walk toward fruitful preparation and celebration of Christmas. God loves us despite the multiple cracks in our lives, and He comes to help us fill them with prayer, and positive relationship with Him and others.

In his book, *After Heaven: Spirituality in America since the 1950s*, the sociologist Robert Wuthnow observes that Americans are shifting from spirituality of “dwelling” (relating to God in a sacred place like church) to spirituality of “seeking” (relating to God only in some moments that assure them of God’s presence).

Since this spiritual orientation expressed in either case is incomplete, Wuthnow offers an authentic option, “a practice-oriented spirituality.” This requires us to intentionally engage in activities that deepen our relationship with God, such as attending Mass, receiving the sacraments, reading sacred scripture, doing charitable acts, and caring about and praying for others. The Advent preparation tenor reinforces this depth of spiritual response and maturity.

Happy Advent!

Advent Reconciliation

There will be 3 Advent reconciliation services scheduled in Cedar Rapids deanery. All Saints will host one on Saturday, December 11th @ 10:30 am. St. Pius will host one on Saturday, December 18th @ 10:30 am. Due to the continuing COVID pandemic, both will be **General Absolution** services. Thursday, December 16th at St. Ludmila @ 6:30 pm a communal reconciliation service with traditional individual confession. Please participate in the one you prefer.

Fr. Andrew will be available all day Tuesday, December 22nd at St. John, and Wednesday, December 23rd at St. Isidore, to hear confession till 8 pm. Confession also takes place 30 minutes before weekend Mass, and by appointment.

Liturgical Seasons and Colors

I am sure you have noticed all the assorted colors Fr. Andrew wears during the different church seasons.

The Catholic Mass engages all our senses. The assorted colors draw our minds to the different seasons they represent, helping us on our journey with Christ. Every color has a symbolic meaning. Most of the year is “*Ordinary Time*” and the color is green which means “*life and hope.*” Occasionally, Fr. Andrew will wear white vestments during the season of Christmas and Easter, on feasts dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to the angels and to saints who are not martyrs. White symbolizes joy and victory.

Red vestments have two different symbolic meanings. It sometimes represents blood and is worn on Palm Sunday and Good Friday, and on the feast days of martyrs (who shed their blood for their faith) and the Apostles. Other times red signifies the fire of the Holy Spirit. This is why Fr. Andrew wears red on Pentecost and for Confirmation. During Advent and Lent, the color is purple or violet which symbolizes penance.

On the Third Sunday of Advent and the Fourth Sunday of Sunday of Lent, you may see Fr. Andrew in pink or rose vestments. Pink symbolizes the joy and anticipation for Christmas and Easter.

Linda Hansmeier, DRE

Readings for the week of December 5, 2021

Sunday: Bar 5:1-9/Ps 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6 [3]/Phil 1:4-6, 8-11/Lk 3:1-6
 Monday: Is 35:1-10/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14 [cf. Is 35:4f]/Lk 5:17-26
 Tuesday: Is 40:1-11/Ps 96:1-2, 3 and 10ac, 11-12, 13 [cf. Is 40:10ab]/Mt 18:12-14
 Wednesday: Gn 3:9-15, 20/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4 [1]/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38
 Thursday: Is 41:13-20/Ps 145:1 and 9, 10-11, 12-13ab [8]/Mt 11:11-15
 Friday: Is 48:17-19/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6 [cf. Jn 8:12]/Mt 11:16-19
 Saturday: Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16, 18-19 [4]/Mt 17:9a, 10-13
 Next Sunday:
 Zep 3:14-18a/Is 12:2-3, 4, 5-6 [6]/Phil 4:4-7/Lk 3:10-18



HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

Wednesday, December 8th - Note time

*6:30 pm - Darlene Allard

Friday, December 10th

8:30 am - Irvin & Louise Clark

Sunday, December 12th

8:30 am - Theresa Stewart



Meetings & Activities of the Week

Sunday, December 5th

6 - 7 pm - Advent Program Presentation
 7 - 7:30 pm - Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Wednesday, December 8th

6:00 pm - FF for grades 4th - 8th
 6:30 pm - Mass - 4th - 12th grade attend Mass
 After Mass high school go to lower level
 7 - 9 pm - Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Saturday, December 11th

6:30 - 8 pm - Men's Group

Sunday, December 12th

8:30 am - preschool
 9:30 am - K - 3rd grade
 9:30 am - Confirmation Session
 9:30 am - "Catholic Jam" Musician Rehearsal



STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

Weekly contributions needed..... \$5,423.08

Contributions Received

November 21, 2021

Budget, Adult.....	\$ 2,390.00
Loose Coin/Currency.....	\$ 177.00
Snow Removal.....	\$ 95.00
Total Collected.....	\$ 2,662.00
YTD collection needed.....	\$113,884.68
YTD collections received.....	\$111,851.36
YTD.....	\$ 2,033.32

Contributions Received

November 28, 2021

Budget, Adult.....	\$ 2,160.00
Loose Coin/Currency.....	\$ 280.00
Snow Removal.....	\$ 20.00
Up-Keep of Faculty.....	\$ 175.00
Thanksgiving.....	\$ 100.00
Total.....	\$ 2,735.00
YTD collection needed.....	\$ 119,306.00
YTD collections received.....	\$ 114,486.03
YTD.....	\$ 4,819.97



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Liturgical Ministers for December 12th

Sacristan: Jim Kendall

EM: Tom Wieseler Carol Woods Boren
 Pete Bahl Kathy Dix

Lector: Charlene Vig Vicky Wieseler

Greeters: Andy & Erin Moeller family
 Tim & Kim Fall family
 Dean & Kathy Mallie

Servers: Lauren Stolte Laura Swart

FORMED

Parishioners of St. John's, St. Isidore's and Sacred Heart now have access to FORMED --- an on-line platform with over 4000 Catholic videos, movies, educational topics and kids' programming. Browse the many options for movie night or find something to enhance your prayer life.

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 (use zip code 52314).**