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ST. JOHN, ONAWA ST. BERNARD, BLENCOE

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The Mass of the First Sunday of Advent November 27, 2016

Please remember in your prayers the sick of our parishes. Please pray for **Father O'Kane**, Verla Benjamin, Loretta Simoff, Doe Walker, Esther MacClure, Kayla Hausman, Shirley Turner, Pam Beck Casperson, Cheri Gibler, Darlene Ellis, Donna Linder, Ray & Maryann Mueller, Ken Stangel, Fred Servia, Charlotte Low, Mary Clare Mendick, Pete Mortensen, Kathy Siebersma, Judson Bramow, Bob Bruns, Connie Rasmussen & Louis Benjamin. If you know of someone who is ill and needs our prayers, and would like to be listed, or if you no longer need to be listed please contact the office @ 423-1004.

Liturgy Schedule ---Nov28- Dec 4

St. John, Onawa

Monday: No Mass

Tuesday: 9AM Monsignor Zenk

Wednesday: No Mass

Thursday: No Mass

Friday: 9 AM All Souls

Sunday: 9:00 AM A. J. Benjamin

St. Bernard, Blencoe

Wednesday: 9 AM Monsignor Zenk

Saturday: 6 PM Parishioners of St. John, St. Bernard & St. Joseph

St. Joseph, Salix

Thursday: 9am Mass

Saturday: 4 PM

Sunday: 11 AM

CONFESSIONS BEFORE MASS : ST. BERNARD 5:45-5:50 ON SATURDAYS. ST. JOHN 8:30-8:45 ON SUNDAYS

Dec 4

Saturday 5 PM (Blencoe)

Lector: Janet Ryan

EM's: © Chris McAndrews, Fran Tramp,

Mary Tramp (H)

Franklin & Wanda Heisterkamp

Sunday 9 AM (Onawa)

Amy Brandt

Armonda & Jada Barker, Maggie & Mollie Lage

Jerry Sievers© Anita Madsen© (Elmwood)

Lesley Hubert (H) (Homebound)

Grace Fouts

Contrary to popular opinion, it is not too late to give to DAA. If you have misplaced your card and/ or envelope, if you are/ were too tired, if you were going to but got distracted, this is your lucky day. In the pews this weekend and the next couple weekends, there will be an envelope for you to place your contribution for DAA. Just fill in a few blanks, put your name and your contribution in and drop it in the collection basket. It's just that easy to do your part and help our parishes make their goals. Our DAA goal this year at St. John is **\$9622.00. We are almost there, but we still need your help. St. Bernard has made their goal of **\$2333.00**. Congratulations! Please continue to be generous in your donation to DAA, our parishes gain considerably through the funds collected in this annual appeal. If you have made a pledge or payment online, please let me know so that I can credit you. Thank you!**

Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, was elected president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) during the annual fall General Assembly in Baltimore. Cardinal DiNardo has served as vice president of the USCCB since 2013. Cardinal DiNardo is elected to a three-year term and succeeds Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky. The new president's term begins at the conclusion of the General Assembly on November 15. Cardinal DiNardo was elected president on the first ballot with 113 votes. Cardinal DiNardo was born May 23, 1949, and ordained a priest of Pittsburgh on June 16, 1977. He previously served as bishop of Sioux City, Iowa, from 1998-2004 before being appointed to coadjutor bishop, then archbishop, of Galveston-Houston. Pope Benedict XVI named him a cardinal in 2007, making him the first cardinal from Texas. Please keep Cardinal DiNardo and all our Religious men and women in your prayers.

It is that time of year, when we start to gather our resources and evaluate where we are and what we have accomplished this year. Have we done all we can for our family, friends & community? Is there a little bit more that we can do to increase our giving of our time, talents and treasure, and in doing so, help a little bit more. Please do not forget your church family, church friends and church community. Our expenses are increasing and our income is not. Please consider increasing your giving, even just a bit. It all helps. *Farmers, please consider a donation of grain. Thank you for your continued generosity.**

Knights of Columbus Annual Toy Drive: The Knights of Columbus Council 6249 is holding it's Annual Christmas Toy Drive. All toys collected on this drive will go to West Central Development of Onawa to be distributed to help those less fortunate in Monona County. New toys can be dropped off at St. John's Church, Dollar General, Stangel Pharmacy, Bomgaars or Shopko in Onawa or St. Bernard's Church in Blencoe starting on November 21st.
All Toys stay in Monona County.

Christmas Flower Memorials for St. John & St. Bernard: It is wonderful at Christmas time to make a contribution for Christmas flowers in Memory of Loved Ones. We are asking for a contribution of \$25.00. If you wish to participate, we ask that you write the name of your loved ones on paper, clearly mark your envelope "Christmas Flowers", or use the Christmas Flower envelope in your packet and place in the collection basket. In the bulletin of December 25, we will publish the names of the contributor and their loved ones. Please do not donate a flower, we would like all our plants to be uniform in size and color.

Would you like to make a difference for other adults in your community? If you are 55 or better, the Senior Companion Program would love to help you get started! Volunteer benefits may be available. Senior Companion volunteers work with adults one-on-one to help them maintain their independence in their own homes through visiting and assistance. Be that friend and companion to someone who can use your support to improve their quality of life. For more information about being a volunteer or receiving Senior Companion services, please contact the nearest Senior Companion office at 712-224-2610 or 712-476-2628 or view their website www.rvrseniorvolunteerprograms.org.

As we begin Advent, we light one candle in the midst of all the darkness in our lives and in the world. It symbolizes our longing, our desire, our hope. Three “advents” or “comings” shape our desire. We want to be renewed in a sense that Jesus came to save us from our sin and death. We want to experience his coming to us now, in our everyday lives, to help us live our lives with meaning and purpose. And we want to prepare for his coming to meet us at the end of our lives on this earth.

So, we begin with our longing, our desire and our hope.

When we wake up, each day this week, we could light that candle, just by taking a few moments to focus. We could pause for a minute at the side of our bed, or while putting on our slippers or our robe, and light an *inner* candle. Who among us doesn't have time to pause for a moment? We could each find our own way to pray something like this:

“Lord, the light I choose to let into my life today is based on my trust in you. It is a weak flame, but I so much desire that it dispel a bit more darkness today. Today, I just want to taste the longing I have for you as I go to the meeting this morning, carry out the responsibilities of my work, face the frustration of some difficult relationships. Let this candle be my reminder today of my hope in your coming.”

Each morning this week, that momentary prayer might get more specific, as it prepares us for the day we will face. And as we head to work, walk to a meeting, rush through lunch, take care of errands, meet with people, pick up the phone to return some calls, answer e-mail, return home to prepare a meal, listen to the ups and downs of our loved ones' day, we can take brief moments to relate our desire for the three comings of the Lord to our life.

If our family has an Advent wreath, or even if it doesn't, we could pray together before our evening meal. As we light the first candle on the wreath, or as we simply pause to pray together our normal grace. Then, as we begin to eat, we can invite each other, including the children, to say something about what it means today to light this first candle.

Perhaps we could ask a different question each night, or ask about examples from the day. How am I getting in touch with the longing within me? How did I prepare today? What does it mean to prepare to celebrate his coming 2,000 years ago? How can we prepare to experience his coming into our lives this year? What does it mean for us now, with our world involved in so much conflict? How are we being invited to trust more deeply? How much more do we long for his coming to us, in the midst of the darkness in our world? In what ways can we renew our lives so we might be prepared to greet him when he comes again? Our evening meal could be transformed this week, if we could shape some kind of conversation together that lights a candle of anticipation in our lives. Don't worry if everyone isn't “good at” this kind of conversation at first. We can model it, based on our momentary pauses throughout each day, in which we are discovering deeper and deeper desires, in the midst of our everyday lives.

And every night this week, we can pause briefly, perhaps as we sit for a minute at the edge of the bed. We can be aware of how that one, small candle's worth of desire brought light into this day. And we can give thanks. Going to bed each night this week with some gratitude is part of the preparation for growing anticipation and desire.

***Come, Lord Jesus! Come and visit your people.
We await your coming. Come, O Lord***