

ST. MARY PARISH

518 South 2nd Street; PO Box 847; Guttenberg, Iowa 52052

Newsletter: Dec. 21, 2023 ~ Rectory: 563-252-1247 ~ Fr.'s Cell: 563-258-3958 ~ www.maryicjoseph.org

LIVE THE LITURGY: Christmas Joy!

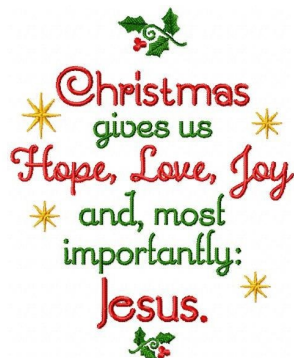
~ source: Creighton University


All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God. *But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God.* John 1

We plan to celebrate the family Christmas morning, with our traditional customs, perhaps with a Christmas tree gift sharing with the children. When we come to church to celebrate our faith together, there is a different feel than midnight Mass or even an early morning Mass. Still, the choir draws us in immediately. We look at each other and smile and we see the bright eyes of the elderly and single friends around the community. We know why we are here, and it is easy to join in the singing.

Let us give thanks today. Let us **repeat the sounding joy** of a faith-filled Christmas. Let's go forth to share glad tidings with our family and friends. Let's help our Lord usher in an age of justice and peace, beginning in our own hearts this day.

Brothers and sisters: In times past, God spoke in partial and various way to our ancestors through the prophets; in these last days, he has spoken to us through the Son. *Hebrews 1*



 A holiday gift . . . To: **You**
From: St. Mary Parish Life
“**THE ROCKING CHAIR PROPHET**”
book, by Matthew Kelly, has arrived and is now available at the entry ways of the church. It is great book to read; containing many every day, common sense events.

Roof Replacement Projects

The roofs on the church and the old school will be replaced in 2024 at an estimated cost of \$250,000. Donations are being accepted. Please make checks out to St. Mary Parish and indicate Roof Project in the memo line.

A sample of the steel shakes that will be put on the church and old school building can be found at the back of church.

Mass Schedule: Dec 23 – Dec 31, 2023

Sat., Dec 23: Vigil of Fourth Sunday of Advent
[No Masses]

Sun., Dec 24: Fourth Sunday of Advent
10:00 A.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg, Mass
(this Mass will **not** be live streamed)
People of the Parish

Sun., Dec 24: Christmas Eve
4:00 P.M. – St. Joseph, Garnavillo, children's Mass
Marion Moses
5:30 P.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg, children's Mass
Janice & Clifford Frommelt



Mon., Dec 25: Christmas Day
8:30 A.M. – N. Buena Vista – children's Mass
10:00 A.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg, **live streamed**
Dec'd of Kann/Kolker Families

Tues., Dec 26: [No Mass Scheduled]

Wed., Dec 27: 8:30 A.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg
Leonard & Editha Hartmann

Thur., Dec 28: 8:30 A.M. – Guttenberg River Living Center
People of the Parish

Fri., Dec 29: [No Mass Scheduled]

Sat., Dec 30: Vigil of Feast of the Holy Family
4:00 P.M. – St. Joseph, Garnavillo
Tracy Werges & Bert Behrend
5:30 P.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg
Robert & Elaine Hoffmann

Sun., Dec 31: Feast of the Holy Family
8:30 A.M. – Immaculate Conception, N. Buena Vista
10:00 A.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg
Roger Bries & Charlie Bries

GOSPEL REFLECTION: "Nothing will be impossible for God"

source: <http://rclblectionary.com>

The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will conceive and bear a son and name him Jesus. Mary does not understand how this can be, and the angel explains that the Holy Spirit will come upon her and "the power of the Most High will overshadow [her]." Gabriel then tells Mary that Elizabeth, too, will bear a son, emphasizing that "nothing will be impossible for God." Mary replies, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word."

As Christmas nears, what seems most impossible to you? Does it seem impossible that all the gifts will be bought, wrapped, and under the tree in time for Christmas morning? Does it seem impossible that you will have time to complete the preparations for and cooking of the Christmas meal? Does it seem impossible that family members will get along? Take time to talk to the Lord about these seeming impossibilities. Quietly repeat the promise of the angel Gabriel, "nothing will be impossible for God."

Continue the above reflection with your family members. Light the four candles of the Advent wreath and invite each family member to name something that seems impossible—perhaps a difficult task or deadline—that he or she must take care of by Christmas Day. Then pray together the words of the angel Gabriel; "Nothing will be impossible for God." Support and encourage each other in the days between today and Christmas Day.

Prayer for Vocations:

Father, we're your people, the work of your hands. So precious are we in your sight that you sent your Son, Jesus. Jesus calls us to heal the broken-hearted, to dry the tears of those who mourn, to give hope to those who despair, and to rejoice in your steadfast love. We, the baptized, realize our call to serve. Help us to know how. Call forth from among us priests, sisters, brothers and lay ministers. With our hearts you continue to love your people. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

Coming Soon . . .

2024 Archdiocesan Women's Conference, Beauty in Christ: Reviving our Hearts!
Saturday, January 27, 2024, 8:30 - 1:30
St. Mary Parish Center

A Christmas Prayer

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary,
the obedience of Joseph,
the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the determination of the magi,
and the peace of the Christ child.
Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.
~Ray Pritchard

Special thanks to Harry Bries for sharing his talents to restore our manger figurines!

Faith Formation Tree

Take a look at the beautiful Faith Formation Tree by the manger scene. The tree was donated in memory of Stella Weber Sholly, a 1916 graduate of St. Mary School, decorated with ornaments made by our Faith Formation children and adorned with lilies of the valley representing the idea of a pure heart and the innocence of youth.



A Stewardship Moment

In the first reading, God promises King David that his house and his kingdom will endure forever. It is through Mary's "Yes" – "I am the handmaid of the Lord, Let it be done to me as you say." – that the promise finds fulfillment.

Upcoming Parish Events . . .

(BH is Brinkmann Hall; PC is Parish Center)

Jan 10: Faith Formation Classes, 6pm
Jan 14: KC Breakfast, 8:00-11:30am
Jan 22: Parish Council/Finance Meeting, 6:30pm
Jan 27: Beauty in Christ Women's Conf, 8:30-1:30, PC
Feb 6: CDA, Noon in Monona

2024 Budget Envelopes are available at the back of church. Please let the office know if you no longer need a budget box due to online giving or you simply use your own envelope.

Reminder: The Internal Revenue Service requires all contributions to the parish must be **contributed/postmarked** by **December 31, 2023** to receive charitable credit for 2023.

Please email items for the bulletin by 7:30am Wednesday morning to OfficeOfStMary@gmail.com

Priest: Rev. Marvin J. Bries, 563-252-1247
Deacon: James Pfaffly, 563-880-9696
Faith Formation: Erin Schmelzer, 563-880-7471
Parish Life: Lois Bries, 563-252-3026
Stewardship/Liturgy: Sue Bahls, 563-252-3253
Social Justice: Gerald Bormann, 563-419-6967
Choir: Gina Dahlstrom-Osborn, 563-213-9021

Finance:
Jim Schlueter
563-252-1490
Steve Bahls
Marv Althoff
Jeff Burr
Al Schlueter
Tom Augustyn

Parish Council:
Don Scherbring
563-252-1556
Gerald Bormann
Lois Bries
Sue Bahls
Adam Scherbring

Parish Center: Lora Kolker, 563-880-9111
Parish Center Reservations: 563-252-1577
Knights: Adam Scherbring, 563-880-3808
St. Anne: Maggie Schlueter, 563-252-1490
Cath Daughters: Lois Bries: 563-252-3026
Prayer Line: Betty Evers, 563-252-1666
Friends of St Mary: Jane Parker, 563-880-5469