

ST. MARY PARISH

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

Newsletter: Dec. 28, 2023 ~ Rectory: 563-252-1247 ~ Fr.'s Cell: 563-258-3958 ~ www.maryicjoseph.org

LIVE THE LITURGY:

~ source: Marcellino D'Ambosio; catholicmom.com

As a teen, I assumed that a serious pursuit of holiness meant opting out of marriage and family to enter a convent, monastery or seminary. Holiness was about lots of quiet prayer and apostolic work. The noisy, everyday life of family was a distraction to all this. The role of married folks was to merely get to Mass on Sunday, obey the Ten Commandments, and get into heaven.

The feast of the Holy Family shows how far off-base I was. It reminds us, that all human beings are called to the heights of holiness. That all states in life, including student, teenager, and parent, offer abundant opportunities to grow in faith, hope, and love. That the nitty gritty of family life, if approached right, can be a road to profound personal transformation and communion with God.

Think about it. The creator of the universe spent most of his human life as a craftsman, working with dad in the family business and ultimately taking it over. Mary, the holiest and greatest of all creatures, spent most of her time changing diapers, cooking, and cleaning. **The secret to holiness is not to do extraordinary things, but to do ordinary things with extraordinary love and gratitude** (Col 3:15-17).

The word seminary means "seedbed." It is a greenhouse where, in a sheltered environment, vocations can sprout and develop so they can be ready not only to survive in the real world, but to bear fruit there. The family is the original seminary. There is sown the call to share in both Christ's holiness and his mission. Ironically, tending to these seedlings causes the parent/gardeners to grow as well. So family, in God's plan, is a community where everyone grows and becomes more fruitful.

The bottom line is this—we don't become holy despite the busy-ness of family life, but in and through it.

BAPTISM INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD & OUR COMMUNITIES OF FAITH:



Saturday, January 6 at St. Mary, Guttenberg after Mass

Bowen James Knipper

son of Trevor & Stacia (White) Knipper

May you grow in age, knowledge & wisdom in the Lord!

From the desk of the Pastor . . .

Thank you for your Christmas cards and gifts. May God bless you in your generous gifts to your pastor.

Mass Schedule: Jan 1 – Jan 7, 2023

Mon., Jan 1: [No Mass Scheduled]

(The Feast of Mary, Mother of God is not obligatory this year)

Tues., Jan 2: [No Mass Scheduled]

Wed., Jan 3: 8:30 A.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg

"Feast of the Most Holy Name of Jesus" *Loris Kickbush & Owen Kabb*

Thur., Jan 4: 10:00 A.M. – Guttenberg Care Center

"St. Elizabeth Ann Seton" *Leon Berns & Pete Davis*

Fri., Jan 5: [No Mass Scheduled], "St. John Neumann"

Sat., Jan 6: Vigil of Epiphany of the Lord

4:00 P.M. – St. Joseph, Garnavillo

Mary Jane Steger (Anniv.)

5:30 P.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg

Dec'd of Goerd/White Families

Sun., Jan 7: Epiphany of the Lord

8:30 A.M. – Immaculate Conception, N. Buena Vista

10:00 A.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg, **live streamed**

People of the Parish

KC Biscuits & Gravy Breakfast

Drive-thru and Dine In;

St. Mary Church

Sunday, December 14

8-11:30am

Free will donation.

Roof Replacement Projects

The roofs on the church and the old school will be replaced in 2024. 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.

GOSPEL REFLECTION:

~ source: Steve Scholer, Creighton University

Today is the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. The message in the reading from Sirach is as meaningful today, if not more so, than it was some 2,200 years ago.

God, in his infinite wisdom, saw that a family that respected and honored one another was essential to his plan. A family would be the source of not only a sense of belonging and a home, but where honor, duty, justice, and compassion were taught, and comfort and love were found. A family would be the wellspring of strength in times of need and would be there to celebrate the joyous occasions of life.

I think we all would agree that being part of a loving, caring family is truly a gift from God and is one that we deeply cherish. So, why not share this gift with others? Why do we so often withhold our love and caring from those who are not our members of our biological family, but who need the love, comfort, and support we find in our family just as much, if not more, than we do?

Just think what the world might have missed, had Jesus decided that his love and compassion were limited only to Mary and Joseph. If he had not willingly laid down his life for those outside of his family, people he did not know, we would have no hope of salvation. It is as simple as that!

As we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph and go about the New Year, let us strive to be more inclusive in our definition of family. Let us include the disenfranchised, the infirm, whose lives are confined to nursing homes, our neighbors and office mates who sometimes annoy us, and those whose political persuasions are not the same as ours.

If we can be more Christlike in expanding our definition of family, then we, too, can make the world a better place not only for those we interact with, but for the good it does for our own well-being. And in so doing find joy in extending our love to all of God's children.

Thank You ~ Thank You ~ Thank You

Thank you for all those who made our church a beautiful place of worship this Christmas season and throughout the year — the people who decorated the church, those who made donations of or for poinsettias, adult and children choir members, Eucharistic ministers, ushers, readers, Mass servers, faith formation teachers, janitors, those who work behind the scenes, Fr. Bries, Deacon Pfaffly and most of all, **thanks to each of you for joining us in person or online in worship!**

A New Year's Prayer

Lord, You make all things new
You bring hope alive in our hearts
And cause our Spirits to be born again. Thank you for this
new year
For all the potential it holds.
Come and kindle in us A mighty flame
So that in our time, many will see the wonders of God
And live forever to praise Your glorious name.

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 Stewardship Moment

"Whatever you do," says St. Paul to the Colossians, "...do it in the name of the Lord Jesus. Give thanks to God the Father through Him." And so it is that we offer our gifts in the Eucharist "through Him, with Him, and in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit."

Upcoming Parish Events . . .

(BH is Brinkmann Hall; PC is Parish Center)

Jan 2: KC Meeting, 7:30pm
Jan 3: Sacred Seed Sowers Book Club, 1pm, PC
Jan 10: Faith Formation Classes, 6pm
Jan 14: KC Breakfast, 8:00-11:30am
Jan 15: Parish Council/Finance Meeting, 6:30pm
Jan 17: Sacred Seed Sowers Book Club, 1pm, PC
Faith Formation Classes, 6pm
Jan 24: Faith Formation Classes, 6pm
Jan 27: Beauty in Christ Women's Conf, 8:30-1:30, PC
Jan 31: Sacred Seed Sowers Book Club, 1pm, PC
Feb 6: CDA, Noon in Monona

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