

# ST. MARY PARISH

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

Newsletter: Dec 2, 2021

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## **LIVE THE LITURGY Inspiration for the week: “Be Vigilant at all Times”**

Staying awake can often be a challenge, especially when we are exhausted. Life’s demands have a way of zapping every last bit of energy out of us. When we are tired it affects us not only physically, but psychologically and spiritually as well. All of our senses are dulled and diminished. We can overlook details, become disinterested, lethargic and apathetic, and detached. Getting sufficient physical rest only helps so much. We need to be rejuvenated, refreshed, and reenergized in other ways. If we are psychologically exhausted, we need to understand what is draining our emotions and taxing our relationships. If we are spiritually tired, we need to find the necessary “shot in the arm” to put us back in touch with God. Unfortunately, exhaustion is seldom limited to just one part of who we are. When we lack energy and zeal it is usually the case that everything suffers. We not only are affected physically, but psychologically and spiritually as well. In short, when we run out of gas the engine stops.

And yet, our Lord’s directive is clear, “Be vigilant at all times.” Even Jesus knew what “the anxieties of daily life” can do to us. One day pours into another and time quickly flies by. Any one of us can take a moment and reflect on how many wonderful, creative opportunities we miss because there is always so much “stuff” to do and so little time to do it. Usually these are missed moments of love, and if we are missing love encounters we are also missing God.

Sleepwalking through life, we check the boxes next to our list of “must and have to dos” and justify it all by convincing ourselves that tomorrow is another day and there’ll be more time. It may surprise us, but tomorrow is here, and time is running out. While we may like to believe that we have an “eternity” of time to do all those things that require the focus, energy, and desire we do not currently have, we don’t. We’re on a limited ride and time is short. Jesus is also clear on another point. “That day [will] catch you by surprise like a trap.” If we are going to be judged on love and so easily justify not having all that much time to do so, then it seems we must shift focus a bit. St. Teresa of Calcutta tells us, “We desire to be able to welcome Jesus at Christmas-time, not in a cold manger of our heart, but in a heart full of love and humility, a heart so pure, so immaculate, so warm with love for one another.” Getting to this place doesn’t “just happen.” It requires vigilance and discipline both with a knowledge of what is really of importance and what really needs to be the focus of our energy and time. Pray, starting now and not tomorrow, that we can stay alert, be strengthened in our faith, and prepared for whatever will come. Don’t miss another opportunity to love. ©LPi

**CHRISTMAS GIFT:** If you did not receive the book by Matthew Kelly, “**LIFE IS MESSY**,” this last weekend, look for it in the entry way of church. This book is a loose collection of journal entries written by the author during very difficult times and the process of healing and becoming a stronger person. This book was promoted by the St. Mary’s Parish Life & Catholic Daughters America.

### **Adoration & Reconciliation**

Parishioners are welcome to join Youth Ministry on Wed., Dec 8<sup>th</sup> for Adoration of Blessed Sacrament and the burning of your sins from 7–8pm in St. Mary’s church.

St. Mary Finance Council meeting on Mon., Dec. 13 at 6:30 P.M. & Pastoral Council meeting at 7 P.M. Packets for members will be on back table of church weekend of Dec. 11 & 12.

### **Mass Schedule: Dec. 6 – Dec. 12, 2021**

**Mon., Dec 6:** [No Mass Scheduled]

**Tues., Dec 7:** 8:30 A.M. St. Joseph, Garnavillo, Mass  
“St. Ambrose” – *Kathleen Neylan & Barb Mohning*

**Wed., Dec 8:** 8:30 A.M. St. Mary, Guttenberg, Mass, Gr. 2  
“Feast of Immaculate Conception of BVM” - *People of Parish*

**Thur., Dec 9:** 8:30 A.M. – Guttenberg River Living Center  
*Harold Mueller & Owen Kann*

**Fri., Dec 10:** [No Mass Scheduled]

**Sat., Dec 11:** Vigil of Third Sunday of Advent  
4:00 P.M. – St. Joseph, Garnavillo, Mass  
*Bert Behrend & Tracy Werges*

5:30 P.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg, Mass  
*Robert ‘Bob’ Hoffmann*

**Sun., Dec 12:** Third Sunday of Advent  
8:30 A.M. – Immaculate Conception, N. Buena Vista  
*People of the Parish*  
10:00 A.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg, Mass, *Live Streamed*  
*Jean [Wessels] Mensen (Month Mind)*

**SPECIAL COLLECTION FOR RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT FUND:** Envelope in your budget boxes.

## GOSPEL REFLECTION: Humility Prepares the Way for Christ

“A voice of one crying out in the desert. ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.’” [Luke 3:4](#)

On this, the Second Sunday of Advent, we are given the person of St. John the Baptist to ponder. What a gift he is! Jesus Himself stated that “among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist” ([Matthew 11:11](#)). What a compliment! What is it that made John so great? We can point to two things in particular. The first has to do with his calling and the second has to do with his virtue.

First of all, John was great because he was the transition from the Old Testament Prophets to the New Testament. He was the bridge that prepared for the new life to come. His unique mission makes him truly great. But John was great not only because of his unique calling, he was also great because of the virtue he had in his life. And it is this gift that is worth pondering for our own inspiration more than any other.

The particular virtue that John had was that of humility. He saw himself as nothing other than a “voice of one crying out in the desert.” And the Word he spoke was Jesus. John acknowledged that he was not even worthy to stoop down and untie the sandal straps of Jesus ([Mark 1:7](#)). He was praised by many and followed by many and yet he continuously said of Jesus that “He must increase and I must decrease” ([John 3:30](#)). John was not in it for praise and honor; rather, his mission was to point everyone to the Savior of the World. He could have sought the honor and praise of many and he would have certainly received it. They may have even made him king. But John was more than willing to fulfill his mission and then submit himself to the cruel sword of his executioner. His humility was such that he was focused only on Jesus and desired only to point to Him.

Reflect, today, upon this humility in your own life. Do you tend to point to yourself or to Christ? Do you seek the praise of others or do you humbly point all praise and glory to God? Humility is the path that St. John the Baptist took and it’s the path we must strive for each and every day.

*Lord, thank You for the gift of St. John the Baptist. May his witness of humility inspire me in my Christian walk. Help me, Lord, to always point others to You rather than to myself. Jesus, I trust in You.* source: mycatholiclife.com

## St. Mary Social Justice Committee’s 3rd annual CHRISTMAS CLOTHING MISSION

This year the need is greater than ever due to Covid’s effect on our working and needy families.

*Please select a tag from the Giving Tree in the back of church. Each tag will identify an item for a child or adult in need. After you purchase the item, please return it with the tag attached, and place it in the container at the back of church. There is no need to gift wrap.*



Items need to be returned by December 19.

The Family Resource Center is helping us to identify and distribute the clothing.

On this second Sunday of Advent as we prepare for the coming of Jesus, we remember that Jesus is our hope and our peace. Light the second purple candle on your advent wreath, the candle of Peace.

Clayton Ridge High School Christmas Concert  
Sunday, Dec. 12 – 7 P.M.  
St. Mary’s Church in Guttenberg



### **CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE:**

(No children’s Mass this year due to covid)

Fri., Dec., 24, 4:00 P.M. - Garnavillo  
6:00 P.M. – N. Buena Vista  
Sat., Dec. 25, 9:00 A.M. - Guttenberg

### **Upcoming Parish Events . . . .**

Dec 4/5: General Absolution offered during all Masses  
Dec 5: After 10:00am Mass; Celebration of Carla’s organist legacy!  
Dec 5: IC Soup Lunch/Vendor Show, N. Buena Vista  
Dec 7: CDA Mtg, Noon, Brinkmann Hall; all women invited!  
Dec 7: KC Meeting, 7:30 pm  
Dec 8: Youth Ministry, 6:15-7pm, Brinkmann Hall  
Dec 8: Adoration & Reconciliation, 7-8 pm, St. Mary Church  
Dec 13: Finance Committee Mtg 6:30pm  
Pastoral Council Mtg, 7pm  
Dec 15: SMIC Christmas Concert, 6pm  
Dec 15: Youth Ministry, 6:15-8pm, Brinkmann Hall

### **A Stewardship Moment**

Good stewards believe that God, who has begun this good work in them, will carry it through to completion. In words and deeds, they can sing with the Psalmist, “The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy!”

**Donate \$1 to the STO, and you’ll get back 75 cents!** A donation to the Our Faith School Tuition Organization is that simple. For every dollar, you donate you receive ¾’s of your donation back in an Iowa income tax credit. Check with your tax professional on how this could work for you. Tax Credits for 2021 are only available until December 31. Help Catholic school families with tuition assistance and help yourself to a tax credit. For questions, visit [www.ourfaithsto.org](http://www.ourfaithsto.org) or call Deacon Brian Zeman at (563) 556-2580 x296