

ST. MARY PARISH

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

January 23, 2025 ~ Rectory: 563-252-1247 ~ Fr.'s Cell: 563-880-6017 ~ www.maryicjoseph.org

LIVE THE LITURGY:

~ St. Mary's Liturgy Committee

In today's Gospel, Jesus does not hesitate to proclaim who He is and the mission He has been sent to accomplish. If you could sum up Jesus's mission in just a few words, you might say that He came to *set us free*. That's what He told the townspeople in the Nazareth synagogue as He read from the prophet's scroll: His mission statement - He had been sent "to proclaim liberty to captives" and "to let the oppressed go free." He came to set us free from sin and death itself, and from everything that prevents us from living the abundant life He came to give us.

So what would you like to be set free from right now? Perhaps worry has you tied up in knots, casting shadow over everything you say or do. Maybe it's fear that keeps you awake at night or stops you from taking that next step in following the Lord. You could be feeling discouraged about the state of the world or the state of your family. Or perhaps you're fighting a compulsion that leads you into sin. We often accept these things as an inevitable part of living as fallen people in a fallen world. But that kind of thinking discounts the power of Jesus's cross and resurrection. He died and rose so that you could be set free from anything that steals your peace and joy!

Today, take some time to examine your heart. Is there anything holding you captive? If so, let it go by offering it up to the Lord. Then make an act of faith by telling Jesus that you believe His proclamation to the people of Nazareth. Through His death and resurrection, He really has let the oppressed go free - and that includes every one of us!

"Jesus, thank you for setting me free!"

Gift Bearers

The privilege of carrying the "Gifts" to the altar during the Mass is accomplished by the Gift Bearers. It is a simple, special, and meaningful part of the Mass. These gift bearers represent the entire parish as we return to God a small part of the many blessings that He has given to us. **What a wonderful way to express thanks and joy to God by bearing these gifts!**

Any occasion can be a time to serve as a gift bearer: a birthday, an anniversary, or just a "happy day." Or maybe you would like to bring up the gifts on a memorial of a loved one. At least two people are needed for each Mass and families are welcome to bring up the gifts together. Serving as a gift bearer requires no special skill. Let an usher at your Mass know that you / your family are willing to take up the gifts that day.

Speaker System Project

The Parish Council has approved a project to add ten additional speakers to our church. White Dove Electronics has been contracted to do the project at a cost of approximately \$14,000. The KC's are donating \$6865 with the remainder coming out of parish funds. Work will begin on Monday. The KC's also purchased the headset mic that Fr. Paul wears. Many thanks to the KCs!

2024 Contribution Statements

Year-end contribution statements are available at the back of church. Please pick up at your convenience. The church is open daily.

Mass Schedule: Jan 27 – Feb 2, 2025

Mon. Jan 27: [No Mass Scheduled]

Tues., Jan 28: [No Mass Scheduled]

Wed., Jan 29: 8:30 A.M. Mass – St. Mary, Guttenberg
Bernice Haas

Thur., Jan 30: 8:30 A. M.—Guttenberg River Living Center
Judy Blattel

Fri., Jan 31: 8:30 A.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg
Dec'd of Kann/Kolker family
9:00-9:45 A.M. — Confessions

Sat., Feb 1: Vigil of 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time
4:00 P.M. Mass—St. Joseph, Garnavillo
Gerald & Amy Hoeger
5:30 P.M. Mass—St. Mary, Guttenberg
Albert & Marie Bieber

Sun., Feb 2: Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
8:30 A.M. Mass – Immaculate Conception, N. Buena Vista
People of the Parish
10:00 A.M. – Mass – St. Mary, Guttenberg, *live streamed*
People of the Parish

Homily: Your words are Spirit, Lord, and they are Life!

~Fr. Paul Ameyaw

Today we meet the people of Israel and two of their leaders, namely Ezra and Nehemiah. When these returnees reached Jerusalem, Ezra realized that after so many years of living in exile, the people ignored even the basics of the Law of Moses. They did not obey the law, they forgot the religious festivals, even the Sabbath was not properly observed. In brief, the people lived like pagans did.

As a matter of urgency, Ezra had to acquaint the people with the Law of Moses. In consultation with Nehemiah, the administrator, he called for an assembly of the whole people that lasted several days. Ezra in person stood on a platform, read the Book of the Law, while translators translated what was being read and explained its meaning to the people.

The people listened to God’s word and were moved to tears. They realized Gods’ generous love for their forefathers in the face of their ingratitude and unfaithfulness. The outcome was their resolution to put away idolatry, to observe the Sabbath strictly and to contribute towards the building of the temple.

In the Gospel, we find another liturgical setting, Jesus in the Synagogue of Nazareth, his home town. This time, however, the people of Nazareth, unlike Ezra’s Congregation, rejected the word of God spoken to them and consequently rejected the Word made flesh.

My dear people of God, these two groups of people stand for every man and woman that come into the world, ourselves included. When the scriptures are read to us during our service, it is Jesus himself who speaks to us. When the reading ends each time we should hear Jesus himself say: “This text is being fulfilled even as you listen”.

Each time then we listen to God’s word, we are compelled to either accept it like Ezra’s Congregation or reject it like the Nazareth Congregation. My dear beloved in Christ, but God’s word is a word of life and it communicates God’s Spirit to us. The word should take root in our hearts and transform us into true and faithful disciples of the Lord and to know more about Him, to love Him and serve Him better.

My dear people of God, let us pray for all Christians, that they may have a better understanding of the word of God.

May the Good Lord richly bless you! Amen

Bringing the Gospel Into Your Family:

Children are really all the things listed in what Jesus read from Isaiah. They are poor because they really depend on parents for their every material need. They are not free because they are too young and inexperienced to live on their own. While they're not completely blind, much of what they do see has been shaped by their parent's vision. When we think of all parents do for their children, it becomes clearer all that Jesus is for us.

Who are the oppressed people in your community, neighborhood, or parish? Is there another family carrying a heavy burden right now? Reach out to that family in hospitality. Perhaps you could invite them over for an evening of cards or board games, or send them a "thinking-of-you" card. Be sure to keep them in your family's daily prayers.

~<http://www.rc1blectionary.com>

A Stewardship Moment

The US bishops’ pastoral letter on stewardship reinforces today’s reading from I Corinthians: “Because its individual members do collectively make up the Body of Christ, that body’s health and well-being are the responsibility of the members - the personal responsibility of each one of us. We all are stewards of the Church.”

Upcoming Parish Events . . .

(BH is Brinkmann Hall; PC is Parish Center)

- Jan 27: Liturgy Meeting, 9:30am, PC
Finance Committee Mtg, Noon, PC
- Feb 2: Patriotic Rosary, 5:30pm
- Feb 4: Scripture Study, 8:30-10:30 am, PC
CDA Mtg, Noon, St. Mary’s
KC Meeting, 7:30pm
- Feb 5: Sacred Seed Sowers Book Club, 1pm, PC
Faith Formation Classes, 6pm
- Feb 6: Scripture Study, 6:30-8:30 pm, PC
- Feb 11: Scripture Study, 8:30-10:30 am, PC
- Feb 12: Faith Formation Classes, 6pm
- Feb 13: Scripture Study, 6:30-8:30 pm, PC

Please submit items for the bulletin by Tuesday evening to OfficeOfStMary@gmail.com

Priest: Fr. Paul Kwaku Ameyaw, 563-880-6017
 Deacon: James Pfaffly, 563-880-9696
 Faith Formation: Erin Schmelzer, 563-880-7471
 Youth Ministry: Katey Simon, 563-219-4129
 Parish Life: Lois Bries, 563-252-3026
 Stewardship/Liturgy: Sue Bahls, 563-252-3253
 Social Justice: Gerald Bormann, 563-419-6967
 Choir: Anna Moser, 563-880-1176
 Secretary: Lisa Kies, 880-1946; officeofstmary@gmail.com

Finance:
 Jim Schlueter
 563-252-1490
 Marv Althoff
 Jeff Burr
 Tom Augustyn
 Sharon Keehner
 Austin Greve

Parish Council:
 Beth Sadewasser, Chair
 563-880-2743
 Jessie Young, Gerald
 Bormann, Lois Bries
 Adam Scherbring
 Larry Wille

Parish Center: Lora Kolker, 563-880-9111
 Parish Center Reservations: 563-252-1577
 Knights: Dale Wille, 309-232-9476
 St. Anne: Maggie Schlueter, 563-252-1490
 Cath Daughters: Janet Happel: 319-530-9121
 Prayer Line: Betty Evers, 563-252-1666
 Friends of St Mary: Jane Parker, 563-880-5469
 St. Mary Alumni: Pat Kolker, 563-880-9815
 Phoebe Johnson: 563 880-4767

Stephen Ministry: Becky Shaffer, 319-393-1234