

ST. MARY PARISH

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

Newsletter: Nov 23, 2022 ~ Rectory: 563-252-1247 ~ Fr.'s Cell: 563-258-3958 ~ www.maryicjoseph.org

LIVE THE LITURGY Inspiration for the week: **Eyes On Your Own Paper**

“Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be powerful earthquakes, famines, and plagues from place to place.”

Looking at these words, I have to wonder. Am I reading the Bible or today's newspaper headline?

It's never easier to despair than when you glance up and take a good look at what's going on in the world: disasters, natural and contrived, wars, resentments, rivalries, and divisions. It is almost too much sometimes, isn't it? The twenty-four-hour news cycle doesn't help. Add social media and it's enough to push anyone into a nervous breakdown.

When you find yourself in this place of despair, remember Paul's admonishment in his letter to the Thessalonians. Work quietly and eat your own food.

It's not so different from the old “keep-your-eyes-on-your-own-paper” rule of the classroom. Poking our noses into other people's business, we may think we are getting a shortcut to the right answer, but we're really just getting distracted. When we become too preoccupied with events that we cannot control — whether they are happening in our neighborhood or half-a-world away — we are tempted to leave off the very specific work God has given us in our own lives. We are easily lured into anger, bitterness, and anxiety.

What is the work that God has called you to? Is it your career? Your family? Your community? What is your food — what nourishes you, sustains you, connects you to something real, powerful, and life-giving? This is what you should be concerned with. This is where your thoughts and your efforts should be.

Work quietly and eat your own food. — *Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS*

Happy Thanksgiving

Good and gracious God, we give You thanks today, as we do all days, first and foremost for the gift of creation and the gift of life. We ask You to bless this food, that it may nourish us and sustain us, and strengthen our ability to do Your will. We pray in thanksgiving for all the hands involved in bringing it to our table. You tell us, Lord, that to whom much is given, much is expected. May this meal and the fellowship we enjoy not only serve as clear reminders of Your love of us, but of Your call for us to share Your love and to serve our brothers and sisters, especially those most in need. We ask this as we ask all things, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

A note from the choir director:

Practice for Christmas will start on Wed. November 30th in the choir loft at 6:30 pm. All interested singers welcome and we still are searching for anyone interested in playing keyboard or guitar. For more information or questions call Gina at 563 213 9022.

Join us for **Sunday School**. Class will be held in the SMIC Faith Formation building on Sundays from 9:45am -10:45am for preschool, kindergarten and first grade students. Dec 4th, 11th & 18th.

Mass Schedule: November 28 – December 4, 2022

Mon., Nov 28: [No Mass Scheduled]

Tues., Nov 29: 8:30 A.M. —St. Joseph, Garnavillo
Vincent & Inez Hoeger/Amy Hoeger

Wed., Nov 30: 8:30 A.M. —St. Mary, Guttenberg
Sacrament of Anointing
Dan & Rose Liefeld Fam./Richard Goerd

Thur., Dec 1: 10:00 A.M. - Guttenberg Care Center
Sacrament of Anointing
Leon Berns/Pete Davis

Fri., Dec 2: [No Mass Scheduled]

SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING BEFORE & AFTER MASSES THIS WEEKEND:

Sat., Dec 3: Vigil of Second Sunday of Advent
4:00 P.M.—St. Joseph, Garnavillo
People of the Parish
5:30 P.M.—St. Mary, Guttenberg
Sherrie Westemeier (1st Anniv.)/Carol Schlueter

Sun., Dec 4: Second Sunday of Advent
8:30 A.M. – Immaculate Conception, N. Buena Vista
10:00 A.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg, Mass, **Live Streamed**
Mary Lou Gulbro & Lynn Finnegan

GOSPEL REFLECTION: A World Whose Time Has Come

“Brothers and sisters: You know the time; it is the hour now for you to awake from sleep.” — Romans 13:11

There is an old-fashioned phrase that always charms me when I see it, “a woman whose time has come.” It describes a pregnant woman whose due date is close at hand, and it is a relic of an era where all references to pregnancy and childbirth in polite society were wrapped in rhetorical cotton. “In a delicate condition,” “In the family way,” “Expecting.” Part of me is inclined to roll my eyes at these euphemisms, because I really believe that creating a pro-life culture demands that we talk frankly about the experience of being pregnant and giving birth. *And yet. And yet.* I cannot help but be attracted to these expressions, in all their affected preciousness. There is something so reverent — so deferential — in how they frame the reality of childbirth and all that leads up to it.

Interwoven themes of timeliness, expectation, and preparedness course through the Advent liturgical season. We are streaming toward the mountain of the Lord’s house, seeking the God of Jacob, knowing that “salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.” There is a clear parallel between the Incarnation — the coming of Mary’s hour — and the fulfillment of all things, the return of Christ. *Get ready, get ready, get ready,* is the drumbeat of every Sunday’s Liturgy of the Word. *The time has almost come. Stay awake.* Be prepared.

I think one of the devil’s greatest ingenuities is the chaos of modern Christmas — and I say that as someone who sincerely enjoys Irving Berlin tunes, Hallmark movies and all the other trappings of the postmodern secular “holiday season.” But it’s all *so much*, isn’t it? It’s so intense. It’s so distracting. It’s a poor man’s Advent.

In the four weeks of Advent, I think I ask myself, “Am I ready?” about 400 times, but it’s so rarely in reference to anything that really matters. I’m worried about the gifts for the kids, the potatoes I promised to bring to the family party, the delayed shipping on the Christmas cards. For what am I preparing here? I’m not advocating against Irving Berlin, Hallmark movies, holiday parties, and extravagant gift-giving. There is something magical about the flurry of activity leading up to Christmas. All I am saying is (and I’m saying it to myself as much as I am saying it to anyone else), keep these things in their proper place. They are not what make you ready for Christmas.

I love Christmas — but do I love Advent well enough, too? With each of my babies, as I held them in their first moments of life, there was sadness mingled with the joy as I wondered quietly to myself if I had not *missed* something in those last weeks as I frantically washed bottles and prepped freezer meals, making checklist after checklist to ensure that I have “everything ready” for when the baby comes. Well, the baby always comes, and I am never ready. Because all the neatly stacked diapers and freshly laundered onesies in the world don’t make you ready for a baby, just like all the wrapped presents and frosted cookies don’t make you ready to receive the gift we are given on Christmas. — *Colleen Jurkiewicz*

St. Mary Social Justice Committee’s 4th Annual CHRISTMAS CLOTHING MISSION

 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, 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 Dec 18. The Family Resource Center is helping to identify and distribute the clothing.

Soup Luncheon & Vendor Show, Immaculate Conception Church, N. Buena Vista, IA; Sunday December 4

10:30 AM - 2:00 PM; Special appearance by Santa from 11AM - 1PM;

Come do your Christmas shopping with many Vendors and Crafters on hand.

Christmas Mass Schedule

Saturday, Dec. 24, Christmas Eve

4:00 P.M. – St. Joseph, Granavillo, Children’s Mass

5:30 P.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg, Children’s Mass

Sunday, December 25, Christmas Day

8:30 A.M. – Immaculate Conception, N. Buena Vista
Children’s Mass

10:00 A.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg,
Mass with Adult Choir

Upcoming Parish Events . . .

Dec 4 Coffee/Donuts after Mass

Dec 6: CDA Mtg at Noon in Monona
St. Anne Mtg/Christmas gathering, 7pm, BH
KC Mtg, 7:30 pm

Dec 7: Faith Formation, 6 pm
Youth Ministry, 6:15 pm

Dec 11: Clayton Ridge Christmas Concert, 7pm

Dec 14: Faith Formation, 6 pm
Youth Ministry, 6:15 pm

A Stewardship Moment

The Son of Man will come at an hour you do not expect. Good stewards know that they are accountable to God for all they have and are, and they strive to live in readiness for His coming.

Are you interested in possibly becoming a Deacon? Please join us at an informational meeting on the Permanent Diaconate on December 15 at 7:00 p.m in the Parish Hall (church basement) at St. Benedict Parish in Decorah, IA. Wives are encouraged to attend as well. Call Deacon Nick Francois if you have any questions at 563-379-8488.