## Next week's theme: **AWAKENING**



Son, why
have you done
this to us?
Jesus replied:
Did you not
know that I
must be in my
Father's
house?

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God: Saturday, 1/1, 9:00 am Church offices closed for the New Year holiday on Friday and next Monday

Pastor:

Rev. Steve Zabrocki
Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturdays - 3:30 pm or by appt

**Weekend Mass Schedule:** 

Saturday - 5:00 pm

Sunday - 8:30 am, 10:30 am

**Daily Mass Schedule:** 

Tuesday - Friday - 9:00 am

**Church:** 

2055 Woody Dr. Billings, MT 59102 Office: 406-656-5800

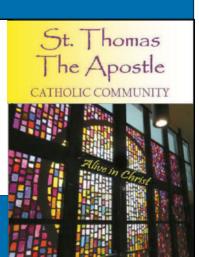
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December 26, 2021: Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph



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Please thank them for supporting St. Thomas.

The diocesan special collection for the month of December is for the **Retirement Fund for Religious**. Thousands of senior sisters, brothers and priests belonging to religious orders served in Catholic schools, hospitals and parishes. Their religious communities struggle to provide for their aging members. Please consider donating to help them by using the envelopes found at the parish entrances. Thank you!



Collection 12/12

Year-to-date Collection (start: July 1, 2021)

YTD Total Collection ......\$653,936

Prefer online giving? Go to <u>GiveCentral.org</u> and choose a "way to support" St. Thomas the Apostle Church - Billings.

Thank you for supporting your parish!

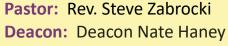
Contact our staff...

#### **Office Hours:**

#### Mon -Thurs:

8:00 am - noon; 1:00 - 5:00 pm

Friday: 8:00 am - 12:00 pm



Retired Deacon: Deacon Tim Birkle

Liturgy Asst:: Jina Arroyo

Administrative Asst:: Theresa Ball

Custodian: Brian Etchart

RCIA/Adult Education: Mary Gillespie Youth Ministry: Tiffany Glennon Religious Ed: Joyce Hollowell

Outreach: Kathy Lombardozzi Finance Mgr: Paul Miron Liturgical Music: Carolyn Peters





The Diocese of Great Falls-Billings is holding the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual charity raffle from now until May 20, 2022. This

raffle benefits both the diocese and the parish and ticket sales end May 6<sup>th</sup>. The drawing for the 5 major prizes will take place at a Moving Mountains Benefit event on May 20<sup>th</sup> in Great Falls (need not be present to win). The next **Early Bird cash drawing for \$1,000** will take place at the Diocese Chancery on **January 19<sup>th</sup>**. **Raffle tickets are \$20 each and may be purchased at the church office by cash or check**. As a bonus, anyone purchasing two books of 10 tickets will automatically receive one entry ticket to the Moving Mountains Benefit event (normally \$50 each).

### We offer our

## Time - Talent - Treasure



## Next Week's Readings - January 2, 2022 The Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6 (20ABC)

Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6 N

Matthew 2:1-12

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed."

### **Liturgical Ministers**

#### January 1, January 1-2

# Sacristy Linens December: Lisa Wetzler Sac/Holy Water Dec 30: Jocelyn Pickens

				-
	Sat 9:00 AM	Sat 7:00 pm	Sun 8:30 am	Sun 10:30 am
Asst Collect			M Eckard	
Collection			P Miron	
Altar Serv Bk	S Jagodzinski	K Brown	Br Warn	B Arroyo
Altar Serv Cr	D Kunz	NEEDED	J Burmeister	K McMahon
Altar Serv Ch	D French	G Brown	L Sadler	L Arroyo
Plate 2	Fr P Zabrocki	Fr P Zabrocki	Fr P Zabrocki	Fr Pat Zabrocki
Plate 3	A McFarlin	S King	M Powell	Deacon Tim Birkle
Plate 4	L Ehresman	S Bartholomew	S Begger	C Kaiser
Greeter SG	K/V Petermann	A Anderson	B/J Pedersen	J Jordan
GA	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
СС	S/B Long	NEEDED	G Burmeister	NEEDED
Proclaimer 1	T Scott	D Weaver	B Lynch	F Dugas
Proclaimer 2	E Helgeson	M Fishbaugh	B Warn	P Lowthian
Sacristan	N Nielsen	N Nielsen	M Fitzpatrick	E Mellor
Usher Lead	B Duray	B Goetz	C Hasiak	B Gibson
<b>Usher Choir</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Usher Altar	D Ehresman	D Fishbaugh	S Fleury	Z Arroyo
Usher Altar 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Usher Ambo	D Lambrecht	W Ray	K Fleury	J Mellor



# Breakfast Sandwich Ministry December 28

Assembly & Delivery:

Mike & Nicky Schlosser December 26 - December 31

**Bring Ingredients:** 

English muffins: Barb Junnila

Canadian bacon: Lawrence & Mary Halvorson

American cheese: Janet Glennon 5 dozen eggs: Susan Santala



**Soup Ministry** December 27

Lynn Ehresman



**Plant Care** December 30

Jina Arroyo

#### **Next week's MASS INTENTIONS:**

Tuesday, 12/28, 9:00 am Tuesday, 12/28, 9:00 am Wednesday, 12/29, 9:00 am

Wednesday, 12/29, 9:00 am

Thursday, 12/30, 9:00 am

Thursday, 12/30, 9:00 am

Friday, 12/31, 9:00 am Friday, 12/31, 9:00 am

Saturday, 1/1/21, 9:00 AM

Saturday, 1/1/21, 9:00 AM

Saturday, 1/1/21, 5:00 pm

Saturday, 1/1/21, 5:00 pm

Sunday, 1/2, 8:30 am

Sunday, 1/2, 8:30 am

Sunday, 1/2, 10:30 am

Sunday, 1/2, 10:30 am

Intentions of Regina White by Barb & John Junnila

**† Vern Boyer** by Darlene Dibble

**† Gabe & Bertha Kinzel** by Ed & Evelyn Kinzel

**† George & Hattie Dvorak** by Ed & Evelyn Kinzel

**† Don Brocopp** by Diane Nelson

† David Larimer by Diane Nelson

**† Gene & Elaine Etchart** by Mitch & Rita Gallagher

**† Mark, Delores & Kathy Etchart** by Mitch & Rita Gallagher

**† Ralph Begger** by Sue Begger

**† Danny Burnosky** by Sue Begger

† Margie Marr by the Schwab Family

**† Mabel Grosulak** by the Grosulak Family

Intentions of the St. Thomas the Apostle Parish Family

**† Vern Boyer** by KC Council #13050

**† Don Brocopp** by Tom Cysewski

**† James Madsen** by Tom Cysewski

The Rosary is prayed prior to daily Mass on weekdays.



Christmas marks the end of the Advent season and the beginning of the Christmas season. With each candle the

4 weeks of Advent, we asked God to help us be present to our neighbors and friends. Now, in the Christmas season, we are called to be Christ in the flesh to our world. Let us pray -

God,

you became human through the obedience of a simple young woman named Mary. Mary is our model of faith. May we be faithful to your word as Mary was. Give us the courage to face each day with the yes that Mary gave to you. We ask this through the Incarnate God, who comes to us again during this Christmas season. Amen.



Your prayers are requested for the repose of the soul of **Greg Jones**, brother of

David Jones of our parish. Please pray for Greg, his family and friends, and for all those who grieve his passing.

Prayers needed:

Bill Belinski, Judy Clouse, Jamie Cross-Lake, Deacon Bill Daem, Vernice Doughten, Colleen Eisenman, Jeff Flaten, Reid Hagen, Mick Johnson, Ron Jones, Daryl Ann Jorgensen, Katie Lien, Ed & Audrey Parks, Linda Rodgers, Autumn Rumph, Robin Rumph, Janice Smith, Judy Smith, Tristan Voller, Gerry Wagner, Bob Weber and Kathy Wilson.

### Let's meet Matt & Margaret Helfrich.



#### Please tell us a bit about yourself.

Matt and Margaret have deep roots in Baker, MT. They owned and operated a clothing retail there, Russell's Clothing, for 28 years. Before that, Margaret worked in the drugstore in Baker for a former parishioner of ours, Jack Lawler, and then at the bank. They raised their 3 children there. From Matt: "That store originally opened in 1916, so it was already well-known, but we worked hard - long hours 6 days a week; 7 days a week from Thanksgiving through Christmas! We loved that community, and they loved us. ... and though we had moved to Billings, the new owners invited us back for the store's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016. We were so surprised and

honored that many people came from over 30 miles away just to see us again..." So what made them leave Baker? Matt & Margaret have a daughter and 2 sons: Karla Stanton lives with her family here in Billings, and Kevin and Keith have families of their own in Gilbert, AZ. After Matt and Margaret sold the business and retired in 2004, they were able to attend the sporting events of all their grandchildren in both states; but after two years of driving back and forth, they decided to leave Baker and move to Billings in July of 2006. From Margaret: "We have 7 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren so far. Marissa (she's one of our grandchildren) & Connor Cunningham are in this parish, and their youngest, Kamryn is being baptized here on New Year's Day!" Margaret and Matt will celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary on June 28<sup>th</sup>. They enjoy playing cards, travelling and volunteering.

# Please tell us which Mass you greet at and what brought you to this ministry initially. Do you volunteer in any other ministries?

"We like meeting people and talking! When the parish asked for volunteers here in 2012, it was something we really enjoyed doing in Baker, and something we can continue to do. We always helped as greeters, eucharistic ministers and proclaimers in Baker." They used to serve at the 10:30 am, but since COVID-19 restrictions, there has been a greater need at the 5:00 pm, so that's where they serve now. Matt has been in the KCs for 59 years - 42 years as a 4<sup>th</sup> degree Knight. Margaret has been in the Catholic Daughters for 55 years. They also help out with our Soup Ministry.

# What changes have you seen in your ministry over the years, particularly since the pandemic restrictions?

"We had to be a lot more mindful about how we greet. We had to stop giving hugs and shaking hands. That's been hard." They miss the bulletin crew, coffee & donuts, breakfasts, hospital visits, funeral luncheons and meetings they used to attend. They hope for the return of these events.

As we find our new normal, what message do you have to share with your parish family? "We feel so blessed to be part of the St. Thomas Parish family. We look forward to getting back to volunteering and gathering again — something close to the way it used to be."



A heartfelt thank you to the St. Thomas parish family from the 150 families with 469 children who were the recipients of the food baskets and gifts. Your generosity provided these families not only with everything needed for a Christmas dinner, but also with groceries to help them get through the two-week break from school. EVERY ACT OF CARE COUNTS. Caring for others is the most important thing you can do. Each and every can or box of food, each ham that you contributed was needed. These families are shocked that we do this for strangers.

The contribution of gifts and the care taken to purchase them is amazing. For many of the children, this is the only time they receive something brand new. A new shirt certainly improves their self-esteem.

Much appreciated are the 39 St. Thomas families who sponsored 53 families! WOW!

Many thanks to the faithful volunteers who donated their time and efforts to bring this ministry to fulfillment. From the ladies of St. Rose of Lima Circle who cut out the ornaments, the knitters who made hats for the children, to the men who sorted and boxed the food, to the ladies who wrote out the ornaments and sorted the gifts, and to all those who delivered on Sunday — well done! May God bless you always.





### **Religious Education**

No Religious education this week.

Classes will resume on January 4th & 5th!



"I am the New Year.
I am an unspoiled page in your book of time.
I am your next

Chance at the art of living."

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!** 

Author Unknown



### **Youth Ministry**

A king is born! Youth Ministry does not meet. Instead, please pray a rosary with a special intention for yourself to embrace the love of Christ in your life.



Tiffany

"Wisdom is seeing with God's eyes."

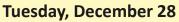
Pope Francis

Scripture and the Tradition of the Catholic Church provide an abundance of wisdom, though it can often be challenging to apply it to our lives. To help us learn to gather and live with greater wisdom - Beginning January 5<sup>th</sup>, the Wednesday evening Bible Study will study "Wisdom: God's Vision for Life" at 7:00 pm for eight weeks. Cost/Registration is \$25 for the book and one-year online video access. Call Paul at the church office to register & join!

### What's happening?

Monday, December 27

Soup drop-off and delivery No Prayer Group this week



Breakfast Sandwiches
No RE classes this week

Adult Choir, 6:30 pm, St. Cecilia Room

### Wednesday, December 29

Lectio Divina, 9:45 am, St. Benedict Rm No RE classes or Youth Group this week

Parish Offices closed for New Year's on Friday, Dec 31<sup>st</sup> and Monday, Jan 3<sup>rd</sup>
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

### **Word of Life**

Like every other human family, the Holy Family had to confront real and concrete challenges. Yet, "in every



situation, Joseph declared his own 'fiat'" (Patris corde 3). His "yes" to the Lord meant that regardless of the hardship and personal sacrifice to himself, he consistently chose to put the needs of Mary and Jesus before his own. Joseph's devotion helps reveal to us our own call to show special care for the lives of those whom God has entrusted to us.

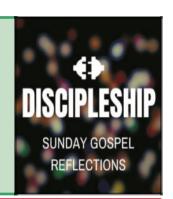
USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities 2021 Respect Life Reflection

### In preparation for January 2:

### **AWAKENING**

"And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was." (vs 9)

**Matthew 2:1-22** 



## **Adults** -

- 1. The Magi symbolize our search for God and meaning in life. God gave them direction (the star to follow). He is always with us. What gives meaning to your life? Has some recent discovery or new passion brought new meaning and depth to your life?
- 2. In the Epiphany, Jesus is manifested to the Magi and Gentile world. Can you name a recent epiphany (God revealing Himself to you) experience in your life, a recent discovery?
- 3. What is the one thing Jesus is saying to us in this Sunday's Gospel about how a disciple should speak or act? And what do you need to do or change to be a better disciple?
- 4. Where do you see the characteristics of a dynamic disciple expressed in the Gospel?

**Obstacles of living out the Gospel**: Time (to think & work on your relationship with God), lack of knowledge/understanding, etc.



# Teens -

- 1. What does our faith teach us about power and control? What do we know about the gift of free will?
- 2. What is the definition of the word epiphany? What are your epiphany moments in your faith journey?

#### **Obstacles of living out the Gospel:**

Not fully understanding the gift of free will and what it means when we sin or in the choices we make.

# Children -

- 1. If you could give Jesus a gift that expresses something about who you are and the talents you have, what would that gift be?
- 2. "Epiphany" means a revelation. How has Jesus revealed himself to you or someone you know?
- 3. How can we live in a way that "reveals Jesus' love" to someone who might not know him?
- 4. Think of the magi and their desire to worship the newborn king. They travelled a long way following a star. Would you have the courage to go seek Jesus in such circumstances? How can you seek Jesus right now?

#### **Obstacles of living out the Gospel:**

 Fear of the unknown; lack of understanding, not fully realizing that we are called to use our gifts/talents to honor God; unsure how to make the first step

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It's not too late! Take advantage of tax savings through a gift to St. Thomas the Apostle's endowments at the Catholic Foundation of Eastern Montana. Consider a year-end gift to the Catholic Foundation to receive the Montana Endowment Tax Credit. This amazing opportunity is available to Montana taxpayers who make a planned gift to a permanent endowment. You could receive a tax credit equal to 40% of the charitable value of your gift — wow! Please reach out to Judy Held, Foundation President, to learn more and ensure you receive this impressive benefit for supporting St. Thomas the Apostle parish! Call 406-315-1765 or email judy@catholicfoundationmt.org.

# Community Needs

Period Pals is a non-profit service which distributes feminine hygiene products to women below the poverty line or homeless in Billings. Research has shown that 1 in 6 women in Montana between the ages of 14 and 44 lives below the poverty line. Neither SNAP nor WIC allow purchase of these basic necessities. YOU CAN HELP. Donations of maxi pads, overnight pads, pantiliners, tampons, etc. can be placed in the special pink bins at the church office or in the church gathering area. Contact Magdalen at 406-256-0541 for more information.

**St. Vincent de Paul** thanks you for continued support of their Mission and the many programs they offered throughout the past year. They wish you and all those you love a very blessed Christmas and a joyous New Year.

# Around the region—

Marriage Encounter Experience: We rediscover Jesus every year at Christmas and recognize the great gift He has given us. Why not share a weekend with your spouse and show them what a great gift they are to you? Those weekends are a powerful time for you to focus on one another, reconnect and grow closer. Upcoming dates in 2022: Billings, Feb 4-6; Gillette, WY Feb 18-21; Elk Mountain Apr 22-24. For more information/dates and to apply, visit <a href="www.wwme.org">www.wwme.org</a>, or contact Dan & Clare Dooley: 406-697-3275 or email <a href="montana.dooleys@gmail.com">montana.dooleys@gmail.com</a>.

**Rediscover your marriage.** Retrouvaille simply means "rediscovery". The program offers the chance to rediscover yourself, your spouse, and a loving relationship in your marriage. Retrouvaille is not a spiritual retreat, not a sensitivity group, not a seminar, not a social gathering. Retrouvaille is for any couple who would like to rediscover their marriage and improve communication. The next program begins Feb. 25, 2022. For more info, contact the registration team at 1-800-470-2230 or visit <a href="www.HelpOurMarriage.com">www.HelpOurMarriage.com</a>. Not counseling or group therapy. All contacts and names held in strictest confidence.

The annual fundraiser for LaVie will take place 3-17-22, with special guest Tim Tebow.



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