

## PARISH STAFF

**Pastor:** Fr. Joseph Okine-Quartey

Suzanne Brunner, Housekeeping, St. John the Baptist Rectory

Robyn Trannel, Director of Religions Education

Gwen Glaus, Housekeeping, St. John the Baptist Church

Vickie Hartung, Housekeeping, St. Joseph

Dorothy Kopp, Bookkeeper

Aletha Pullen, Secretary, Bulletin Editor

## PARISH COUNCILS

### St. John the Baptist

Parish Pastoral Council

Connie Ahlers, Kevin Coulson, Peggy Gilles, Gwen Glaus, Sarah Hinrichs, Steve King, Dianne Lecheler, Terry Pelzel, Mike Rhiel, Audrey Ryan, Jacqui Steele, and \*Dan Wieser (Chair)

Parish Finance Council

Lawrence Bechel, Jeff Bergmann (Chair), \*Todd Glaus, and Deb Radle

### St. Joseph

Parish Pastoral Council

Dave Anibas, Brad Bauer, Bud Bauer, David Drier (Chair), Gerald Leiffring, Linda Leiffring, Howard Martin, and Dennis Milliren

Parish Finance Council

\*Jeff Brunner, \*Dale Klein (Chair), and Sue Milliren

\*Corporate Board Members

## ORGANIZATIONS

Holy Name Society      Parish Council of Catholic Women

Knights of Columbus      St. Ann's Altar Society

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAY'S & ANNIVERSARY'S

Betty Lauer's Birthday: 12/7

Briana Larson's Birthday: 12/9

Dennis Schneider's Birthday: 12/11

\*Bob Binkowski's Birthday: 12/16

\*Dean Gilles's Birthday: 12/17

\*Terry Pelzel's Birthday: 12/21

Steve King's Birthday: 12/26

Tom & Sue Milliren's 44<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: 12/28

Gloria Watkin's Birthday: 12/29

**St. John the Baptist Parish, Plum City, WI**  
**St. Joseph Parish, Arkansaw, WI**

**December 16, 2018**



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**Central Office, CCD, Rectory, and  
St. John the Baptist Catholic Church**

212 Church Road, Plum City, 54761

11stjohn@centurylink.net

Office: 715-647-2901 | Rectory: 715-647-2301

**St. Joseph Catholic Church**

W7805 County Road Z, Arkansaw, WI, 54721

saintjoseph@nelson-tel.net

**Bulletin Announcements**

bulletin-editor@centurylink.net

**Bulletin Deadline: Monday Noon**

## GAUDETE!

Dear friends in Christ, life generally presents us with three categories of people. In life, there is the person whose philosophy is to pursue pleasure as an end in itself. Such persons pursue a course simply because it brings them pleasure, it makes them feel good. As a matter of fact, their motto is: "Do it! If it feels good." They deify the belly and convince themselves into believing that man was made to eat and drink and die tomorrow. In the Epic of Gilgamesh, when Siduri, a female divinity associated with the fermentation of beer and wine, had the opportunity to offer a piece of advice, she reiterated this philosophy when she said, "Fill your belly. Day and night make merry. Let days be full of joy. Dance and make music day and night [...]. These things alone are the concern of men." Pleasure then to such people is an intrinsic good. It is an end beyond which there is no other. Pleasure is a good in itself; it is a god and is pursued without any cognizance to God. However, experience teaches us that seeking pleasure for its own sake is a canker to many cultures. Kingdoms have fallen, and monarchs have been disgraced and destroyed because they clung to the god of the hedonist. Seeking pleasure as an end breeds inordinate cravings and contorted addictions. Its end result is nothing but despair and despondency. It makes people lazy, lustful, and gluttonous (see M. Kelly). In the end, the happiness and joy they seek, simply elude them.

There is also the person whose philosophy in life is to seek happiness. To such a person, personal happiness is the chief good. It is the proper aim of every action. His happiness is conceived of in terms of well-being based on virtuous and rational self-realization. The self is at the center of such happiness and such happiness depends to a large extent on certain external conditions- good health, a good job, a good spouse, a happy family, brilliant kids, many toys and lots of possessions. Because happiness has everything to do with what is going on in the world, it is easily forfeited at the sight of any unforeseen eventualities. Let a calamity or misfortune strike, and the happy person has nothing to hold on to. Life becomes a bitter pill to swallow, happiness eludes them; and it is not uncommon for many such people to either commit suicide or entertain suicidal thoughts. Chasing happiness as an end in itself is thus as dangerous as seeking pleasure as an intrinsic good. They both lead to emptiness and despair, a sense of loss, of woes, and lack of meaning.

There is also the person who seeks to receive joy and is joyful in life. Because such persons receive joy, they also rejoice. W. J. Bausch clearly distinguishes between pleasure, fun and happiness on the one hand and joy on the other. In his thoughts, whereas pleasure, fun, and happiness depended on certain worldly material conditions, the presence of God is the only condition for joy. Happiness generally depends on the quality and quantity of material goods. It comes from the outside. Joy wells from within, it is not dependent on external stimuli. It flows from a union with God and it can thrive even in the midst of deprivation. For Bausch, joy can thus break forth in a depressed economy, in the midst of war, in an intensive care waiting room, in the slums; and I believe that it comes also at the loss of a job, in the abject poverty of life, and in the most miserable and deplorable situations of life.

On the 3rd Sunday of Advent, the Church invites us to rejoice. *Gaudete in Domino semper* which is the theme for this Sunday translates as Rejoice in the Lord always. This call comes to us in spite all the troubles we see in our global village, in various countries, in most families, and in many individual lives. In the many dangers and toils and snares that engulf us, it is somewhat unthinkable that one can rejoice always. Yet, come to think of it that when the Prophet Zephaniah called on Israel to shout for joy, to sing joyfully, to be glad and exult with all her heart, it was not just because the LORD had removed the judgment against her, and had turned away her enemies; it was more so because the King of Israel, the LORD, was in their midst. Their joy and lack of fear or discouragement, even in the midst of misfortune then, stemmed rather from the fact that God dwelt among them as a Mighty Savior; who rejoices over them with gladness, and renews them in his love, singing joyfully and festively because of them (see Zeph. 3:14-18).

When St. Paul bade the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord always (4:4), he was behind bars. At the time, he was not living in comfort, neither was he certain of the future. He had been cut off from his mission and the call to evangelize had fallen into the hands of some self seeking and self styled men of God. If he had a dream for his mission, his dream had been nearly truncated. Yet he could still find enough joy within as to encourage it in others. Because the Lord was close to him, he had no anxiety at all. Rather he prayed and petitioned in everything. He gave thanks and made his requests known to God; and the peace of God that surpasses all understanding therefore guarded his heart and mind in Christ Jesus. Certainly, he was a man of joy even in the roughest of circumstances.

The season of Advent thus invites us to a life of joy. It encourages in us the resolve to place God within our search for pleasure. It enjoins us to inject God into the center of our bid to find happiness so as to rejoice always in the Lord. When St. Augustine asked us to love God and do whatever we wanted, he knew quite well that when we loved God and made him the center of all we do and are, our choices would be inspired and permeated by the light of his spirit and his joy would be our strength. Let us therefore seek to prepare our hearts this Advent in order to receive Christ, whose light will cast away those dreams of darkness which center our minds and hearts only on the transient pleasures and happiness Christmas brings. May Christ come to dwell in our midst and in our hearts so that on the great day of glory we may all see the light and rejoice with him in our hearts.

Have a pleasant week as you rejoice in the Lord always.  
Fr. Joseph Okine-Quartey

## THANK YOU CONGRESSMAN KIND

If there was anything beyond gratitude, I would have given that to Congressman Kind. However, since I cannot fathom any such thing, may I request as many parishioners as possible to add their voices to mine as I register my deepest sense of gratitude to him and his kind offices for all they did to expedite the processing of my visa. If it weren't for him, my struggles to reach the embassy would have been a total fiasco and I would not have been back yet. Please pick your phones, give him a call or write him an email, show him some gratitude on my behalf. Thank you for accepting to do this for me. God bless you.

Congressman Ron Kind can be reached through the following address: <https://kind.house.gov/contact>



## MASS SCHEDULE & DAILY READINGS

### Monday: December 17

- **No Mass**
- Readings: Gn 49:2, 8-10/Ps 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17/Mt 1:1-17

### Tuesday: December 18

- Mass: 8:30 a.m., St. John the Baptist - Living & Deceased Members of the Helmueller Family
- Followed by Communion for the sick and homebound
- Readings: Jer 23:5-8/Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19/Mt 1:18-25

### Wednesday: December 19

- Mass: 8:30 a.m., St. Joseph - † Douglas Brunner
- Readings: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17/Lk 1:5-25

### Thursday: December 20

- Mass: 8:30 a.m., St. John the Baptist - † Jason Bates
- Mass: 10:30 a.m., Plum City Care Center
- Readings: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6/Lk 1:26-38

### Friday: December 21 - St. Peter Canisius

- Mass: 8:30 a.m., St. John the Baptist - † Oliva Pelzel
- Readings: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21/Lk 1:39-45

### Saturday: December 22

- Mass: 8:30 a.m., St. John the Baptist
- Mass: 4:00 p.m., St. Joseph - † Bernard & Darlene Milliren
- Readings: 1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd/Lk 1:46-56

### Sunday: December 23 - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

- Mass: 8:00 a.m., St. John the Baptist - Carl, Agnes, & Raymond Berger
- Mass: 10:15 a.m., St. John the Baptist - St. John & St. Joseph Parishioners
- Readings: Mi 5:1-4a/Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19/Heb 10:5-10/Lk 1:38/Lk 1:39-45

**The Rosary is prayed before all Masses**

## POPE FRANCIS' MONTHLY INTENTION

December: That people, who are involved in the service and transmission of faith, may find, in their dialogue with culture, a language suited to the conditions of the present time.



## SACRAMENTS

### Confessions (anytime by appointment)

- Saturdays at 3:15 p.m.: St. Joseph, Arkansasaw
- Friday after 8:30 a.m. Mass until 10:00 a.m.: St. John the Baptist, Plum City
- Sunday at 7:15 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.: St. John the Baptist, Plum City

### Anointing of the Sick

Please call the Parish Office when needed.

### Rite for the Blessing of a Child in the Womb

Please contact the Parish Office if you would like this special blessing.

### Baptism

Please call the Parish Office for an appointment at least one month in advance.

### Marriage

Please call the Parish Office for arrangements at least six months prior to the intended date.

### Hospitalized / Homebound

Holy Communion to the sick and homebound is on Tuesdays & Saturday evenings and Sundays after Masses. Please contact the Parish Office for arrangements to be made.

### Funerals

Please contact the Parish Office before making arrangements.

## CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

### Christmas Eve

- Sunday, December 24th: 4:00 p.m. - St. Joseph
- Sunday, December 24th: 10:00 p.m. - St. John the Baptist

### Christmas Day

- Monday, December 25th: 8:00 a.m. - St. John the Baptist
- Monday, December 25th: 10:00 a.m. - St. Joseph

## THAT MAN IS YOU

"That Man Is You" program Fall Semester concluded on Friday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. We would like to thank all the men that took part in this program. We will resume with the Spring Semester on Friday, February 1<sup>st</sup>. Thanks! Dan Wieser & Tom Pullen



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISHIONERS

### Ornament for the Parish Christmas Tree

If you are a new member of our Church, or a returning member please consider purchasing an ornament for the Parish Christmas tree. Baskets will be at each entrance of the church for you to place your purchased ornament in.

### 2019 Catholic Calendars

2019 Catholic calendars, sponsored by Rhel's Funeral Home, are at each entrance of the Church. Please take one home with you.

## OUR WEEK: ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

### Money Counting

Monday, December 17, 9:30 a.m.  
Monica Krings, Terry Pelzel,  
& Verna Weiss

### Announcements

Sunday, December 23, 8:00 a.m.  
Monica Krings  
Sunday, December 23, 10:15 a.m.  
Teresa Fedie

### Extraordinary Minister

Sunday, December 23, 8:00 a.m.  
Todd Glaus  
Sunday, December 23, 10:15 a.m.  
Peggy Gilles

### Gift Bearers

Sunday, December 23, 8:00 a.m.  
Todd & Gwen Glaus  
Sunday, December 23, 10:15 a.m.  
Brian & Crystal Books Family

### Lector

Sunday, December 23, 8:00 a.m.  
Dianne Lecheler  
Sunday, December 23, 10:15 a.m.  
Ramona Schneider



### Music

Sunday, December 23, 8:00 a.m.  
Musicians: Paul & Char Fetzter  
Sunday, December 23, 10:15 a.m.  
Organ: Annie Hansen  
Cantor: Sara Hansen

### Rosary Leader

Sunday, December 23, 8:00 a.m.  
Irene Helmueller  
Sunday, December 23, 10:15 a.m.  
Teresa Fedie

### Sacristan

Sunday, December 23, 8:00 a.m.  
Gwen Glaus  
Sunday, December 23, 10:15 a.m.  
Aletha Pullen

### Servers

Sunday, December 23, 8:00 a.m.  
Gary Lecheler  
Sunday, December 23, 10:15 a.m.  
The Trannel Family

### Usher

Sunday, December 23, 8:00 a.m.  
Chad Steele & Mel Pittman  
Sunday, December 23, 10:15 a.m.  
Dan & Mackenzie Wieser

## FRUITS OF YOUR GENEROSITY - ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Adult Envelopes (42).....	\$	2413.00
Offertory.....	\$	169.00
Retirement Fund for the Religious.....	\$	967.00
Holy Day (Immaculate Conception).....	\$	72.00
<b>Total Income.....</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>3621.00</b>

## OUR WEEK: ST. JOSEPH

### Money Counting

Monday, December 17, 8:30 a.m.  
Jerry Liefkring, Dawn Lauer,  
& Madalyn Fleishauer

### Extraordinary Minister

Saturday, December 22, 4:00 p.m.  
Jeff Brunner

### Gift Bearers

Saturday, December 22, 4:00 p.m.  
Dan & Sue Caturia

### Lector

Saturday, December 22, 4:00 p.m.  
Jeff Brunner

### Music

Saturday, December 22, 4:00 p.m.  
Organ: Beth Pattison  
Cantor: Sara Hansen

### Rosary

Saturday, December 2, 4:00 p.m.  
Joyce Haigh & Betty Lauer

## FRUITS OF YOUR GENEROSITY - ST. JOSEPH

Adult Envelopes (27).....	\$	1025.00
Offertory.....	\$	139.00
Retirement Fund for the Religious.....	\$	287.50
<b>Total Income.....</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1451.50</b>



**For kids in grades K-5**

When: Thurs, Dec. 27, 9:00 am—4:00 pm

Where: St. John's Church School

Cost: \$5 per child/\$10 per family

### Family visiting?

Grandchildren, cousins and any other kids visiting you this holiday season are all welcome to attend!

### To Register:

Fill out a registration form (located at the ends of pews) and return it to the Church office or place in a collection basket. during Mass.

## LOCAL CONFESSIONS

If you would like to go the Confession outside the scheduled times at St. John the Baptist and St. Joseph's, the Sacrament of Confession is offered at these local Parishes, as follows:

- Elmwood - Every Wednesday from 6:45 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.
- Spring Valley - Every Tuesday from 6:45 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.
- Ellsworth - Parish Confession Service on Wednesday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

If you would like to send a Christmas card to the Priests who have ministered to us, they may be sent to:

Reverend Biju Chennala Kunjukutty  
Sacred Heart Hospital - Pastoral Care Department  
900 West Clairemont Avenue, Eau Claire, WI, 54701

Reverend Joseph Albert  
412 S. Main Street, Chippewa Falls, WI, 54729

Reverend Paul G. Czerwonka  
713 West Avenue S, LaCrosse, WI, 54601-4727

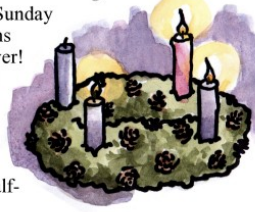


In honor of his Feast Day, St. Nicholas paid a visit to the students at the Ave Maria Academy bringing treats and warm wishes.



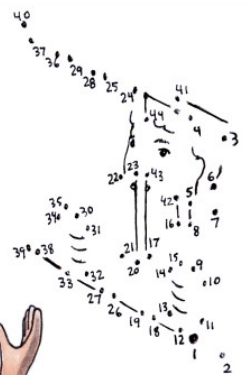
## Advent is Half Over!

Today is the third Sunday of Advent. That means that half the wait is over! If you have an advent wreath, this is the week to light the pink candle. Pink is a symbol the joy we have because we're half-way to Christmas.



In today's Gospel, Jesus tells the people that John the Baptist was a prophet and messenger. A prophet is someone who tells the truth. In the Old Testament the prophets told God's people the truth about God. Saint John was a prophet because he told the people that the Messiah, or saviour, was coming soon, and that they needed to repent of their sins.

*Where was John the Baptist in today's Gospel reading? Connect the dots to find out! Then you can finish coloring in the picture.*



*Saint John the Baptist was the messenger who prepared the world for Jesus' coming.*

## JOIN US FOR A Live Nativity

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23<sup>RD</sup>  
4:00 - 7:00 P.M.

AT THE DUCK POND  
PLUM CITY



CAROLING

LIVE ANIMALS

REFRESHMENTS