

NATIVITY of MARY

313 E. WALL STREET • JANESVILLE, WISCONSIN 53545-3047

Rectory

313 E. Wall Street
 Janesville, WI 53545-3047
 Website www.nativitymary.org
 Phone (608) 752-7861
 Pastor Msgr. Daniel Ganshert
 Email: daniel.ganshert@straphael.org
 Dir. of Pastoral Outreach....Sr. Ruth Brings
 Email: rbrings@nativitymary.org
 Dir. of Liturgy Bob Craig
 Email: liturgy@nativitymary.org
 Coord. Religious Ed.....Jan Bier
 Email: re@nativitymary.org
 Business Manager ... Arwen Twitchett
 Email: accounts@nativitymary.org
 Parish Secretary.....Sharlet Collins
 Email: psec@nativitymary.org

St. Mary School

307 E. Wall Street
 Janesville, WI 53545-3047
 Phone (608) 754-5221
 Principal.....Kim Ehrhardt
 SecretarySue Vodak &
 Lisa Nemeth

Religious Education

Phone.....(608) 752-7861
 Coordinator.....Jan Bier

Prayer Network

Mary Ann Venable.....(608) 754-5284

Janesville/Milton Mass Times

Nativity of MarySat. 4:30 pm
 Sun. 8:30 & 10:30 am
 St. Patrick.....Sat. 7:30 am & 4:00 pm
 Sun. 9:00 am
Spanish Mass - Sun. 12:00 pm
 St. John VianneySat. 8:15 am
 & 5:00 pm
 Sun. 8:15 & 10:00 am
 St. William.....Sat. 4:00 pm
 Sun. 8:00 & 10:30 am
 St. Mary - MiltonSat. 4:00 pm
 Sun. 8:30 am



GLORY
 TO GOD
 IN THE
 HIGHEST
 AND ON
 EARTH
 PEACE TO
 THOSE
 ON WHOM
 HIS FAVOR
 RESTS.

LUKE 2:14

We, the Catholic family of Nativity of Mary, are empowered by the Holy Spirit to be disciples of Jesus Christ. Through worship, the sacraments, fellowship, evangelization and outreach, we will share the word of Christ in our community. -Mission Statement

NEWS & NOTES

From the desk of Msgr. Dan

A Blessed and Merry Christmas to all!

Holiday music and decorations seemed to have arrived a little earlier this season as a segue to brighten spirits somewhat beleaguered by the isolation and distancing in people's lives over these past several months.

Social media has seemed to play an ever increasing role in the diminution of coping with the loneliness and, at times, even the boredom caused by various stay at home orders and other personal restrictive requirements. Connecting on line has been a valuable alternative when it has come to staying in touch with family and friends.

May this Christmas 2020 bless us all with a deeper appreciation of the gift of being part of our community here at St. Mary's, our family of faith. May the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, our Prince of Peace, fill us with every good gift and strengthen our hope as we rededicate ourselves to sharing His love and joy with one another and our world.

Msgr. Dan



MONEY MATTERS

Money Counts for 2020-2021

	Received	Budgeted	Variance
Week 22			
11-29-2020	\$9,894.25	9,930.82	-36.57
YTD	\$204,057.18	231,529.11	-27,471.93
	Received	Budgeted	Variance
Week 23			
12-06-2020	21,970.50	22,782.54	-812.04
YTD	\$226,027.68	254,311.65	-28,283.97

NEWS & NOTES

St. Mary School



The school Christmas tree and Nativity set went up— thanks Mr. Kessler, Mrs. Hodge and Mrs. Ehrhardt. Pictures will appear on Facebook.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas at St. Mary School. We will produce a short video to share with you so that you can see all the holiday decorations throughout the school.

Since we are not able to have a Christmas Concert this year, our band students will be playing each morning during the announcements. We are working hard to keep as many of the Christmas activities as possible, although modified.

As part of our school safety initiative during the pandemic, I have a scheduled meeting with the Rock County Health Department each week. At the meeting I receive updates and review various school activities to occur in the future. As a result of that engagement, we modified the Christmas movie activity at JPAC on Friday, December 18, 2020; **no popcorn or drink option that would cause students to remove their masks during the movie.** The Rock County Health Department has approved this activity consistent with their policies and those of the State of Wisconsin Department of Health and the CDC. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact me at 608-754-5221 or Anne Weirich from the Rock County Public Health Department at 608-758-8570.

The federal Title I program has recently commenced. Title I provides additional help and support for students in the Reading area. All students who were present in school and qualified for the program met with Mrs. DeYoung, the new teacher of the program.

On Tuesday afternoon, December 15 and Wednesday morning, December 16 Monsignor Dan conducted communal penance meetings with each of the grades in preparation for Christmas.

Friday, December 18, 2020, was our final school Mass for the calendar year. We planned some special music and other additions to the liturgy to help us prepare for Christ's coming.

As we continue in our Advent journey toward Christmas we ask that the Lord helps us to stay in Advent and not jump into Christmas before it is time. We ask the Lord to fill us with this wisdom of the quiet time and stop us in our tracks and slow down to sit with him. God's Blessings be with you all.

Dr. Kim Ehrhardt, Principal

FOCUS ON FAITH

Please Pray For Our Parishioners

Bill, Valerie Boggs, Karen Bullis, Noah Cotter, Sue Creek, Gerri, LeeAnn Gilligan, Corbin Grieving, Jackie H., Alice Jensen, Paula Kimler, Ken Kunkle, Rosemary Ludwig, Pat & Mark, Patricia Mosher, Max Rammer, Harold Robb, Heather Saalfeld, Madelynn Schieve, Colleen Schroeder, Andrew Stuehler, Tammy, Cory & Barb, Edna Thorp, Mary Tullis, Avalon Widner



Please note: Due to the pandemic Msgr. Ganshert and Sr. Ruth will not be making pastoral visits to the hospital, nursing homes, or to those who are homebound except for people who are end of life or are very seriously ill. If you, a family member, or someone you know fits this description, please contact the parish office at 608-752-7861.

Sacraments

Reconciliation: Tuesday evening from 5:00 - 6:00 pm and Saturday morning from 9:30-10:30 am.

Anointing of the Sick: Please call us at 752-7861 when a loved one has a serious illness.

Weddings: Please contact the rectory six months in advance. One party must be a parish member in good standing.

Infant Baptism: Registered members of the parish are welcome to arrange for their baby's baptism by signing up for the necessary preparation program for parents.

RCIA

Please call anytime if you would like to discuss Catholicism and see how joining the Church may offer you a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. Contact Colleen Szerlong at 868-6386 or irishcatholic56@gmail.com.

Catholic Women's Club

Contact Jan Bier at 752-4387 for more information.

Knights of Columbus

Contact Jim Mullen at 608-201-9860 for more information.

Adult Catholic Spirit Club

Contact Dolores Dilley 752-2587.

Bulletin Deadline

Mondays at 9:00 AM. Please contact Sharlet Collins at the Rectory, 752-7861 or email psec@nativitymary.org.

SCRIPTURE

Fourth Sunday of Advent

"Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High." (Lk 1:31-32a)

 In Blaise Pascal's work, *Pensees*, he says: "What else does this craving, and this helplessness, proclaim but that there was once in man a true happiness, of which all that now remains is the empty print and trace? This he tries in vain to fill with everything around him, seeking in things that are not there the help he cannot find in those that are, though none can help, since this infinite abyss can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object; in other words by God himself."

We have a difficult time accepting that fulfillment and happiness are not achieved by our own merits but through a relationship with God. We are hardwired for this relationship and it is in our DNA. The simple fact is that we come from God and are designed to return to God. If our beginning and our end define who we are, why would we not want to seek the One who can truly satisfy? The world does not realize that it is waiting. It is waiting for the birth of God in time, within one's soul and in eternity. We get so confused by seeking other momentary satisfactions that we misinterpret the hunger within. We crave God.

The union of God and humanity, revealed in Jesus Christ, is precisely what sets us on a straight path, orders our relationships, establishes proper focus and goals and tells us whose kingdom we really are meant to serve. We are so lost. God is with us. The prophet Nathan told this to King David, the angel said this to Mary and the birth of Christ brings this Good News to us. We do not need to be busily looking for more things but must learn to find contentment and blessing in the One Presence. This is the beautiful simple message of Advent!

If you are feeling unsettled, anxious, angry, disgruntled, disconnected, unhappy, worried, fearful, off center, becoming overly self-indulgent, unable to spend time alone and without distraction, then there's a good chance you are lost. Now is the time to allow God to find you! Ponder the holy simplicity of Mary's call to be the Mother of God. "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." When we are helpless and at home with our emptiness, God will fill us. Our Savior has come.



Readings for Sunday, December 20, 2020 Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 / Rom 16:25-27 / Lk 1:26-38

Readings for Next Sunday, December 27, 2020 The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 / Col 3:12-21 / Luke 2:22-40

WHAT'S HAPPENING

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR



EACH DAY TAKE THE DESIGNATED ITEM AND PUT INTO A BASKET OR BOX.

AT THE END OF THE MONTH (OR SOON AFTER), TAPE UP THE BOX WITH YOUR ITEMS AND BRING THEM TO ECHO - IT'S THAT EASY!

- December 1 - Package of Toilet Paper
- December 2 - Full Size Bottle of Shampoo
- December 3 - Canned Fruit
- December 4 - Tooth Paste
- December 5 - Canned Meat
- December 6 - Boxed Meal
- December 7 - 100% Juice
- December 8 - Laundry Detergent
- December 9 - Peanut Butter
- December 10 - Canned Vegetable
- December 11 - Spaghetti
- December 12 - Package of Diapers
- December 13 - Oatmeal
- December 14 - Tomato Sauce
- December 15 - Kleenex
- December 16 - Flour
- December 17 - Canned Soup
- December 18 - Package of Bar Soap
- December 19 - Tooth Brush
- December 20 - Package of Feminine Products
- December 21 - Paper Towel
- December 22 - Bottle of All Purpose Cleaner
- December 23 - Rice
- December 24 - Cereal

Please make ensure donations are of good dates.

ECHO, Inc.
65 S High St
Janesville, WI 53548

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Christmas Day

Today marks the end of the Advent season and the beginning of the Christmas season. We have lighted four candles these past four weeks and 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.



December 25, 2020—*The Nativity of the Lord*

Gospel: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. (Jn 1:14)

If the salutation, "Merry Christmas," is more than just the expected greeting we use today, then what is the "more" really all about? Today is a sacred day and the birth of Christ has changed not only history but how human beings perceive and relate with God. God has become one with humanity in the Person of Jesus Christ. All of these truths remain just pious sentiments unless they take flesh in the heart and soul of each one of us. We need to absorb and immerse ourselves in what is meant by these truths so that we can be changed by them. Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord!

A woman once recounted her journey with poverty and how she went from "doing" for the poor to "being with" the poor. It's transforming and life changing. It's easy to simply give alms to those in need, and yet another thing to be with them in their poverty and become poor ourselves. A change of the axis from vertical to horizon puts a whole new twist on things. Our souls understand the experience in ways that our minds simply cannot. Christmas requires this same change of axis.

It is one thing to sing out the words, "Joy to the World," and quite another to experience that joy ourselves. Many have not experienced the full impact of that first Holy Night because they choose to keep the manger at a distance rather than make a home with the Holy One who resides there. The birth of Christ levels the playing field of life and we have to allow ourselves to be leveled. There is no way to truly be human unless we understand that God is with us and blesses every fiber of the human experience. We cannot be truly human unless we listen to the words of the Word Made Flesh and work so that justice and peace can be realized by all, and God's sacred earth cared for and nurtured.

The axis of Christmas begins to shift when we realize it's not about, "I and me," but, "we and us," and there's an order and purpose to how God fashions and sustains things. The world hasn't really given Christ a full shot yet to understand that Truth has been born in our midst. We pick and choose what suits us in the message and leave the rest behind.

What needs to change about you so that Christ can truly be born in you?

Mass Intentions

♥ = Living

Monday, December 21

No Mass

Tuesday, December 22

12:10 PM Carol Warner ♥

Wednesday, December 23

8:15 Jessica Lynn Szerlong

Thursday, December 24

4:00 PM Parishioners of Nativity of Mary

6:00 PM Edwin & Lillian Allen

Friday, December 25

10:00 AM Henry, Carol & Peter Schoeberle

Saturday, December 26

4:30 PM Gene Wagner

Sunday, December 27

8:30 AM Parishioners of Nativity of Mary

10:30 AM Edward Felten

Christmas Eve Mass

4:00 & 6:00 PM

Christmas Day Mass

10:00 AM

Reservations Required

Please note that Mass attendance is by reservation only this year, due to the current restrictions.

Make your reservation now, by going to:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040A4DABA82CABFE3-christmas>
or by calling Sharlet in the parish office at 608-752-7861.

Current reminders about attending Mass

If you will be attending Mass, please note the following guidelines from Rock County and the Diocese of Madison:

Those parishioners at risk (over 65 or anyone with a health condition) are strongly encouraged to stay home.

Attendance will be first come, first seated. Our maximum occupancy, observing social distancing, is 100 people.

Wearing a face covering at all times is required in the church & school, including during Mass.

As always, if you or a family member are not feeling well, please stay home and rest.

Together we can do our part to help everyone in our community stay healthy!

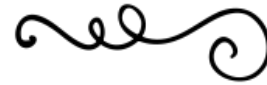
***“And this will be a sign for you:
you will find a babe wrapped
in swaddling cloths
and lying in a manger.”***

Luke 2:12

Parish Office—We have recently moved our parish offices from the Rectory to the Nativity House, which is the building directly behind the parking lot of the church (entrance is on the right). Going forward, please continue to use the slot at the Rectory door (old location on Wall Street) to drop off your envelopes and such, if necessary.

In light of the pandemic, we're keeping contact to a minimum, so calling the office to schedule a Mass, or to make an appointment for other church business is appreciated. We look forward to welcoming you freely into our new space once the community spread has minimized. We believe the new offices will better serve you, our parish family.

Our phone number is still the same, so dial 608-752-7861 to speak with a member of our staff. We are here for you! Stay safe and thank you for supporting St. Mary's.



Wearing Masks in the Communion Line

Parishioners, please continue to wear your masks while in the communion line at Mass. The Vicar General of the Diocese of Madison advises, “A communicant should only remove one’s mask in preparation to receive Holy Communion as the person immediately in front of the communicant is receiving Holy Communion. So, the communicant should keep one’s mask on in the communion line prior to that point in time. The communicant should shortly thereafter resume the wearing of the mask after receiving Holy Communion.”

Also, please remember to maintain a distance of 6 feet between you and the person in front of you in line.

Thank you for your cooperation. We wish to keep all of our parishioners and guests safe.

