



30TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Jesus said to him in reply, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see." Jesus told him, "Go your way; your faith has saved you." Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way. - Mk 10:51-52

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

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Saint Mary Nativity

706 North Broadway Street
Joliet, IL 60435

Pastor: Father Jerome Kish

Weekend Associate: Father Gerald Nicholas, O.S.A.

School Principal: Mrs. Gina Pestrak

Music Director: Mr. Donald Legerski

Parish Secretary: Mrs. Tricia DiChristofano

Maintenance Supervisor: Mr. Mick Joutras

Maintenance Manager: Mr. Larry Tomasic

Business Manager: Mrs. Mary Nemanich

MASKS REQUIRED

Parish Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday 8:30am - 4:30pm

Fridays 8:30am – 3pm

Rectory Office (815) 726-4031

Rectory Fax (815) 727-4393

School Phone Number (815)-722-8518

www.stmarynativityholycross.com



St. Mary Nativity Weekend Masses

Saturdays: 4pm

Sundays: 7am, 11am, 12:30pm & 5:30pm

Weekday Masses

8:30am: Tuesday & Thursday
at St. Mary Nativity

Confessions

Saturdays 3:15pm-3:45pm

Holy Cross

Kościół Świętego Krzyża

830 Elizabeth Street Joliet, IL 60435

Mailing Address:

901 Elizabeth Street Joliet, IL 60435

Parochial Vicar: Father Tomasz Sielicki

Polish Organist: Mr. Mariusz Madej

Business Manager: Mrs. Mary Nemanich

Polish School Principal: Barbara Szuba

Holy Cross Weekend Masses

Saturdays: 4pm in English

7pm in Polish

Sundays: 9am in English

10:30am in Polish

Weekday Masses

8:30am in English

Monday, Wednesday, Friday

7:00pm in Polish Monday—Friday

Confessions

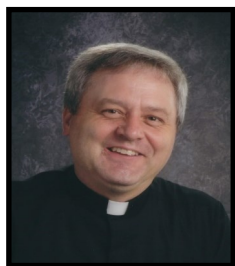
Saturdays 3:15pm-3:45pm



30th Sunday in Ordinary Time October 24, 2021

The Pastor's Corner

What's Next?



We're not in heaven yet. But God wants us to get there. And in order for that to happen, we have to take the next step. What's that next step for you? How will you grow in your life with Christ? How will your family grow? How will our parishes grow in our life with Christ? And

how can you be a part of that? It's a very important question to ask, 'What's Next?'

I'll be hosting three get-togethers in November to discuss that very question. First, we'll talk about all the steps we've taken already. How did God get you to the place you are in life right now? The second week we'll talk about where we are right now. You'll never reach your destination if you don't know where you are right now. The third and final week is a chance to take the next step: How can my life look more like the life of Christ? How can my family look more like Christ's family? How can our parish family look more like Christ's family?

I'm willing to bet your life has changed a lot during the last year. You probably had to make new plans because of it. This is an important time to make sure I am still united to Christ and growing more and more like him each day. God calls us to work with him, to walk with him. If we don't take these steps to heaven, we'll never get there.

So you won't want to miss this opportunity to go over these questions with your pastor. It will be a chance for you to personally grow in faith; and the more you grow in faith, so do our parishes. Sometimes people ask: What can I do at my parish? How can I help? What can I take part in? These days will be the next step in finding your place in our parish life. We're going to try to see in a very individual way how God has blessed you and how he calls you to follow him at this moment of your life. We want to see that next step and take it.

St. John Henry Newman recognize that our Lord was the Light, leading him step by step throughout his life. He was raised as an Anglican,

but it dawned on him that he would find the fullness of faith in our Lord's Church, the Catholic Church. The path wasn't easy for him. It meant leaving behind things from his own family and his own life. It meant leaving behind some friends whom he loved dearly; but he loved them in a new light after his conversion. How did he pray? We find a glint of it in his beautiful poem "Lead Kindly Light." He wrote:

*Lead, Kindly Light, ...Lead Thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from
home, Lead Thou me on. Keep Thou my
feet; I do not ask to see the distant scene;
one step enough for me.*

Let's meet in the St. Mary Nativity Room at 1:30pm on November 8th, 15th, and 22nd and we try to see our next step. Call the Parish office 815-726-4031 to reserve your place. Lord Jesus, be a Kindly Light leading each one of us and all of us together on our next step.

With my prayers,

Fr. Jerome

PS: Congratulations to Holy Cross Parish, proud, new owner of the empty lot at 900 Elizabeth St. This lot is vacant due to a house burning down some years ago. It went up for sale at a tax auction and we were the successful bidder at \$6000. This bid was made after consulting the Holy Cross joint parish and finance council and was well under the property tax evaluation of \$11,500. It is hoped that the property will eventually ease our parking burden. However, you may have different ideas about our Holy Cross campus. Now is a good time for Holy Cross parishioners to speak up so we can consider those plans with the council. Please send them along to the parish office or email them to me at frkish@outlook.com.

St. Mary Nativity & Holy Cross News



This weekend we will celebrate World Mission Sunday. Pope Francis invites the entire Church to support mission diocese in Africa, Asia, the Pacific Island, and parts of Latin America and Europe, where priests, religious and lay leaders serve the world's most vulnerable communities. Please keep Pope's mission in your prayers and be generous in this weekend's collection for the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY

Fall Bounty Monthly Food Collection



"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat,"

Nov. 6th - Nov. 7th

Special Need: Kid Friendly Foods

Fruit Cups/ roll-ups, peanut butter, jelly, breakfast bars, canned pastas (Spaghetti Os) All food will be donated to our neighbors, the St. John's Food Bank.

St. Mary Nativity Church Employment Opportunity



St. Mary Nativity Church is now accepting applications for a part-time, non-benefitted Maintenance Custodian. The person in this position is responsible for performing general maintenance tasks including janitorial, completing work orders, maintaining the grounds at St. Mary Nativity and Holy Cross parishes. This position reports to the Maintenance Supervisor. This is an hourly position; hourly rate is commensurate knowledge and experience.

Key responsibilities of this position include, but are not limited to the following:

Performs maintenance projects and tasks with minimal supervision under direction from the Maintenance Supervisor. Responsibilities include basic custodian / janitor tasks such as cleaning, painting, basic repairs, replacing light bulbs, yard work, snow removal, etc. Please send resume and references to: MaryNemanich@smnccs.com

ALL SAINTS & ALL SOULS Mass and Evening Prayer Schedule



Solemnity of All Saints, Monday, November 1, 2021
(Not a Holy Day of obligation)

8:30am Holy Cross

7:00pm, Saint Mary Nativity

7:00pm, Holy Cross —Polish

Commemoration of All Holy Souls, Tuesday, Nov. 2

8:30am Saint Mary Nativity

7:00pm Saint Mary Nativity

7:00pm Holy Cross —Polish



St. Mary Nativity's Tuesday Prayer group is inviting you to join us as we rekindle the devotion of the Novena in honor of our Sorrowful Mother. Please join us every Tuesday.

1:00—The Holy Rosary

1:30—The Chaplet of Divine Mercy

1:45— **The Sorrowful Mother Novena** (Although the emphasis of the Novena will be intended for conversations and the return of lapsed Catholics, there is period of time allowed during the Novena for private intentions as well).

You are most welcome to join us for the entire prayer time or join us just for the Novena at 1:45pm.

O Come, Let Us Adore Him!

Do you miss Exposition and Adoration of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist? How can we bring people to discover Our Lord and receive his many graces? Join us for a planning meeting on Tuesday, October 26 at 6:30 p.m. in the St. Mary Nativity Room. Come early at 6pm for a Rosary as we pray for God's blessings on this effort.



Holy Cross and St. Mary Nativity Mass Intentions

**Sunday October 24 — Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
World Mission Sunday**

7:00 AM MASS (SMN)
For the People of the Parish

9:00 AM MASS(HC)
For all the Responders

10:30 AM MASS (HC)
O Boże błogosławieństwo dla Danuty i Jana w rocznicę ślubu oraz o szczęśliwe rozwiązanie dla Eweliny Dziękczynna i o Boże błog. dla p. organisty Mariusza, dla Nicole i Claudii
Dziękczynna za dary i prowadzenie przez Ducha Świętego
O zdrowie, pokój, łaski i Boże błog. dla rodziny Gąsieniców + Stanisław Murzański (11. rocznica śmierci)

11:00 AM MASS (SMN)
+ Anne Jelinek by Terry Gruber
+ Victoria Hernandez by Family

12:30 PM MASS (SMN)
+ Delores Bebej by The Cole Family

5:30 PM MASS (SMN)
Melanie Giordano by Family (SMN)

Monday October 25 (HC)

8:30 AM Mass
+ Jayson Adelman by Denise Adelman

7:00 PM Mass
+ Józef Klikuszowian (zam. Holy Cross Rosary Group)

Tuesday October 26

8:30 AM Mass (SMN)
+ Matthew Sellers by Betty Sellers

7:00 PM Mass (HC)
+ Jan Zajac (zam. Koło Różańcowe)

Wednesday October 27 (HC)

8:30 AM Mass
+ Matthis G. & Annette Senffner by Ken & Mary Ellen Spiegel

7:00 PM Mass
O nawrócenie synów (prosi matka)

Thursday October 28

8:30 AM Mass (SMN)
Dan & Marilyn Lajein (54th Wedding Anniv.) by Family

7:00 PM Mass (HC)
+ Władysław Skolarus (zam. parafianie)

Friday October 29 (HC)

8:30 AM Mass
+ Lorraine Jaskowiak by Joel Jaskowiak & Crystal

7:00 PM Mass
+ Ewa Sędacka (w 42. rocznicę przyjazdu do USA)

Saturday October 30

4:00 PM MASS (SMN)
+ Douglas Petan Family
+ Joanne Downey & Turk Johnson by Dave & Mary Shankland Lawson

4:00 PM MASS (HC)
+ Anne V. Kolakowski by Bolek & Kolakowski

7:00 PM MASS (HC)
Dziękczynna za otrzymane łaski i błogosławieństwa (zam. Elżbieta)
W intencji Panu Bogu wiadomej

Sunday October 31 — Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:00 AM MASS (SMN)
For the People of the Parish

9:00 AM MASS(HC)
+ Walter Mueller by Rosemary & Family

10:30 AM MASS (HC)
O powrót do Boga i Kościoła oraz o wyzwolenie z nałogu dla Władysława
O Boże błogosławieństwo i opiekę MB dla Zofii i Piotra z okazji urodzin
+ Józef Długosz
+ Joanna Niejadlik

11:00 AM MASS (SMN)
+ Mary Stefanich by Michael Debbie & Rosemary
+ Rita Matuszewski by Eddie & Lorraine Matuszewski

12:30 PM MASS (SMN)
+ John Valek by Shirley Pershey

5:30 PM MASS (SMN)
+ Raymond & Elizabeth Marso by Edward & Deborah Marso

Holy Cross at St. Mary Nativity Calendar of Events

THIS WEEKS EVENTS

(SMN) Saint Mary Nativity Nativity Room (NR)
(HC) Holy Cross (SMNS) Saint Mary Nativity School

Sunday, October 24 — World Mission Sunday

10:00AM — Family Faith Formation —Group Mtg. (Cafe) (NR)

Monday, October 25

6:30—School Board Mtg. (NR)

Tuesday, October 26

9:30AM — Bible Study (NR)
1:00PM—Rosary (Church)
6:00PM—Adoration Planning Meeting (NR)

Wednesday, October 27

All School Mass

Thursday, October 28

1:00PM—Rosary in Spanish (SMN) (Church)

Friday, October 29

Polish School (SMNS) (Gym)

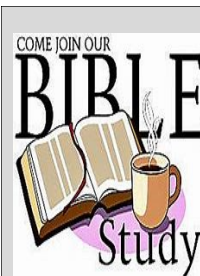
Saturday, October 30

3:15 PM to 3:45 —Confessions at St. Mary Nativity & Holy Cross Church

Sunday, October 31 —Happy Halloween



**** If you are having a mass intention said for a family member and would like to bring the gifts up for the mass please see the Ushers the day of the mass and they will direct you Thank you! ****



COME JOIN Our Bible Study Group as we continue to study the Bible book by book.

We meet on **Tuesday mornings** from **9:30AM until 11AM** in the **Nativity Room**.

Our next meeting date will be: **Tuesday, October 26th**



Set your clocks back one hour



As stewards of God's gifts, our parishes have many opportunities to provide lasting legacies. Please prayerfully remember St. Mary Nativity and Holy Cross in your estate plans. Your gift to the Church and its ministries would be very much appreciated and will be used in accordance to your wishes. For more information, please call the rectory office at 815-726-4031.

October 17, 2021 Collection

St. Mary Nativity \$ 7,148.00
 Holy Cross \$ 2,139.00

Thank You

Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Novena Prayer



Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Novena Prayer
 My dearest Mother Mary, behold me, your child, in prayer at your feet. Accept this Holy Rosary, which I offer you in accordance with your requests at Fatima, as a proof of my tender love for you, for the intentions of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in atonement for the offenses committed against your Immaculate Heart, and for this special favor which I earnestly request in my Rosary Novena: (Your Request)

I beg you to present my petition to your Divine Son. If you will pray for me, I cannot be refused. I know, dearest Mother, that you want me to seek God's holy Will concerning my request. If what I ask for should not be granted, pray that I may receive that which will be of greater benefit to my soul.

I offer you this spiritual Bouquet of Roses because I love you. I put all my confidence in you, since your prayers before God are most powerful. For the greater glory of God and for the sake of Jesus, your loving Son, hear and grant my prayer.
 Sweet Heart of Mary, be my salvation.

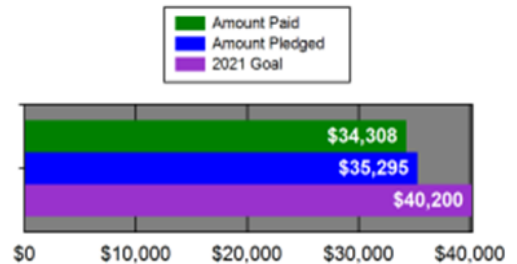
Thank you for supporting the Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal



CMAA Report By Parish

2021 Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal through 10/17/2021

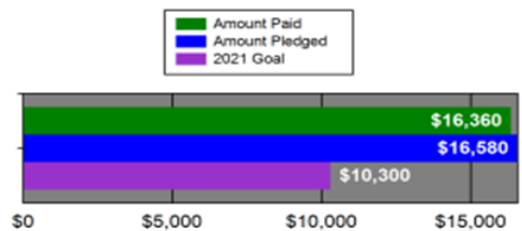
Parish #	115			
Parish Name	St. Mary Nativity Parish - Joliet			
	2021	2020	Inc/Dec	2020 (Final)
Goal	\$40,200	\$43,200	(\$3,000)	\$43,200
Amount Pledged	\$35,295	\$28,991	\$6,304	\$30,101
Amount Paid	\$34,308	\$28,715	\$5,593	\$30,419
Balance Due	\$987	\$276	\$711	(\$318)
Donor Count	160	174	-14	179
2021 Rebate	\$0			



CMAA Report By Parish

2021 Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal through 10/17/2021

Parish #	102			
Parish Name	Holy Cross Parish - Joliet			
	2021	2020	Inc/Dec	2020 (Final)
Goal	\$10,300	\$10,500	(\$200)	\$10,500
Amount Pledged	\$16,580	\$17,605	(\$1,025)	\$18,145
Amount Paid	\$16,360	\$16,328	\$33	\$17,225
Balance Due	\$220	\$1,278	(\$1,058)	\$920
Donor Count	45	57	-12	58
2021 Rebate	\$4,242			



Holy Cross Polish School News



W ubiegły piątek w polskiej szkole odbyła się akademie przygotowana przez klasę 3 i panią Elżbietę Palar, wspominająca postać naszego świętego. Na program artystyczny złożyły się wspomnienia, piosenki oraz słowa wypowiedziane przez Świętego Jana Pawła II do Polaków 43 lata temu.

Wieczór zakończyli licealiści, którzy przypomnieli historię Dnia Edukacji Narodowej oraz złożyli wszystkim nauczycielom życzenia z okazji ich święta.

Występy uczniów zostały nagrodzone nie tylko gromkimi oklaskami rodziców, ale także przygotowanymi przez przybyłych gości z Unii Polsko-Słowiańskiej, prezentami.



JOHN PAUL II Healing Center
Transformation in the Heart of the Church

Healing the Whole Person

OFFERED IN-PERSON OR VIA LIVESTREAM!
NOVEMBER 4-6, 2021
NOTRE DAME PARISH - CLARENDON HILLS, IL

Healing the Whole Person

This seminar provides the opportunity to learn about and experience the healing power of God in the wholeness of body, soul and spirit. Teachings are augmented by private activities for personal application and healing, including journaling, prayer ministry, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Adoration and Eucharist.

EVENT HOURS:

Thursday, Nov 4:
Check-in 5:30pm
Program 6:30 - 9:30pm

Friday, Nov 5:
Program 6:30 - 9:30pm

Saturday, Nov 6:
9:00am - 4:30pm

NOTRE DAME PARISH
64 Norfolk Ave. Clarendon Hills, IL 60514

For questions or information about scholarships, student & missionary discounts email: JPiRetreatNDP@gmail.com

REGISTER online for either the IN-PERSON or LIVESTREAM version of this event at: www.JPIIHealingCenter.org

Follow the John Paul II Healing Center & share this event on social media!
[@jpihealingcenter](#) [@jpihealingcenter](#) [@JPIIHealingCenter](#) [@JPIIHealing](#)

"We are not the sum of our weaknesses and failures, we are the sum of the Father's love for us and our real capacity to become the image of His Son Jesus." - Pope St. John Paul II



St. Joseph Senior Christmas Bazaar

Saturday, November 13th

10 AM - 3 PM

St. Joseph Park,
700 Theodore St, Joliet

Now is the time to do some Christmas Shopping: ornaments, crocheted items, jewelry, raffles, potica, and much, much more!
Refreshments available for purchase.

The Christmas Bazaar is open to the public. **No admission fee.** Strollers are welcome. **Bring your family and friends—you won't want to miss this event!**

For more info, call Barb, 815-690-7038.



CASH CALENDAR RAFFLE

Get your tickets now! \$20 per ticket

Payouts for the Cash Calendar Raffle fundraiser will be daily* (see ticket) from January 1 to May 31 of 2022, which means **150 days of winners, totaling \$11,000 in winnings!**

Payouts include \$20 on weekdays, \$40 on Saturdays, and \$150 on Sundays. There will even be one \$500 winner drawn and 2 winners on the 22nd of each month, in addition to other special payouts which are identified on the ticket.

Please print Name _____ Address _____ Phone Number _____	Seller _____ Please return this portion with payment \$20 per Ticket	<p>St. Mary Nativity Catholic School</p> <h2>150 DAYS OF WINNING</h2> <p>CASH CALENDAR ~ January to May 2022</p> <h1>\$11,000</h1> <p>in Total Payouts</p> <p><i>All Tickets Can Win More Than Once</i></p> <p>Every Weekday \$20 Every Saturday \$40 Every Sunday \$150 1st Day of the Month \$200 Last Day of the Month \$200 2 Winners on the 22nd of each month</p> <p>Special Days</p> <table border="0"><tr><td>Jan. 1st</td><td>New Year's Day - Hello 2022</td><td>\$500</td><td>Mar. 29th</td><td>Spring Break</td><td>\$50</td></tr><tr><td>Jan. 6th</td><td>Epiphany</td><td>\$50</td><td>Mar. 30th</td><td>Spring Break</td><td>\$50</td></tr><tr><td>Jan 17th</td><td>MLK Jr. Day</td><td>\$50</td><td>Apr. 10th</td><td>Palm Sunday</td><td>\$200</td></tr><tr><td>Feb. 2nd</td><td>Groundhog Day</td><td>\$50</td><td>Apr. 14th</td><td>Holy Thursday</td><td>\$100</td></tr><tr><td>Feb. 14th</td><td>Valentine's Day</td><td>\$500</td><td>Apr. 16th</td><td>Holy Saturday</td><td>\$100</td></tr><tr><td>Feb. 21st</td><td>President's Day</td><td>\$50</td><td>Apr. 17th</td><td>Easter Sunday</td><td>\$500</td></tr><tr><td>Mar. 2nd</td><td>Ash Wednesday</td><td>\$100</td><td>May 5th</td><td>Cinco de Mayo</td><td>\$50</td></tr><tr><td>Mar. 14th</td><td>Father, Jerome's Birthday</td><td>\$500</td><td>May 8th</td><td>Mother's Day</td><td>\$200</td></tr><tr><td>Mar. 17th</td><td>St. Patrick's Day</td><td>\$50</td><td>May 27th</td><td>Last Day of School</td><td>\$150</td></tr><tr><td>Mar. 19th</td><td>St. Joseph Day</td><td>\$50</td><td>May 30th</td><td>Memorial Day</td><td>\$500</td></tr><tr><td>Mar. 28th</td><td>Spring Break</td><td>\$50</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <p>Tickets drawn daily* *Weekends and holidays will be drawn the next business day. There will be no drawing on 4/15/2022 Good Friday</p> <p>\$20 per Ticket</p>	Jan. 1st	New Year's Day - Hello 2022	\$500	Mar. 29th	Spring Break	\$50	Jan. 6th	Epiphany	\$50	Mar. 30th	Spring Break	\$50	Jan 17th	MLK Jr. Day	\$50	Apr. 10th	Palm Sunday	\$200	Feb. 2nd	Groundhog Day	\$50	Apr. 14th	Holy Thursday	\$100	Feb. 14th	Valentine's Day	\$500	Apr. 16th	Holy Saturday	\$100	Feb. 21st	President's Day	\$50	Apr. 17th	Easter Sunday	\$500	Mar. 2nd	Ash Wednesday	\$100	May 5th	Cinco de Mayo	\$50	Mar. 14th	Father, Jerome's Birthday	\$500	May 8th	Mother's Day	\$200	Mar. 17th	St. Patrick's Day	\$50	May 27th	Last Day of School	\$150	Mar. 19th	St. Joseph Day	\$50	May 30th	Memorial Day	\$500	Mar. 28th	Spring Break	\$50			
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The Cash Calendar Raffle tickets would make great Christmas gifts or stocking stuffers for your friends and loved ones!

Please contact the Rectory Office at (815) 726-4031 if you would like to purchase tickets. The ticket stubs and payment can be sent to St. Mary Nativity – 706 North Broadway Street – Joliet, Illinois 60435, or dropped off at the Rectory Office or in the collection basket at the weekend masses.

Ticket stubs and payment are due by Monday, December 20, 2021.

All proceeds benefit Saint Mary Nativity School - Thank you!



Arriving early..... If you ordered **Dan's Caramel Apples**, they will be ready for pick-up **Wednesday – October 27th** from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., or on **Thursday – October 28th** and **Friday – October 29th** between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at the **rectory office**. Thank you to everyone who supported SMN with this fundraiser.



There is still time to donate towards scholarships for the 2021-2022 school year. **Your donation must be made by November 30th. Donations made in December will help fund 2022-2023 scholarships, but still qualify for a 2021 state tax credit.** If you pay income taxes in the State of Illinois, you can direct those funds to our St. Mary Nativity School and receive a credit on your tax bill. As an example, if you paid \$100 to our school through the group called EMPOWER, you could get \$75 off on your state taxes. That's a \$25 donation from you, a \$75 credit on your taxes, and the whole \$100 goes to the school. You would receive the tax credit in the following tax year. It would not qualify as a deductible donation on your federal taxes. For additional information or if you have questions, please contact Mary in the rectory office.



Premium Boxed Chocolate Fundraising

Please fill out the bottom of this order form and send it along with your payment by Tuesday, November 9th. Please make check payable to St. Mary Nativity School. Please drop off your order form along with payment at the rectory office or in the weekend collection basket. **The candy will be ready for pick-up in early or mid December. A date has not been set yet. You will be contacted, so it is very important to include your phone number on this order form.** If you have any questions, please contact the rectory office at (815) 726-4031.

All boxes are 8 ounces and \$14.00 each!

All proceeds benefit St. Mary Nativity School!

Name _____

Phone Number _____

	<u>Quantity</u>
Vanilla Buttercreams (Milk Chocolate)	_____
Mint Meltaways	_____
Trinadads	_____
Pixies	_____
Assorted Chocolates	_____
Total Boxes	_____

Total Due at \$14.00 each _____

Tree of Light Blessing (Online Video)

.....
REGISTER BY:
OCTOBER 26, 2021



This special Tree Blessing Ceremony remembers infants lost through miscarriage, stillbirth, other pregnancy losses, and infant or early childhood death.

In order to help all families through the grieving process, The Office of Family Ministry in the Catholic Diocese of Joliet is offering a Tree of Light Blessing (Online Video) to honor all infants in lieu of an in-person mass this year.

In the pre-recorded video, each baby will be acknowledged giving each family the opportunity to have their loss acknowledged.

Please register to receive the video online link by email familiministry@dioceseofjoliet.org or online at <https://bit.ly/2zWNhtY>



Bishop Hicks' Column

October 2021: The Art of Preaching



I love to preach. I love it! That may sound odd to you, especially since public speaking is one of the greatest fears in the world, partly because we become anxious about looking silly and being judged or rejected. Yet, every time I approach the pulpit, I am humbled and overjoyed to break open the Word of God and try to connect it to our daily lives.

While I am able to share my love for preaching now, I must admit that when I entered the seminary, I thought to myself, "I am not sure how I am ever going to preach!" Not only did I wonder how I would conquer my fear and stage fright, but I also questioned, "How am I going to come up with new and relevant material day after day?"

Thankfully at the seminary, my homiletics' teacher was wise, brilliantly creative and humble. He encouraged me and my fellow seminarians to find our own voice. He gently helped us to develop our own authentic style instead of trying to pretend to be someone we were not.

Admittedly, my confidence has grown over the years. Yet there still remains the daily task of thinking of what to say. People have noticed over the years that when someone is telling a story in normal conversation, I will often say, "Now, that would make a good homily!" I am constantly listening to others and their experiences, keeping track of how I might share them in my preaching one day. In other words, I keep my eyes and ears open to the world around me and then try to connect those examples to Scripture and the spiritual life.

Before preaching, I also use the ancient tradition of "lectio divina" which Pope Benedict XVI referred to as "prayerful listening to the Word of God." Basically, this four-step process of praying over Scripture includes: 1) Reading (lectio) 2) Meditation (meditatio) 3) Prayer (oratio) 4) Contemplation (contemplatio). The process allows me to move beyond myself and my own interpretation by encountering God, who is behind, in and beyond the text.

In other words, by using lectio divina, I try to avoid preaching about the "Gospel according to me" and instead break open the Scriptures according to the "Word of the Lord."

I remember this past Advent season, I started thinking about my Christmas homily. I wanted to share something fresh and relevant as the new bishop of Joliet. Yet, with all my reading, conversations and prayer, I was dry. Nothing! I started to think to myself, "Maybe I will just have to dust off a homily from a Christmas past?" Then, two days before Christmas Eve, I was doing my morning Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament and I said to Jesus, "I have nothing to preach about on Christmas. Please help me." My prayer was answered almost instantly. Within two minutes of my asking the Lord for his help, he sent the Holy Spirit to me and deposited in my head a homily from beginning to end, which I joyfully preached two days later at our Cathedral of St. Raymond Nonnatus.

Please know that most of my prayer petitions are not answered so quickly or so precisely. But I wanted to share that personal experience with you to remind all of us that Jesus is real and that God wants the best for us. He truly knows and loves us and wants us to know and love Him.

While I always try to preach well, I am aware of my own shortcomings and regret the times that I was not as good as I would have liked to have been or when I gave less than what the people of God deserve. I think most of us desire good preaching and long to be fed by the Word of God. I wholeheartedly agree with Pope Francis, who said, "The homily can actually be an intense and happy experience of the Spirit, a consoling encounter with God's word, a constant source of renewal and growth." (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 135)

One last thought ... remember that we all preach. Most preaching does not come from a pulpit at Mass. Instead, we communicate much by our daily words, attitudes and actions. By raising our minds and hearts in prayer to God, let us all strive to preach well and follow the wise words of St. Teresa of Avila, "We must all try to be preachers through our deeds."

Communion to the Homebound

The Holy Eucharist is the gift of Jesus himself at Mass. If you are confined to home and unable to receive him, we have volunteers who will bring him to you. Please contact the parish office if you would like to receive Holy Communion at home. We could also use new volunteers to help in this outreach, so also contact the parish office if you are able to help. Our parish office can be reached at 815-726-4031.

Please pray for our sick

Mary Bellos	Paul Morris
Vietta Bews	Phil May
Sheri Bokholtt	Ann
Christopher Borsom	Robert Nasenbeny
William Brenc	Raymond John Nickel
Charlotte Brown	Andy Orosco
Genaro Cisneros	Willard Perkins
John Drnek	Nick Pervan
Bob Eberhard	Mildred Pruss
Dosseh Houeai Elise	Ronald Pruss
Jim Flannery	Amy Rabb
Charlette Frieh	Father Pete Rossa
Anthony Gregory	Steve Senisais
Anthony Harames	Nancy Serdar
Haramas	Ashley Smith
Janet Horvath	Adam Speirs
Harriet Kazlauskas	Scott Speirs
James Kozar	Teresa
Janet	Mary Therese Stefanec
Marilyn Lajcin	Joseph Trubich
Jerry Lakota	Diann Cerpen-Verlare
Darlene Likar	Susan Ward
Frank Lozano	Bill
Mark	
Pat Majetic	
Gabby Matlak	Need prayers or know
Alex McKeel	someone who does call
John	Pat Weiskop
Charlene Molnar	(815)-723-7141



THE NINE MONTHS OF THE CHILD JESUS IN THE WOMB OF MARY THE SEVENTH MONTH SEPTEMBER 25 TO OCTOBER 25

Each year on December 25th we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. For centuries the Church has also celebrated his conception on March 25, the feast of the Annunciation.

Our parishes have once again begun our ‘Spiritual Adoption’ program. Each month we will be keeping you up to date with the development of your baby. Mary and Joseph knew in advance that their baby would be a boy. And although Jesus was not his biological child, Joseph eagerly anticipated his birth. By the seventh month, the baby’s hands grip strongly. His eyelids open and close as he surveys his increasingly cramped surroundings. The baby is now 15 inches long and weighs 2-3 pounds. The infant Jesus listens intently for his mother’s recognizable voice. A child of seven months would survive birth. Four to 20 couples wait to adopt each available child. The average abortion takes 5-10 minutes. The average wait for adoption is 2-10 years.

Pray for all adoptive parents who provide the loving care and nourishing environment which every child deserves, and for foster parents who lend their hearts and homes to those whose fates hang in the balance.

Please pray for our troops

Pfc. Paul Roder, USM
Jacob Gregurich, USMC
Chris McCarty, USMC
LT Alex Aguilera, USMC
2ND LT Kevin A’Hearn
Capt. Marcos Aguilera, USMC 1st Sgt.
Christina Romero USMC,
Cpl. Anthony Gutierrez, USMC
Pfc. Michael McCallister, USA
Joe Miller, USMC Sgt.
Tommy Hanks, USMC
Sgt. Christina Hanks, SMC
Alexander Gregurich Pfc. Lawrence Washington
Sgt. FC Jay R. Martin, USA

E5 Kathleen Sullivan, USN
SRA Michael Wilson Arellano
CPL. Christopher Wesoly,
Brent Moot
Justyn Moot
Jeremy M. Close, USMC
David Walters, USA
Johnathon Schroll, USMC Special Forces
Petty Officer 1st Class Tyler Hintzsche, USN
PV2 Christian Cortez

