

THE LITURGICAL WEEK

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, December 6

St. Nicholas

8:30am - Pat Vann†

4:30pm - Kipp Newton

Sunday, December 7

2nd Sunday of Advent

8:30am - Jerry McMahon†

11:00am - For St. John Parishioners

12:30pm - For St. John Parishioners

Monday, December 8

The Immaculate Conception

8:30am - For St. John Parishioners

6:30pm - Deacon Jos. Fugere†

Tuesday, December 9

St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin

8:30am - Priest's Intention

Wednesday, December 10

5:15pm - The Kohlbry Family

Thursday, December 11

St. Damasus I

8:30am - The Meyers Family

10:00pm - For St. John Parishioners

Friday, December 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe

8:30am - Patrick Ross†

Saturday, December 13

St. Lucy

4:30pm - Lindsey Layfield

Sunday, December 14

3rd Sunday of Advent

8:30am - Betty Lewis†

11:00am - For St. John Parishioners

12:30pm - Raiford Hyde

“Behold the Lamb of God

who takes away

the sin of the world.”

~St. John the Baptist (John 1:29)

CONFESSION

Mondays 7:30 - 8:15am

Wednesdays 4:00 - 5:00pm

Fridays 7:30 - 8:15am

Saturdays 3:30 - 4:15pm

DEVOTIONS

ADORATION

Wednesday at 5:45pm

MORNING PRAYER

After Mass on Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday & Friday

DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET

After Morning Prayer on Monday

THE SANCTUARY LIGHTS

are lit this week in honor of

The Swift Family

PRAYERS

FOR OUR SICK & SHUT-INS

Please remember the infirmed of our parish, especially those who, by request, have been placed on our parish prayer intention list.

If you would like to be added to this list, please call the parish office. You may also call for a copy of the prayer list.

SPIRITUAL READING & REFLECTION

Dear Parishioners,

In this Advent Season, we are preparing to greet Christ in three ways: at His second coming, in celebrating His birth at Christmas, and of course, daily as He comes to us through the Holy Mass and the Sacraments. The word “Advent” of course comes from the Latin meaning “to come to.” Christ has come to us, He is coming to us and He will come to us in the end times. I hope you are enjoying this season of penance and joyful anticipation.

Today and next Sunday, St. John the Baptizer is presented to us in the Liturgy. This striking figure calls us to attentiveness, to preparation to greet our Blessed Lord. All of our preparations for celebrating Christmas have their reason, not just in having a “party” with over abundant material gifts, but rather to lead us into a daily welcoming of Christ into our lives. Christmas is after all “Christ” “Mass.” The Mass of His birth is the reason for all the preparations and parties and gifts. Christians daily give their lives to Christ as a gift to Him. We submit ourselves as His disciples. The Infant King leads us to reflect on the enormous love of God for us and the redemption from sin and sinful lives which He offers us through the passion, death and resurrection of Christ.

So, as we are preparing to celebrate “Christ” “Mass”, let us be sure to make our “New Year of Grace” resolutions a reality. What is different this year in my daily plan to serve Christ? Or, have I let Him and my religion become superstitious? Do not let the secular view of Christmas as a merchandising feast take over your lives. Enjoy these days as the real spiritual uplift that they are.

The voice prophesied in Isaiah is the voice of St. John the Baptizer in the desert telling us that our sins are expiated and so he brings us news of glad tidings of a true and whole life. We are that voice in the desert of our world today; we are the evangelizers. True freedom is expressed in responsibility not license. We are physically free to do many things, but we are not morally free to do all things. Thinking man must find his reason to be from the definition of who he is.

The distorted image of man today is a mockery of truth and gives license for temporary pleasures which lead not to happiness but to the endless tragedies we see played out in the broken lives and culture in which we live.

You and I can have the consolation of Isaiah in our Lord Jesus Who is the truth teller. Trust in Him. Spend time with Him each day. Study His word. Go to Him in His Sacraments. When you arrive at Church for Holy Mass, enter into the Church with awe. Genuflect in love before the One Who loves you most. Kneel in your pew, make the sign of the Cross and thank God for the privilege to be in His quiet Presence as He speaks to you heart to heart (*Cor ad cor loquitur*). Begin Holy Mass by praying to understand what God will do for you in this particular Holy Mass. Your fasting has prepared you for the great meeting, and when Holy Mass begins you ascend the Holy Mountain where God reveals Himself to you personally. Awe, quiet, preparation. Let us enter into the saving act of His Love: Holy Mass.

This time of the year affords us great opportunities for evangelizing. The entire reason of all the festivities is the birth of the Son of God. While others may have great celebrations and customs which we always want to respect, we ask the same of them. A “holiday” comes from “holy day.” A “Christmas Tree” is a Christmas tree. To wish someone “Merry Christmas” is to express our Christian happiness in the birth of our Savior and to wish others well. We would expect others to use their greetings from their religion in a similar fashion and we would not be offended but honor their convictions.

Tomorrow, December 8, is a Holy Day of Obligation – the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. It is our National Holy Day as the U.S.A. has Mary, the Immaculate Conception as our patroness. See the bulletin for the times of Holy Masses.

May God bless you and our Lady keep you in her care. With my prayers, Father Arnsperger

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

For sacramental emergencies, please call 828-859-9574, ext. 6

If you or anyone you know is homebound or hospitalized, even temporarily, please call the office so that we may arrange for them to be visited by one of our Extraordinary Ministers.

DAILY MASS READINGS



YEAR B

December 7 Sun

2nd Sunday of Advent

Is 40:1-5, 9-11/2 Pt 3:8-14/Mk 1:1-8

December 8 Mon

Gn 3:9-15, 20/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38

December 9 Tue

Is 40:1-11/Mt 18:12-14

December 10 Wed

Is 40:25-31/Mt 11:28-30

December 11 Thu

Is 41:13-20/Mt 11:11-15

December 12 Fri

Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a, 12:1-6a, 10ab/Lk 1:26-38
or Lk 1:39-47

December 13 Sat

Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Mt 17:9a, 10-13

December 14 Sun

3rd Sunday of Lent

Is 61:1-2a, 10-11/1 Thes 5:16-24/Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

December 8th

This is a holy day of obligation

Masses are at 8:30am and 6:30pm

Collect: O God, who by the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin prepared a worthy dwelling for your Son, grant, we pray, that, as you preserved her from every stain by virtue of the Death of your Son, which you foresaw, so, through her intercession, we, too, may be cleansed and admitted to your presence. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.



**YOUTH GROUP CAROLING
AUTUMN CARE
SUNDAY, DEC. 7TH AT 5:30PM**

FINANCIAL FACTS

	This Week	Y.T.D.
Actual	\$ 8,078	\$150,622
Budgeted	\$7,038	\$154,846
Variance	\$1,040	(\$ 4,224)
(unfavorable)		

Campaign for Human Development \$290

This is the collection report for the
Sunday Masses of November 29 & 30, 2014

UPCOMING OFFERTORIES

Please remember to drop your Immaculate Conception offertory envelope for December 8th, and your Christmas Flower offertory envelope, in the collection baskets.

DONUTS & DOGMA

We hope you will join Fr. Arnsparger for Donuts & Dogma this Sunday morning, December 7th in the parish social hall after the 8:30am Mass. On the first Sunday of each month, hot coffee and various donuts will still be offered by the gracious generosity of our Family Life Commission members; however, we will now have Fr. Arnsparger sharing and teaching on various faith topics.



RIDE NEEDED TO MASS

Ride needed for parishioner Tish Jaccard, to Church from White Oak/Benson Hall for Sunday and weekday 8:30am Masses. Her sister Betsy, who had been providing rides, has moved to Michigan. Please contact Rosemary Kingsley at 828-713-4341.

SECOND COLLECTION NEXT WEEKEND RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

Give thanks for religious. A parishioner writes, "We thank God today and every day for every religious sister who taught us in school, not only our ABCs, but also to love God." Share your gratitude for the senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests who made a positive difference in so many lives. Please give generously to next week's collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious.



PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

YOUTH CHOIR PRESENTATION ON DECEMBER 14TH

In a spirit of Joyful Anticipation, the children and youth of St. John and the music ministry invite you to the presentation, *O Antiphons: Lessons and Carols*, on Sunday December 14th, Gaudete Sunday, at 4:00pm in the church. Join us for recitation, poetry, music, both choral and instrumental. Come prepared to raise your voices in song with us as we prepare our hearts for Christ's birth.

PARISH SOUP SAMPLER SUPPER

Tomorrow Evening, Monday, December 8th at 7:30pm



Join us tomorrow night Monday, December 8th, for a simple evening meal with delicious homemade soups and breads, crackers and light desserts shared in the warmth of parish fellowship. The Soup Supper will begin directly after the Holy Day Mass—Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary at 6:30pm. We

have some fabulous soups coming our way and we hope to see you there!

Any questions: Palma Davis: riverhillfarmpmd@gmail.com 828-817-4430
Send recipes for sharing to Theresa Fitch: stjhnff@windstream.net

ATTENTION LECTORS

Lector Workbooks have arrived for 2015. The 2015 Liturgical Year B began on the First Sunday of Advent, November 30, 2014. Lectors, who serve the Sunday Mass schedule, are asked to come by the office during office hours: 9:00am to 3:00pm to pick up their copy. Please be sure to speak with someone in the office before taking a Workbook. Also, if your family has more than one lector, we ask that you pick up only ONE copy per family. Thank you.

*NOTE: These notebooks **do not** contain Daily Weekday Readings.*

NIGHT OF PRAYER FOR LIFE

The 25th National Night of Prayer for Life falls on Monday, December 8th, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. In addition to our 8:30am and 6:30pm Masses and the annual soup supper, the Church will be open until 9:00pm for prayers to re-establish a Culture of Life in our country, return America to One Nation Under God, restore Religious Liberty and make Americans worthy of Christ's Peace. All are invited to this special evening honoring the Immaculate Conception of our Blessed Virgin, enjoying our annual soup supper and joining in prayer for our country.

*

FAITH FORMATION'S INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

1. Faith Formation Classes are automatically cancelled if Polk County Schools are closed or close early due to weather conditions.
2. Delayed local school openings do not affect our schedule.
3. If Faith Formation Classes are cancelled for any other reason (even if Polk County Schools are not closed) you will be notified by email. Please be sure that the FF Office (stjhnff@windstream.net) has your up-to-date email address. If you do not have an email address please provide a cell number that receives text messages: 859-9574 ext 3.
4. When Faith Formation Classes are cancelled, the "cancellation message" can be heard when you call the parish office after 3pm at: 828-859-9574.
5. At all times during inclement weather please use your best judgment for the safety of yourself and your children.

PARISH LIFE AT A GLANCE

Mon	Dec 8	— 9:00am — — 7:30pm	Parish Office Closed, Holy Day Divine Mercy Chaplet Schola Choir rescheduled to Tuesday No RCIA Soup Sampler Supper
Tue	Dec 9	5:30pm	Schola Choir Rehearsal, Church
Wed	Dec 10	5:30pm 6:00pm	Mixed Sacramental Class, Parish Center Faith Formation Classes, Parish Center
Thur	Dec 11	9:30am 7:00pm	Patriotic Rosary, Church Men's Group, Social Hall
Fri	Dec 12	5:30pm	Children's Choir Rehearsal, Church
Sat	Dec 13	9:15am	K of C Meeting/Ceremony, Social Hall
Sun	Dec 14	9:45am 4:00pm	Children's Choir Rehearsal, Parish Center Gaudete Sunday Presentation, O Antiphons

FAITH FORMATION / OTHER

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS

RCIA Classes do not meet this Monday evening, December 8th as it is a Holy Day of Obligation: The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. RCIA classes will resume Monday, December 15th at 7:00pm in the parish center.

MEN'S GROUP

7:00pm to 8:30pm • Parish Social Hall

All men of the parish are invited to join the Men's Group, for our last session of this calendar year, this coming Thursday, December 11th at 7:00pm.

WOMEN'S GROUP

The Women's Group concluded the "Eucharist" series. We thank all ladies of the parish who joined together to explore more deeply the Eucharist as Sacred Meal, Sacrifice and Real Presence. Fr. Barron's series are so rich and illuminating each time you view them! We extend a very special thanks to Patricia Skadow for her insightful teaching—such a true gift to all present. We wish all the women who have been a part of our sessions a most reflective Advent, filled with joyful anticipation, as we prepare for the coming of a most Holy Christmas!

YOUTH GROUP MEETINGS & EVENTS

Youth, Fr. Arsnparger will be offering "Donuts and Dogma" this morning! Family Life will provide the coffee and donuts and Fr. will provide the "Dogma"! Don't miss this great opportunity to enrich your faith. This evening, we will meet shortly before 5:00pm for a quick prayer in the church. Then we leave for Autumn Care to sing and visit the sick and shut-in. Don't be late—we are due to arrive at Autumn Care at 5:30pm. Dress in festive Christmas colors!

- Sunday, December 7— Youth Christmas Caroling. Prayer at 5:00pm. Arrive at Autumn Care at 5:30pm.
- Monday, December 8— Youth SERVE at Soup Sampler Supper.
Arrive at 7:15pm or come down directly after the 6:30 Mass.
- Friday, December 19— Youth Christmas Party. Parish Center—6:30 to 9:00pm.
- Sunday, December 21— Youth Group Sunday Morning. Social Hall at 9:45am.

*

See the
Inclement
Weather
Policy
on page 4.

FAITH FORMATION DVDS

NEW ARRIVAL: "MARY OF NAZARETH"

We have a copy of the recently released "Mary of Nazareth." A Two-Disc Collector's Edition on the life of Mary, mother of Christ, from her childhood through the Resurrection of Jesus. This film will be available for check-out starting Tuesday, December 9. We also have the DVDS listed. If any adult member of the parish would like to "borrow" any of the following DVDS---please contact Theresa in the Parish Faith Formation Office at stjohnff@windstream. You can then visit the office and sign the DVD out.

- *A Parent's Guide: Teaching the Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*—Catholic Parents Online
- *The Real Presence of the Lord in the Holy Eucharist*—The Newman Connection
- *Passionately Loving the World—Ordinary Americans living the spirituality of St. Josemaria*
- *Seven Deadly Sins/Seven Lively Virtues*—Very Rev. Robert E. Barron
- *Catholicism* (5 disc set)—Very Rev. Robert E. Barron

THE MAGNIFICAT ADVENT COMPANION

St. John Parishioners: Advent Companion Booklets are still available in the church vestibule. "This rich spiritual companion will accompany you like a beloved friend through the four weeks of Advent with poignant scriptural reflections for each day of the season." If you didn't pick up a copy last Sunday, be sure to do so today! You can pick up with the readings starting today or spend some quiet time catching up!

PARISH / DIOCESE / OTHER

WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES 2015



World Meeting of Families: Love is Our Mission, The Family Fully Alive

Registration is now open for the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia, September 22-27, 2015! Families can look forward to seeing and hearing Pope Francis, guest speakers, celebrations, kids’ activities and prayer, all of which will bring renewal and transformation for you, your loved ones and the world. To reserve your spot at the World Meeting, visit the official website WorldMeeting2015.org and select Register. Multiple packages are available for adults and children (Ages 6-17). Jesus is the source for the hope, faith, love and joy that should animate Catholic family life.

In this blessed month of December, let us remember that we are called to a Mission of Love. “God works through us. We have a mission. We are in the world for a purpose—to receive God’s love and to show God’s love to others. God seeks to heal a broken universe. He asks us to be his witnesses and helpers in that work.”

WMOF has an official hymn: “Sound the bell of holy freedom; call all nations of the earth, “ the new hymn begins, continuing: “Sons and daughters of one Father, sent to spread God’s saving Word. Come, and gather, as one fam’ly at the table of the Lord.” Archbishop Chaput said the hymn’s “powerful words and melody” make it “an excellent choice for our official hymn.”

Love Is Our Mission: The Family Fully Alive is a preparatory catechesis for the World Meeting of Families. Our hope is that these books will help each of you, as a family, to reflect upon the beauty and joy of God’s plan for marriage and family life. These books are still available, free of charge, in the parish office. Office hours are 9:00am to 3:00pm.

RETROVAILLE MARRIAGE HELP

Marriage Help – Do you feel lost, alone, or bored in your marriage? Retrouvaille can help, as it has helped thousands of couples at all stages of disillusionment in their marriage. For confidential information or to apply for the next program beginning Feb. 13–15, call 800-470-2230 or 434-793-0242, e-mail us at retrouvaille@msn.com, or visit the web site at www.retrouvaille.org.

K OF C CHRISTMAS DINNER

The Knights of Columbus are hosting their annual Christmas Dinner on December 14th. The dinner is open to parishioners; but tickets are limited. Tickets will be on sale after Sunday Masses.



<i>St. John the Baptist Catholic Church</i> SAVE THE DATE		
Dec 8	7:30pm	Holy Day of Obligation, Parish Office Closed Immaculate Conception Masses 8:30am & 6:30pm Soup Sampler Supper, Social Hall
Dec 11	10:00pm	Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass & Celebration
Dec 14	4:00pm 5:30pm	Advent Program “Lessons & Carols,” Church K of C Christmas Dinner, Links O’Tryon
Dec 24 – 26		Parish Office Closed for Christmas Christmas Eve Masses at 4:30pm, 6:30pm & Midnight Christmas Day Mass at 9:30am
Dec 31	6:30pm	Vigil Mass for Solemnity of Mary
Jan 1		Solemnity of Mary, Masses at 8:30am & 11am Holy Day of Obligation, Parish Office Closed
Jan 9		9th Annual March for Life in Charlotte NC
Jan 19		Parish Office Closed, Martin Luther King Jr Day
Jan 22		March for Life in Washington DC
Jan 31 /Feb 1		All Masses, Souper Bowl of Caring, Church Steps
Feb 14	5:30pm	Annual Spaghetti Dinner, Social Hall
Feb 18		Ash Wednesday, Masses at 8:30am & 6:30pm