



## Father Ray Burkle

**Sweetheart Supper:** In one of my former parishes, they celebrated Valentines Day with an evening Mass and Meal for married and engaged couples. This year we will try and start a similar celebration within the St. Isidore Cluster. On Friday, February 15, all married and engaged couples are invited to send in reservations for an evening of prayer and fun. Mass will begin at 6:00 pm at Sacred Heart, Osage, followed by a social, meal and if cooperation takes place, a nice fun game for some, and entertainment for others.

We are still in the planning phase for this event, so please check the future bulletins, where information will be presented as it becomes available. However, we do know that the cost will only be to cover our expenses.

**Limestone Brewery** will be hosting evenings for people to gather to discuss and share our faith while at the same time share a drink. We haven't worked out all the details yet, but we are currently looking at the first Thursday of each month (starting in January) when people can gather along with various pastors of our community, and we will discuss various topics and questions as posed by people. There will be a "Discussion/Topic/Question Jar" posted at the Limestone Brewery, where people can insert their questions or topics, then on the given night those items will be the main course of discussion. People will also have time to bring their topics or questions as well. We are currently looking at starting the evening around 7:00 pm and going until 8:30 ish. More information will be posted in upcoming bulletins as it becomes available.

**Advent, Immaculate Conception and Christmas** Advent begins Sunday, December 2. This is a season of preparing for the coming of Christ at Christmas, as well as preparing for the second coming of Christ at the end of time. It is a time of joyful anticipation and preparation.

This year the holy day of obligation for the celebration of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (December 8<sup>th</sup>) falls on a Saturday. Masses are as follows:

Friday, December 7<sup>th</sup> - 5:15 pm Mass at Sacred Heart, Osage

Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup> - 8:30 am Mass at Visitation, Stacyville

10:30 am Mass at Sacred Heart, Osage

Christmas Mass Schedule:

December 24<sup>th</sup> - 4:00 pm Visitation

6:00 pm Sacred Heart

December 25<sup>th</sup> - 8:30 am Sacred Heart

10:30 am Visitation

**Sacrament of Reconciliation:** The normal schedule of hearing confessions are at Sacred Heart on Saturdays at 4:30 pm and at Visitation on Sundays at 8:00 am. This year during advent, I will be hearing confessions before the 8:30 am Masses on Thursdays and Fridays starting at 8:00 am. Along with these times I will also be offering the sacrament on the following occasions:

Wednesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm Visitation

Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm Sacred Heart

Saturday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> at 1:00 pm Visitation

I hope to add other times as well during advent, so please check with the bulletin if these times do not work for you. Also, you can always call me to schedule a time (563-580-2197 cell).

A clean and pure soul is the best gift you can give yourself this advent season, or anytime throughout the year, at no cost to you.

## What is the Chaplet of Divine Mercy?

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“Saint Faustina was born Helena Kowalska in the village of Glogowiec west of Lodz, Poland, on August 25, 1905. She was the third of ten children. When she was almost twenty, she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, whose members devote themselves to the care and education of troubled young women.

The following year she received her religious habit and was given the name Sister Maria Faustina, to which she added "of the Most Blessed Sacrament," as was permitted by her Congregation's custom.

On September 13, 1935, Faustina wrote of a vision of Jesus about the chaplet in her diary. Faustina stated that Jesus asked her to pray the chaplet and instruct others to do so. Although the chaplet is said on beads like the Rosary, it is about a third of the length of the Rosary, and unlike the Rosary that has evolved over the years, the form and structure of the chaplet has remained unchanged since Faustina attributed it to a message from Jesus. Sister Faustina received from the Lord a message of mercy that she was told to spread throughout the world. She was asked to become the apostle and secretary of God's mercy, a model of how to be merciful to others, and an instrument for reemphasizing God's plan of mercy for the world. According to Faustina's visions, written in her diary, the chaplet's prayers for mercy are threefold: to obtain mercy, to trust in Christ's mercy, and to show mercy to others.

The message of mercy that Sister Faustina received is now being spread throughout the world; she has been recognized by the Church as a "Saint"; and her diary, *Divine Mercy in My Soul*, has become the handbook for devotion to The Divine Mercy. She would not have been surprised, for she had been told that the message of God's mercy would spread through her writings for the great benefit of souls.

Through Saint Faustina, Jesus also revealed special ways to live out the response to His mercy—one of which is the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, as both a novena and a prayer *for the three o'clock hour—the hour of His death.*”



### **During the 2nd Thursday of the month, the Chaplet will be prayed in community during Eucharistic Adoration after Mass at Sacred Heart.**

There are several of these cards with the instructions on the back in both churches.

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### **Come Pray With Us — December 1 and every first Saturday of each month**

St. Isidore parishioners are invited to come together on the first Saturday of each month for about 30 minutes to pray for unity and a faith-filled response to the call to discipleship for each of us. The first session will be December 1. Prayer sheets will be provided. We ask that you pray for these intentions every day on your own and collectively on 1<sup>st</sup> Saturdays.

Sacred Heart Parish Hall at 9:00am

Stacyville Community Nursing Home at 9:00am

Good Samaritan Nursing Home in St. Ansgar at 9:15am

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### **Mass Cancellations due to weather**

**WEEKEND** — Whenever there is a weather warning regarding ‘snow or ice’ that would affect weekend Masses, Masses will be cancelled. Cancellations will be on KIMT, KAAL and KTTC.

**WEEKDAY** — If St. Ansgar School is delayed or cancelled, morning Mass is cancelled at Visitation.

If Osage School is delayed or cancelled, morning Mass is cancelled at Sacred Heart..

Masses at the Nursing Homes will be determined separately. If bad weather occurs, and you want to know if Mass will be at the Nursing Home, please call St. Isidore Catholic Center at (641) 732-4342.

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**Visitation Faith Formation: October 24th family night: “Let our light shine” Pumpkin Prayer Project.** The activity was actually a Bible lesson that tells the story of salvation as parents and children carve a pumpkin. Teaching them the pumpkin prayer while carving pumpkins is a wonderful activity which gives them a new insight about their relationship with God; they are chosen by God, are cleansed by him, are given a new identity in Christ and then are made to be a light to shine for God. Sixty-six attended this family event.

### Totus Tuus in 2019

St Isidore Faith Formation programs have registered for Totus Tuus which is a week-long catechesis and evangelization program for children and teens. A team of four trained missionaries will come to our parish and serve our children during the day and our youth during the evening.

### Totus Tuus Missionaries Needed

Do you know any college age men and women from your parishes who would be great role models to younger Catholics? The Archdiocese is looking for college-aged disciples of Jesus to serve on teams with other men and women like them during the summer of 2019. Totus Tuus missionaries travel from parish to parish throughout the summer leading songs, teaching, performing skits, and sharing witness talks with the children and youth of the Archdiocese. This is a paid position with training and most expenses provided during the summer. Please encourage anyone who would be excellent at this to apply. The application can be found at [www.dbqarch.org/TotusTuus](http://www.dbqarch.org/TotusTuus). Contact Joanne Pohland ([j.pohland@dbqarch.org](mailto:j.pohland@dbqarch.org)) with any questions.



**First Reconciliation** was Sunday, November 11 Those from Visitation Parish were: Harper DeMaris & Daniel Merten



## 9th Annual Ladies' Night Out...by Mary Blake



A skit was based upon the book-marks distributed to each lady which said, "When life gives you lemons ...make lemonade" and was carried out by Glenda Ross. As one might guess, a real lemon packet was attached.



Eighteen intentionally-themed tables filled the Columbus Club on October 16. The seasonal theme of autumn predominated and also the coming season of Christmas. The best china and glassware were displayed upon elegant tablecloths, surrounded by customized table napkins and out-of-the-ordinary silverware. Some center pieces consisted of roses, candles, table runners, small pine trees, and pheasant feathers.

Mary Lou Kennedy, Sheila Adams and Glenda Ross coordinated the event. A splendid salad bar featuring taco meat, vegetable, fruit and lettuce salads were available. The meal was topped off with raspberry sherbet and large cookies as dessert!

The Sacred Heart and Visitation ladies plus ladies from the Christian Missionary Alliance Church of Osage mingled with each other, enjoying great food and fellowship! Two recently deceased members, Belle Spitz and Lorraine Meitner, were not forgotten as the organizers saved two chairs at special tables in remembrance of them.

Harriet Janson of Mason City, the keynote speaker at the age of 100, spoke on her rewarding and rich life of two marriages, two children and many moves from state to state. Her calm demeanor reflected taking all of life's ups and downs in great stride.



## The Shared Table



St. Isidore Cluster made and served the dinner at the UCC Church on October 21. Members of the Smart Pharmacy joined in to help. Including deliveries, we served approximately 100 people. This is a good opportunity for community members to join in fellowship and a free meal.

Those helping were Vera Kasel, Jo Popp, Jane Miller, Barb Onken, Barb Weber, Annette and Dan Uker, Karen Heimer, Levi & Gabriella Frost, and Chris Penney.

## 2018 Rosary Rally...by Janice Shonrock

The last few years an organization titled, "America Needs Fatima" has called for Catholics across the country to gather people in public squares to pray the rosary for the conversion of America. Their banner reads, "Praying the Rosary for America, Please join us! As human efforts fail to solve America's key problems, we turn to God through His Holy Mother, asking His urgent help."

This year, 21,145 public square Rosary Rallies took place across America on the 101st Anniversary of the 'Miracle of the Sun' in Fatima, Portugal. On that day long ago Our Lady asked us to 'Pray the Rosary'.

We, at Sacred Heart, joined in forming our own Rosary Rally on October 13 along with all those thousands of Catholic across America. We planned to meet at the shelter in Osage City Park, but, because of weather conditions, we moved to the Parish Hall.

We gathered around a statue of the Blessed Mother. Then, we began with a short introduction and listened to the traditional, "Our Lady of Fatima" song. We prayed the Rosary using the Fatima Prayer after each decade.

Twenty people participated. We were pleased to have a few children join us. Now that we know a little more about this, we hope to have more participation next year. Watch for this activity next October!

Mary Lou Kennedy & Janice Schonrock (Rally co-captains)  
Bev Nikolas (motivator)



## Upcoming Events

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**January 9** — Welcoming the Stranger Among Us—Immigration has been an issue in the political sphere in America since 1790 when one of the first immigration laws was passed. Since then, it remains a perennial issue. How are we as Catholics supposed to approach this topic not only politically but spiritually and communally?

Mark Schmidt, Director of Respect Life and Social Justice for the Archdiocese of Dubuque, will offer insights on the topic of immigration through a Catholic lens. Mark will offer Catholic principles to guide Catholics on developing a better understanding and approach to immigration as well as offer historical, economic, and social context for our current immigration system. Mark will present this information on Wednesday, January 9 at 6:30pm in the Sacred Heart Parish Hall.

**February 2 & 3** — Throat Blessing of St. Blaise—We will have blessing of the throats at all three Masses.

**February 10** — Speaker from “Wings of Refuge” which is a house for girls rescued from human trafficking in Iowa Falls will speak from 1-3pm in the Sacred Heart Parish Hall.

**February 15** — Sweetheart Mass with re-blessing of marriages followed by dinner and fun activities

**June 30** — Polka Mass, lunch, and dancing at Sacred Heart

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### Holy Day Mass Times

#### The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

(12-7 – 8:30 am at VIS – daily Mass)  
12-7 – 5:15pm at SH  
12-8 – 8:30am at VIS  
12-8 – 10:30 at SH

#### Christmas

12-24 – 4:00pm @ VIS  
12-24 – 6:00pm @ SH  
12-25 – 8:30am @ SH  
12-25 – 10:30am @ VIS  
12-26 – No Mass

#### Solemnity of Mary

12-31 – 5:15pm @ SH  
1-1-19 – 8:30am @ VIS  
1-1-19 – 10:30am @ SH  
January 2, 3, 4 – No Mass

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## Beauty in Christ

The Third annual Archdiocesan Women's Conference "Perfect isn't Perfect .. True Beauty is Rooted in Christ" will be held Saturday, January 26, 2019 at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. This year's speakers are Donna Marie Cooper O'Boyle, speaker, author and EWTN host; and Kate Wicker, storyteller and speaker. Archbishop Jackels will celebrate Mass. All women, high school age and up are invited for this spirit filled day hosted by the Archdiocese of Dubuque and Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women. Bring your mother, bring your sister, bring your daughter!! To register, please go to this website: <https://archwomensconference.org>

There were several from the Sacred Heart that attended last year. Their comments were in the March newsletter and as inserts in the bulletin in October. Those attending were Mary Lou Kennedy, Laura Wynohrad, Laurie Gisleson, Helen Gerdes, Kelli Duren, Terri Hernan, Janice Schonrock, Deb Popp, Corissa Meek, Julie Brumm, and Annette Uker. If you have any questions about this wonderful faith-filled day, ask one of them.

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**Thursday Morning Bible Sharing** 9:00am in the Sacred Heart Parish Hall. All are welcome.

**Friday Morning Bible Sharing** 9:00am at Evergreen Senior Living. All are welcome.

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### 2019 St. Isidore Parish Mission



Steve Angrisano is undoubtedly one of the most effective and versatile ministry leaders in the Church today. Young and old alike embrace the passionate message of faith, hope and love woven throughout his music and storytelling.

Always rooted in a spirit of humility and faithfulness, Steve's easy, honest style of ministry is born from who he is: a committed witness to the life and love of Jesus Christ.

**SAVE THE DATE:** Steve will join us for a Parish Mission, April 14, 15, & 16.

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## Live Pietra Fitness Class...by Julie Johnson

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On November 6, 2018, Chris Mautino from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, came to the Pietra Fitness class held at the parish hall. Ten women were present at the live class. Usually the class follows a DVD, but the live class gave us an opportunity to try something new. The class meets on Tuesday evenings from 5:15-6:15pm. The class works to improve flexibility, muscular strength, range of motion, posture and stability, and incorporates prayer and meditation in the workout. The class helps you feel relaxed, refreshed, rejuvenated, and restored. Anyone who is interested is encouraged to join us at any time.



Left to right: Brenda Huebsch, Kelly Gerbig, Laurie Gisleson, Janet Taets, Carrie Mayer, Liz Stevens, Susan Ringhofer, Chris Mautino, instructor, Carol Riley, and Mary Klaes. Others are usually there but were unable to attend that evening. Julie Johnson coordinates this program.

I was very excited to start this class. What I think is such a big plus is that we stop and pray during the exercises. It is so meaningful. I really enjoyed the live class last week and I hope she will come again soon! Good exercise and prayer. It is a great combination!

Laurie Gisleson

It was wonderful having a licensed Pietra Fitness instructor visit our group. The background information, meditations, and tips on getting the most out of the fitness moves were appreciated. I would invite anyone remotely interested in strengthening your core to check it out.

Carrie Mayer

Each week I look forward to Pietra Fitness as a time to exercise not only my body but also my mind with prayer and relaxation techniques.

Carol Riley

Pietra Fitness is a mind, body, and soul workout. I learned about Pietra Fitness following a meeting I went to where different parishes talked about the programs they offered in their churches. I didn't know what it was but did some research and ended up ordering the three DVDs that are offered. Each of the DVDs lasts about one hour and includes a prayer at the beginning and end of the workout and a meditation during an extended stretching period. The class promotes flexibility, balance, and core strength. I enjoy doing this workout with other ladies from our parish because we are all comfortable with the prayer incorporated into the workout, and it is a fun way to have some fellowship with other people from our parish. It is a great way to get in some exercise! There are no fees to participate in the class unless we do a live class. You can attend as it fits your schedule. Feel free to join us on Tuesdays from 5:15-6:15pm in the Parish Hall. All you need to bring is a yoga mat.

Julie Johnson

### Expansion of Immigration Legal Services

Due to the overwhelming need for immigration legal services across the Archdiocese, Catholic Charities has responded. These last couple of months have been an exciting time at Catholic Charities with the addition of two Immigration Attorneys, Ry Meyer and Denise (Dee) Patters, along with two bilingual (Spanish) legal assistants, Catherine Clark and Claudia Rodriguez De Nunez.

Our newest attorneys, Ry and Dee, between them both have years of legal experience, along with their many accomplishments, they have both previously spent time as County Attorneys in Northeast Iowa. With these new staff additions, Catholic Charities currently has a full-time Immigration Attorney in the Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, and Dubuque office locations.

Catholic Charities Immigration Legal Services continues to provide affordable, quality immigration legal services to help reunite families by assisting them in navigating the immigration system and advocating on their behalf. Catholic Charities assists with paperwork for green card and citizenship applications, family based visas, deferred action for childhood arrivals, temporary protected status, violence against women act, and other humanitarian immigration legal services. For more information, call 319-364-7121.



Immigration Legal Services Team, left to right: Miryam Antunez De Mayolo, Dee Patters, Yer Vang, Ellen Blocker, Claudia Rodriguez De Nunez, **Catherine Clark, daughter of Jeff and Liz Clark and granddaughter of Betty Clark & Ry Meyer**



9th grade from Visitation  
Morgen Koenigs, Loren Isler, Kasey Hemann, Bradley Hackenmiller



**Service Day  
at  
“Shop On  
State”**

10th grade from Sacred Heart  
Nathan Brumm, Eric Bobinet, Noah Krabbe,  
Jade Frein, Vince Morische, Ellie Bobinet, Paige  
Kisley, Alexis Jones, Katie Smith & Hannah  
Koch



## West Bend Grotto Pilgrimage, Camp Algona POW Museum and Nativity Scene



Members of St. Isidore Cluster had a wonderful chartered bus trip on October 6. Those attending were Zita Marzen, Carol Mullenbach, Barbara Brumm, Dort Schmidt, Anita Adams, Mary Michels, Christine Hackenmiller, Helen May, Carol Brumm, Carol Power, Bev Wolff, Ann Durben, Joanne Blake, Barb Adams, Sr. Millie Leuenberger, Barb Weber, Marie Donner, Irene Mullenbach, Mary Lou Kennedy, Marilyn Sullivan, Linda Marquesen, Jo Popp, Janice Schonrock, Vera Kasel, Dan Uker, Annette Uker

My trip to the Grotto at West Bend. I had been there before but never had an official tour. I was impressed how Father placed the rocks into designs. The stop at the POW camp where the German prisoners were held really impressed me how the prisoners who were there went to work for different farmers, how we trusted them as human beings, and that some after being sent back to their country, wanted to come to America to live. Vera Kasel

Adult Faith Formation Bus Trip - This bus trip found us traveling to West Bend and Algona, Iowa, to The Grotto of the Redemption and The Algona Nativity Scene and Camp Algona Museum.

We were treated to a narrated group tour of the Grotto which consists of nine smaller grottos making the largest of its kind in the world. It is made entirely of precious stones and gems from every country set in cement, along with petrified wood, stalactites, stalagmites and more. This block sized wonder was the plan and work of Father Paul Dobberstein with a few helpers over the years. He also constructed a Christmas Nativity Scene in the Church nearby. This was my 5th visit to the Grotto. From my first time as a child until now as a senior citizen, it has always been a beautiful and inspiring experience! From the sparkling gems to wonderful statues and vignettes we “experienced” events in the Life of Christ.

After lunch we visited the Algona Nativity Scene that was built by POW's from the Algona Prison Camp during WWII. It is awesome! If you would like to see it, it is open to the public during the Christmas season.

Then, we went to the Camp Algona Museum. Learning about this German prison of war camp, right here in Iowa, was an eye opener. It served as “home” for some 10,000 German soldiers captured in Europe from April 1944 to February 1946. There were a total of 34 branch camps supervised from Algona. Prisoners went out from the camps to work on farms, in homes and in factories in Algona and the surrounding communities. They were a great help to our economy since so many of our own men/women were serving the war effort. They were treated well, and many returned to the U.S. after their release. There is nothing left of the camp, but the museum tells its' story well using diagrams, pictures, drawings and paintings by prisoners, uniforms, letters and such. It was a learning experience!

Thank you Adult Faith Formation Committee for another interesting, inspiring, learning experience! Can't wait to see what next year brings! :)

Janice Schonrock

Comments continued on Page 10.

## **West Bend Grotto Pilgrimage, Camp Algona POW Museum and Nativity Scene...Cont**

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Bus trip to the West Bend Grotto. No, I don't want to go, I have been there and done that! Well, I really didn't have anything else to do so decided it had been a long time and there wasn't a better offer for the day so I went.

What a super decision. At the Grotto we had the greatest guide who explained everything so completely and, even though, the weather was sooo cold and breezy, the miracle of the workmanship and faith needed for this project was beyond belief. No wonder thousands of people visit there each year. We warmed our bodies and stomach at the Wagon Wheel. Then off to Algona to view the Nativity Scene made by the German prisoners of World War II to thank the people of Algona for their kind treatment they were given while they were being held. The friendships that were created during their stay lasted lifetimes. This visit made me stop and wonder about the way those soldiers were treated and how we relate to others who are strangers today.

I came home thanking God and our St. Isidore Cluster for the soul searching and appreciation that this experience created within me.

Mary Lou Kennedy

We arrived at the Grotto in West Bend on a blustery cold day, but that didn't stop us from enjoying the sights. It's hard to imagine the many pieces of rock that make up the scenes in the life of Christ, all just amazing and beautiful. We also visited the Catholic Church where Fr. Dobberstein built the Christmas Chapel, considered his finest work. In the afternoon, we visited the Nativity Scene in Algona built by Prisoners of War. I never knew about the many prisoners who were kept there and in the four state region. It was a day to remember!

Jo Popp

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## **Grandparenting: Leaving a Legacy of Faith**

My husband, Steve, and I attended the Archdiocesan Conference, "Grandparenting: Leaving a Legacy of Faith", in Waverly, Iowa, on August 25. Crystal Crocker, director of the Office of Evangelization for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, was the keynote speaker. Mass was celebrated with Archbishop Michael Jackels. There were three breakout sessions. Deacon Gary and Kay Aitchison spoke about the program they authored called "The Grand Adventure: A New Call to Grandparenting." Matt Selby, director of the Office of Marriage and Family Life, spoke on reaching out to adult children and other family members. Mary Pederson, director of Adult Faith Formation, spoke on sharing your memories, traditions and faith with your grandchildren. The conference was designed to help grandparents get some ideas on how to reach out to their grandchildren, adult children and other family members and encourage them to grow in their faith. It was an excellent conference to attend.

Julie Johnson

Grandparents' Day was held at St. Mary Catholic Church in Waverly on August 25, 2018. Just knowing the title of the conference – Grandparenting: Leaving a Legacy of Faith – was enough for me to want to attend. It was a wonderful, faith-filled day spent with other Catholic grandparents who were all interested in passing their faith on to their family members. Our day included keynote speaker Crystal Crocker, who oversees the grandparenting ministry in the St. Paul and Minneapolis Archdiocese, as well as several breakout sessions and a Mass led by Archbishop Jackels.

I learned a great deal about how to share faith with my family, but the following thoughts seemed to strike me as the most important. First, I learned how important grandparents are for family life and passing on the religious heritage which is so essential in the world. Second, when you are passing on faith, focus on Jesus – Jesus as a friend who loves unconditionally and lives in our hearts, and as the Good Shepherd who is ever-present, protects, and guides us. Third, let your grandchildren know they are made in God's image – tell them they are perfect, that God made them for heaven, pray daily for each of them, and let them know "of all the children in all the world I would choose you".

So what exactly is God's call to grandparents? Our goal is to help our grandchildren get to heaven: to know, love, and serve Him here. It had a profound effect on me when our speaker said, "tell your grandchildren that someday 'I want to dance in heaven with you!'" Now that's worth striving for!

Susan Ringhofer

## St. Nicholas

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The true story of Santa Claus begins with Nicholas, who was born during the third century in the village of Patara. At the time the area was Greek and is now on the southern coast of Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus' words to "sell what you own and give the money to the poor," Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to those in need, his love for children, and his concern for sailors and ships.

Under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, who ruthlessly persecuted Christians, Bishop Nicholas suffered for his faith, was exiled and imprisoned. The prisons were so full of bishops, priests, and deacons, there was no room for the real criminals—murderers, thieves and robbers. After his release, Nicholas attended the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. He died December 6, AD 343 in Myra and was buried in his cathedral church, where a unique relic, called manna, formed in his grave. This liquid substance, said to have healing powers, fostered the growth of devotion to Nicholas. The anniversary of his death became a day of celebration, St. Nicholas Day, December 6th (December 19 on the Julian Calendar).

Through the centuries many stories and legends have been told of St. Nicholas' life and deeds. These accounts help us understand his extraordinary character and why he is so beloved and revered as protector and helper of those in need.

One story tells of a poor man with three daughters. In those days a young woman's father had to offer prospective husbands something of value—a dowry. The larger the dowry, the better the chance that a young woman would find a good husband. Without a dowry, a woman was unlikely to marry. This poor man's daughters, without dowries, were therefore destined to be sold into slavery. Mysteriously, on three different occasions, a bag of gold appeared in their home—providing the needed dowries. The bags of gold, tossed through an open window, are said to have landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. This led to the custom of children hanging stockings or putting out shoes, eagerly awaiting gifts from Saint Nicholas. Sometimes the story is told with gold balls instead of bags of gold. That is why three gold balls, sometimes represented as oranges, are one of the symbols for St. Nicholas. And so St. Nicholas is a gift-giver.

Widely celebrated in Europe, St. Nicholas' feast day, December 6th, kept alive the stories of his goodness and generosity. In Germany and Poland, boys dressed as bishops begged alms for the poor—and sometimes for themselves! In the Netherlands and Belgium, St. Nicholas arrived on a steamship from Spain to ride a white horse on his gift-giving rounds. December 6th is still the main day for gift giving and merrymaking in much of Europe. For example, in the Netherlands St. Nicholas is celebrated on the 5th, the eve of the day, by sharing candies (thrown in the door), chocolate initial letters, small gifts, and riddles. Dutch children leave carrots and hay in their shoes for the saint's horse, hoping St. Nicholas will exchange them for small gifts. **Simple gift-giving in early Advent helps preserve a Christmas Day focus on the Christ Child.**



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What happens when you throw a blue rock into the Red Sea?

It sinks.

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### Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

If you, or someone you know, has been thinking about learning more about the Catholic faith and becoming a Catholic, please contact Fr. Ray Burkle at 563-580-2197.

## Sacred Heart Faith Formation 2nd graders and 10th graders...by Deb Popp

Light the Night with Jesus is our second grade First Reconciliation retreat. Parents were invited to assist with our special pumpkin carving where we “open our mind, scoop out the yukky stuff (sins), and begin to carve out the eyes as hearts to see the love all around, nose as a cross to remind us what Jesus has given us, ears as bibles to hear God’s Word, the mouth as a fish to tell others all about Jesus and then place a candle inside so everyone can see our light shine!) It is so cool when we turn out the lights and see the glowing Prayer Pumpkins! We then take a pumpkin hike across the hall to show the 10<sup>th</sup> graders and they share about their First Reconciliation and upcoming Confirmation. Upon our return to our classroom, there were several other Reconciliation activities that parents and students did together. We are learning about Fruits of the Holy Spirit. That night we had our parents also join in our lesson. The fruit of that week was a goodness banana. Each child and parent wrote “goodness” on their paper banana, colored it and placed it in our Fruit of the Holy Spirit bowl on our prayer table. We have a good-looking (paper) fruit salad in the making!

Another weekly activity we do is write down prayer intentions to place in our prayer jar. Our parents had the opportunity to add theirs this week.

We also had a pepper/water/dish soap activity to learn more about washing away our sins during reconciliation.

The kids also shared with their parents, our Mary’s Meals project we are collecting monies for all year. We had a busy productive “Light our night with Jesus” (which also included a fire drill!)

We had First Reconciliation on November 11. Witnessing the smiling faces and hearing “yes my heart feels better” is one of the reasons I love to teach this “lots to learn in a year” 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class. Advent is next on our agenda and in January we will start learning more about their First Communion. Please keep these 2<sup>nd</sup> graders in your prayers.



L to R (front to back)  
Kaycee Kominek (2nd), Kellén Hanke (2nd), Charlie O'Malley (2nd),  
Hannah Koch (10th), LilyAnn Kolbet (2nd), Alexis Jones (10th), Brynnile Havig (2nd)  
Katie Smith (10th), Brynley Schouweiler (10th), Jadie Frein (10th), Grace Mallory (10th), Ellie Bobinet (10th)  
Deb Popp, 2nd grade Catechist, Spencer Krabbe (10th), Kellen Taets (2nd), Eric Bobinet (10th), Paige Kisley  
(10th), Claire Machin (2nd), Vince Morische, 10th grade Catechist

## Christ Our Life Catholic Regional Conference held in September

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I was invited to attend the Christ our Life conference by my parents. They had attended before and highly recommended it. I was grateful to be able to share the experience with my parents and two sisters! I have been to NCYC before and it was similar to that but on a much smaller scale. I think NCYC had about 6,000 participants and this was about 600- still a great number. The speakers were fantastic, lots of energy and love in the arena and the music was outstanding! We were able to go to Reconciliation after standing in line for over an hour. You wouldn't believe how many hundreds of people lined up. I also loved visiting all the vendor tables and seeing their Catholic themed goods.

Laura Wynohrad

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My second trip to the Christ Our Life conference in September was just as inspiring as my first one two years ago. Jon Leonetti shared his contagious high energy and humor as emcee. Steve Angrisano and Praise Band brought me to tears many times throughout the weekend as they shared stories and music that moved my soul. I fell in love with the Divine Mercy Chaplet two years ago after hearing Steve and the Praise Band lead us in singing this prayer. I have spent the last two years learning more about the Divine Mercy Chaplet and the prayers, so I was able to participate more fully this year. I took my rosary along, which was a gift from my Grandma and Grandpa Popp when I was a little girl. Praying with my rosary in hand kept me more centered as we sang the Divine Mercy Chaplet and also started off each morning by saying the Holy Rosary.

The speaker line-up and all their messages were excellent. Listening to Bishop Robert Barron speak in person was just as awesome as watching him in his podcasts and on social media. As soon as he was done speaking, he headed to the airport, hopped on a plane to Rome, to attend a Synod on Young People with Pope Francis and other Priests. Thomas Cardinal Collins from Toronto, Bishop Richard Pates from Des Moines and Father Leon Pereira, who serves in Medjugorje and at the age of 19 had a supernatural experience with Mother Mary, all shared their love of God, their faith, humor and experiences.

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, from Scotland, home to Mary's Meals, (a program he started that serves a meal each day to students in their place of education. It feeds more than 1,300,000 of the world's poorest children in 17 countries) shared his story again, updating us on the past two years. Jimmy Belabre, from Haiti, attended school only so he could eat Mary's Meals each day. He told his story about staying in school, his love of singing and that he is now the principal of that school. (since I first learned about Mary's Meals two years ago, I have made this a class project for my Faith Formation second graders. We set a goal to collect money throughout our year to feed one child which is \$20 per year. We talk about hunger and what we can do to help. We have collected monies to feed four children over the past two years and have a good start to feed another one this school year!)

Renee Bondi shared her story about her life as a quadriplegic. I heard her at NCYC several years ago and I am so glad I had this opportunity to hear her again. Her story is remarkable. She blessed us with her singing, introduced us to her son and they sang several songs. Her life lessons relating to Our Lord, her surrender to His Will, her struggles and triumphs, touched me and many in her audience.

One of the many wonderful weekend opportunities to practice our faith was sharing the Eucharistic Procession, Adoration and Benediction with several thousand Catholics. I could feel the Holy Spirit surround me and my heart was so full, my eyes leaked.

Most of us take our hearing for granted. Witnessing the hearing-impaired participants be able to fully enjoy this magnificent weekend with interpreters, their faces said it all.

The two women, who listened to the Holy Spirit to start this conference, are providing opportunities for many to grow in faith, our love for God and how to serve our Lord. The 2020 speaker line up has me planning on making the trip back to Des Moines! Think about joining me!

Deb Popp

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## **Christ Our Life Catholic Regional Conference held in September...Continued**

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This was my second time attending this fantastic event. It is held in Des Moines at the Wells Fargo Arena every other year. 2018 was their 5th biennial conference. As the program said, "we gather to listen, learn, be inspired and motivated to share our Faith, the Word of God and Good Works."

On September 28, I traveled to my oldest daughter and son-in-law's home near Des Moines to meet up with my other daughter. On Saturday the four of us went into the city for the conference. We had an awesome weekend.

There were 6,879 attendees. When we arrived and were getting in line to enter the building I thought I heard voices that I recognized behind me. I turned around and to my surprise there were the Meiricks from Holy Rosary Cluster in New Haven. And a little farther back was Deb Popp. As we entered the building, I heard someone say my name. It was a friend with her husband and daughter from St. Mary's in Winnebago, Minnesota, where I lived for 12 years before coming back to Osage. Small World! Wonderful Surprise!

Christ Our Life was two days filled with music, praising God and listening to fantastic speakers who have inspiring stories and meaningful messages. Most of them are very well known across the Catholic world. For example, Bishop Robert Barron from Word on Fire Institute gave the homily at the opening Mass and also a presentation that afternoon. However, he couldn't stay for Sunday since he had to catch a plane to Rome where he was a participant in the Synod on Youth, meeting with the Pope and Cardinals and Bishops from around the world.

If you have never been to a Mass with nearly 7,000 Catholics praying and singing together, celebrating the meeting of heaven on earth, you really should plan to go to the next Christ Our Life Conference! It is September 26 & 27, 2020.

We laughed, we prayed, we shed a few tears, we clapped, we were inspired and we were extremely grateful to have participated in this faith filled weekend!

Words just can't do it justice. It needs to be Experienced. Hope to see many of you there in 2020!

Janice Schonrock.

\* Interesting Tidbit: During those 2 days there were 1700 people who stood in long lines to receive Our Lord's Gift of Mercy and Grace in a special way through the Sacrament of Penance! Impressive!

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## **West Bend Grotto Pilgrimage, Camp Algona POW Museum and Nativity Scene...Cont**

The St. Isidore Cluster Fall bus trip to the Grotto of the Redemption and the Prisoner of WWII Nativity and museum was another opportunity for reflection and renewal. I had been to the Grotto when I was a little girl. It remains a beautiful shrine to remind me that God always was and always will be with me as I walk my Journey of faith.

The most moving experience of the day for me was the visit to the WWII Nativity display. Sitting in the quiet and dimly lighted room among the 60 some Nativity figures, gave me a time to reflect upon the message of the Birth of Jesus. These figures, created by German Prisoners, lonely and so far from home, offered the realization that in our poverty for Jesus we find unity in our love for one another and a hope for a time of peace that only Jesus could bring. Listening to the story of the lives of the Prisoners in the Camp and singing along to Stille Nacht opened our hearts to the realization that we are all God's people. Maya Angelou said, "I note the obvious differences between each sort and type, be we are more alike, my friends, than we are unlike. The WWII museum was a beautiful tribute showing the respect and understanding that America gave to the WWII Prisoners and the humanitarianism of the Algona Iowa community. Our day tour was complete with the celebration of Mass at St. Cecelia's in Algona.

Let the message of the Grotto of the Redemption remind us to allow God's peace, which the world cannot give, through any war, to take root in our hearts.

Barbara Brumm

## Throat Blessing of St. Blaise

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### Throat Blessing of St Blaise

Through the intercession of St Blaise, bishop and martyr,  
may God deliver you from ailments of the throat  
and from every other evil.

† In the Name of the Father, and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. †

The **Blessing of the Throats** is a sacramental of the Roman Catholic Church, celebrated on February 3, the feast day of Saint Blaise of Sebaste.

Article 1625 from The Book of Blessings contains a brief historical background of the blessing of throats: Saint Blaise was the bishop of Sebaste in Armenia during the fourth century. Very little is known about his life. According to various accounts, he was a physician before becoming a bishop. His reputation spread throughout the entire Church in the Middle Ages because he was reputed to have miraculously cured a little boy who nearly died because of a fishbone in his throat. From the eighth century he has been invoked on behalf of the sick, especially those afflicted with illnesses of the throat.

Details regarding the miraculous healing of the boy vary. One account relates that the miracle occurred during the journey to take Blaise to prison when he placed his hand on the boy's head and prayed; another that the miracle happened while Blaise was in prison when he picked up two candles provided to him and formed a cross around the boy's throat.

The use of candles for the blessing of throats stems from the candles that Blaise used while in prison. When an old woman's pig had been miraculously rescued from a wolf by Saint Blaise, she would visit him in prison, bringing him food and candles to bring him light in his dark cell.

The blessing may be given by touching the throat of each person with two candles blessed on the feast of the Presentation of the Lord (February 2) and which have been joined together in the form of a cross.

The candles may be joined together by a red ribbon, the color of martyrdom. Although it is the general custom to touch the throat with the candles, it is not required, especially if the candles lit. The candles may be held over the person.

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### Prayer to St. Raphael...by Father Ray Burkle

Some of you may have noticed that during the last month we have been praying the prayer to St. Michael prior to the start of Mass. We started this because some people feel we should be doing something to pray for the victims of clergy sex abuse. During Advent, we will be using the prayer of St. Raphael once a month. St Raphael the Archangel is the Patron of the Archdiocese of Dubuque, and is the messenger of God's healing, which is sorely needed by victims, but also by the Church as a whole. Therefore, as we recite this prayer (which will most likely be inserted into the new music issues at the beginning of Advent) we will be praying for all who are in need of healing, whether it be mind, body or soul. We will be praying for those abused, those in medical need, those grieving the loss of a loved one, those separated or divorced, etc.

In case you also want to pray the prayer to St. Raphael at home, I include it below:

*St. Raphael, of the seven angels who stand in the glorious presence of the Lord, ready to serve as the bearer of God's healing. The Lord has filled your hand with balm from heaven. We beg you, therefore, to help us in our needs and in the sufferings of this life, as once you helped the young Tobias on his travels. Soothe our pains, cure our sickness, both physical and spiritual, make us fit to be temples of the Holy Spirit, and guide our steps when doubtful of our ways! Amen.*

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### **Baptisms**

VIS—9-29-18—Huxley David, son of Jason & Bridget Rice  
SH—10-6-18—Mason Michael, son of Brian & Michelle Horgen  
VIS—10-7-18—Cameron Reid, son of Justin & Bethany Aupperle  
SH—10-20-18—Kyler Paul, son of Dallas & Kelly Kuper  
SH—11-3-18—Lydia Elizabeth, daughter of Bensen & Laura Hargens  
VIS—11-4-18—Jacob Paul, son of Cole & Jessica Smith

### **New Parishioners**

VIS—Cody & Anna Hemann  
VIS—Jacob & Ashley Wilberding  
SH—Linda Paulus

### **Marriages**

Meyer—9-22-18—Hayley Frodl & Ray Mueller  
VIS—10-20-18—Michelle Hemann & Skyler Hulshizer  
VIS—11-10-18—Kayla Hemann & Josh Burke

### **Deaths**

SH-8-24-18 Darlene Kasel  
VIS-8-24-18 Marjorie Mayer  
Meyer-9-11-18 Richard Kruse  
VIS-9-23-18 Frederick Kramer  
SH-10-1-18 Eileen Kleckner  
VIS-10-12-18 Leon Hackenmiller  
VIS-10-19-18 Maynard Theobald  
VIS-10-25-18 Rita Schrandt  
SH-10-26-18 Kathleen Hemann  
VIS-11-2-18 Helen Falada

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