



# ST. JAMES BASILICA of Jamestown

Parish Newsletter

DEC 2014



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## “Relationships With Others Deepen the Meaning of Church Itself”

### *The Yatskis Family*

Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Fried, N.D., was a rural parish of about 30 families. Though they were married at St. James Basilica in 1989, Yvette and John, a Fried native, raised their family within the close-knit community of Sacred Heart until the closing of the parish.



*The Yatskis family. (Back row, from left) John Yatskis and sons, Tygh and Andrew. (Front row, from left) Yvette and daughters, Dasha and Julia.*

“When you’re part of a small parish, everyone just does their part because there is a real need,” says Yvette Yatskis. “When we came to St. James, we all got involved in what we had been involved in at Sacred Heart. I think over the years, I realized that it wasn’t the small church that created the

community – it was because we were so involved.”

Though they thought the transition from Sacred Heart would be difficult, John and Yvette felt that the community of St. James truly welcomed them and their children. At the time, they had two young boys, and

John and Yvette adopted two girls shortly after the transition. In different ways, each member of the Yatskis family has felt the impact of being involved in community life and forming relationships with others.

John currently serves as a lector and Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.

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## The Yatskis Family *continued from front cover*

He is also on the FACE Board for St. James Academy and has been involved with the HOPE Dinner for the past three years.

“Being involved in church is a way of giving back to others, and it is fulfilling,” John says. “Particularly, being part of the Mass deepens the Mass. I think the kids saw us involved, and then realized that is just what you do.”

After reflecting on her faith journey, Yvette realized that she became more involved as her children have gotten older, and she uses her background in teaching to serve as a religious educator.

“The more I do, the more I understand that the feeling of community is what you put into it,” Yvette says. “Recently, I have signed up to become a proclaimer and started attending Bible study classes. I also try to attend daily Mass. The past two years, I’ve taught seventh and eighth-graders in the middle school Religious Education program, and I look at it as a calling. By doing this, we’re developing closer relationships with the parish and the priests.”

Like their parents, the older Yatskis children became involved at Sacred Heart out of necessity, and the boys began serving Mass at a very young age. All of the children attended St. James Academy from first through sixth grade. Now, Andrew, 20, is currently in a college Bible study, and his girlfriend recently went through RCIA and joined the Church at St. James.

“At Sacred Heart, serving Mass was out of a need, but I really enjoyed doing it, too,” Andrew says. “It is important to give your time back, because others gave their time when I was younger, and now it is my turn to give back.”

Tygh, 19, was also a young altar server and continued serving at St. James. He believes everyone “needs to do

their part.” Being involved made the Church mean more to him and was a way to meet people.

Like their older brothers, the Yatskis girls were also altar servers, though they started serving at St. James. Julia, 15, watched the example of her older siblings, which prompted her to want to serve at Mass. By serving, Julia got to know the priests better and remembers that Fr. Joe always made her laugh. For Dasha, 16, who recently attended a Steubenville Youth Conference, serving brought her closest to the central mystery of our faith.

“I became an altar server because it was a front seat to Jesus,” Dasha says. “It helped me understand more about the Mass and gave me opportunities, like serving for the bishop.”

Over the years, the Yatskis have realized how much you receive from giving, whether you give to your family at home or to your parish community and priests at church.

“In our home, we love to host big family gatherings, and it is so much work, but it is so much fun, and we get so much back,” Yvette says. “It is the same with church. Personally, you get so much self-fulfillment from what you give. Relationships with others deepen the meaning of Church itself. As a mother, I love that my kids know the priests. They wouldn’t have received that if we weren’t involved.”

Through their selfless giving, the Yatskis family found a self-fulfillment and fostered relationships with the parish community that has always welcomed them at St. James.

“We are so appreciative of how welcoming everyone was when we had our transition coming from Fried,” Yvette says. “It is always comforting to know you have a community of faith with you no matter what you go through.”

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*“Being involved in church is a way of giving back to others, and it is fulfilling. Particularly, being part of the Mass deepens the Mass. I think the kids saw us involved, and then realized that is just what you do.” – John Yatskis*

A Letter from Our Pastor

# Making Christmas a Time of *Real Blessing*

Dear Parishioners,

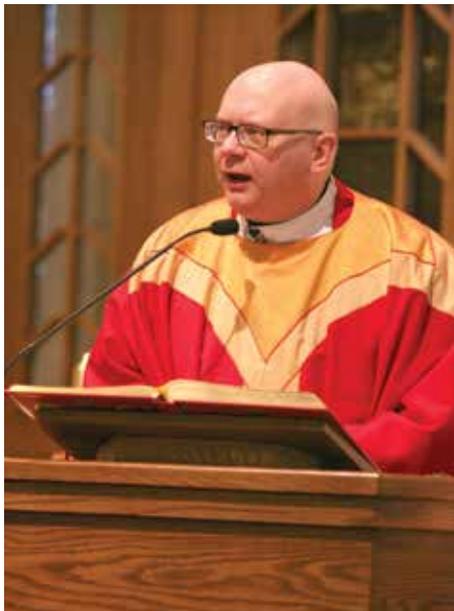
As we all know, December is about Christmas – and Christmas is about giving.

The basic truth of Christmas, celebrating the birth of Jesus the Messiah, God Incarnate, is plenty of reason for us all to rejoice and worship. But the additional load we have piled onto our Christmas observance means that worship is often almost lost in the shuffle.

Think about what weight Christmas has to bear. For instance, we send Christmas cards to people we contact at no other time of the year. We have to put up wreaths, Christmas trees and lights. It's the time of year above all others to visit relatives – “Home for Christmas” is a sort of national motto. There's the Christmas dinner to plan and cook. And then, we have Christmas presents to buy. No wonder the Christ Mass becomes an afterthought!

Presents, at least, are a natural extension of the Christmas theme: “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son” (Jn 3:16). As God loved us and expressed it by giving His Son, so we in turn share the love we have received by giving to others. And it's natural to show the joy we feel at the birth of our Savior with gifts, decorations and festivities.

Maybe, though, we can combine our Christmas activities with our stewardship commitments. Treasure, although challenging, is the simplest. Shouldn't the most generous Christmas present we give be the one to Jesus, whose birthday we're celebrating? Risen and glorified, He needs nothing we have. But His Body, the Church,



continues Jesus' mission here on earth, and as good stewards, we all have a need to return a portion of our gifts to God in gratitude for His many blessings.

Stewardship of our time may be a little more complicated, but can't we spend a little more of our time in worship and prayer? Drop in to the church and offer a prayer of thanks for the gift of God's Son. Maybe you can attend Mass each day of the Christmas Octave. Have your family gather for prayers together in the morning or at dinner, in preparation for Christmas Day and through the Christmas season.

And talent? There are lots of possibilities. You can help decorate the Church. Or perhaps you might cook or bake for someone who is homebound or a shut-in. Invite someone who will be alone to share Christmas dinner with your family. Offer to work in a soup kitchen. The possibilities are endless.

Yes, December is synonymous with Christmas. But with a little planning, we can make this hectic time one of real blessing, both for ourselves and others.

Have a blessed and joyful Christmas.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Msgr. Jeffrey L. Wald  
Pastor



## The Rosary Ministry at Eventide

On the surface, it seems like a simple way to pray – 50 recitations of the Hail Mary, divided into decades, with each decade beginning with an Our Father. But as simple as it sounds, praying the Rosary can be a deeply spiritual experience since our Blessed Mother prays with us – offering us the gift of meditation on Jesus’ life as seen through her eyes. And for the residents of Ave Maria Village and Eventide, the fingering of the Rosary beads and the repetitive, whispered prayers are also a great source of comfort.

“The praying of the Rosary is a standard prayer for many elderly folks,” says Deacon Tom Geffre, chaplain at Ave Maria Village. “Most of the residents here recognize the power of the Rosary, and this elderly generation is very familiar with the promises that the Blessed Virgin

Mary gave to us through St. Dominic and through the children of Fatima.”

Every Monday morning, the residents of Ave Maria Village gather in the newly constructed Good Shepherd Chapel to pray the Rosary together. Deacon Tom coordinates this ministry, relying on more than a dozen volunteers who come to lead and participate in the Rosary with the residents.

“Before we started the Stewardship program, we weren’t officially a ministry and I had only three people helping me,” Deacon Tom says. “But now, I actually have to schedule everyone. Each volunteer is scheduled approximately every 12 weeks, which really works out well and accommodates the leaders’ personal schedules.”

And who are the volunteers who give of their time in this special

way? Judy Harr, who coordinates the Rosary Ministry at Eventide, says that a lot of the volunteers are retired and therefore have that extra time to give back, but some are still working and come during their lunch break. What’s especially beautiful is how the volunteers take the time to socialize with the residents.

“We say the Rosary every Wednesday morning with the residents of Eventide,” Judy says. “They like to pray as a group, and even though some may doze off during the prayers, the important thing is that they are there. And it’s so easy to become attached to them. I love the residents, and there are a few with whom I’ve become friends.”

So what exactly makes the Rosary such an important spiritual tool? Deacon Tom explains that in the early part of the Church, some religious orders used a rope that contained 150 beads, or bone chips, as a way of keeping track of the 150 Psalms they were required to pray. Over time, the rope was used to recite 150 Our Fathers, and still later for 150 Hail Marys.

“It wasn’t until the late 14th and early 15th centuries that the Rosary took its present form as developed by the Dominican Order,” Deacon Tom says. “Ever since, it has become a very special devotional prayer that Our Lady of Fatima says offers eight benefits, including a perfect



*The Rosary is a source of comfort for the residents of both Ave Maria and Eventide.*

# Eventide and Ave Maria Village



*Bill and Luverne Mangin pray with the group on Monday morning, and also pray the Rosary with Mother Angelica on EWTN.*

knowledge of Jesus, purification of souls, and a vehicle of grace.”

The Rosary, as we know it today, reflects our faith. The Apostles’ Creed summarizes our faith from creation to Christ’s resurrection; the Our Father is taken from the Gospels; the first part of the Hail Mary includes the words of Gabriel’s announcement of Christ’s birth as well Elizabeth’s greeting to Mary; and the repetition of the Hail Marys is meant to lead us to ponder, reflect and meditate on our Catholic faith.

“Many of our residents grew up saying the Rosary every day, and it’s something they’ve continued to do,” Deacon Tom says. “Among the residents who show up on Monday morning, there are several who will pray it on other days as well by

listening to Mother Angelica on EWTN or on the radio.”

Ultimately, the prayers of the Rosary – the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Glory Be – are the prayers of our childhood. They are the prayers we turn to during difficult times, or when our hearts are too heavy to compose words. And for the residents of Eventide and Ave Maria Village, the Rosary offers comfort, familiarity, and security of a faith that has been with them all of their lives.

Presently, there is a need for volunteers to help lead the Rosary at Eventide on Wednesday mornings. If you are interested in participating in this special ministry, please contact Judy Harr at 701-252-6723 or the parish office at 701-252-0119.

*“The praying of the Rosary is a standard prayer for many elderly folks. Most of the residents here recognize the power of the Rosary, and this elderly generation is very familiar with the promises that the Blessed Virgin Mary gave to us through St. Dominic and through the children of Fatima.”*

*– Deacon Tom Geffre, chaplain at Ave Maria Village*

# KEEPING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE DURING *Christmas*

**C**hristmas season is upon us. We have started making our gift lists and checking them twice. Of course, we will include family and friends on our lists. But we may also include teachers, coaches, and even service workers, such as newspaper deliverers or mail carriers. We want to give everyone a gift, showing our love and appreciation for all they do during the year. The idea of holiday gift giving – to show love and gratefulness to others who have touched our lives – is certainly parallel to the concept of stewardship.

Stewardship – returning a portion, or gift, to God in love and thankfulness – follows the very same pattern. We give a gift to Him to express our thanks. Think of all God has done for you this year, and how His love has impacted you. Maybe He has answered a special prayer petition, or provided a job

for an unemployed loved one. He may have helped safely bring a new baby into the family, or has brought peace during a difficult time. The blessings are no doubt countless. These abundant gifts God bestows on us are given to us freely out of His love – even though we are unworthy to receive them.

Now think of all the ways you respond to these bountiful blessings. How do you choose to show God your thankfulness? As we prepare for the coming of Jesus during Advent, do we remember to add His name to our list? When we check Grandpa's name on our list, are we also including a gift to Christ? It is His birthday we are celebrating, after all.

The very first name on the list – above our spouse, children, relatives and friends – should be God's name. As good stewards, we are called to give God our "first

fruits," and not what is left over. His name should not be added to our list out of guilt, or as an afterthought. We should instead joyfully desire to place God first on our list for the same reason we want to give gifts to the others on our list – out of love and appreciation.

Stewardship allows us to tangibly give a Christmas gift to God through our time, talent and treasure. Why not spend an hour in the church adoring God, or pray a Rosary to share your time with Him? Perhaps you might bring a meal to a family going through a difficult time, or watch an infant for a young mother so she can prepare for Christmas. Providing an extra offering by way of the Christmas envelope is also a perfect way to share your treasure with God. Whatever choice you make this season, make the decision to be a good Christmas steward.

*How do you choose to show God your thankfulness?*

*As we prepare for the coming of Jesus during Advent, do we remember to add His name to our list?*

*When we check Grandpa's name on our list, are we also including a gift to Christ?*



# Liturgical Music Promises Prayerful Christmas Celebrations

**A**licia Bollingberg, Director of Liturgy and Human Concerns, has been active in music since she was a small child. She says that music is a vital part of her experience of the Mass.

"I love prayer, and music just adds to that prayer," Alicia says. "I always think how they say, 'When you sing, you pray twice.' I truly believe that. I express my prayer through song, and working here has definitely deepened my faith through music."

This is especially true for Alicia – and, most likely, for many parishioners – during Christmas. By highlighting various aspects of the mystery of the Incarnation, whether it be peace, joy, hope, or wonder, music brings us into a greater appreciation of why we are celebrating in the first place.

"We're preparing for Christ's coming, so we prepare ourselves in the Mass and through the music of the Mass," Alicia says. "It helps to get the congregation to participate in the Mass, and it leads them through a more prayerful experience."

To prepare for the Advent and Christmas liturgies, the parish choirs practice diligently for weeks in advance. The three parish choirs – St. James Basilica Choir (adult choir), Kingdom Spirit Youth Choir (middle and high school choir), and Joyful Noise (children's choir) – meet to familiarize themselves with hymns, instrumentals and lyrics. Joyful Noise, which is open to children in the fourth through sixth grades, also goes caroling at nursing homes during Advent under Alicia's direction.

Christmas liturgies include some of the most beloved traditional Christmas hymns. Caroling, which will begin 30 minutes before Christmas Masses, is enjoyed by cantors, choirs and parishioners alike.

"People love to carol before Christmas Mass, so we always schedule a lot of liturgical Christmas songs before Mass starts," Alicia says. "The whole congregation joins in. A cantor may do one or two pieces individually, but they also lead the congregation in all the other music."

Each of the four Masses during Christmas weekend will have a different musical composition. Kingdom Spirit Youth Choir will sing at the 4 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass. The 6 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass and the 9:30 a.m. Christmas Day Mass will have a cantor and accompaniments, or individual musicians who have volunteered to sing and play for the holiday. These solos will feature classical instruments such as the trumpet or French horn. The St. James Basilica Choir will sing at the 10 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass.

With 15 participants in the Kingdom Spirit Choir, 25 in the St. James Basilica Choir, 10 in Joyful Noise, and various cantors and accompaniments, nearly 60 or 70 people are directly involved in the Music Ministry. Those involved gather for a common purpose, with the promise of another year of beautiful and sacred Christmas music for us all.

If you have questions or would like to get involved, please contact Alicia Bollingberg at 701-252-0119.



*Joyful Noise – the children's choir*



*St. James Basilica Choir joyfully singing cherished Christmas hymns*



*Kingdom Spirit Youth Choir*



# ST. JAMES BASILICA OF JAMESTOWN

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## Weekend Mass

### *Saturday Vigil*

4:30 p.m. Mass

### *Sunday*

8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Mass

## Daily Mass

*Monday thru Friday* - 12:10 p.m. Mass

*Saturday* - 8:00 a.m. Mass

## Reconciliation

*Monday thru Friday* - 11:40 a.m. - 12 noon

*Saturday* - 3:30 p.m.

Address Service Requested

# Advent and Christmas Schedule

## *Mass times will stay the same*

Saturday – 4:30 p.m.

Sunday – 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.

## Reconciliation Service

Dec. 14, 7:15 p.m. – following the 6 p.m. Mass.

## *Christmas Schedule:*

### **Christmas Eve, Dec. 24**

4 p.m., 6 p.m., and 10 p.m.

### **Christmas Day, Dec. 25**

9:30 a.m.

### **Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God**

Dec. 31 – 5 p.m.

Jan. 1 – 9:30 a.m.

