



# The Vianney Vine

"I am the vine and you are the branches." John 15.5

Saint John Vianney Catholic Church

4097-18th Street, Bettendorf, IA 52722

Office: 563-332-7910 or office@sjvbett.org

www.sjvbett.org

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## Awaiting the season of renewal

Having just celebrated Saint Valentine's Day, a day we give thanks for human love, we prepare to receive ashes on February 17 to begin the season of renewal called "Lent" – the 40 days through which we more deeply appreciate God's love for us and for each other.



Father Vrba

This year, the way ashes are given will be very unique. We are accustomed to having our foreheads signed. However, this year, because of protocols to reduce the risk of COVID-19, ashes will be "sprinkled" on the top of the head.

Although an unusual way to be signed in the United States, this is the customary practice at the Vatican, in Italy, and other parts of the world as shown in this picture from the Philippines on Ash Wednesday 2020.

So, after the ashes are blessed, I will announce to all, "Repent and believe in the Gospel." Then, you are invited to come to the regular communion stations to be "sprinkled" without any further words.

Given the spread of the coronavirus, this practice has the advantage of not requiring the minister to touch multiple people.



On Ash Wednesday, February 17, ashes will be sprinkled over the top of the head rather than signed on the forehead. This is how it's done in many parts of the world.

Lent is our annual retreat asking the Holy Spirit to help us grow closer to Jesus with a renewal of our minds and hearts. The gospel of Ash Wednesday gives us the three hallmark disciplines to do that: Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving.

**PRAYER** is our communication with God and God's communication with us. This year can be one to expand our regular ways of praying.

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# Draw closer to God during Lent

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Of course nothing can be more important than celebrating the Mass, even if it is through the internet.



Other forms of prayer can complement the Eucharist. I especially enjoy the ancient method of “Lectio Divina,” which has several steps.

1. Make a quiet place for your prayer. Select a scripture passage. I always suggest one of the readings from daily Mass. You can find it by going to the U.S. Bishops’ website at [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org). Read slowly and quietly. Listen for a word or phrase that touches your mind or heart. This is God’s special way of speaking to you.

2. Make a connection of that word or phrase with your life. What is God trying to say to you? Allow the Word of God to interact with your thoughts, your hopes, your memories, and your desires.

3. Open your real self to be touched and changed by the Word of God.

4. Finally, ask yourself what the Word of God is inviting you to do, or maybe undo. This step is putting the Word into action.

**FASTING** includes the traditional practices of Fast and



Abstinence. Those 18-59 fast by eating one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to one full meal. Those 14 years and older abstain by not eating

meat. All Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence.

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of both fast and abstinence. Health issues, of course, are automatic dispensations from these disciplines.

**ALMSGIVING:** I encourage you to participate in our Rice Bowl program this Lent. You will find “rice bowls” in the Gathering Space as well as outside the north entrance to the church. Put into your rice bowl the financial equivalent of what you saved by fasting and abstaining. Use the information that comes with the rice bowl



to learn more about world hunger. Let it be a catalyst for you to become more aware of the hunger that permeates the world, as well as within our own community. Bring your rice bowl contributions to the church on Holy Thursday – or draft a check that summarizes your sacrifice and mail it to the church.

Lent is a special season to draw us closer to God. It can also be a way for us to draw closer to others, especially during these pandemic times.

I’m very proud of the ways our staff has organized reach-outs to parishioners over the past months. Staff and committee members have called to visit with households to see how they are doing, and if they need any help.

We took advantage of Saint Nicholas Day on December 6 and set up many joyful and thoughtful stations around the church building. It was a delight to see smiling, joyful faces inside the many cars that drove around the parish campus.

These 40 days can also be a time for families to reach out to others, especially those in retirement centers, relatives, and those whom the Holy Spirit may be “tap, tap, tapping” you to call.

As Lent begins with a sprinkling of ashes, let’s continue the sprinkling by sharing God’s love with others through our prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Doing so will help the Holy Spirit to touch our lives in a special way and continue to empower us as a community of faith, hope, and love.

*In Jesus*



**As we continue to be challenged in this world, St. John Vianney invites you to renew your heart in our Lord and Savior during the holy season of Lent.**

**All Masses are in the main church and live-streamed on SJV Facebook and sjvbett.org.**

We remain committed to following faithfully the safety guidelines given to us to reduce COVID-19 risk. Your willingness to make weekend Mass reservations is helpful for us to plan safe seating and Holy Eucharist reception. Please continue to do so as we anticipate higher attendance during Lent.

**Reservations will be required for all Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Holy Triduum, and Easter Masses.**

To ensure your safety, seating will be assigned for all Easter Sunday Masses. Our capacity remains greatly reduced so we encourage reserving your household's space early.

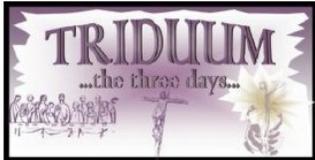
**Please make reservations on our website: [sjvbett.org](http://sjvbett.org) or call: 563-332-7910.**



**Ash Wednesday Masses** ~ Wednesday, February 17, 9 a.m., 4:30 & 6:30 p.m.

**Stations of the Cross** ~ Fridays, February 19, 26, March 5, 12, 19, 26, 6 p.m.  
*February 26 will be Taizé Praise*

**Palm Sunday Masses** ~ Saturday, March 27, 4:30 p.m. and Sunday, March 28, 8:30 and 11 a.m.



**Holy Thursday ~ Mass of the Lord's Supper** ~ April 1, 7 p.m.

**Good Friday ~ Passion of the Lord** ~ April 2, 7 p.m.

**Holy Saturday ~ Easter Vigil** ~ April 3, 8:30 p.m. *(no 4:30 p.m. Mass)*

**Reservations required and seating assigned for Easter Sunday.**  
**Please make ONE reservation per household with the total number of people in your group.**  
**Reservations will close on March 31. You will be notified of your seating location on April 1.**

<b>Total capacity at each Mass</b>	<b>Mass Times</b>
Main Church ~ 165	7, 9, and 11 a.m.
Mary Chapel ~ 40	<i>We will have three Masses on Easter Sunday only.</i>
Activity Center ~ 60	<i>Our regular schedule will resume on April 11.</i>
<i>live video/audio feed</i>	
Parking Lot	
<i>live stream on mobile device and receive Eucharist</i>	

Lenten Communal Penance services will not be held this year. To receive the **Sacrament of Reconciliation**, please contact the parish office to make an appointment with Fr. Jim: 563-332-7910 or [office@sjvbett.org](mailto:office@sjvbett.org).

*Visits to the parish office remain by appointment only. Please call or email.*

# A Christmas like no other

*While COVID-19 protocols kept us in masks and socially distanced, the spirit that is such a part of Saint John Vianney spread joy and cheer as we celebrated the birth of Our Savior.*



**RIGHT:** Eleanor Kiel leads the Exultate Choir, dressed in Victorian garb, in seasonal carols before Mass on Christmas Eve. **BELOW, LEFT:** Julie Loose handles the camera for live-streaming Mass. **BELOW, RIGHT:** Maureen Conrad checks the seating chart for those attending Mass. **BOTTOM:** With sparkly halos attached to their face shields, SJV Preschool students record their annual Christmas show, which was shared with parents.



# CEW sponsors virtual Faith, Hope, Love presentations

With wintry weather, early darkness, and the COVID-19 pandemic, we could all use a boost of positivity at this time, says parishioner Maureen Conrad.

Maureen and other board members of the Christian Experience Weekend have developed the perfect solution – a Virtual Renewal stressing the theological virtues of faith, hope and love.

The traditional CEW weekend retreats were not possible this year because of the pandemic, so the board decided on a virtual alternative.

“We really feel like this was God-inspired,” Maureen said. “We were all talking about how we needed to do something, and somebody said ‘we could really use some hope right now.’”



Father Chris Weber, one of the CEW spiritual advisers, reminded the group that faith, hope and love are the three theological virtues of our faith.

“We realized the love talk could be on Valentine’s Day,” said Maureen, one of two SJV parishioners on the CEW board. She is joined by Martha Conway.

The three presentations by lay people are Faith on February 12 at 7 p.m., Hope on February 13 at 3 p.m., and Love on February 14, also at 3 p.m.

The events, of approximately 40 minutes each, may be accessed via the Facebook pages of both Saint John Vianney and Our Lady of Lourdes parishes.

They will be recorded and available through the parish websites for people to watch afterward as well. Those without a Facebook account can email [ololcew@gmail.com](mailto:ololcew@gmail.com) to get instructions on accessing the talks in a different way.

The Faith talk will be given by four generations of believers, the Hope talk by a great steward of God’s gifts, and the Love talk by a married couple with an inspirational story, she said.

CEW, hosted by Lourdes and SJV annually, is typically held the first and third weekends in February, one for women and one for men. The board hopes to resume in-person retreats in 2022.

“We are all companions on this journey,” she said. “If you’re sheltered at home, this is a way to connect with others.”

## SNOW DELIGHTFUL



Bundled up against the cold, these intrepid students in the SJV Preschool program enjoyed some outdoor recess in January on the snow hills in front of the rectory. The gentle slopes also provided some sledding fun, according to Preschool Director Christy Barnum.

# Parish outreach takes many forms

Staff and volunteers at Saint John Vianney are rising to the challenge of helping parishioners stay connected to what's happening at the parish during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In early December, phone lists were assigned to a team of volunteers, with the goal of reaching each one of the parish's nearly 2,000 households to wish Christmas blessings, ask if they needed anything or had any prayer requests, and to remind them about the first-ever St. Nicholas Express event on December 6.

The feedback was positive. Many parishioners on the other end of the conversation reported they were happy to hear from someone. The calls were often greeted with "Well, bless you!" or "It's so nice to hear from someone at the parish." Numerous prayer requests were submitted. And several hundred cars drove through the parking lot to enjoy the sights and sounds of Christmas before getting a greeting from "St. Nicholas" and a bag of treats.

Liturgy & Music Director Eleanor Kiel said another round of phone calls is planned. That's in addition to regular calls that members of the Health Ministry make to elderly parishioners.

If you never received a call or voice message, it could be that the parish does not have an updated phone number.

Office manager Julie Mishler requests that if you are not receiving the weekly parish bulletin via email and/or if you haven't received a phone call or voice message during our



Preschool staff Paulette Jones, Cindy Corrigan, Christy Barnum, Karen Emard and Chris Bries pose with St. Nicholas prior to the event. Not pictured is Terry Camarena.

outreach events, please contact the office (563-332-7910 or [office@sjvbett.org](mailto:office@sjvbett.org)) to update your information.

Most of the innovative ways to connect have involved technology, Eleanor said.

"We've been utilizing much more our website ([www.sjvbett.org](http://www.sjvbett.org)), emails, the Bulletin, Facebook and YouTube," she said. And, the live-streaming of Masses has continued, enhanced recently by a major upgrade by the parish in its wireless connections.

She encourages parishioners who may not have a computer, but do have a smartphone, to consider participating in one of the virtual parish activities, such as Bible study, via Zoom.

While the Exultate Choir is not singing at Mass yet, rehearsals are still going on via Zoom, and the choir, masked and socially distanced, sang Christmas carols outdoors and in the Gathering Space during the holidays.

Eleanor is seeing attendance at the Masses grow a bit week by week, especially as more music has been introduced and cantors are once again allowed to sing.

"We're really trying and we want to be here for parishioners," she said. And, she encouraged anyone who has a spiritual or material need to call the office.



Director of Religious Education Jeannie Moran hands out treat bags as cars file through the parking lot during the St. Nicholas Express.

# Bringing St. Joseph into focus

Mitchell Narvasa, SJV pastoral associate for discipleship & evangelization, invites parishioners on a journey to learn more about St. Joseph during the Year of St. Joseph as proclaimed by Pope Francis.

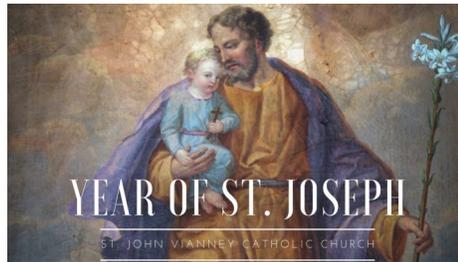
“To be honest, I don’t know much about St. Joseph,” Mitchell said. “He doesn’t say a word in Scripture, yet we regard him as one of the holiest people, next to Mary and Jesus.”

He noted that devotion to St. Joseph is actually stronger in other countries. “But this deficiency for us in the U.S. and for me personally makes this year all the more exciting,” he said.

Mitchell has made a series of personal video reflections on St. Joseph, which are available for viewing on the parish website at [www.sjvbett.org](http://www.sjvbett.org).

St. Joseph’s role as the foster father of Jesus resonates with Mitchell, himself a father of young children.

“We all know the adage, actions speak louder than words. If there’s anyone who encompasses that phrase, it’s St. Joseph,”



he said. “I think that aspect about St. Joseph is worth reflecting on. As a father, it reminds me how important my presence is to my kids. Saying ‘I love you’ is important, but what speaks louder are the moments of play, hugs, snuggles, dates, etc., that I make time for.”

Parishioners are invited to participate in a 33-day Consecration to St. Joseph through Father Donald Calloway’s book, “Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father,” which can be purchased through online booksellers. People can take the journey privately, beginning on February 14, to honor St. Joseph on his feast day 33 days later.

“But the hope is that through our prayers and reflections, people will be able to pick up the book and do the consecration at any time during the Year of St. Joseph,” he said.

*The Year of St. Joseph runs through December 8, 2021. It marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the saint’s proclamation as Patron of the Universal Church by Pope Pius IX. The Prayer to St. Joseph written by Pope Leo XIII is printed on the back page.*

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## Book discussion group thrives in virtual world

By JAN TOUNEY

The hour flies by, as participants in the SJV monthly book discussion group dissect the character developments in “The Rosie Project,” a novel of humor, love and personal change.

The main character’s Asperger’s syndrome and how it impacts his relationships take off into a lively discussion that rarely wanes, with questions deftly posed by group leader Janene Misak.

Cindy Flanders Brown noted that “each character had problems and hurts and wounds, and they tried really hard to overcome them.”

Meeting via Zoom since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the group has lost some members who are not connected to the internet. But it’s also allowed people like Margy Dobbelaere to log on from Florida.

Judy Benevento, who formerly led the group, said it’s been going at least 10 years. Starting at first solely with books about spiritual growth and Catholic issues, the group has expanded the genres. They now alternate between fiction, nonfiction (many with a social justice theme) and spiritual. Members recommend books and vote on the selection. January participants in addition to Janene, Judy, Margy and

Cindy were Marian Johnson, Marcia Barnes, Michele Chari, Perrine West, Marjorie Scott-Craig, Jane Campagna, Jan Ehrlich and Marcia Walsh.

The opportunity to discuss books with familiar faces has been a blessing during the pandemic, they said.

“I’m a reader, I’ve always been a reader, and I love to share books,” Jane said.

The next meeting is at 1 p.m. on Monday, March 1, with discussion of “The Elegance of the Hedgehog.” A book with a spiritual theme will follow for April. If you’re interested in joining the group, contact Janene at [janenemisak1000@msn.com](mailto:janenemisak1000@msn.com).

# PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH

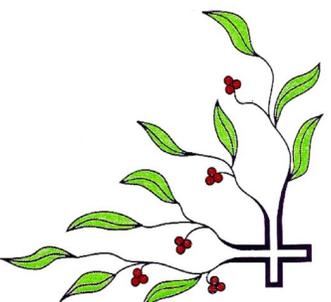
by Pope Leo XIII



*"To you, O blessed Joseph, do we come in our tribulation, and having implored the help of your most holy Spouse, we confidently invoke your patronage also. Through that charity which bound you to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and through the paternal love with which you embraced the Child Jesus, we humbly beg you graciously to regard the inheritance which Jesus Christ has purchased by his Blood, and with your power and strength to aid us in our necessities."*

*"O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family, defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ; O most loving father, ward off from us every contagion of error and corrupting influence; O our most mighty protector, be kind to us and from heaven assist us in our struggle with the power of darkness."*

*"As once you rescued the Child Jesus from deadly peril, so now protect God's Holy Church from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity; shield, too, each one of us by your constant protection, so that, supported by your example and your aid, we may be able to live piously, to die in holiness, and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven. Amen."*



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