God’s love knows no barriers. St. Pascal’s...where all people matter.
Welcome! We hope you enjoy your time with us. Whether you are just visiting or looking for a parish home, it’s great to have you with us. Whatever your life circumstances, wherever you have been or whatever has happened in your life, you are welcome here.

DECEMBER 25, 2022 | CHRISTMAS DAY

OUR STAFF

Pastor
Fr. John Mitchell | ext 125
john.mitchell@stpascals.org

Deacon
Rev. Mr. Richard Moore
richard.moore@stpascals.org

Business Administrator
Theresa Ruttger | ext 130
theresa.ruttger@stpascals.org

Director of Facilities and Maintenance
Mike Kelleher | ext 134
mike.kelleher@stpascals.org

Pastoral Associate for Music
Sharon Balcom | ext 126
sharon.balcom@stpascals.org

Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation
Kim Roering | ext 128
kim.roering@stpascals.org

Pastoral Associate for Pastoral Care
Barb Uschold Anderson | ext 129
barb.ua@stpascals.org

Liturgy Assistant
Keri Mader | ext 127
keri.mader@stpascals.org

Communications & Office Manager
Thea Munoz | ext 133
thea.munoz@stpascals.org

Welcome Desk
Karri Creamer | ext 120
karri.creamer@stpascals.org

PARISH OFFICE HOURS
Monday – Friday from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Mass Times
Saturday 4:30 PM | Sunday 8:45 & 10:30 AM (ASL) | Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:00 AM; Wednesday 9:30 AM
1757 Conway Street | Saint Paul, Minnesota 55106 | 651.774.1585
www.stpascals.org | church@stpascals.org
FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

On behalf of all of us here at St. Pascal Baylon Parish, I wish you a Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year 2023. I pray that the joy of Jesus’ birth will fill your heart with peace and hope. Jesus was born in our world long ago at Bethlehem, and we can imagine the vulnerability of the baby Jesus lying in the manger. Jesus was born into an imperfect world, and today we still live in an imperfect world. At the same time, Christmas reminds us that Jesus chose to enter our world because of His love for us. Each day Jesus shows His love for us through the Church’s ministries and sacraments, through His real presence in the Eucharist, through the compassion we experience in our parish community, in the Christian service we offer to the poor and needy, and in the beauty of our liturgies filled with Scripture, song, prayer and art. You are an amazing parish filled with a strong faith, and I pray that this Christmas you will experience once again God’s deep love for you.

Thank you to the Women’s Club for all their work on the Christmas plant and gift card fundraiser during November. Also, thank you for hosting the Women’s Club Christmas Party in December.

Thank you to the Men’s Club for all their work on the Christmas Tree Lot during November and December. The Men’s Club and volunteers sold 650 trees and topped off the sale on Sunday, December 11. Great work! Also, thank you also for hosting Turkey Bingo in November. Everyone had fun gobbling up the prizes of gift cards and turkeys.

Items discussed at the December 6, 2022 meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council:

In Spring, the Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District will plant three triumph elm trees in the tree boxes in the center of the parking lot and four pinnacle birch trees in the landscape buffer strip along Third Street; Father John is forming a parish Synod Evangelization Team to discern ways to implement the Archdiocesan Synod pastoral letter in our parish and work in collaboration with the parish council, parish staff and parish leadership groups; the council heard updates from liaisons to the Women’s Club, Men’s Club, Adult Faith Formation Committee, Parish Activities Committee, and the Social Justice and Caring Committee; discussion of updates to the Parish Council By-Laws. Updates from prior meetings can be viewed at: stpascals.org/parish-council-notes

The Pope’s Monthly Intentions. Each year, the Holy Father asks for our prayers for a specific intention each month. You are invited to answer the Holy Father’s request and to join with many people worldwide in praying for this intention each month.

Prayer Intention of Pope Francis for December 2022: We pray that volunteer non-profit organizations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.

Prayer Intention for January 2023: We pray that educators may be credible witnesses, teaching fraternity rather than competition and helping the youngest and most vulnerable above all.

God Bless You,
Father John Mitchell

COMING UP AT ST. PASCAL’S

Mark Your Calendars!
Saturday, February 18, 2023 after 4:30 PM Mass
Mardi Gras Care Card Project
Dinner and a Service Project! All ages welcome! We’ll share a free dinner, make or write Care Cards and enjoy some Mardi Gras fun! Sign up will begin in the new year. Questions? Contact Barb Uschold Anderson at 651.432.4959.

2023 Family Event
We have a theme: The next running of “Off to the Races”—Indoor horse racing down the middle of Brioscii Hall.
We have a date: Saturday, April 22, 2023
We have a location: Brioscii Hall

Now all we need is YOU! Please save this date on your calendar. We would like everyone there to make this a success.
We need help to run all the games, sell tickets, and help with registration, the dessert auction, and more. If you would like to help plan or help on the day of the event, please let us know.

We are looking for a few people to take over this fun event in future years so please consider this. We are more than willing to work with you while you learn all the things we do to make this event a success.
As you are out Christmas shopping, please consider picking up a gift card or two for this event. We use lots of gift cards for prizes and for the games. Contact us:
Mike Aeling: mjaeling@gmail.com
(651.307.8237)
Ellen Aeling: ellenoaeling@gmail.com
(651.307.8241)

Thank you!
A big thank you to everyone who donated food in November as part of the Social Justice and Caring monthly donation closet collection. As always, our parish was very generous in helping others. The cereal, fruits and vegetables, and soup were delivered to Progressive Baptist Church and have already been distributed. Many grateful families have been served.

In Christ We Live Forever

Please remember in your prayers…
Betty Campbell
who was recently buried from our church. We extend our sincere sympathy to her family and friends, and pray for her soul’s eternal peace.

Opening to the Joyful Moment
Daily Practice: Dance with great joy. It could be the explosive happy dance of a child or merely a joyful toe-tapping and slight head-bob. How you dance doesn’t matter, but at some point today, dance!
—S. James Meyer, Opening to Great Joy
FAITH FORMATION

Confirmation I Registration
Registration for Confirmation I has been extended! St. Pascal’s confirmation process consists of sessions beginning in the middle of 9th grade and concluding in the winter of 10th grade. Older candidates are also welcome. For registration materials or more information, contact Kim Roering in the parish office. Registrations are due by Friday, January 13, 2022.

REGIONAL SCHOOL NEWS

Merry Christmas from St. Pascal Regional Catholic School! May everyone have the gift of faith, the blessing of hope, and the peace of His love at Christmas and always.

Thank you to all who donated items to this year’s Santa Shop. We are also grateful for the volunteers who helped work the Santa Shop this year. They did hours of wrapping, and the students were so excited to shop and bring home wrapped gifts. We couldn’t run the Santa Shop without so many thoughtful donations and helpful hands. Please keep us in mind for next year; we’d love to have your help again. Also, if you happen to be out shopping the after Christmas sales and see some good bargains, we are now accepting donations to our 2023 Santa Shop. Donations can be brought to the school office in January. Thanks for thinking of us and supporting our school!

St. Pascal’s Women’s Book Club
Monday, January 9 at 7:00 PM
Time to make a new Year’s Resolution to read more! Join the St. Pascal Women’s Book Club. We meet on the 2nd Monday of each month in the Staff Lounge. All parish women are invited to join the group for its monthly discussions—join us as often as your schedule allows. This month, we will discuss The French Braid by Ann Tyler. On February 13 we will share thoughts on Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen. Contact Toni Baker toni@bakers.us (651.731.7763) for a list of the twelve 2023 selections.

St. Pascal’s Winter Celebration—Parish Ice Skating and Game Night
Friday, January 27, 2023 from 4:30-8:30 PM at the Roseville Skating Center
Ready to chase away the winter blues? Plan to join us at the Guidant John Rose OVAL in Roseville on Friday, January 27. Fun for skaters and non-skaters alike! Ice skating available from 5:00-7:00 PM. Games, snacks, and cocoa in the Fireside Room from 4:30-8:30 PM. Free will offering will be taken for food and room rental. Let us know you plan to join via the SignUp Genius link on the parish website or call the parish office.

Sponsored by the Parish Life and Activities Committee

SOCIAL JUSTICE & CARING

January Collection: Brittany’s Place
During January, items will be accepted in the parish donation closet for Brittany’s Place, an emergency shelter in St. Paul for girls and young women who have experienced commercial sex trafficking or are at high risk for sexual exploitation. Items needed at this time are:

- **Toiletries and Personal Care:** Bathroom caddies, loofahs, towels, wash cloths, body wash, lotion, toothpaste, hairbrushes/combs/picks, hair ties/headbands/clips, small black hair rubber bands, hair care products (culturally specific, such as Eco Gel, Carol’s Daughter, Cantu). Brittany’s Place serves BIPOC girls and strives to provide a culturally relevant experience.

- **Clothing:** Plain white or black T-shirts, socks, sweatpants and hoodies, pajama pants/sets (S-M-L); slippers and fuzzy socks (size 5-12)

- **Crafts and Activities:** Colored pencils, fidgets, movies, books, board games, activity kits (e.g. Legos, puzzles)

- **Shelter Supplies:** Twin sheets sets, blankets, pillows

Items will be collected through Sunday, January 29. Thank you for your generosity!

Faith In Action: Putting Faith Into Action is Everyone’s Responsibility
Members of the Social Justice and Caring Committee wish all a very Blessed Christmas. Your support of our various causes and initiatives is greatly appreciated. As we move forward, we hope many more of you will participate in putting your faith into action. Planning ahead, keep these two dates on your 2023 calendar: Wednesday, January 11, and Monday, March 20. More details will follow so watch our Faith In Action article each week.

Also, start collecting any old and useless keys you may have around the house—a project in the new year will offer a very constructive new home for them. Stay tuned!

CONTACT US

Parish Office
Phone 651.774.1585
Email church@stpascals.org
For after-hours pastoral emergency (death, dying or anointing), call 651.774.1585 and dial 1.

Parish Office Hours
Mon-Fri 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Holidays as announced

St. Pascal Regional Catholic School
Phone 651.776.0092
Email icollierpaske@stpascalschool.org

School Office Hours
Mon-Fri 7:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Parish Councils
Parish Pastoral Council
Meetings 1st Tuesday at 6:30 PM
Ann Karner, Chair

Parish Finance Council
Meetings 4th Thursday at 5:30 PM
Mike Aeling, Chair

Sacramental Information
Reconciliation
Saturday from 3:45-4:15 PM
or contact Fr. John in the parish office
Communal celebrations as announced

Baptism
One pre-baptismal session is required. To register for a pre-baptismal session or to schedule a celebration, call the parish office.

Marriage
Arrangements must be made with the pastor at least six months in advance of the desired date.

Parish Prayer Line
8:00 - 10:00 AM
Mary Butler-Levine
651.735.0004
4:00 - 6:00 PM
Pat Kackman (new phone number)
651.342.8879

Parish Communication
Bulletin Notices
Due 5:00 PM Monday
thea.munoz@stpascals.org

Mass Announcements
Due 12:00 PM Tuesday
keri.mader@stpascals.org

Like, follow & share us on Facebook:
St. Pascal Baylon Catholic Church
Mass Times & Intentions

**Tuesday, December 27, 2022**
8:00 AM The people of the parish

**Wednesday, December 28, 2022**
9:30 AM + Mary Schaeffer

**Thursday, December 29, 2022**
8:00 AM + Vince Arceno

**Friday, December 30, 2022**
8:00 AM The people of the parish

**Saturday, December 31, 2022**
4:30 PM The people of the parish

**Sunday, January 1, 2023**
Mary, Mother of God
8:45 AM The people of the parish
10:30 AM The people of the parish

Use Your Smartphone to Make a Donation to St. Pascal's!

1. Scan this QR code with your phone.
2. Open the secure link and follow the prompts.
3. Thank you!

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**Readings**

**December 25, 2022**

**Sunday:**
*Christmas Day*
Is 52:7-10  
Ps 98:1-6  
Heb 1:1-6  
Jn 1:1-18

**Monday:**
Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59  
Ps 31:3c-d4, 6-8b, 16bc, 17  
Mt 10:17-22

**Tuesday:**
1 Jn 1:1-4  
Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12  
Jn 20:1a, 2-8

**Wednesday**
1 Jn 1:5—2:2  
Ps 124:2-5, 7b-8  
Mt 2:13-18

**Thursday:**
1 Jn 2:3-11  
Ps 96:1-3, 5-6  
Lk 2:22-35

**Friday:**
*Holy Family*
Sir 3:2-6, 12-14  
Ps 128:1-5  
Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

**Saturday:**
1 Jn 2:18-21  
Ps 96:1-2, 11-13  
Jn 1:1-18

**Next Sunday:**
Mary, Mother of God
Nm 6:22-27  
Ps 67:2-3, 5-6, 8  
Gal 4:4-7  
Lk 2:16-21

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**The Weeks Ahead**

**Sunday, December 25—Christmas Day**
10:00am Mass

**Monday, December 26**
Parish office closed  
No scheduled events

**Tuesday, December 27**
No scheduled events

**Wednesday, December 28**
9:00am Rosary: Church  
9:30am Mass: Church

**Thursday, December 29**
No scheduled events

**Friday, December 30—Holy Family**
No scheduled events

**Saturday, December 31—New Year's Eve**
4:30pm Vigil Mass for Mary, Mother of God

**Sunday, January 1, 2023—New Year's Day**
Mary, Mother of God
No scheduled events

**Monday, January 2, 2023**
Parish office closed  
No scheduled events

**Tuesday, January 3, 2023**
6:30pm Pastoral Council: Zoom

**Wednesday, January 4, 2023**
9:00am Rosary: Church  
9:30am School Mass: Church  
5:00pm SPRCS Christmas Lessons & Carols: Brioschi Hall, Church  
6:30pm Catechist Meeting: Staff Lounge  
6:30pm RCIA: Founders Room

**Thursday, January 5, 2023**
11:30am Parish office closed (staff lunch)  
6:00pm Spirit Song: Church  
6:30pm SJCC: Zoom  
7:00pm Men's Club Board Meeting: Brioschi Hall

**Friday, January 6, 2023**
No scheduled events

**Saturday, January 7, 2023**
No scheduled events

**Sunday, January 8, 2023—Epiphany of the Lord**
11:30am Women's Club Board Meeting: Brioschi Hall  
12:00pm Confirmation II: Old Church

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**Stewardship of Giving**

*Financials for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023*

**November 2022**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>YTD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sundays Giving</strong></td>
<td>82,356.00</td>
<td>279,558.64</td>
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<td><strong>Budgeted</strong></td>
<td>67,168.67</td>
<td>335,843.00</td>
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<td><strong>+/-</strong></td>
<td>15,187.33</td>
<td>-56,284.36</td>
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**Mortgage Reduction** (as of 11.30.2022)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loan Balance</td>
<td>$ 2,906,054.00</td>
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<td>Principal</td>
<td>$ 12,371.32</td>
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<td>Interest</td>
<td>$ 10,089.73</td>
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<td>Monthly Payment</td>
<td>$ 22,461.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>YTD Collected Donations</td>
<td>$ 126,457.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>YTD Payment</td>
<td>$ 112,305.25</td>
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| Deficit             | $ -14,151.75

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<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Reserve Account Balance</td>
<td>$ 199,939.00</td>
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<tr>
<td># of payments from Reserve:</td>
<td>9</td>
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*Thank you for your support!*

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**Parish Office Holiday Hours**

The parish office will be closed Monday, December 26 for the Christmas holiday and on Monday, January 2 for New Year's Day. *Have a beautiful and safe holiday season!*

**Join Us for Our Weekly Rosary in the New Year!**

The gentle repetition in the Rosary is meant to lead one into restful and contemplative prayer related to each Mystery and to help us to enter into the silence of our hearts, where Christ's spirit Dwells. Join us every Wednesday at 9:00 AM in the church to pray the Rosary together. All are welcome!

**Do you play the piano?**

Cerinity-Marian of Saint Paul is looking for a backup piano player. Weekday Mass times are at 1:00 PM and Saturday-Sunday at 10:00 AM. If you would like to fill in at times (with advance notice) please call Jackie Brunts at 651.793.2101. Thank you!
Thank you to all who donated money for flowers and enhancements for our worship space during this holy season.

Let us hold the following in our hearts...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dedication</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Family of John Acosta</td>
<td>Henry Chavez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard &amp; Irene Anderson</td>
<td>Cheryl Anderson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marianne Anderson</td>
<td>Mike &amp; Terri Grill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greg Arko</td>
<td>Martha Arko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father-in-Law Len Atzmiller</td>
<td>Rodney Korf</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Bannick Family</td>
<td>Jeanne Hess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmund &amp; Mary Barnes</td>
<td>Margie &amp; Joe Fernlund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom Bertini</td>
<td>Joann Bertini</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carl Buraglio</td>
<td>Kathleen Buraglio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs. Patte Chavez</td>
<td>Henry Chavez</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Joseph Chavez</td>
<td>Henry Chavez</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Nick Chavez</td>
<td>Henry Chavez</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Robert Chavez</td>
<td>Henry Chavez</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Family of Leo Chavez</td>
<td>Henry Chavez</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. David Chavez</td>
<td>Henry Chavez</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. William Chavez</td>
<td>Henry Chavez</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Richard Chavez</td>
<td>Henry Chavez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband Ronald Clarke; Children Dean &amp; Sandy</td>
<td>Mother, Olivia Clarke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie Darling</td>
<td>Audrey Darling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Len Demers</td>
<td>Kathleen Buraglio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Flottmeyer</td>
<td>Ann Flottmeyer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs. Becky Glebus</td>
<td>Henry Chavez</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edward Graw</td>
<td>Your Family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joe &amp; Patricia Grill</td>
<td>Mike &amp; Terri Grill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denny Groess</td>
<td>Yolanda Groess</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deceased Family Members</td>
<td>Joan &amp; Bob Hauri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don &amp; all my loved ones in Eternity</td>
<td>Betty Hensel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herrickhoff &amp; Schwieters Families</td>
<td>Larry &amp; Marlene Herrickhoff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jurkovich Family</td>
<td>Martha Arko</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan Korf</td>
<td>Rodney Korf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents Walter &amp; Angie &amp; Betty Korf</td>
<td>Rodney Korf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed &amp; Ann Kramlinger</td>
<td>Larry Kramlinger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackie Kramlinger</td>
<td>Joe Kramlinger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Deceased Krug Family Members</td>
<td>Theresa Krug</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Krupich Family</td>
<td>Marlene Krupich</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jack Kubiak</td>
<td>Lisa &amp; Sue Kubiak</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glenn &amp; Pat Kurtz</td>
<td>Dick &amp; Fran Czaplewski</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dedicated in the Name of:

Nick Kuske
Family Members
Mike Leier
Nick Leis
Terrence Lemke
Larry & Greg May
My Parents & Grandparents
Mike & Joanne McMahon
Doris & Joe Milla
The Grausnick & Norton Families
Beverly O'Brien
Frederick Odozi
Geraldine O'Hara
Joseph Quinn
Matthew David Rapacz
Jack & Phyllis Redlund
Family Loved Ones
Family & Friends
Joe Scheinost
Mrs. Stephanie Stump
Miss Kaylynn Veseth
Paul Vogelgesang
John & Savina Vukelich
Grace Wagner
Marvin Wasmundt & Violet Dean Wasmundt
Dean, Gloria & Kyle Zilley

Dedicated by:

Dave & Sue Nechrebecki
Dave & Kim Larson & Family
Lois Leier & Family
Diane Leis
Ann Lemke
The May Family
John McKenzie
The McMahons
Karen & Jeff Shanley
Dan & Pam Norton
Husband, Pat O'Brien
Catherine Odozi
Terry & Nancy Engfer
Irene Quinn
David & Diane Rapacz
Kathy Redlund
Norma Roscoe
Carol Rueb
Dave & Sue Nechrebecki
Henry Chavez
Henry Chavez
Marlene Krupich
John & Linda Vukelich
Audrey Darling
The Wasmundt Family
Eric & Kurt Zilley

Lord Jesus,
You have come to us as a small child,
but you have brought us the greatest of all gifts,
the gift of eternal love.
St. Bernard of Clairvaux

Christmas breaks into our lives with the hopeful image of light. “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light,” we hear in the reading from Isaiah. Sickness, death, and much human frailty have been part of our lives in the recent past. More than a promise of better days to come is needed. Isaiah’s prophecy offers abundant hope as we hear, “Upon those who lived in a land of gloom a light has shone.” The light is given to us because “a child is born to us,” a child who will be called “Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.”

This Christmas, as we deal with uncertainty, let us be surprised with Christmas hope! Let us be amazed that God sent his Son to redeem us! Through Jesus, God offers us another path. As St. Athanasius said, “God became human so that humanity might become divine.” How can we be anything but astounded that God has invited us into life with him?

During the Christmas season, seek ways to extend a kindness that is out of the ordinary. After all, God has done that for us, and as St. Paul said in his Letter to Titus, through Christ, God has cleansed us “as a people of his own, eager to do good.” May your kindesses be a light to others.
THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, December 26
St. Stephen
Today is special for permanent deacons as they celebrate the feast of their patron, St. Stephen, the first martyr. Acts recounts how the saint was stoned after he performed “great wonders and signs among the people.” While being stoned, Stephen called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Psalm 31 echoes the suffering of Jesus on the cross and the cry, “Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.” May we allow St. Stephen’s courage to inspire us as we seek to live as disciples of Christ.

Today’s readings: Acts 6:8–10, 7:54–59; Psalm 31:3cd–4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17; Matthew 10:17–22.

Tuesday, December 27
St. John, Apostle
St. John, the apostle, is known as the disciple “whom Jesus loved.” The Gospel text shows this disciple running to the tomb, arriving before Peter. Upon entering the tomb, the disciple “saw and believed.” In the first reading, St. John passes on his belief. “What we have seen and heard, we proclaim now to you,” he states. If there is a funeral at your church this week, try to attend to support the family of the deceased. During the Christmas season, grieving families especially need love and concern from the parish.

Today’s readings: 1 John 1:1–4; Psalm 97:1–2, 5–6, 11–12; John 20:1a, 2–8.

Wednesday, December 28
Feast of the Holy Innocents
The Gospel today tells of “the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity.” If you are with children today, offer them special love and give thanks to God for the blessing of their lives. With the children, make a simple manger from paper, popsicle sticks, or a cardboard box, as a reminder of Jesus’ cradle. If there is a community pantry nearby, donate and deliver diapers or baby supplies for the needy.

Today’s readings: 1 John 1:5—2:26; Psalm 124: 2–3, 4–5, 7b–8; Matthew 2:13–18.

Thursday, December 29
Octave of Christmas
The days after Christmas are called the Octave of Christmas. Similarly, the first eight days of Easter are called an octave. In both seasons, the days of the octave invite the faithful to an extended reflection on what we are celebrating. Today, spend time with the Gospel text of Simeon’s prayer and then with his words to Mary. Incorporate Simeon’s prayer, known as the Nunc Dimitiss, into your nightly prayers.


Friday, December 30
Feast of the Holy Family
The Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph is celebrated on a weekday this year, since there is no Sunday between Christmas and the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. Celebrate this feast with your family and include a guest who is a “family of one” to join you. Prepare a special dessert, meet at a favorite restaurant, or volunteer to serve a meal to those who have no family to share the holidays with. Make peace with an estranged family member.

Today’s readings: Sirach 3:2–6, 12–14 or Colossians 3:12–21 or Colossians 3:12–17 or Psalm 128:1–2, 3, 4–5; Matthew 2:13–15, 19–23.

Saturday, December 31
The Light Shines in Darkness
Today’s Gospel proclaims Jesus as the incarnate Word of God, stating, “In the beginning was the Word, / and the Word was with God, / and the Word was God.” In your Bible, this text is the prologue to the Gospel of John and can be read as a preview of the chapters ahead. The rest of the brief chapter tells of the incarnation. Read this Gospel over meditatively, stopping to ponder phrases such as “the true light, which enlightens everyone.”

Today’s readings: 1 John 2:18–21; Psalm 96:1–2, 11–12, 13; John 1:1–18.