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.

JANUARY 08, 2023 | THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

OUR STAFF

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

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

Business Administrator
Theresa Rutger  |  ext 130
theresa.rutger@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  I  Sunday 8:45 & 10:30 AM (ASL)  I  Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:00 AM; Wednesday 9:30 AM
1757 Conway Street  I  Saint Paul, Minnesota 55106  I  651.774.1585
www.stpascals.org  I  church@stpascals.org
FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

My sabbatical has been officially granted. I received a letter from Archbishop Hebda on December 2, 2022 that states the following: “Dear Father Mitchell, I have received and reviewed your sabbatical request from September 1 through November 20, 2023. I am pleased to grant permission for your request… During your absence, a temporary parochial administrator will be appointed for the parish… I am confident that you will find this time to be energizing for your priestly life. I look forward to hearing about your experiences upon your return. With every good wish, I remain, Fraternally in Christ, Archbishop Bernard A. Hebda”

My sabbatical plans. For my sabbatical, I will be attending the Institute of Continuing Theological Education (ICTE) at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, Italy from September 1-November 17, 2023. During that time, I also plan to visit Spain and the island of Malta. The ICTE campus in Rome is housed on the Janiculum Hill overlooking the Vatican and much of Rome. The campus has its own chapel, classrooms, lounge and dining room. There will be 30-40 other priests from the United States and other English-speaking countries attending the ICTE program with me. For the educational program at ICTE, there will be lectures, presentations and on-site visits to churches, museums and historic sites. One topic I will learn about is “Scriptural Theology of Mary” which includes a 6-day pilgrimage to Marian shrines in Italy. Another topic is “Preaching about Mary” which includes a 13-day pilgrimage following the route of the Holy Family in Egypt. Most of my evenings and weekends in Rome will be free to take in a wide range of pastoral and cultural activities. I look forward to attending an opera, musical events, a football (soccer) match and strolling the streets and piazzas with their Italian culture and ambiance. For the spiritual component of the program, I will be praying the daily Liturgy the Hours with the other priests on the ICTE program, and we will celebrate daily Eucharist. I will have time for reading, prayer and reflection. There will also be opportunities for me to concelebrate liturgies at the Basilica of St. Peter, other Papal Basilicas and various ancient churches.

Why am I taking a sabbatical? The word sabbatical comes from the Greek word “sabatikos” which means “of the Sabbath”, the day of rest that happens every seventh day. A sabbatical is a time of paid leave when an employee takes an extended break from work. People take sabbaticals to work on a project, to travel, and to renew their body, mind and soul. The Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis allows priests to take a sabbatical every seven years, and approval for the sabbatical must be given by the Archbishop. I have not taken a sabbatical yet, and in May 2023, I will celebrate my 27th anniversary as a priest. As I live each day and also look to the future, I believe my sabbatical will help me grow in my health of soul, mind and body.

While I am on my sabbatical, a substitute priest will be here to cover Masses and other sacramental duties. That priest is Fr. Bob Hart. He was ordained as a priest for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis in 2000, and he has served at the Cathedral of St. Paul, Transfiguration Parish in Oakdale and St. Patrick Parish in Inver Grove Heights before his retirement in 2018. Since retirement, Fr. Hart has helped at parishes throughout the Archdiocese, and I am grateful for his help here.

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 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

SOCIAL JUSTICE & CARING

Faith in Action
Action Alert for Affordable Housing
Wednesday, January 11, from 1:30-2:30 PM in the Capitol Rotunda
Have you registered? The Rally for Housing is sponsored by Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative. This is an opportunity to speak for those who lack adequate housing. Inadequately housed children and senior citizens outnumber the “homeless” we see on the streets. You can make a difference! Use the convenient link on the parish website to register for the rally and come join us. For more information, contact Ann Karner at akarner24@gmail.com.

January Collection: Brittany's Place
This month, 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 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 sheet sets, blankets, pillows

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

Living Faith Booklets
A very limited number of Living Faith booklets for January-March 2023 are available. If you would like one, contact Kim Roering in the parish office.

In Christ We Live Forever

Please remember in your prayers…

Deborah Nelson
Georgene Andersen

who were recently buried from our church. We extend our sincere sympathy to their families and friends, and pray for their souls’ eternal peace.
REGIONAL SCHOOL NEWS

Christmas Lessons and Carols at St. Pascal Regional
We had a wonderful evening this past Wednesday connecting with all of our families at our Christmas Lessons and Carols event. It was great to get to gather in the Church to celebrate the Christmas season together. During the evening, we learned about the history behind different Christmas traditions and music and then used our voices to sing many Christmas songs as a community. Finally, we shared some refreshments in Brioschi Hall. Thank you to all who attended and connected with us! Check out our Facebook and Instagram for pictures from the evening.

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’s 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 Women’s Club News
Crafter’s Morning Out
Saturday, January 21 from 9:00-11:00 AM in Brioschi Hall
Gather your crafting project and meet us for a morning of fellowship. No formal program—just coffee, a snack and crafting. Join us! Questions? Contact Cindy Reisdorf at 651.734.8937 or jreisdorf00@msn.com.

Mardi Gras Care Card Project
Saturday, February 18, after 4:30 PM
Mass in Brioschi Hall
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.

Parish Special Project—Is there an architect in our parish?
We plan to make modifications to a storage structure located in the Conway lot. Sketches for the project require an architect’s sign-off before the city will issue a permit. If you know of an architect that could help us, please contact Theresa in the parish office theresa.runetter@stpascals.org (651.432.4960). We are hoping to begin work in the spring.

Christmas Flowers—Additions & Corrections
In Memory of:
Jim & Greg Hawkins
Dick & Fran Czaplewski and Glenn & Pat Kurtz
From:
Mary Hawkins
Mike & Shellie Czaplewski

FAITH FORMATION

Confirmation I Registration
Registration for confirmation 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, 2023.

Baptism Preparation
Monday, January 23 from 6:30—8:00 PM
Families planning to have a child baptized at St. Pascal’s are asked to participate in a pre-baptism session. For more information or to sign up for this session, contact Kim Roering in the parish office.

The Parish Finance Council
At our meeting on December 22, 2022, the Finance Council reviewed and discussed:
- The financial balance sheet
- Profit and loss statement. (Results were good for November. However, increased Gas and Electric costs are significant.)
- Building maintenance issues in the parish. (Increased costs due to a car accident which knocked out power to the building.)
- Plan to explore expanding the composting program
- No activity so far on the sale of Ryan Field

Christmas Tree Sales Update
The SPMC (St. Pascal’s Men’s Club) had another successful year selling Christmas Trees. We would like to extend a very special “Thank You” to all volunteers who helped, and to all who purchased trees. Our Christmas tree fundraiser is one of many successful events sponsored by the SPMC board each year. After all expenses, we had a net income of more than $15,000 based on 650 trees on our lot. The SPMC provides support for various parish events, boy scouts, cub scouts and Veterans Day dinner, and for field trips and tuition assistance for the regional school.

CONTACT US

Parish Office
Phone 651.774.1585
Emailchurch@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 icollarypaske@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 (akarner24@gmail.com)

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 651.735.0004
Mary Butler-Levine
4:00 - 6:00 PM 651.342.8879
Pat Kackman (new phone number)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, January 10</strong></td>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>+ Claudia Wolf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday, January 11</strong></td>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Women's Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday, January 12</strong></td>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>The people of the parish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday, January 13</strong></td>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>The people of the parish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday, January 14</strong></td>
<td>4:30 PM</td>
<td>+ Leonard Stuhl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday, January 15</strong></td>
<td>8:45 AM</td>
<td>The people of the parish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
<td>Jacqueline &amp; Robert Cowden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 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!

### Readings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Epiphany of the Lord</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Is 60:1-6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mt 2:1-12</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Monday:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Baptism of the Lord</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Is 42:1-4, 6-7</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ps 29:1-2, 3-4, 9-10</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mt 3:13-17</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heb 2:5-12</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ps 8:2ab, 5-9</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mk 1:21-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heb 2:14-18</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Ps 105:1-4, 6-9</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mk 1:29-39</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heb 3:7-14</td>
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<td>Ps 95:6-7c, 8-11</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mk 1:40-45</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Friday:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heb 4:1-5, 11</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Ps 78:3, 4bc, 6c-8</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mk 2:1-12</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heb 4:12-16</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ps 19:8-10, 15</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mk 2:13-17</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Next Sunday:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Is 49:3, 5-6</td>
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<td>Ps 40:2, 4, 7-10</td>
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<td>1 Cor 1:1-3</td>
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<td>Jn 1:29-34</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### The Weeks Ahead

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday, January 8</strong></td>
<td>11:30 AM</td>
<td>Women's Club Board Meeting: Brioschi Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>Confirmation II: Old Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday, January 9</strong></td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>Women's Book Club: Staff Lounge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>Boy Scouts: Brioschi Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, January 10</strong></td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Winter Decorating: Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>First Reconciliation: Church, Brioschi Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday, January 11</strong></td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Rosary: Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>School Mass: Church</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>Choir: Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>Faith Formation: Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday, January 12</strong></td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td>Spirit Song: Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>Men's Club Membership Meeting: Brioschi Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday, January 13</strong></td>
<td>No scheduled events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Stewardship of Giving

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Sunday Giving</th>
<th>YTD Giving</th>
<th>Budgeted</th>
<th>YTD Budgeted</th>
<th>YTD Deficit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>November 2022</strong></td>
<td>$82,356.00</td>
<td>$279,558.64</td>
<td>$67,168.67</td>
<td>$335,843.00</td>
<td>$-56,284.36</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mortgage Reduction (as of 11.30.2022)</strong></td>
<td>$2,906,054.00</td>
<td>$12,371.32</td>
<td>$10,899.73</td>
<td>$22,461.05</td>
<td>$126,457.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principal</strong></td>
<td>$2,906,054.00</td>
<td>$12,371.32</td>
<td>$10,899.73</td>
<td>$22,461.05</td>
<td>$126,457.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interest</strong></td>
<td>$12,371.32</td>
<td>$10,899.73</td>
<td>$22,461.05</td>
<td>$126,457.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly Payment</strong></td>
<td>$22,461.05</td>
<td>$10,899.73</td>
<td>$22,461.05</td>
<td>$126,457.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YTD Collected Donations</strong></td>
<td>$126,457.00</td>
<td>$112,305.25</td>
<td>$14,151.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YTD Payment</strong></td>
<td>$112,305.25</td>
<td>$14,151.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deficit</strong></td>
<td>$126,457.00</td>
<td>$14,151.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Reserve Account Balance** | $199,939.00 | $9

**Thank you for your support!**

### St. Pascal’s Legacy Society

Are you interested in helping our parish endure for future generations through planned giving? St. Pascal’s Legacy Committee wants to spread the vision that St. Pascal’s is a parish with a great future and encourages planned giving to support the future at St. Pascal’s. For more information on St. Pascal’s Legacy Society, please call Theresa Rutger in the parish office at 651.774.1585 or talk to a member of the Legacy Committee—Ellen and Mike Aeling, Susan Hommes, Joe Sullivan, and Brigid O’Malley.

“What I can do, you cannot. And what you can do, I cannot. But together we can do something beautiful for God.”

—Mother Teresa
ST. PASCAL BAYLON

WINTER Celebration

Ice Skating  Games  Food

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2023
4:30-8:30 pm
Guidant John Rose OVAL
2661 Civic Center Drive in Roseville

CHASE AWAY THE WINTER BLUES!
Skaters and non-skaters welcome!
Ice Skating from 5-7 pm
($8 to skate, $5 to rent skates)
FREE indoor walking track
Games, food, and cocoa in the Fireside Room

RSVP via SignUp Genius Link at stpascals.org
or call the parish office at 651.774.1585
Feel free to bring a game and snack to share!

Freewill offering for food and room rental

Sponsored by the Parish Life and Activities Committee
THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Star-Crossed

God our Creator
you guided the Magi to the infant
through the brightness of a star.
Gold, frankincense, and myrrh,
the Magi presented.
May the light of Scripture
guide our journey
as we offer to you
our worship and discipleship.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, January 8, 2023
Illumination and Glory

Today’s readings: Isaiah 60:1–6; Psalm 72:1–2, 7–8, 10–13; Ephesians 3:2–3a, 5–6; Matthew 2:1–12. The radiance of God’s glory is clear as we celebrate Isaiah’s prophecy fulfilled in the visit of the Magi. In the first reading, Isaiah addresses Jerusalem, saying, “Your light has come.” Continuing, Isaiah tells of people from afar bringing gifts: “All from Sheba shall come bearing gold and frankincense, and proclaiming the praise of the Lord.”

The Magi proclaim the Lord’s birth, when they arrive in Jerusalem, inquiring, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews?” Alarmed at this query, the jealous King Herod begins a search for the one he considers a rival to his power. But this newborn is not destined to compete with the king. Isaiah had foretold that the newborn would “shepherd my people Israel.” This is not the language of an earthly ruler. Jesus continues to be manifest in us in the readings and the Eucharist. On this Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord, we thank God for the gift of the Eucharist, a gift that we can continue to receive throughout our lives.

Matthew’s Gospel is a particular type of Jewish story that intends to make a theological point and is heavily influenced by biblical tradition and diverse sources. These visitors to the holy family were clearly good-hearted, kindly, and motivated by faith in prophecy and astrology. Honor their generosity by extending good will and kindness to family, friends, and coworkers.
THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

Tuesday, January 9
The Baptism of the Lord
The readings of the Christmas season conclude with the heavens opening and a voice saying, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” What could be a more joyous way to end the season? During Christmas Time, we have experienced the birth of our Savior, the manifestation to the Magi, and Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan. As we enter Ordinary Time in winter, pause to reflect on each of these in-breakings of the kingdom and how they have affected you.


Monday, January 23
Legal Protection of Unborn Children
The Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children weaves the secular with the sacred. Wherever we are on this day, we pray that God will protect all unborn children. Although the unborn are nameless to us, we can easily look around and offer thanks to God to all those who have been born. Consider using some of the photos from the Christmas cards that you have received this year to start a conversation with children about our belief that all life is sacred.

Today’s readings: Isaiah 9:1–6; Psalm 72:2,3–4ab, 7–8, 11–12, 13–14; Matthew 5:1–12a.

Wednesday, January 25
Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul
The Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul reminds us that conversion to deepen faith and service of others is sometimes sudden. For most people, though, conversion to living in Christ is gradual, like a never-ending timeline of good works, struggles, reconciliation, renewal, and stronger faith in Jesus. Today, pray that we may never hesitate to serve God by serving others with kindness and understanding. Pray also to follow the example of St. Paul and to learn from struggles, so that you can dedicate your life to following Christ.


Thursday, February 2
The Presentation of the Lord
The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord is sometimes called Candlemas Day or the Feast of the Encounter in the Temple (by Eastern Christians). In the Gospel, we hear Simeon’s words of blessing and Anna’s prophecy. Many parishes bless candles for parishioners and for the year’s Masses today, a tradition that reminds us of the light of faith that we have through baptism.


Friday, February 3
St. Blaise
Little is known about St. Blaise, who was a bishop and martyr. He is celebrated as having healed a boy who was choking, likely on a bone. Recalling this miracle, the tradition of the blessing of throats arose around the eighth century. As throats are blessed with crossed candles close to the recipient’s neck, we ask God to heal all who suffer from diseases of the throat and “every other illness.”


Saturday, February 11
World Day of the Sick
On the optional Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes, we recall the story of the apparitions of the Blessed Mother to St. Bernadette Soubirous of Lourdes, France. Millions of pilgrims have visited the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes since 1862, when several miracles were confirmed as authentic. In 1992, Pope John Paul II named February 11 World Day of the Sick, a day of awareness of those who are ailing and for all who have no access to proper medical care. Today is an important intersection of loving awareness of all sick persons, with a memorial in the Church that celebrates God’s healing through the intercession of the Blessed Mother.

Today’s readings: Genesis 3:9–24; Psalm 90:2, 3–4abd, 5–6, 12–13; Mark 8:1–10.