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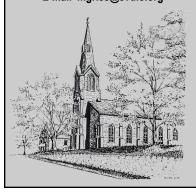
WEEKEND MASS
SCHEDULE
Saturday—5 PM
Sunday—8 & 10:30 AM
SACRAMENT OF
RECONCILATION
SATURDAY 4-4:30 PM

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Evansville, IN 47720
SCHOOL
6130 W. Saint Joseph Road

Parish Office: (812) 963-3273 School: (812) 963-3335 School Fax: (812) 963-3335 Prayer Requests: (812) 963-3149

Evansville IN 47720

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DECEMBER 31, 2023 FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Dear friends,

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family. Like so many other characters we encounter in the bible, Mary and Joseph can become people we admire from a distance but feel little or no connection with them. And yet, both Mary and Joseph remind us of the power that resides in simple and ordinary people that can profoundly change the world. And those simple and ordinary people are you and I.

Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM, had this reflection on the example of Mary and Joseph. Kingdom of God people are history makers. They break through the small kingdoms of this world to an alternative and much larger world, God's full creation. People who are still living in the false self are history stoppers. They use God and religion to protect their own status and the status quo of the world that sustains them. They are often fearful people, the nice proper folks of every age who think like everyone else thinks and who have no power to break through, or as Jesus' opening words put it, "to change" (Mark 1:15; Matthew 4:17).

How can we really think that Mary—if she thought like any good Jewish girl of her time was trained to think—could possibly be fully ready to hear, to speak, or to live out God's message? She had to let God lead her outside of her box of expectations, her comfort zone, her dutiful religion of follow-the-leader (a feature of all religions at their lower levels). She was very young and largely uneducated. Perhaps theology itself is not the necessary path but instead simply integrity and courage. Nothing anyone said at the synagogue would have prepared Mary or Joseph for this situation. They both had to rely on their angels! What proper bishop would trust such a situation? I wouldn't myself. All we know of Joseph is that he was "a just man" (Matthew 1:19), probably also young and uneducated. The circumstance is a total afront to our criteria and way of evaluating authenticity.

So why do we love and admire people like Mary and Joseph, and then not imitate their faith journeys, their prophetic courage, their non-reassurance by the religious system? Mary and Joseph trusted their encounter with God and acted accordingly. These were two laypeople who totally trusted their inner experience of God and followed it to Bethlehem and beyond. There is no mention in the Gospels of the two checking out their inner experiences with the high priests, the synagogue, or even their Jewish Scriptures. Mary and Joseph walked in courage and absolute faith that their experience was true, with no one except God to reassure them they were right. Their only safety net was God's love and mercy, a safety net they must have tried out many times, or else they never would have been able to fall into it so gracefully.

We have just spent the last nine months rebuilding our church. And, it is beautiful. A testimony to the great love you have for our parish. But this building, as wonderful as it is, can only point the way to a greater "rebuilding." And that rebuilding is for each of us to be rebuilt—to grow up in our faith. Jesus said it this way: "try to enter through the narrow gates," "cast your nets into the deep," "take up your cross and follow me."

Mary and Joseph model this behavior. And they did it by trusting that God spoke to them in their hearts and having the courage to follow him. And the God who spoke to the hearts of Mary and Joseph, is the same God who speaks to us today. But it takes courage to hear this. Most people won't. The same was true of the people we encounter again in the gospel. We hear Jesus speak of them like sheep without a shepherd. But his heart was moved with great love for them and again and again he invited them to follow him. "Do not be afraid," hd told them over and over again. And he did not give up on them, even when many left him because they found him altogether too much.

Mary and Joseph did listen and did follow, even when things seemed unclear and scary. And they changed the world because of it. And we can do it as well. Leaning into the journey of life

Fr. Gene Schroeder

GOOD IS THE FLESH

Good is the flesh that the Word has become. good is the birthing, the milk in the breast, good is the feeding, caressing and rest, good is the body for knowing the world, Good is the flesh that the Word has become. Good is the body for knowing the world, sensing the sunlight, the tug of the ground, feeling, perceiving, within and around, good is the body, from cradle to grave, Good is the flesh that the Word has become. Good is the body, from cradle to grave, growing and aging, arousing, impaired, happy in clothing, or lovingly bared, good is the pleasure of God in our flesh. Good is the flesh that the Word has become. Good is the pleasure of God in our flesh, longing in all, as in Jesus, to dwell, glad of embracing, and tasting, and smell, good is the body, for good and for God, Good is the flesh that the Word has become. Brian Wren



CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30 FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

5:00 PM MASS: JoAnn Schoenstein, Sr. Wilfrida OSF (Agatham Ludovicum Mayer, 1888), Kaspar Golzhauser (1895), Charles (1981) & Mary Alsop, Estella (2009) & Larry Ubelhor (2009), James Woods (2020)



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31 THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

8:00 AM MASS: Bob & Bernadette Jean, Dennis Jean, Richard Jean, Bonnie Jean Norton, Mary Kay Jean Neely, Infant Charleen Inkenbrandt, Albion & Violet Inkenbrandt, Charlie Inkenbrandt, John Inkenbrandt

10:30 AM MASS: Cathy Crowdus, Jack Siemers, Jeff Schneider, For the people of our parish, Elisabeth Comings (1880), Olivia (1994) & Leo Schapker, Stephanie Hillmann (2017), Bob Straub (2018), Stan Schapker (2022)

MONDAY, JANUARY 1 **NEW YEAR'S DAY**

8:00 AM MASS: Anna Herrmann (1872), Francis Wolf (1874), Adam Wolf (1895), Mary (1919) & Thomas Effinger, Barbara (1924) & George Hoefling, Joe & Maurice Buechlein

TUESDAY, JANUARY 2 SAINT BASIL THE GREAT

7:30 AM MASS: Catharina (1929) & Sebastion Weiss, Susanna Schneider (1930), Peter Schenk (1944), Mary Hoefling (1967), Albert (1990) & Florentina, Willie (2023) & Joyce Nieten, Barb Gertiesen

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3 **CHRISTMAS WEEKDAY**

7:30 AM MASS: Catherine (1963) & Joseph Hillenbrand, Frank (1968) & Olivia Voelker, Blanche Rives (1978), Clara (1998) & Clarence Baumgart, Dorothy (2015) & Francis Hillenbrand, Verena (2019) & Gus Bender

THURSDAY, JANUARY 4 SAINT ELIZABETH ANN SETON

NO MASS: Adolphus Fahrney (1902), Louise (1953) & Joseph Macke, Melvin (2009) & Caroline Garvin

FRIDAY, JANUARY 5 SAINT JOHN NEUMANN

NO MASS: Barthel (1914) & Anna Bender, Alfred Kibby (1981), Katherine (1984) & Leo Quinlin, Sr. Conradine Will, OSF (2002), Keith Stewart (2017), Talmadge Wells (2018), Larry (2020) & Donna Alsop

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6 THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

5:00 PM MASS: Ron Happe, Cyrilla Reker, Elisabeth (1871), Christina (1955) & Frederick Benendes, Joe Herr, Joseph & Virginia (Hirsh) Herr

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7 THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

8:00 AM MASS: Aloys & Marie Elpers, Jeanne, Harry, Rosie, Kenny & Bert Elpers, Jeanette & Orville Hall, Wilma & Joe



Gumbel, Jorhdan Wood, Killian & Irene, Peggy Baehl, Jim & Delores Niemeier, Donna Wessel

10:30 AM MASS: For the people of our parish, John Buchart (1880), Rosina Buchart (1880), Friedric Roeleke (1892), Joseph (1960) & Dina Ritter , Sylvester Schnepper (1967), Viola (2012) & Francis Englert

STEWARDSHIP: The Lord's Way

"Whatever you do," says St. Paul to the Colossians, ". . . do it in the name of the Lord Jesus. Give thanks to God the Father through him." And so it is that we offer our gifts in the Eucharist "through Him, with Him and in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit. . . "



December 24 & Christmas 2023	\$ 23,560.00
WEEKLY BUDGET	\$ 14,650.00
TOTAL INCOME TO DATE	\$ 381,403.35
BUDGET TO DATE	\$ 380,900.00
MAINTENNACE	\$ 25.00

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

HAITI COLLECTION	\$ 3,090.00
HAITI STUDENTS/HIGHER EDUCATION	\$ 2,460.00
HAITI GIFTS OF COMPASSION (TO DATE)	\$ 2,935.00
HAITI SEWING HOPE	\$ 565.00
VLADIVOSTOK MISSION	\$ 160.00
ST. VINCENT'S FOOD PANTRY	\$ 15.00

May we continue to be blessed by your faithful financial support to our parish and to our outreach ministries. Remember that you can SEND YOUR COLLECTION THROUGH THE MAIL:

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REBUILDING OUR CHURCH CAMPAIGN

TOTAL PLEDGED \$802,772 **RECEIVED TO DATE** \$472 740

Your monthly packet of collection envelopes now includes a "Rebuilding our Church Campaign" envelope which you can use to make your pledge contributions.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN IN THE HOSPITAL AND NURSING HOMES

HERITAGE CENTER: Brenda Koester, Christine Settle PREMIER NURSING CENTER (NEW HARMONY) Betty Fischer

THE RETREAT AT LEISURE LIVING: Margaret Kafel

CYPRUS REHABILITATION CENTER (NEWBURGH): Steve Hasselbrinck

NORTH PARK NURSING CENTER: Marie Gumbel, Carl Kempf ENVIVE HEALTHCARE: Doris Head

RIVER POINTE: Beverly Jones SOLARBRON TERRACE: Rose Weiss

EVANSVILLE PROTESTANT HOME: Mary Lou Davis

December 31: Diane Bassemier, Becky Muensterman, **HAPPY** Stephanie Purcell **BIRTHDAY** January 1: Bobby Mossberger, Becket Tenbarge

January 2: Becky Raben

January 3: Pluma Hillenbrand, Brooke Hohler, Ella Paul, Grayson Perigo, Carolyn Wargel

January 4: Clare Baylor, Alan Blankenberger, Haley Elpers, Amy Tenbarge

January 5: Joe Happe, Ethan Kissel, Tyler Weinzapfel January 6: Clay Allison, Logan Daugherty, Brian K. Elpers,

Max Layman, Quinn Layman, Charlotte Schlichting, Janna Waugh, Leo Wilkinson

January 1: Charles & Monica Voelker, Joe & Karla Deweese

January 3: Jordan & Kelly Wilkinson January 4: Bryan & Angie Will

January 5: Mike & Eran Happe January 6: Todd & Sheri Powers

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



Please remember in your prayers Joe Herr, the brother of Jim Herr and Jane (Herr) Luigs who died last week. May God grant him eternal rest and may His peace be with his family and friends.

NEW YEAR'S DAY MASS--MONDAY JANUARY 1 WILL BE AT 8 AM

POPE FRANCIS CHRISTMAS REFLECTIONS

"A census of the whole earth" (cf. Lk 2:1). This was the context in which Jesus was born, and the Gospel makes a point of it. The census might have been mentioned in passing, but instead is carefully noted. And in this way a great contrast emerges. While the emperor numbers the world's inhabitants, God enters it almost surreptitiously. While those who exercise power seek to



take their place with the great ones of history, the King of history chooses the way of littleness. None of the powerful take notice of him: only a few shepherds, relegated to the margins of social life.

The census of the whole earth, in a word, manifests the all-toohuman thread that runs through history: the quest for worldly power and might, fame and glory, which measures everything in terms of success, results, numbers and figures, a world obsessed with achievement. Yet the census also manifests the way of Jesus, who comes to seek us through enfleshment. He is not the god of accomplishment, but the God of Incarnation. He does not eliminate injustice from above by a show of power, but from below, by a show of love. He does not burst on the scene with limitless power, but descends to the narrow confines of our lives. He does not shun our frailties, but makes them his own.

Brothers and sisters, tonight we might ask ourselves: Which God do we believe in? In the God of incarnation or the god of achievement? Because there is always a risk that we can celebrate Christmas while thinking of God in pagan terms, as a powerful potentate in the sky; a god linked to power, worldly success and the idolatry of consumerism. With the false image of a distant and petulant deity who treats the good well and the bad poorly; a deity made in our own image and likeness, handy for resolving our problems and removing our ills. God, on the other hand, waves no magic wand; he is no god of commerce who promises "everything all at once". He does not save us by pushing a button, but draws near us, in order to change our world from within. Yet how deeply ingrained is the



worldly notion of a distant, domineering, unbending and powerful deity who helps his own to prevail against others! This image is so frequently ingrained in us. But that is not the case: our God was born for all, during a census of the whole

Let us look, then, to the "living and true God" (1 Thess 1:9).

The God who is beyond all human reckoning and yet allows himself to be numbered by our accounting. The God, who revolutionizes history by becoming a part of history. The God who so respects us as to allow us to reject him; who takes away sin by taking it upon himself; who does not eliminate pain but transforms it; who does not remove problems from our lives but grants us a hope that is greater than all our problems. God so greatly desires to embrace our lives that, infinite though he is, he becomes finite for our sake. In his greatness, he chooses to become small; in his righteousness, he submits to our injustice. Brothers and sisters, this is the wonder of Christmas: not a mixture of sappy emotions and worldly contentment, but the unprecedented tenderness of a God who makes himself close, tender and compassionate, for this is God's style: closeness, compassion, tenderness.

So why remain caught up in your troubles? Like the shepherds, who left their flocks, leave behind the prison of your sorrows and embrace the tender love of the God. Put aside your masks and your armor; cast your cares on him and he will care for you.

He is looking not for your achievements but for your open and trusting heart. In him, you will rediscover who you truly are: a beloved son or daughter of God. Now you can believe it, for tonight the Lord was born to light up your life; his eyes are alight with love for you.

Make us believe, Lord, in the power of your love, so different from the power of the world. Lord, make us, like Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and the Magi, gather around you and worship you and bear witness before the world to the beauty of your countenance.

CATHOLIC MINISTRIES APPEAL (CPC)

PARISH GOAL \$130,270.00 \$124,956.00 96% PLEDGED TO DATE NUMBER OF PLEDGES 328 63% AVERAGE PLEDGE \$ 380.97

Our stewardship goal is to give 1% of our gross income to the Catholic Ministries Appeal (CPC). Thanks to the following people who have returned APPE



their pledge card: Michael & Amy Stewart MAKE YOUR PLEDGE TODAY AND SUPPORT OUR COMMON EFFORT!

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pot to be eligible for our first drawing of the year. MATER DEI/MEMORIAL TREASURE THE TRADITION LOTTERY TICKETS are also Available. Call Margie Hartman (812-453-6836) or the parish office (812-963-

MARK YOUR CALENDAR----FEBRUARY 11, 2024 A DAY OF CELEBRATION FOR OUR PARISH Look for details soon!!

and mind this Lent 2024 with an inspirational Women's Retreat. Beginning Saturday, March 2 from 8:30 WOMEN'S RETREAT am-10:00pm and end-



ing on Sunday, March 3rd with 8:00 am Mass. Adoration, guest speakers, live reflective music, rosary, a spa hour, confession, and Mass. What a great way to enter into the busy Lenten season. You are welcome to come and pray for as long as you Contact Jessica Reckelhoff (812-598-1151 jreckelhoff@evdio.org) for information and/or to register.



Mary Mother of God Mission Society

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Christmas Flower Memorial Names that came in after Dec. 18: Deceased Members of the Clarence Rexing & Richard Emge Families Let us remember the gift they were to their families.

COFFEE AND DOUNTS...NEXT SUNDAY AFTER MASS

The Altar Society will be hosting us for coffee and donuts after the 8 am mass next Sunday. join us in the cafeteria.

They will also be making their famous kuchens on Saturday, January 13th. We will start at 7:30. You are welcome to come and join in helping make kuchens.

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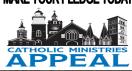
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