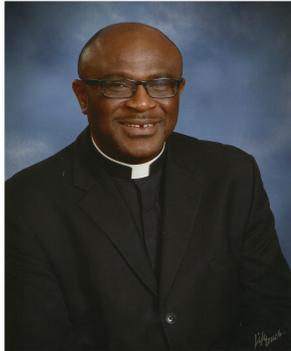


Saint John the Evangelist Eagle

Volume 12 Number 4 December, 2020



From the Pastor's Desk:

Dear Parishioners,

This past week we celebrated Thanksgiving Day. I did pray for you all in a very special way and I implored the Lord to enable us to see that in spite of how the COVID 19 might have hampered our ability to gather together with family and friends over the period, yet there are so many other things for which we are thankful. Let us thank God for our faith, hope and love. I encourage all to stay positive and take the ultimate care as we move forward towards the end of the year. My thoughts and prayers are with all who have been so directly impacted

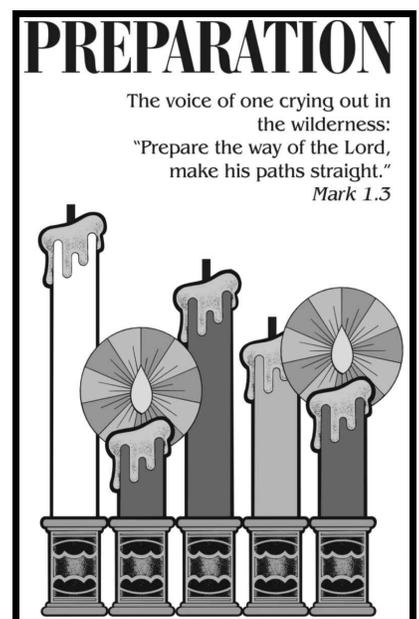
by this pandemic and I pray especially for recovery for all who are sick. I believe that this too shall come to pass and we will come rejoicing unto the house of the Lord.

I wish to use this medium to convey the appreciation of the parish to some individuals who have served us in various capacities over the years and have now decided to retire for others to pick up the baton. Richard and Nancy Kirmer have worked as our janitors for several years and retired in the first week of September. Also Judy Spangler have served as Director of the RCIA since I arrived this parish more than seven years ago, and she has felt called to other ministries and so has retired from the RCIA effective in November. We are looking for a new Director of RCIA now, if anyone feels called to this ministry do not hesitate to speak with me. Thank you very much Judy Spangler, Dick and Nancy Kirmer for your services to our parish. We wish you God's abundant blessing.

We find ourselves at the beginning of yet another liturgical year in the Church, beginning with Advent this Sunday. Advent is a season during which we prepare for Christmas. I encourage everyone to embrace the spirit of the season which includes prayer, diligence and joyful sharing. Remember that JESUS is the Reason for the Season. Unfortunately we have had to cancel a scheduled Advent Mission as a result of the uptick of COVID 19 cases in our city. Also we will not be able to have our usual Advent Communal Penance Service because of the health concerns. However I am available for reconciliation every Saturday 4:00 to 4:45pm and also on demand through the period of Advent. We will make a very strong effort to accommodate as many requests as possible for reconciliation during this period.

The challenge presented to us by the pandemic has been an enormous one, yet parishioners have continued to defy the situation and have been supporting parish ministries generously. Most have continued to participate in Masses (weekday or weekend) and helping in any liturgical ministry we have asked you to serve. I am thankful for that. Your generosity has been outstanding and your unalloyed support for parish programs exceptional. Thank you all very much. We are in the process of collecting money and goods to enable us keep our obligation to the needy families in our community this Christmas, and we know we can count on you to make it happen. Donate to the Christmas food basket today.

God bless you all, Fr. Anselm Eke, MSP Your Pastor



Altar Society Report

Submitted by Loretta Kinman

The ladies of the Altar Society have not gathered recently due to covid and cancelled the annual cinnamon roll baking as well. Instead a 'Bakeless' Bake Sale was held. So far, \$813 has been donated. Thanks so much! This money will go to help with the expense of candles, wine, and altar bread for the church.

Outreach Committee Report

Submitted by Jan Morgenstern

The Memorial Prayer Service was held Sunday Nov. 1 at St John's church. Seventeen deceased members of St. Ann's and St. John's parishes were remembered in the service. A reception was held for their families in the parish center afterward. We continue to hold these families and their loved ones in our prayers during this month of November. Those remembered were Melvin Polzin, Joyce White, Helen Stos, Sharon Schneider, Teresa Jilg, Ervin Schneider, Marcella Maneth, Bernard Mauler Jr., Robert Glynn, Jerry Morgenstern, John Martin, Randy Dumler, Kevin Urban, Ruth Lake, Teresa Hochstatter, Yvonne Palmer, and Bernard Demel.

Plans are in progress for the Christmas food basket project. Celeste Meitner is in charge for our parish again this year. The baskets will be put together on Monday Dec. 14 at 6:00 and will be given out on Thursday Dec. 17 at the parish center. Donations of non-perishable food items as well as monetary donations are being accepted. The churches of Hoisington along with the Hoisington Food Bank work together each year on the baskets. If you know of a family in need from the community, please call the office and we will get an application to them. Applications are also available at the City Office, Chamber of Commerce and the Food Bank.

Thank you to Kathy McGinnis who has volunteered to serve on the Outreach Committee. Anyone who would like to serve on the committee or learn more about it can call Jan Morgenstern 793-2824 or the parish office.

"Give thanks to the Lord, who is good, whose love endures forever." ~ Psalm 118:1

"Good News Corner"

Welcome to our recently registered new parishioners:

* Travis and Shelli Schmidt and daughters, Madison, McKenna, Marissa, and Taylor

* Luke and Joslyn Keener



R.C.I.A. Report

"Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults"

Submitted by Judy Spangler

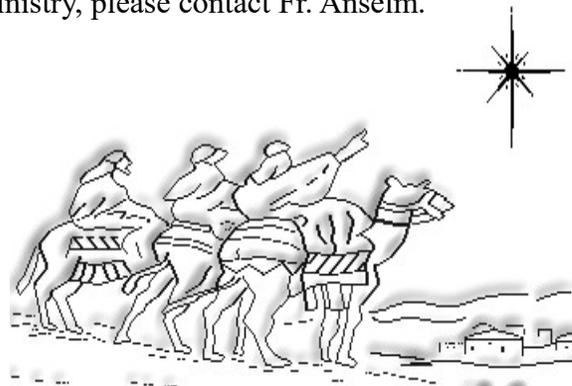
It is with a divided heart that I am stepping down as RCIA Director for St. John's parish. RCIA is not simply a course on Catholicism, it is a journey of conversion, discovery, and faith. It has been a privilege and a blessing to have journeyed with so many spirit and faith-filled people on this path to becoming Catholic. I have truly been blessed beyond measure! Thank you to the many folks who shared their giftedness and faith as a fellow team member, catechist, sponsor, dismissal leader, music ministry, and parish support person!

Also, a special thanks to Fr. Anselm for his support, encouragement, and as main-celebrant of the Rites and Sacraments.

I will hold in my heart many special memories of this beautiful, essential part of our Church.

In Christ's love, Judy Spangler

NOTE: If you would like to inquire about serving as RCIA Director or information about this ministry, please contact Fr. Anselm.



Finance Council Report

Submitted by Lois McLeland

The Finance Council met on Nov. 17. The members present were Father Eke, Debbie Finn, Lois McLeland, Alan Hoffman, Mike Riese, and Loretta Kinman. The members absent were Gene Mooney and Jim Blackwell. The meeting opened with prayer. The meeting minutes from September and the financial reports were approved.

There have been several members of our parish who have or have had covid-19. Father Eke led us in prayer for our parishioners and everyone that is fighting covid-19.

New Christmas Decoration: Due to covid, the ladies on the committee tasked with new Christmas decorations have not met. It was decided the garland really needed to be replaced. We purchased enough garland and lights for the choir loft as well as swags for the windows.

Upper Church Windows: Hoefer Custom Stained Glass Company started work on the circular and smaller round top framed windows on the church on Nov. 17. This project was approved by the Bishop. The cost will be \$24,150.00 and we have already paid \$12,075.00. Donations received in the special collection envelopes have totaled \$4,975.00 to date! Thanks for your generosity!

Refinishing Church Steps: We will wait until spring to do this project. Bob Schnieder has agreed to help the men from our parish with this work.

Paycheck Protection Program (PPP): It was reported that the PPP money has all been spent and Austin from Adams, Brown, Beran & Ball will help fill out the loan forgiveness form.

Parish Advent Mission: Due to the pandemic, we have decided to cancel the scheduled Advent Mission by Fr. Simeon Gallagher.

Janitors: Janet and Duane Koester are doing a great job cleaning the church but decided they did not want to clean the parish center. Loretta and Keith Kinman will do this.

Covid-19 Protocols: We had stopped fogging the church for several weeks, but with the uptick in covid cases, we decided to resume the fogging.

This means the missals are moved to the vestibule so they are not damaged by the fog. Father mentioned more people have been coming to Mass. Father has helped people find places to sit at times and he's been impressed that some people will get up and move to a small pew to provide room for larger families. This is appreciated! Also, the parish center will be fogged on Thursdays, after the religious ed classes.

"Giving Tuesday": The Diocese is promoting the Giving Tuesday event with the "iGiveCatholic" program. Our parish is registered for this. People can go to the Diocesan website to participate. We will find out the date and announce it in the bulletin.

Our next meeting will be in late February. We closed the meeting with prayer.

Sacramental Celebrations

Baptism:

Nov. 7 - Taylor LeAnne Schmidt, daughter of Travis and Shelli (Stoss) Schmidt

Wedding:

Oct. 24 - Luke Keener and Joslyn Stum

Knights of Columbus Report

Submitted by Dan Esfeld

The November Family of the month is John and Michelle Moshier and Knight of the month is Alan Hoffman. The tootsie roll drive was about the same as last year and they donated \$430 to "The Storm" special Olympics team. The annual Memorial Mass was Nov. 22. The turkey dinner was also Nov. 22 with limited in-house seating and drive-thru service available. The annual community breakfast served about 55 people. On Nov. 30 the Knights will pack Christmas goodie bags for the religion classes, which will be handed out on Dec. 2. The Council decided to keep events going with encouragement of mask wearing and social distancing.

Pastoral Council Report

Submitted by Linda Moeder

The Pastoral Council met on Nov. 19. Members present were Richard Neidhart, Neil Ochs, Judy Spangler, Dan Esfeld, Steve Debes, Linda Moeder, and Father Anselm Eke. The meeting was opened with prayer and the minutes from the September meeting were read and approved.

Health of parishioners: We prayed one Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be for the intention of those sick and those caring for the sick. Father asked for parishioners to let him (or the office) know when someone is sick so that we can pray and offer help to those suffering from covid-19.

Protocol at Mass during covid-19:

What are we doing at this time: we had stopped fogging the church with disinfectant when we put the missals back in the pews (for 2 weeks only). Now that covid-19 is increasing in the community, we have started fogging again, as of Nov. 14-15. We can use the missals but they must be picked up from the vestibule when entering the church, and returned there after Mass. This is to prevent the missals from being damaged from the moisture of fogging. We continue to use social distancing and encourage the wearing of masks to minimize the spread of infection. The Mass attendance on Saturday evening has been not too crowded and attendance on Sunday morning has been more, sometimes a bit 'crowded'. The balcony is available for additional seating as needed. There were no suggestions for any changes.

Advent: (*The new Church year and the liturgical season of Advent starts Nov. 29*).

Penance Service: there will be no communal penance service in the diocese this Advent due to the increasing numbers of infection of covid-19. Everyone is encouraged to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) before Christmas. Father is available at the 'old usual' time of Saturday afternoon before Mass (4:15 – 4:45). He is also available after the weekday Masses and by appointment. Father encourages us all to take the time to spiritually prepare for Christmas.

Mission: the Advent parish mission is cancelled. There is still a mission scheduled for Lent in mid-March.

Christmas / New Year Schedule: Although the obligation to attend Mass is still suspended, Father thinks that most people won't think that a weekday Mass will suffice for a Christmas celebration. It is difficult to determine if extended family will be visiting during the December holidays considering the pandemic restrictions and precautions. He is trying to decide if an additional Mass on Christmas Eve might be needed so that the church is not too crowded to maintain the necessary social distancing. (Christmas falls on a Friday this year). Father is debating the usual Christmas Eve schedule of 5 pm in Hoisington and 7 pm in Olmitz, **OR IF** an additional Mass is scheduled, the schedule might be 4 pm in Hoisington, 5:30 or 6 pm in Olmitz, and then 8 pm again in Hoisington. Christmas Day Masses will remain the same as Sunday schedule. Father would appreciate any feedback that parishioners might be willing to share about their family celebration and / or travel plans.

Committee reports were given. No new business was brought up. The next meeting date will be late February or early March. The meeting was closed with prayer.



Religious Ed. Committee Report

Submitted by Rose Debes, DRE

While the start to this year has looked different, it has been going well. Our sacrament preparation classes have been meeting weekly, and the other grade levels have been meeting on rotating weeks.

Our annual food collection night had to be cancelled due to health concerns. Instead we will collect donations before and after Masses on the weekend of Nov. 21-22. We are also collecting donations in the parish office.

Our poinsettia sales were very successful this year. In addition to our normal sales, we were also able to purchase enough poinsettias to give one to each resident at Country Place Senior Living, as well as a couple larger ones for their main hall. Along with the poinsettias, our high school students made Christmas cards and painted wooden ornaments for each resident. Thank you to everyone who adopted residents and are helping to spread some extra Christmas cheer!

Knights of Columbus are donating Christmas goodie bags to our students. They will be distributed to all students attending class on Dec. 2nd. Students may take home additional bags for their siblings enrolled in CCD/CYO who are not present that week. We will keep the extras at the parish center to distribute them to remaining students as they attend classes in future weeks. Thank you to the Knights for helping our youth celebrate and enjoy the Christmas season!

Since many students are not meeting every week this year, we are encouraging families to listen to a podcast called “Creed” put out through Catholic Sprouts. It is a series of short podcasts discussing our Catholic beliefs as expressed in the Nicene Creed. They also highlight a number of Saints and tell their stories. We have a parish subscription, so it is free to all parishioners! If you would like to have access to this, please contact Rose Debes by calling the parish office or emailing to stjohndre544@gmail.com

No Relief

By Br. Hyacinth Grubb, O.P.

www.DominicanaJournal.org

It doesn't let up. There is no relief. God doesn't give us relief. God doesn't give us relief, because he wants to give us healing, which is a very different thing. We suffer from so much pain in our lives—from broken relationships, or the suffering of illness, or the injustices heaped upon us, or simply the wounds of our own sin. Most of the time, we just want that suffering to be gone. We want relief. We want to go back to the time before that relationship broke, before that illness overtook us, before we were unjustly wronged, before we failed our God.

But the Lord doesn't want to take us back. He wants to take us forward. He wants to heal us. He wants to show us a much greater mercy and love than we might desire, we who pine after the way things once were.

It has always been this way, since the very beginning. After Adam and Eve fell from grace and were expelled from the Garden, surely they looked back with yearning, longing to return. But the Lord had a greater plan, a plan to give them and all of humanity healing. It was a plan that would stretch over centuries and millennia, a plan that would reach its climax when he came down from heaven and became a man himself. It was a plan that would heal the suffering of the First Adam by the suffering of the Second Adam, and it is a plan that even continues until today, encompassing our own lives, and our own suffering.

The Lord's plan to heal is filled with the infinite mercy of an infinitely loving God. But it is not simple, and not simply relief. No, God wants to walk with us down the long and arduous path to true healing. And when we arrive, we will not be the same as before. We will be better.

But for now, we take one step at a time down the difficult and yet wonderful way that God has given us, confident that our Father in heaven knows how to give good things to his children. And let us always pray for the strength to accept healing, and the wisdom to leave behind our wish for relief.





Birthday Celebrations

DECEMBER

Michelle Hitschmann...1st
 Bernard Wondra.....1st
 Ginny Axman.....2nd
 Gene Mooney.....2nd
 Corrine Boor3rd
 Christie Brungardt...3rd
 Gladys Byers.....4th
 Kurt Williams.....4th
 Doug Dolechek.....5th
 Tracey Knapp.....6th
 Michael Davis.....7th
 Derrick Kaiser.....7th
 Maleigha Schmidt...7th
 Tyann Schremmer....7th
 Taylor Boxberger.....8th
 Dennis Trapp.....8th
 Michael Aylward.....9th
 Shayla Cook.....9th
 Mark Crawford.....10th
 Luke Keener.....10th
 Rita Bailey.....11th
 Melissa Davis.....11th
 Nicole Staudinger...11th
 Marlene Cook.....12th
 Linda Rubio.....12th
 James Wright.....12th
 Miranda Shives.....13th
 Robert Conrad.....15th
 Paul Rziha.....15th
 Annalise Detter.....16th
 Sandrik Williams...17th
 Kira Cook.....18th
 Curtis Cramer.....19th
 Mayci Gruis.....19th
 Mary Dumler.....20th
 Trent Schremmer...20th
 Nolan McCurry.....21st
 Nicolas Rubio.....21st
 Carson Hoffman.....22nd
 Barbara Springer...22nd
 Alan Charles.....24th
 Rafael Ecot.....24th
 Amy Finger.....24th

Landon Harmon.....24th
 Celeste Meitner.....24th
 Jason Robinson.....24th
 Janelle Lang.....25th
 David McLeland.....25th
 Preston Merlau.....25th
 Dayton Nett.....25th
 Elizabeth Klima.....26th
 Samantha Merlau...27th
 Leon Klug.....28th
 Donna Nett.....28th
 Blake Reeves.....28th
 Robert Finger.....29th
 Ben Brewer.....30th
 Giovanni Gonzalez..30th
 Kameron Schneweis.30th
 Mary Beth Higgins..31st
 Kathy Hitschmann...31st
 Tim Schremmer.....31st

JANUARY

Jakob Breit.....1st
 Jon Lange.....2nd
 Elizabeth Gruis.....3rd
 Cheryl Schremmer...3rd
 Emaline Debes.....4th
 Curtis Hitschmann...4th
 Patrick Kephart.....4th
 Ambrose Demel.....5th
 Cameron Knapp.....6th
 Renita Schremmer...6th
 Ally Beck.....8th
 Elliott Burton.....8th
 Grant Burton.....8th
 Delores Kaiser.....8th
 Anita Meade.....8th
 Clair Birzer.....9th
 Josh Debes.....9th
 Danny Dolechek.....9th
 Patricia Radke.....13th
 Andrew Debes.....15th
 Jason Ingram.....15th
 Linda Linsner.....15th
 Michael Demel.....17th
 John Crawford.....18th
 Kade Cook.....19th

Chris Beck.....22nd
 Kayla Reeves.....22nd
 Tyler Reeves.....22nd
 Khloe Schneweis....22nd
 Nolan Wilborn.....22nd
 Brian Wilborn.....24th
 Cindy Wilborn.....25th
 Sharon Dreiling.....26th
 Jim Steiner.....26th
 James Farmer.....28th
 Rich Koester.....28th
 Duane Koester.....29th
 McKenna Schmidt..29th
 Celine Wright.....29th
 John Yanda.....29th
 Maria Zamarripa....29th
 Leonard Rziha.....30th
 Brandon Schremmer.30th
 Thomas Urban.....30th
 Patty Quade.....31st

FEBRUARY

Cole Birzer.....2nd
 Steffan Dolechek....2nd
 Loretta Finger.....2nd
 Janet Koester.....2nd
 James Springer.....2nd
 Dustin Colston.....3rd
 Jacquelyn Gonzalez..3rd
 Lauklynn Williams ...3rd
 Johnathan Gonzalez..4th
 Nancy Crawford.....5th
 Herman Schneweis...5th
 M.J. Aylward.....6th
 Starla Bieberle.....6th
 Bill Luebbers.....7th
 Duane Stout.....7th
 Alexander Mooney...8th
 Adaline Ochs.....9th
 Alexis Rubio.....9th
 Reece Aylward.....10th
 Bridgett Schneweis..10th
 Barbara Polzin.....11th
 David Byers.....12th
 Karley Zecha.....12th
 Evan Merlau.....13th

John Staudinger.....13th
 Tyson Beck.....14th
 Randy Polzin.....14th
 Kody Cook.....15th
 Jeannie Hein.....15th
 Lori Lane.....15th
 Duane Polzin.....15th
 Michael Riese.....15th
 Wally Schneweis....15th
 Peyton Kinman.....16th
 Bob Morgenstern...16th
 Elaine Yanda.....16th
 Della Boxberger.....17th
 Curt Colson.....17th
 Rick Crawford.....17th
 Dan Schmidt.....17th
 James Sekavec.....17th
 Teresa Doze.....19th
 Ronald Schremmer..20th
 Hayden Beck.....21st
 Connor Boor.....21st
 Kylie Crawford.....21st
 Aydan Davis.....21st
 Thomas Demel.....21st
 Caleb Birzer.....23rd
 Emily Zorn.....23rd
 Brady Reif.....24th
 Livvy Brewer.....25th
 Alan Hoffman.....25th
 Brooke Koester.....25th
 Krista Brewer.....26th
 Corinna Demel.....26th
 Greg Willis.....26th
 Grant Dolechek.....27th
 Becky Luebbers.....28th
 Joan Rziha.....28th
 Bonnie Schremmer...29th

