

# THE GOOD NEWS LETTER

## NOVEMBER 20, 2020



### FROM THE PEN OF THE PASTOR:

With the coming again of our king, Jesus Christ, this Advent and Christmas season, I hope we take this time of preparation and celebration to reflect in thanksgiving the gift of our faith, family, and Church over this past year. I hope and pray that we as a faith family continue to come together united by our love of Jesus Christ and to look forward to a beautiful and joyful year of receiving and sharing the Gospel of the Lord with all that we meet. As part of that, we must reflect on this past year and the joys, successes, and difficulties that we encountered with Christ and each other. Hopefully, we can learn something new about ourselves and how Jesus was with us in so many ways this past year and that He will continue to do so in the new year to come—that He is in fact our real Emmanuel.

As part of this process, we'll have opportunities for reconciliation, service, reflection, and new and old devotions over December and January to encourage us and get 2021 moving in the right direction in building up the kingdom of God in our lives and the lives of others. I am thankful for the opportunity to have started my first pastorate with all of you and looking forward to serving all of you in 2021. Please know of my prayers for you all this Advent and Christmas season, and whatever myself and our staff and volunteers can do to help with your spiritual growth and faith journey this year, we'll do our best to do so guided by the Holy Spirit and through the intercession of the saints, especially our most Holy Mother Mary and her son Jesus Christ.

In Christ, Fr. Hurley

### JOIN US WEEKDAYS

For those who are missing Jesus in the Sacraments by not feeling comfortable to attend weekend Mass, we offer a special invitation to attend a weekday Mass. While dispensation is extended for Sunday obligation, a weekday Mass might be a good alternative. There are a lot less people in attendance, but you can still receive Jesus in the Eucharist. Give it a try, we welcome you back!

**Mondays 10am at St. John's**

**Wednesdays 12noon at St. John's**

**Thursdays 5:30pm at St. Mary's**

**Fridays 9am at Holy Family**



"When you sit down to eat, pray. When you eat bread, do so thanking Him for being so generous to you. If you drink wine, be mindful of Him who has given it to you for your pleasure and as a relief in sickness. When you dress, thank Him for His kindness in providing you with clothes. When you look at the sky and the beauty of the stars, throw yourself at God's feet and adore Him who in His wisdom has arranged things in this way. Similarly, when the sun goes down and when it rises, when you are asleep or awake, give thanks to God, who created and arranged all things for your benefit, to have you know, love and praise their Creator."

— St. Basil the Great



## THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS

We wish to thank our many volunteers at St. Mary's and St. John's who especially this year have helped in so many ways to keep our faith at the forefront.

For those who helped with Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter;

For those who helped with the reopening and the ongoing cleaning to keep us open and safe;

For those who help routinely with grounds care and maintenance;

For those who help with liturgy, including music, lectors, and sacristy help;

For those who help monthly with this newsletter;

For those who help keep our New-to-You Shop open for business;

For those who help with religious education of our youth and with adult formation;

For those who have helped keep our parishes operating with your financial support and generosity;

For our parish staff and council members and new pastor;

And, finally for each and every one of us that live our faith and share our faith.

**THANK YOU** one and all as it takes each of us to make a difference in our lives, our faith communities, and the lives of those around us.

## GIVING & LIVING THANKS

Although Thanksgiving is a national holiday, it certainly echoes the basic orientation of our Christian faith. As we celebrate Thanksgiving this year, let us not only thank God for the abundance of goods and freedoms we share as citizens, but also for the gift of God's abiding presence in our lives.

We celebrate Thanksgiving as Christians and as citizens. As we remember all the blessings that come from our faith and from our citizenship, we give thanks and dedicate ourselves to the responsible use of all our gifts to do God's will. Thank you, Lord!

"You never go away from us, yet we have difficulty in returning to You. Come, Lord, stir us up and call us back. Kindle and seize us. Be our fire and our sweetness. Let us love. Let us run."

— St. Augustine



## The Lord's Day Weekend Mass Schedule:

Saturday Vigil Mass 5:00pm at St. Mary's, Dunkirk

Sunday Mass 9:00am at St. John's, Hartford City

Sunday Mass 11:00am at Holy Family, Gas City

Please continue to pray for our diocesan leadership, our priests, and each of us as parishioners as we embark on this Uniting in Heart 2030 Pastorate Plan. May we truly unite in hearts to be missionary disciples to share the Gospels and the love of Christ Jesus.

## EXTENDED DISPENSATION

The Bishops across all five Indiana dioceses have extended the dispensation from the obligation of in-person Sunday Mass attendance until further notice.

It is important to consider the following when making the decision to attend Mass at your local parish:

- Am I well and currently experiencing no symptoms of my own?
- Am I considered to be in an at-risk group? Or caring for someone who is?
- Am I able to comply with all of the necessary diocesan safety protocols in place for my parish?

**"I expect the people of our diocese to continue to keep the Lord's Day holy,"** said Bishop Doherty. **"To be dispensed from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass does not mean people should stay away from the Church. I continue to invite each of you prayerfully consider attending Mass to fully experience the gift that Jesus gives us in the Eucharist and so you may share in the spiritual gifts of the Church with your parish family,"** he explained.

## **MOTHER MARY, OUR CONSOLATION, STRENGTH AND HOPE**

“At this time when so many families are separated or forced to emigrate, when so many are suffering due to poverty, corruption, domestic violence, drug trafficking, the crisis of values and increased crime, we come to Mary in search of consolation, strength and hope. She is the Mother of the true God, who invites us to stay with faith and charity beneath her mantle, so as to overcome in this way all evil and to establish a more just and fraternal society.”

--Pope Benedict XVI

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## **WEBSITE AND ONLINE GIVING**

Our new pastorate website is designed and ready to go. We are awaiting approval on a domain name so watch the bulletin for the website address. This new design will cover our pastorate, but each parish will have its own identity.

A new and exciting feature will be the option for online giving. Donations for all our parish envelope options will be available and these will be deposited and posted separately for each of our parishes, so your contributions will stay with your home parish.

There have been a lot of new changes this year and we will work forward together. If you have issues and/or suggestions for improvement, please contact Diana.

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## **ONE CALL NOW...DID YOU GET OUR MESSAGE?**

Our phone tree calling service, *One Call Now*, is set and in service. We have made some test calls and if you haven't already, you will soon be getting a message from Fr. Hurley through this new system. If a message does not reach you this week or next, it may be because we do not have a current number for you or you may not be in our system for whatever reason. If this is the case, please do not hesitate to contact Diana in the office, 348-3889, to help us update our records that you may be included in our communications. Thank you for your patience with all these changes as we grow our new pastorate and advance over these hurdles together.



By Father Joshua Janko

Our diocese spent many years preparing for Uniting in Heart which stemmed from the Holy Spirit guiding us in preparation for the future. I recall some of those early meetings and brainstorming sessions filled with curiosity, questions, and anticipation. As Uniting in Heart 2030 is now being implemented, there will be growing pains, but I believe these will not compare with the blessings that are already present and all the blessings that are to come. Please be assured of my prayers for our diocese in this time of transition. The Holy Spirit is active in each of us, and most especially when we surrender and trust.

The pillars of Uniting in Heart include “Mission,” “Community,” and “Witness.” In my own calling to military service, I see our diocese as sharing one of her priests (me) for a special mission to serve our nation’s military members (some of whom are from our own diocese and our own parishes). In my current role, I serve as a missionary priest chaplain from our diocese to our great nation the United States of America and in particular to the United States Air Force. In my Air Force service, I am also afforded opportunities to aid even more folks who serve in the other branches of our military including the Army, the Navy, the Marines, the Coast Guard, and now the Space Force.

Our diocese remains a family to me. I have been part of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana since 1982 when I moved to Indiana. You all remain for me an incredible source of inspiration, support, and connection to our local Church. The pillar of our diocesan plan “Witness” has also played a role in my current ministry particularly because I work alongside other chaplains of other faith groups getting to witness our beautiful Catholic faith. Besides providing spiritual support to Catholic Christians, I am also able to work with my chapel team members to help provide first amendment rights to all our military members and their families no matter what faith or religion they might be practicing. I am given ample opportunities in my role to share the Gospel and the saving message of Jesus Christ. Celebrating the sacraments remains for me my number one priority and blessing in my life. In my vocation and ministry as a chaplain, I am building community and bringing God’s peace to all the people I serve. Thank you, my diocesan family, for your unwavering support and prayers. You all remain in my prayers as well.

Father Janko is a diocesan priest currently serving in Guam as an U.S. Air Force military chaplain.

## MONTHLY CHALLENGE BY K OF C

**NOVEMBER CHALLENGE** by Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori:

“Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.” (Gospel for Nov. 22, Mt 25:40)

St. Teresa of Calcutta observed that in the poor we can see Christ in a distressing disguise. Quite frankly, it can be difficult to see Christ in some of those who suffer. But we, by virtue of our baptism, are Christians on a mission: We are called not to ignore those who suffer, but to attend to their physical and spiritual needs. May we strive to recognize the face of Christ — however obscured it may seem — in the faces of the poor and suffering around us and respond to them with Christ’s love and compassion.

**Challenge by Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori:**

This month, I challenge you to find a way to directly serve the poor, the sick, the needy or the imprisoned in some way, such as by serving in a soup kitchen. Second, I challenge you to join with your brother Knights to help feed the hungry in your midst.

**Questions for Reflection:**

Why is it so difficult at times to see Christ in every human person? What obstacles exist in your life that prevent you from being more aware and attentive to the serious needs of others? How can serving others help you see Christ in them?

--KofC.org

## LITURGICAL MINISTERS FOR DECEMBER—ST. MARY'S

**Dec. 6:** **Reader:** Ted Kolodka **Greeter:** Colleen Bicknell **Counter:** Danette Hamilton

**Dec. 8:** **Reader:** Dan Watson **Greeter:** Jane Crouch **Counter:** Dan Watson

**Dec. 13:** **Reader:** Laverne Watson **Greeter:** Colleen Bicknell **Counter:** Jane Crouch

**Dec. 20:** **Reader:** Ted Kolodka **Greeter:** Jane Crouch **Counter:** Dan Watson

**Dec. 24:** **Reader:** Dan Watson **Greeter:** Colleen Bicknell **Counter:** Jane Crouch

**Dec. 27:** **Reader:** Laverne Watson **Greeter:** Jane Crouch **Counter:** Dan Watson

## LITURGICAL MINISTERS FOR DECEMBER—ST. JOHN'S

**Sunday 9:00 am Reader & Announcements:** Claire Aulbach Dec. 6, 8, 13, Vince Cimino Dec. 20, 24, 27, Jan. 1



## CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

### ANNIVERSARIES:

#### December

20 John & Karen Shields

29 Rich & Karen Uggen

#### January

None

### BIRTHDAYS:

#### December

3 Becky Cain

5 Ted Fettig

5 Rich Uggen

6 Jacob Holsten

12 Rose Stroup

16 Tom Aulbach

23 Kyle Holsten

25 Brian Kitterman

27 Amy Hardesty

#### January

8 Ammee Uggen

10 Adam Aulbach

21 Linda Trant

23 Jerry Trant

25 Bernadette Elkins

29 Jessica Kitterman

If you would like to be included in the birthday and anniversary listings, please drop us a note. We would be happy to share it through *The Good News Letter*.

## ADVENT RECONCILIATION OPPORTUNITIES

As with all things looking different this year, we will not have a standard penance service for Advent with extra priests traveling in for confessions. But, Fr. Hurley will have extra reconciliation times each Wednesday evening from 6-7pm on December 2, 9, and 16, along with the weekly regular times.

Please, especially this year, make use of this sacrament and receive Jesus' healing graces through confession, penance and forgiveness.

**Wednesday, December 2, 6-7pm at St. John's**

**Wednesday, December 9, 6-7pm at Holy Family**

**Wednesday, December 16, 6-7pm at St. John's**

Each Thursday 5-5:25pm at St. Mary's

Each Saturday 3-4pm at St. John's

Each Friday 8:30-8:55am and Sunday 12noon-1pm at Holy Family

The above listed times are tentative end times as Fr. Hurley will stay past the end time listed until all confessions are completed.



## JESSE TREE AT ST. JOHN'S

In some ways this year has passed by slowly, in some ways it has flown. Here it is Advent again...a new beginning maybe. This year we will continue our annual Advent tree program. We will once again ask everyone to take as many tags from the tree as you like. Please return the tags with the items unwrapped and it place under the tree. Everything we collect will be taken to the head nurse at the BJSHS to be distributed to all the public schools in our county.

The tags this year have been edited to include needed items due to the pandemic, including disposable masks and hand sanitizer. Because there is no way to sterilize items, everything needs to be single use, disposable or sample/travel size. The snacks should be individually wrapped and have some nutritional value, not cookies or candy. St. John's parishioners are always very generous and we ask everyone to continue in assisting our school children. Thank you for making this ministry possible.



## RECEIVING ADVENT

By: Thomas McGrath; through [loyolapress.com](http://loyolapress.com)

One year during Advent, our parish priest invited us to write down on a slip of paper a word that named something that is keeping us from getting closer to God. He suggested it might be a fear, a resentment, or an attitude that shuts us off from the love God so wants to give. We were to fold the paper over a few times, grasp it tightly in one hand, and make a fist around it while he began to preach on the Scripture readings.



After a minute, my hand began to ache. At two minutes, my hand grew numb. At three minutes, the hand started shaking uncontrollably. He told us to open our hands. I found how hard it was to do that. After grasping the piece of paper so tightly, my hand had stiffened and seemed to have a mind of its own. I can't remember what else he said that day, but I have never forgotten that lesson. Hold on to a resentment, fear, or bad attitude long enough and you will become paralyzed.

As I begin Advent every year now, I start with the realization that I need to let go of any and all spiritual impediments I'm hanging onto. Advent is a time of receiving. It's hard to receive if your hands are clasped shut. So, I begin Advent once again with this prayer: **Holy Spirit of God, open my hands, my eyes, my ears, all my senses, and all of my heart so I will be ready to receive your Advent blessings.**

And then I sit there in the Advent darkness, my hands open before me, waiting on God.

**“Catholic Christians are called to proclaim joyfully and with hope, by words and deeds, the treasure of our ever-ancient faith in Christ.”**

--Alan Schreck, Catholic & Christian  
From Dynamic Catholic



## **ADVENT: THE SEASON OF "YES"**

When Mary said “Yes” to God, Christmas became possible. She agreed to bear Jesus in her womb. During Advent, each one of us needs to be able to say our own “Yes” to God as we prepare to celebrate Christmas—and bear Jesus in our hearts.

### **YES OF MARY and TO WHAT HAS BEEN:**

When we say “yes,” God is most often inviting us to what is already within our capacity—inviting us to see our ordinary roles as sacred. Like Mary, can we accept the deepening of the lives that we have already been given? Can we say “yes” and let life be sacred?

Today, think about some common feelings that distract you in your encounters. Maybe it is fear that you can’t do something or anger that you feel you must. Maybe it is resentment that another needs you or guilt that you do not want to be needed. As you go about your day, notice these feelings and then practice your way back to what is actually at hand. At the end of the day, ask yourself, “When I was present today, what happened?”

Advent is a time for us to acknowledge that Christ came to save us, and he did just that by his dying and rising.

### **YES OF JOSEPH and TO WHAT IS:**

When Joseph said “yes,” he accepted the promise that Mary saw and affirmed that he would pursue it with her. He took part in God’s hope for his life but also relied on the faith of Mary’s hope.

On whom do you rely to see what is possible? Whose “yes” impacts your own?

Joseph’s “yes” reminds us to partner with one another. When he agrees to continue with their

marriage, he acts not only with trust in God, but also in Mary. Today, look for ways that you can partner with your loved ones. Look for ways you can trust them and act upon that trust. How does working in tandem affect your relationship with that person? How does it affect your understanding of God?

Advent prepares us to celebrate the presence of God in our lives and in the lives of other people, especially our loved ones and the poor.

### **YES OF US and TO WHATEVER WILL BE:**

Like the expectant Mary and Joseph, we all have a piece of God to bring into this world. How do we audaciously trust that we have a “yes” to issue as well?

Christ was born unto *us*. What does this mean? As we look for our place in the manger scene, we will ready ourselves to respond more deeply to it.

Think of an area that is not your strength. Choose something that is difficult for you but imagine it as doable. Imagine that it is an invitation to which you can respond, “Yes!”

At the end of the day, look back on the activity and your response to it. What was your experience? How can this experience impact your faith? What is doable in your life because of your faith?

As we yearn for the full coming of the kingdom of God, our desire for the coming of Christ gets renewed in Advent.

(Excerpted from [loyolapress.com](http://loyolapress.com) and [AllSaintsPress.com](http://AllSaintsPress.com))

New Date and Reduced Price!  
Thursday, December 17, 2020  
\$30, includes lunch

*Advent Day of Reflection*

REGISTER ONLINE AT  
[STJOSEPHRETREAT.ORG](http://STJOSEPHRETREAT.ORG)

SAINT JOSEPH  
RETREAT & CONFERENCE CENTER  
A MINISTRY OF THE DIOCESE OF EVANETTE IN INDIANA

## "THROUGH THE CHURCH YEAR"

### Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

This feast was instituted in 1925 during a period in which certain secular rulers were launching dictatorial regimes that would soon become diabolical vehicles of hatred and destruction. Through this feast, Pope Pius XI anted to reassert the ultimate, universal sovereignty of Jesus Christ and his law of truth and love.

This day is also a "feast of hope." Jesus, our Lord and King, is now "in the glory of God the Father"—he sits forever in victorious triumph at the right hand of God. He has overcome evil, sin, and death. In glory he has not abandoned us, but is our great Advocate and High Priest—ever interceding for us with the Father.

Christ's sovereignty will be definitively established one day and all people will be subjected to his most gentle rule, which will last forever. Until that day comes, we must be faithful and wait for him with hope.

--loyolapress.com

## KNIGHTS FOUNDER BEATIFIED

During a special Mass on October 31, 2020, Fr. Michael McGivney, founder of the Knights of Columbus, was beatified. He now awaits canonization, needing one more confirmed miracle attributed to his intercession. He lived a life of heroic virtue with an extraordinary love of God and neighbor. His feast day is August 13.

Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney Founder of the Knights of Columbus:

*"God, our Father, protector of the poor and defender of the widow and orphan, you called your priest, Blessed Michael McGivney, to be an apostle of Christian family life and to lead the young to the generous service of their neighbor. Through the example of his life and virtue, may we follow your Son, Jesus Christ, more closely, fulfilling his commandment of charity and building up his Body which is the Church. Let the inspiration of your servant prompt us to greater confidence in your love so that we may continue his work of caring for the needy and the outcast. We humbly ask that you glorify Blessed Michael McGivney on earth according to the design of your holy will. Through his intercession, grant the favor I now present (here make your request). Through Christ our Lord. Amen."*



## HEARTS ON FIRE CATHOLIC MINISTRIES APPEAL

The Catholic Ministries Appeal, which replaces Fruitful Harvest Appeal and the annual Seminarian Fund Appeal, is in great need of your help through a pledge.

Even though we have been through a lot this year, our faith is what we rely on to sustain us and carry us through. The local Church, our diocese, cannot operate without your help to bring the needed services to our people and those we connect with through our faith.

Each of your gifts, from the small to the large, matter to the people within the 24 counties in North Central Indiana that make up the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana. How does Jesus light the fire in your heart? There is a good chance that the Catholic Ministries Appeal is supporting something that He has placed on your heart.

For those who have already returned your pledge card, we graciously thank you. A second request letter went out this week to those who have not had the opportunity to make a pledge. We encourage you to prayerfully consider a pledge, no matter the size, to support our diocesan programs. Envelopes and pledge cards are located at each of our church entrances. Thank you for your pledge!

## PEOPLE WITH GOOD NEWS

**Cora Freiburger** was on the A/B honor roll at Montpelier Elementary.

**Jacob Hardesty** was on the all A honor roll at Albany Elementary.

**Ashley Henderson** was on the A/B honor roll at Montpelier Elementary.

**Gavin Kitterman** was on the A/B honor roll at Montpelier Elementary.

**St. Mary, Holy Family and  
St. John the Evangelist Parishes**  
A Pastorate of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana  
209 S. Spring St., Hartford City, IN 47348  
PASTOR - Rev. Kevin Hurley  
Dunkirk: 765.768.1283 Gas City: 765.674.2605  
Hartford City: 765.348.3889 stmaryjohn@att.net

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### **Lord's Day Liturgy**

SATURDAY: 5:00 pm at St. Mary's

SUNDAY: 9:00 am at St. John's

11:00 am at Holy Family

- Weekday Liturgy: Please consult inside the bulletin. -

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: Jan. 22, 2021**

**Editor: Diana Holsten**

## **HOLYDAY & HOLIDAY SCHEDULES**

The next several weeks hold a couple of holydays and holidays. We will have Mass opportunities for these special days as we commemorate and celebrate our faith and families.

**Thanksgiving Mass** will be held at 9am at St. John's

**Immaculate Conception of Mary**, Dec. 8, is a holyday of obligation (dispensation covers Sunday and holyday obligations). Mass will be celebrated as follows:

Vigil Monday, 5:30pm at St. John's  
Holyday, Tuesday, 12noon at St. Mary's  
5:30pm at Holy Family

**Christmas Mass Schedule** is as follows:

Christmas Eve 5pm at St. Mary's  
Christmas Eve 8pm at St. John's  
Christmas Day 9am at Holy Family

**Solemnity of Mary**, January 1, is a holyday of obligation with Mass schedules as follows:

Vigil, Thursday, 5pm at St. Mary's  
7pm at St. John's

Holyday, Friday, 10am at Holy Family

Join us as we give thanks and praise and celebrate each of these special days.



## **YEAR-END GIVING**

As we approach the end of 2020, now may be a good time to reflect back and examine our tithing, not only to our parishes, but to whatever avenues we offer financial and prayerful support.

Although our parish contributions are down this year, other areas are also in great need of our year-end support such as our CMA appeal, Haiti, local contributing avenues as well as at broader organizations.

Won't you please consider a review of your gifts and see what your prayerful consideration leads you to support by year-end? Thank you for your generosity now and always.