



St. Joseph Parish

1709 Wyatt Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481-3615
715-341-1617 www.togetherinfaith.org

December 24, 2017, Volume LIII, No. 52

Mission: Together in faith, we celebrate Christ through prayer and service.



ACTIVITIES FOR DECEMBER 24-31

- Sunday, December 24
 - 4:00 p.m.—Kids' Noel Mass
 - 9:30 p.m.—Prelude Music
 - 10:00 p.m.—Vigil Mass
- Monday, December 25, Christmas
 - 10:30 a.m.—Christmas Mass
- Tuesday, December 26, Parish Office Closed
- Wednesday, December 27, Parish Office Closed
No Religious Ed Programs
- Thursday, December 28, Parish Office Closed
 - 12:00 p.m.—1/7/18 Bulletin Deadline
- Friday, December 29, Parish Office Closed
 - 5:00 p.m.—Wedding Rehearsal
- Saturday, December 30
 - 1:00 p.m.—Wedding

PARISH

SACRAMENTAL LIFE IN THE PARISH MARRIAGE BANNES

III—Jake Congdon & Kerri Ainsworth

Office Closed—The parish office will be closed for the Christmas season from December 25 until 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday January 3.



*Merry Christmas!
God's Blessings and Good Health
to You in the New Year
—The Staff of St. Joseph Parish*

Thank You—St. Joseph Parish wishes to thank Dave Hansen, Co-Chair of our Finance Council. After many years of service, Dave is stepping away from the Finance Council. We truly appreciate all the work he put into serving the parish as well as time and energy he willingly gave us. May God bless you Dave!

Christmas Mass Schedule St. Joseph Parish

12/24, Kids' Noel Mass	4:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve Vigil Mass	10:00 p.m.
12/25, Christmas Day	10:30 a.m.

St. Stephen Parish

12/24, Christmas Eve	5:30 p.m.
12/25, Christmas Day	8:30 a.m.

Mass Schedule Change: Fr. Jerzy and Fr. Lindner will both be away during the week of January 8-12. St. Joseph and St. Stephen Parish will not have morning Mass from January 10 through January 12 and parishioners are asked to attend Mass at Holy Spirit Parish with Fr. Todd during this time. Here is the Mass schedule for that week:

Mon., 1/8	8:00 a.m. Mass	St. Joseph
Tues., 1/9	8:15 a.m. School Mass	St. Stephen
Wed., 1/10	8:15 a.m. Mass	Holy Spirit
Thur., 1/11	8:15 a.m. Mass	Holy Spirit
Fri., 1/12	8:15 a.m. Mass	Holy Spirit

We thank you for your patience during this time.

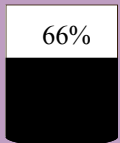
Special Collections 12/18/17

Milk Can Fund	\$26.00
Building Fund	\$210.00
Keeping Our Father's House	\$100.00
Retirement for Religious	\$2,671.00

Envelopes/Basket Summary—12/18/17

Weekly Giving	\$12,139
Weekly Giving Budgeted	\$7,096
Giving to Date	\$163,715
Budgeted to Date	\$177,400

DAA 2018/2018 GOAL	\$50,565
Weekly Pledges Received	\$113
Total Pledges Received	\$33,505
Total Payments Received	\$27,422
Food for Poor Housing Goal	\$3,600
Total Received	\$



Mass Schedule and Intentions

MONDAY, December 25, The Nativity of the Lord
10:30 a.m. †Dora, Ted & Terry Nolan

TUESDAY, December 26, St. Stephen
8:15 a.m. *Mass at St. Stephen Parish*

WEDNESDAY, December 27, St. John
8:00 a.m. †Bill & Georgia Waldherr,
Fr. Jerome Gerum

THURSDAY, December 28, The Holy Innocents
8:00 a.m. *Mass at St. Stephen Parish*

FRIDAY, December 29
8:00 a.m. †Lawrence Ksionsk
The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

SATURDAY, December 30,
4:00 p.m. †Michael Slowinski

SUNDAY, December 31
10:30 a.m. †Sylvester Pliska

Liturgical Ministers for December 30-31**4:00 p.m.—Saturday****Mass Preparation:** Phyllis Ziaya**Altar Servers:** Jim Krueger**Hospitality Ministers:**

Dave Ligman Ron Swenson Virginia Zakoski(w)
Anne Swenson Dale Tetzloff

Readers: Mary Davidson**Eucharistic Ministers:**

Dave Ksionsk Marcia Molner
Lucy Ksionsk Phyllis Ziaya

Gift Card Sellers: Jean and Steve Brazzale**10:30 a.m.—Sunday****Mass Preparation:** Deb Peltier**Altar Servers:** Maddie & Maya Kunze &
Rylan Wuethrich**Hospitality Ministers:**

Rosalie Chojnacki Bev Derezinski Chris Sekerka
Don Dehlinger Mary Iwanowski (w)

Readers: Paul Banz & Michelle Cornell**Eucharistic Ministers:**

M. Cornell Lori Horgan Cindy McCabe
Ally Horgan David Kunze Deb Peltier

Gift Card Sellers: Judy Schiferl

To the families of Richard Kovac, who passed away on November 26 and Peter Kabat, who passed away on December 10. May the Lord hold you in his loving arms during this time of sorrow. Be assured the family of St. Joseph Parish will continue to pray for you.

Meal of Hope—Please note, there will be *no* Meal of Hope at St. Joseph Parish on December 25. St. Joseph Parish Call to Justice Committee is combining with Holy Spirit Parish to provide a Community Christmas Meal on December 25 at Holy Spirit Parish.

Fr. Jerzy will be away the month of January. Please pray for his safe travel and that his time away will be spiritually uplifting. While Fr. Jerzy is away, please contact Fr. Todd Mlsna, 715-252-8157, for emergencies only. Thank you!

Monday Morning 8:00 a.m. Mass will continue at St Joseph Parish through Monday March 26, 2018.

Welcome—Please give a warm welcome to our newest parish members: Robert and Barbara Rogers, and David and Olivia Santangelo. We are so glad you have joined our faith community to celebrate the Eucharist.

School Building Update—Altmann Construction arrived this past Monday to start work on the demolition of the school building. Please use caution around the fenced area between the school and the courtyard during this time. Thank you.

St. Anne's/PCCW—Ladies Group 5 will be responsible for the month of January. These ladies are asked to help with any funeral dinners.

Kathryn Bemowski Linda Losinski
Cynthia Hawley Mary Ann Russell
Sharon Hutnik Kathy Schlice
Co-Chairs Barbara Bartkowiak and Lucille Lutz

Adult Education Opportunity—RCIA will be discussing Catholic morality on January 9, 16 and 23. All are welcome to join. Sessions start at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Family Center. Please call Kris Hansen at 715-341-1617 x112 if you have any questions.

Baptism Class Schedule—If you are planning to bring a child for Baptism, be sure to call the parish office at 715-341-1617 x101 to register for one of the preparation classes. Please note the following future class dates: January 21, March 11 and June 10.

PARISH

January 1, 2018, The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God is *not* a Holy Day of Obligation. There are *no* added Mass times on January 1. St. Joseph Parish will have the normal 8:00 a.m. Mass.

PARISH

Congratulations to our parishioners who are celebrating their Wedding Anniversary the week of December 25-31:



Bobbie & Fran Roman, 59 years

Bill & Diane Tatro, 56 years

Ray & Rita Stepaniak, 44 years

Clint & Laurie Gharis, 17 years

May God bless and grant you many years of happiness.

January Crafter Fundraiser—Join St. Joseph Parish on Saturday, January 13, 2018, from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. for this great crafting opportunity. Cost is \$40 per individual. Participants must be 18 years of age or older. All registration forms and payments are due in the parish office by **December 29**. For more information and the registration form, please go to the parish website, togetherinfaith.org, and click on “Stewardship Opportunities.”

A Celebration of Ministry—St. Joseph Parish members, staff and councils recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit in calling forth FOCCUS couples, Rich & Kim Boden, Al & Lori Bartlett, and Steve & Jean Brazzale, for mentoring engaged couples as they prepare for the Sacrament of Marriage. Thank you for sharing your time and marriage experiences with these new couples.

How is the Holy Spirit calling you to use your gifts for our community?

Thank You—St. Joseph Parish wishes to thank our Holy Name and St. Anne’s Societies for their generosity. The Holy Name Society has given a \$500.00 semi-annual donation and St. Anne’s a \$3,000.00 annual donation. The parish is graced with the support and dedication of these fine men and women. Thank you for all you have done and continue to do for St. Joseph Parish.

Advent Tree & Wreath Project—Christ came into the world to show us how to love one another, unconditionally without passing judgment. Please take one or more ornaments from the Advent Tree or Wreath. Purchase the gift and return it unwrapped to one of the boxes labeled for each charity in the Gathering Space. Please consider using gift cards when possible and return the donations no later than January 1. More information is available on the bulletin board behind the Advent Tree for First Choice, Operation Bootstrap, Dressed to Work and the Family Crisis Center. Thank you!

Ehr Hall Update—Updates and work in the hall are ongoing. At this time, flooring has been chosen along with paint color. Work will begin in the near future.

Holiday Light Fundraiser—Bring in your broken or worn out holiday lights and extension cords. The parish will turn them in for recycling and be paid for the copper inside the lights and cords. This fundraiser goes until January 15, 2018. Items may be placed in the red box in the Gathering Space.



Operation Bootstrap—In December, the parish will continue to support Operation Bootstrap. Whatever you are able to donate is greatly appreciated.

Weekly Reflections—Have you ever wished an angel would appear to tell you what God wants you to do? It would seem to be a good idea. You wouldn’t have to guess any more. Such messages are not the norm. Perhaps it is because God gave us free will and such direct messages might make us feel like we have no choice. God wants us to be free to choose what is good and right. To hear what God wants of us, we must make the effort to discern God’s will by reading Scripture, listening to the Church teachings and praying for the guidance of the Spirit. As we become more open to the promptings of the Spirit, what we are called to do will become clearer.

*The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge.—
Psalm: 18:2*

AREA CHURCHES, SCHOOLS & DEANERY

A Message From Gabe Hurrish—“[My] 10-week orientation is now completed and I have become a Maryknoll Lay Missioner. I leave for South Sudan on December 28. I have been in Stevens Point from December 13-27. I may not be able to see everyone, so I thank you all for your support and prayers. Packets providing additional information about my mission can be found at the back of the church. Have a Holy Advent & Christmas Season.” If you wish to make a donation to help support Gabe, please make a check payable to: Maryknoll Lay Missioners, and on the memo line of the check note “Gabe Hurrish.” You may mail the check to: Maryknoll Lay Missioners, P.O. Box 307, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0307.

Pacelli Catholic High School will be having Eucharistic Adoration on the First Thursday of every month from 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. while school is in session. The dates are as follows: January 4, February 1, March 1, April 5 and May 3. You may sign up for Adoration on a Thursday by following this link: <http://bit.ly/Dec72017>. Thank you for spending time with the Lord!

AREA CHURCHES, SCHOOLS & DEANERY**Label Collection for Pacelli Catholic Schools—**

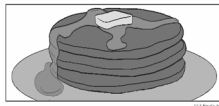
Campbell Soup labels will no longer be accepted by Pacelli Catholic Schools. The Campbell program is set to expire in early January. With the relocation of the Pacelli Early Childhood Program, St. Joseph Parish will no longer be a drop off point for the collection of milk labels or box tops. Those wishing to donate these items should take them directly to the PCS Office, St. Stephen, St. Peter or Holy Spirit schools.

Franciscans Downtown next movie is *Big History*, on December 27, 1:00 p.m.

DIocese/WIDER CHURCH

St. Bronislava Holy Name Society will hold an all-you-can-eat breakfast on Sunday, January 7, from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Menu includes buttermilk pancakes, potato pancakes, French toast, sausage, ham, milk, juice and coffee. Cost is \$7:00 for ages 13-adult, \$4.00 for ages 5-12, and free for ages 4 and under.

**March For Life Chicago or Washington D.C.—**

There are two excellent opportunities to march for life again this year. The “March for Life” Chicago is a one day event held on January 14. You can sign up by visiting www.prolifewi.org and scrolling down to the link. The “Pilgrimage for Life” to Washington D. C. is sponsored by the Diocesan Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry. It runs from January 17-21. Visit the website www.dioc.org/yya and click on “Pilgrimage for Life” to sign up. The deadline for the Early Bird registration is January 3.

Pilgrimage to Oberammergau—Fr. Al Burkhardt invites you to join him from August 18-28, 2020, on a pilgrimage to visit Classical Europe: Budapest, Bratislava, Prague, Nurnberg, Rothenburg, Heidelberg, Rhine River Cruise, Neuschwanstein, and Oberammergau. The highlight is attending the Oberammergau Passion Play scheduled for 2020! If you are interested in learning more about this pilgrimage, attend a meeting at St. Anne Parish on February 9 at 7:00 p.m. Learn about the Oberammergau Passion Play and the additional places that we will visit, cost and inclusions. Brochures will be available. If unable to attend the meeting but desire information, please call St. Anne Parish, 715-849-3930, x302. Share the incredible ability to see this long standing Passion Play offered only every 10 years!

Mission Trip to Rebuild After Hurricane Harvey— A group of volunteers from St. Henry Watermark Mission, an ecumenical initiative from St. Henry Parish in Eau Galle, will be traveling to Houston, TX, this spring to help rebuilding efforts of residents most in need in the wake of Hurricane Harvey. They will assist with carpentry, sheetrock, mud, tape, insulation, some electrical/plumbing, paint, flooring, finish work and landscaping. For more information call Gary Asher at 715-283-4451 or by email at rasher@wwt.net.

Help Refugees This Christmas—Please consider donating to help the millions of persons and families who have been displaced by violence in Syria and Iraq. The Diocese of La Crosse has recommended three excellent Catholic organizations you can choose from: Catholic Relief Services, www.crs.org, Knights of Columbus, www.kofc.org, click on “Give Through Us,” and Aid to the Church in Need, www.churchinneed.org.

Retrouaille Marriage Program—Are you having marriage problems? Retrouaille is for couples with marital problems who are seeking help. Those who are considering marriage separation and those who are already separated or divorced are encouraged to consider this program. The next Retrouaille weekend retreat will be held February 9-11, 2018 at St. Anthony Spirituality Center in Marathon, WI. Space is limited. Email centralwi@retrouaille.org for more information.

Catholic Charities—Many across our diocese come to Catholic Charities for help and hope. With your support, many programs have been funded that work to provide multiple services and financial support to those in need. Check out the website cclse.org to find out how you can help.

ST. ANTHONY SPIRITUALITY CENTER**New year’s Eve Retreat, December 31-January 1**

Invite God into your New Year with this popular St. Anthony’s tradition. A Holy Hour of Adoration and Sacrament of Reconciliation precedes a social which will ring in the New Year. On January 1 there will be an elaborate brunch to close out this special retreat. The retreat begins on Sunday with an evening supper at 6:30 p.m. and concludes on Monday at 1:00 p.m. Cost is \$90.00. For more information and registration, go to the website at www.sarcenter.com. You may also call the office at 715-443-2236 or email info@sarcenter.com.



St. Joseph Parish

Parish Office-715-341-1617
Website—www.togetherinfaith.org
Office Hours: Wed., 8:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m.
Friday, 8:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m.
Closed Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

Parish Office Fr. Jerzy Rebacz, Pastor Fr. Todd Mlsna, Associate Pastor Art Schaller, Deacon Mike Horgan, Deacon	715-341-1617, x103 pastor@togetherinfaith.org
Renée Schneeberg Admin. Assistant	715-341-1617 x101 rschneeb@togetherinfaith.org
Jacob Stiemann Finance Secretary	715-341-1617 x102 finance@togetherinfaith.org
Custodian	715-341-1617
Kris Hansen Pastoral Minister	715-341-1617 x112 khansen@togetherinfaith.org
Religious Education Office Lynn Meyer Director of Children's Ministry	715-341-1617 x114 lmeyer@togetherinfaith.org
Jodi Moss Director of Youth Ministry Youth Website	715-341-1617 x113 youthminister@togetherinfaith.org saintsyouthministry.weebly.com
Pastoral Council Rich Boden, President	parishcouncil@togetherinfaith.org 715-344-6722
Sacred Worship Ellen Miskowski Kris Hansen	sacredworship@togetherinfaith.org 715-344-2952 715-340-7751
Parish Family Life Mary Stroik Terry Miller	familylife@togetherinfaith.org 715-345-1810 715-340-2471
Call to Justice Committee Mary Droske	calltojustice@togetherinfaith.org 715-824-5485
Parish Education Committee Pat Wenzl, Facilitator	pec@togetherinfaith.org 715-344-3906
Finance Council Bill Wallner, Co-Chairman	715-341-7750
Building and Grounds Ron Kobishop	715-344-2276
Picnic Co-Chairs Josh Miskowski Bill and Tari Wallner	715-295-4161 715-341-7750
St. Anne's Society/Parish Council of Women Kathy Tetzloff, President	715-344-7150 stannes@togetherinfaith.org
Holy Name Society Rob Jaworski, President	715-344-3717
Senior Citizens Ron & Aggie Kobishop	715-344-2276
PCS Central Administrative Office	715-341-2445

Mission: Together in Faith,
we Celebrate Christ
through Prayer
and Service.



Welcome to St. Joseph Parish to those who are new to our church or just visiting. We are grateful to have you share in this celebration of the Eucharist. If you are not currently a member of a local church, we invite you to become part of our parish family. Visit our Parish Office to sign up, ask questions or receive more information about our parish. We're glad you're here and hope you become involved in our parish family. Our website is www.togetherinfaith.org.

Share Your Legacy! Have you made a will? Have you included your Parish Family? Support the work of faith within the community of St. Joseph! Estate contributions assist our annual income and help the growth of St. Joseph Parish Stevens Point Endowment Trust. Leave a legacy to the Parish that reflects your connection to your parish. Give thanks to the Lord always! As you desired in life, tithe with your estate.

Sacraments

Baptism: Please call the Parish Office for detailed information on infant Baptism, as parents are asked to attend a baptismal preparation program. The Baptism will be scheduled after completion of the class.

Marriage: Marriage is celebrated for couples who are active and registered members in the Parish. Please contact the Parish Office at least eight (8) months prior to the requested wedding date.

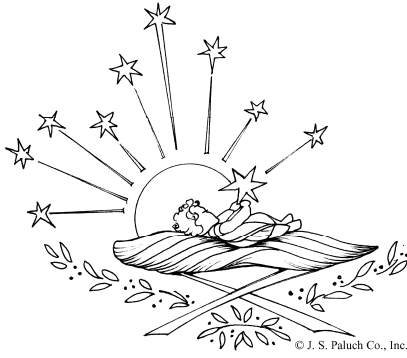
Reconciliation: Confessions are heard on Saturday at 3:30 p.m., before the evening Mass, or you may call the Parish Office to schedule an appointment.

Funeral: Please contact the funeral home director who will assist in making arrangements. The funeral director will then contact the Parish Office.

Services

Visitation of the Sick: If you become homebound because of illness and would like a visit, please call the Parish Office.

Bulletin Deadline: Articles are due Thursday by 12:00 p.m. Drop off the articles at the Parish Office, or send by email to bulletin@togetherinfaith.org, with a copy to rschneeb@togetherinfaith.org.



**“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”
Luke 2:14**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Nativity of the Lord expresses the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Eternal Word of God. God has accepted the human body so that we can get to know Him, love Him and imitate Him. He stands among us as Emmanuel, God with us, the Prince of Peace, and He wants us, especially today, to follow Him and bring peace to the whole world.

Living through the joy of the Savior's Christmas and gazing at the peace and silence of the Bethlehem Grotto, I would like to wish you all a very blessed Christmas.

May Christ, the Incarnate Word of God, bestow His favors upon you. May He support and strengthen you in making important life decisions while accepting responsibilities.

I pray that He takes care of you in the new year.
In Christ,

Fr. Jerzy Rebacz

**Peace
on Earth**

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Relationship with GOD

More than Just SUNDAY

The Holy Gift Exchange

I envision a particular pair of size 11 cowboy boots this Christmas. This species of boot has a throwback 1960s look, with colorful two-toned leather (including turquoise, of course), very pointed in the toe, and worn-in enough to be comfortable (or as comfortable as cowboy boots can be). But these are not just any pair one can find on eBay or Amazon or your local second-hand store. Boots like these are only available through my family's White Elephant gift exchange—and which have been re-gifted for decades.

For any who are not familiar with the Christmas "White Elephant Gift Exchange," it most often consists of a group of friends or family wrapping up items that they no longer want—gag gifts, hard-to-dispose of items, or gaudy goods (like 1960's cowboy boots)—and exchanging and trading among themselves.

Even though the White Elephant exchange is meant mostly for fun and entertainment, it represents only one of many ways we have come to this almost-essential aspect of Christmas: gift-giving. Some families draw names, while workplaces and schools have "Secret Santa." Grandparents, of course, play by their own rules.

But amidst the papers and boxes and ribbons is another more fundamental gift exchange that is the Gold Standard of all other methods of Christmas gift giving, one that should be recalled whenever and however we pass gifts between ourselves.

We first hear about this tremendous trade not on Black Friday, but during the weekdays leading up to Christmas. With December 17, the Church shifts Advent into high gear, and her run-up to Christmas sounds a different tone. When December 17 falls on a weekday (in 2017 it fell on a Sunday), we ask God the Father in the Opening Prayer that his "Only Begotten Son, having taken to Himself our humanity, may be pleased to grant us a share in His divinity." The Mass during Christmas day will pray similarly: "O God, who wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and still more wonderfully restored it, grant, we pray, that we may share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled Himself to share in our humanity." In fact, at any Mass, the deacon or priest will say similar words as he pours the water

(which represents you and me) into the wine (which symbolizes Jesus) as he prepares the chalice: "By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled Himself to share in our humanity."

This swap of divinity and humanity is one definitely worth sharing in—no need to keep the gift receipt or stand in line at the gift counter to return.

Giving and receiving of humanity and divinity is not, of course, a type of White Elephant exchange, or Secret Santa exchange, or family gift exchange. It's called the "holy exchange." St. Augustine tells us just what this exchange means: with the Incarnation and birth of Jesus, "He effected a wonderful exchange with us, through mutual sharing: we gave him the power to die, He will give us the power to live." (I think we're getting the better end of this deal!)

The Prayer over the Offerings at Christmas Midnight Mass asks that "through this most holy exchange we may be found in the likeness of Christ, in whom our nature is united." One of the Mass' Preface texts (coming just prior to the Holy, holy, holy) recounts that "through Him the holy exchange that restores our life has shone forth today in splendor: when our frailty is assumed by Your Word not only does human mortality receive unending honor but by this wondrous union we, too, are made eternal." Christmas gives to Jesus mortality—and to us eternity.

So whether it's giving gift cards, receiving socks and sweaters, or—if you have been especially good this year—the slickest pair of sixties boots imagination can invent, let them all remind us of that ultimate Christmas exchange: life in place of death, joy instead of sorrow, God's divinity added to our humanity. Gifts like these will guarantee a Merry Christmas for all.

Christopher Carstens
Director of the Office for Sacred Worship

