



K-4th Graders making Christmas Cards at November's Family Gathering for the "final's week care packages" sent to 50+ college

## DECEMBER 2014



To create and maintain a Christ-centered Catholic Community where our personal call to holiness, service and spiritual growth leads to continued authentic wit-

SOLON, IOWA

# St. Mary Parish Newsletter

1749 Racine Ave NE  
Solon, IA 52333  
319-624-2228  
[www.solonstmary.org](http://www.solonstmary.org)

## A Note From Fr. Tim

How quickly these past five months have gone by! I've enjoyed getting to know many of you in our parish family and look forward to meeting each of you. Please introduce yourselves following Masses and know I would like to visit your homes during Christmas season.

The season of Advent is already upon us. Advent, a Latin word for "coming" is the time we remember when Christ first came among us, continues to come among us in our daily lives and will come again at the end of time. Jesus is the light that comes into the world bearing truth and salvation for all. So get your Advent wreath out of storage and light the candles throughout Advent. Let these four weeks of preparing for the Birthday of Jesus, be also a time of welcoming his truth and light into our lives each day through daily prayer.

Please join us for St. Mary's Communal Reconciliation Service on Wednesday, December 17 at 6:30. Several priests will be here to hear confessions. Don't forget the Holy Day of Obligation on Monday, December 8—The Immaculate Conception of the blessed Virgin Mary. Mass times are 8:00am and 6:30pm. Come as a parish to celebrate with our patron—Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

My prayers are with all our families here at St. Mary's that we will take time to prepare for Christ's coming; to keep Jesus as the true meaning and purpose of our celebration of Christmas.

Emmanuel, God with us! May the love, joy and peace of Christ be with each of your families. May you have a very Holy and Merry Christmas and Blessed New Year.

Fr. Tim



**Christmas Eve Masses:**  
**5:00pm and 10:00pm**

**Christmas Day Mass: 9:00am**

**Coming to 5:00 Christmas Eve Mass?**  
Bring baby Jesus from your family's nativity set and Fr. Tm will bless it.



**Come, celebrate the birth  
of Jesus with us**

# Coming Up...

## DECEMBER

- 3 WED, 5-12th Grade, 6:30**
- 4 THUR, LIFTS 1:00**
- 6 SAT, Men's Group, 6:30am, parish hall adult room**
- 7 SUN, Cookie Walk, 8am-noon, parish hall**
- 8 MON, Immaculate Conception Holy Day Masses 8:00am & 6:30pm**
- 10 WED 5-7th Large Group, 8 Chosen, 9-12th Life Night, 6:30pm**
- 12 FRI, Eucharistic Adoration, 7:30am-noon, in the church**
- 13 SAT, Men's Group, 6:30am, parish hall adult room**  
**SAT, Couple's Christmas Potluck Party 6:00-8:30pm, lower level**  
**SAT, Youth Concert, 6:30 Church**
- 14 SUN, K-4th Grade Family Faith Gatherings 9:30 & 11:30**  
**SUN, Return Giving Tree Gifts (Care Center & Area Kids)**
- 15 MON, Eucharistic Adoration, 6:00-10:00pm, in the church**
- 17 WED, Parish Advent Reconciliation Service, 6:30pm in the church**
- 18 THURS, LIFTS Group 1:00, parish hall adult room**
- 19 FRI, Eucharistic Adoration, 7:30am-noon, in the church**
- 20 SAT Men's Group, 6:30am, parish hall adult room**
- 21 SUN Decorate Church & Hall, noon, lunch provided**
- 22 MON, Eucharistic Adoration, 6:00-10:00pm, in the church**
- 24 WED, Christmas Eve Masses: 5:00pm in hall, 10:00pm in the church**
- 25 THUR, Christmas Day Mass, 9:00am in the church**

## JANUARY

- 2 FRI, Preparing & Serving at Free Lunch Program –Iowa City**  
*Contact patty@solonstmary.org if you would like to help*
- 11 SUN, Financial Peace University Classes begin, 5:30-7:00pm, childcare provided, \$93 for materials**



Winter 2014 Financial Peace University Graduates!  
Contact [Lindsey@solonstmary.org](mailto:Lindsey@solonstmary.org) for more information for 2015

## Area Reconciliations:

- Sat, Dec. 13—10:00am St. Mary Iowa City  
Sun, Dec. 14— 2:00pm St. Patrick Iowa City  
Mon, Dec. 15— 7:00pm St. Thomas Coralville  
Tues, Dec 16— 7:00pm St. Wenceslaus IC  
**Wed, Dec. 17 – 6:30 St. Mary-Solon**



Sunday, Dec 7 following the 8:30 and 10:30 Masses in the parish hall. Come purchase homemade cookies & pies



Sunday, Dec 14 K-4th Grade Family Faith Gatherings, 9:30 or 11:30



Sunday, Dec 14 return Giving Tree Gifts



Sunday, Dec 21 Join us following 10:30 Mass for lunch & decorating the church and parish hall for Christmas

# Our Parish Family

## Baptisms *We welcome with great joy!*

Lola Olson	Mitch & Brittany Olson
Quinn Heithoff	Brian & Emily Heithoff
Gabriel Bonnema	Adam & Theresa Bonnem
Cael Cannon	Zach & Abby Cannon
Gavin Wesner	Joshua & Kana Wesner
Sydney Taylor	Joseph & Rebecca Taylor
Anna & Eva Bartlett	Seth & Joanna Bartlett
William Bigelow	Quintin & Nicole Bigelow
Noah Campbell	Jesse & Katy Campbell
Jett Haluska	Adam & Kendra Haluska
Zeke Nitcher	Brandon & Emily Nitcher
Emily Klosterman	Douglas & Kathleen Klosterman



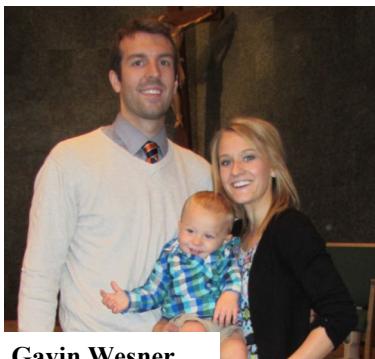
Gabriel Bon-



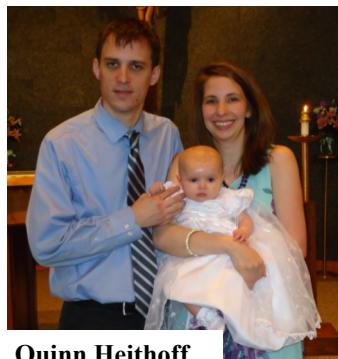
Jett Haluska



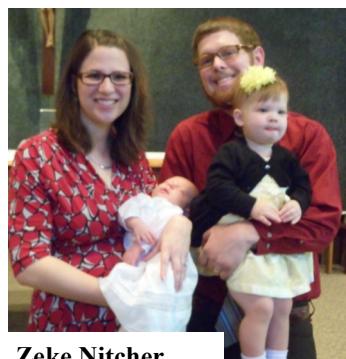
Cael Cannon



Gavin Wesner



Quinn Heithoff



Zeke Nitcher

## New Parishioners *We're glad you're here!*

James & Robin Foy	Charles & Alicia Brock
Luke & Kathleen Linz	Scott & Tonya Stahmer
Corey and Sonja Scott	Emily & Troy Devereux
Bill Wirth	Bradley & Karissa Walker

Matt Poduska & Holly Klouda	
Matt & Carrie Meyer	
Matthew & Margaret Messenger	
Agatha Rudy	Rosemary Hiatt



Father, hear our prayers for these couples who were united in marriage before your altar. Give them your blessing, and strengthen their love for each other. We ask you this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever Amen.

Eternal rest, grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

## Weddings *Congratulations!*

Ryan Crall & Natalie Diaz
Benjamin Plotz & Lyn Postel
Trey Brandt & Bethany Fisher
Jesus Eszobedo & Jennifer Teno
Richard Ebensteiner & Lauren Graves
Michael Fahrer & Courtney Holtkamp
Clint Hansen & Rebecca Shirazi
Justin Parker & Ashley Maitland

## Deaths *We pray for and remember*

Herman Stout	5-25-14
Donald Brannaman	6-15-14
James Meyer	7-3-14
W.J. Zenishek	7-11-14
Robert Zeman	8-9-14
David Carson	10-17-14

# Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

They have asked us to **WELCOME** them, **PRAY** for them & their families and to **GROW** in faith with them.



Front row—joining our church: Jamie Zearley, Jeff Zearley, Michael Fahrer, Joseph Taylor, Robin Densmore Foy, (not pictured Scott DeValk) & Sally Holte. Back row—RCIA leaders & sponsors: Fr. Tim, Theresa Smith, Adam Haluska, Courtney Fahrer, Ron Hugeback, Therese Barenz & Dcn

*In parishes across the country and throughout the world, candidates for the sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation and Eucharist) prepare to become members of the Catholic Church.*

**Those discerning and preparing to enter the Church depend on the support and encouragement of the whole Church, not only to welcome them, but also to join with them in following Christ.** " Msgr. Richard Hilgartner

**PRAY**

## for Our Candidates

Lord, We pray for all those who journey to you.

Strengthen their faith.  
Ease their fears and doubts.

Open their hearts to the fullness of your love.  
Deepen their understanding of your plan for their life.

Set their hearts afire  
for the building of your Kingdom.

Let our prayers of thanksgiving and support be a sign of our love for them.

As we continue to seek your plan for our lives let our witness of bringing your way, truth, and life into our family, parish, and community encourage their yes to you.

We ask this through Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life for all. Amen

## L.I.F.T

### Ladies in Fellowship Together



If you're retired or an "older" homemaker, with afternoons free, join us every other Thursday at 1:00. We're a great group of women who love to laugh, play cards & enjoy each other's company.

**Dec 4 Stuff Stockings**

**Dec 18 Snacks & Cards**

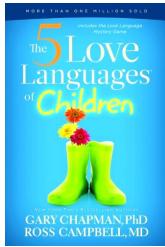


### Mom's Group Come Join Us!

**Wednesday, Dec 17**

**9-11:00** in the parish hall nursery.

We are currently reading **The 5 Love Languages for Your Children**. Purchase at a bookstore or an e-book. Children play, while we visit.



### December Couples' Christmas Party Potluck

**Saturday, December 13**

**6-8:30 pm** in our lower level for married couples of all ages

**Jeff & Janet Francois**  
from Worldwide Marriage Encounter will give a brief talk on **The Gift of Marriage**

Bring some food as well as any adult beverages you would like to enjoy. St. Mary's will provide lemonade, coffee and paper products AND childcare.

# Youth Group



[www.facebook.com/nickatsaintmary](http://www.facebook.com/nickatsaintmary)



[twitter.com/satt\\_xhs](http://twitter.com/satt_xhs)



**YOUTH GROUP:** 40+ 10-12th Graders gather each week for a meal & class. Above: learning the difference between Christian Joy and happiness which can be fleeting.

**LIFE NIGHT:** Once a month gatherings for 9-12th graders featuring guest speakers, praise & worship music and Adoration of Jesus in the Eucharist.

**NEXT LIFE NIGHT:** Dec. 10, Guest Presenter: Adrian Brambilia, aka: "El Tiro"



## Catholic Youth Conference

On the weekend of Nov 22-23 eight of our parishioners (Jenna Roskopf, Mason Redlinger, Noel & Marcus Martin, Brandi Uhlenkamp, Angela Erusha, Allegra Johnson, Kyle Eckrich and our youth minister Nick Satterlee) attended the overnight retreat with 200+ high school students from our diocese. Picture: packing meals for Kids Against Hunger, service project.

SIGN-UP  
NOW  
FOR  
**JULY  
24-26  
2015**  
\$50 check,  
payable to  
St. Mary—  
to hold  
your spot



## 9-12th Grade: Don't Miss December 10th's LIFE NIGHT

With Adrian Brambilia aka "El Tiro" is a dancer originally from Fallbrook, California. Adrian has toured for the artist T-Pain and performed in line ups with Bruno Mars, Ludacris, B.O.B, and even done private shows for artists like Akon. With his dance crew called "The Body Poets" out of San Diego he came out on Season's 7 America's Got Talent making it the Las Vegas Round.

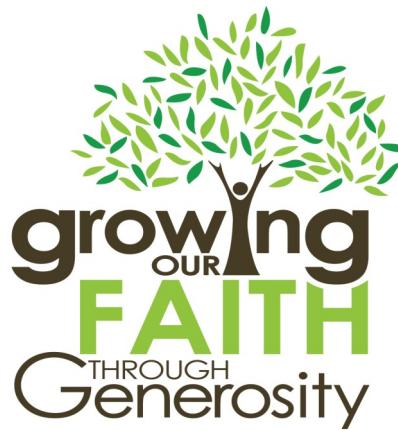
Adrian aka "El Tiro" has since founded his own dance clothing company called [Dance Saves Lives](#) which donates its profits to teaching dance to places of poverty all around the world. Adrian has traveled and inspired countless amounts of schools, communities, and organizations across the globe doing Dance Saves Lives workshops which consist of motivational speaking about living



## 636 lbs of food

was collected by 8th graders and their parents as they canvassed Solon neighborhoods on November 19 to help stock the Solon Community Food Pantry.





# Stewardship

*Parishioners share the response they have made in gratitude to God for what has been given to them....*

## Brian Bock

Molly and I have five children. We are a busy family: lots of schoolwork, activities, running around and we wouldn't trade it for anything. We try to balance the business by keeping these four F's in order: Faith, Family, Financial, Fitness.

Faith in our family begins with attending Mass every Sunday. If we did not take the one hour to thank God for what we have, ask for forgiveness for our sins, and request the help of the Holy Spirit to make us a better person, it probably would not get done. But being part St. Mary's is more to us than just at-

**Being part St. Mary's is more to us than just attending Sunday Mass. It is the real reason we made the decision to move to Solon. It is our extended family.**

tending Sunday Mass. St. Mary's is the real reason we made the decision to move to Solon. It is our extended family; the family we break bread with, laugh with, cry with, and most importantly pray with. Our family has been Blessed to have par-

ents and grandparents provide a fantastic framework for a life balanced on Faith. My dad never planted a seed or turned a combine wheel on Sunday. Not to say we didn't have some late nights in the field, but we all knew that when that week was done Sunday was going to be a day of rest. Now we are the parents. It is our turn to show our children what is really important. Molly helps teach religion classes, baptism classes, child care on Sundays and brings meals and deserts for special occasions. Adam, Hannah, and Emma help at the altar. When asked to help at St. Mary's, we try to make it happen. It would be easy to say we are too busy. Well, saying no would not sit right in my heart if I used that excuse knowing it wasn't true. So I take the time to help with a KC breakfast, substitute teach for a religion class, attend faith formations classes with my children, help with small construction projects.

We have been very fortunate to have Father Wilkening, Father Vrba, and now Father Sheedy to help us grow in our Faith. The church asks us to give one percent of our treasure - a fraction of our income. One percent of your time would be about an hour per week. Multiply that hour times the number of families in St. Mary's—that is literally hundreds of hours of Stewardship. Now that could do some amazing things!

## Dennis Uhl

My wife Lori and I have lived in Solon for 4 years. We have two children: Josie is a senior at Solon and Ben is finishing up at UNI. Stewardship is more than money or volunteering, it is a different way of living. Presently I am involved in a few things—Men's Prayer Group every Saturday morning at 6:30, KC's, Eucharistic minister, 6<sup>th</sup> grade mentor on Wednesday nights, and member of the Church Life group.

Why do I say "Yes" to these things? It is best defined in one word: Love! A definition for love is to give wholly of one self with the expectation of nothing in return. What I was doing for many years was the opposite of love; Matthew Kelly defines it as "Individualism." I was asking: What is in it for me? What do I get out of it? If I didn't see any benefit for me, why do it. When living self-centered lives, we never share the greatest gift given to us; the gift of Jesus' love he freely gives to us.

Recently I gave my group of 6<sup>th</sup> grade boys the task to share how they saw Jesus in others. I was impressed with their

observations, but one really stuck with me. The boy said while on a field trip in the rain, he saw two classmates, one had a rain coat the other didn't. The boy without a rain coat was getting cold and wet. His friend took the coat off and gave it to the other boy so he could warm up.

Each of us is called to freely share the love Jesus gives us, to move beyond one's self and get past what is in it for me? If you

**Each of us is called to freely share the love Jesus gives us, to move beyond one's self and get past what is in it for me?**

are volunteering good, and thank you, but can you do more? If you are not volunteering move beyond yourself and get started. *"As one face differs from another, so does one human heart from another". Proverbs 27:19* We can't look to our left or right and see what others are doing and use that as a gauge. We need to look into our own hearts and find out what love

## Mark Prentice

Gwen and I have been married 23 years and at St. Mary's for 22 years. Our children, Sam and Jill are 21 & 20 years old. I was raised Catholic, but quit going to Mass when I moved away. I did not return until God chose Gwen to be my wife. We went to because it seemed the right thing to do. I was sitting in the pew, going through the motions and didn't commit beyond that one hour. I was busy with things that seemed more important.

After going to a marriage encounter weekend; I began to inch closer to God. I began offering my time, even though I often felt inadequate, after listening to a Catholic speaker at our parish and then later a full day presentation, I joined the Knights of Columbus, said yes when asked to be a catechist, returning the next year to take them through confirmation. I chaperoned a Steubenville conference and took a week's vacation to chaperone a high school mission trip. Gwen and I have led a faith formation group for several years and attend events like the Christ our Life weekend when we can. We are currently mentoring a couple who are getting married this year and I have taken on the challenge of mentoring 5th grade boys. My first thought when being asked is, "certainly there is someone bet-

ter than me to do it." But with each yes I become a better person. Each day I ask God to help me follow his will and not my own. Consider praying with "The Word Among Us" our parish gives out each month, listen to a Lighthouse CD while in your car and come to Adoration. I guarantee it is the most peace you will ever feel.

If we Christians are not involved in something to strengthen our faith, we're like a doctor who has not been to med school or a plumber unfamiliar with a pipe wrench.

As Christians, if we are not involved in something to strengthen our faith, we are like a doctor who has not been to medical school or a plumber who is not familiar with a pipe wrench. *"No one who lights a lamp conceals it with a vessel or sets it under a bed, rather he places it on a lamp stand so that those who enter may see the light".* So uncover your light, brighten someone's day, take the next step and say yes to something and really get involved and you will see that the gifts you receive far outweigh the sacrifices you make.

## Bonnie Mattaliano

Bill and I have three kids Madeline, Nathan, and Joe – who are 21, 20 and 10. They are a great blessing to us, and we're grateful for their willingness to help one another. I was adopted by a Catholic couple who actively lived their faith; my involvement in the church began when I was very young. I knew be-

I knew being adopted was something special. When commissions were formed to advocate for the unborn, I wanted in.

ing adopted was something special and so when churches began to form commissions to advocate for the unborn, I wanted in. I have been to workshops to learn about the needs of victims of human trafficking, help with Informed Choices Medical Clinic, Johnson County Right to Life, 40 Days for Life and other pro-life entities. I am helping grow support for Mary's Meals, which feeds over 700,000 school children in our world each

day. To become a better steward with our finances, I took the Financial Peace University classes at our parish. Bill and I have been shown (that) the way to serve others and God is from the banquet and not the leftovers. Stewardship also involves a desire to learn about the richness of our Catholic Faith. We have many opportunities through book studies and movie viewings. Speakers from around the world have come to our parish for talks and workshops, to inspire and help us grow in faith. Books can be purchased for a fraction of their normal price (in the gathering space.)

From the library in the parish hall lower level, I have read more book(S) about our faith than ever before. There's no reason to NOT be exposed to this food for our souls! Time in prayer, to nurture a personal friendship with Christ, is also important. I come to Eucharistic Adoration, attend daily Mass when I can and revisit the sacrament of reconciliation more often. This helps me improve the attention I give to the needs of my own family, (as well as helping me discern) where God wants me to serve outside of my family.

## Kevin Hayes

I am a widower of 4 years, I have a two adult children and I am a transplant from Illinois. At a retreat in high school, one of the kids mentioned we were all gifts from God and we should open our gift and give back to God. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus tells us, *"because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."* There is a great power in even a little faith when God is with us! That really hit me. Years later, relying on God's power, I was planning our Church's youth group retreats, along with the Archdiocese retreats. After I was married, I volunteered in other ways: Lector, Eucharistic Minister, Usher, and Catechist. I helped begin a Knights of Columbus Council, ran their blood drive, and became a Stephen Minister.

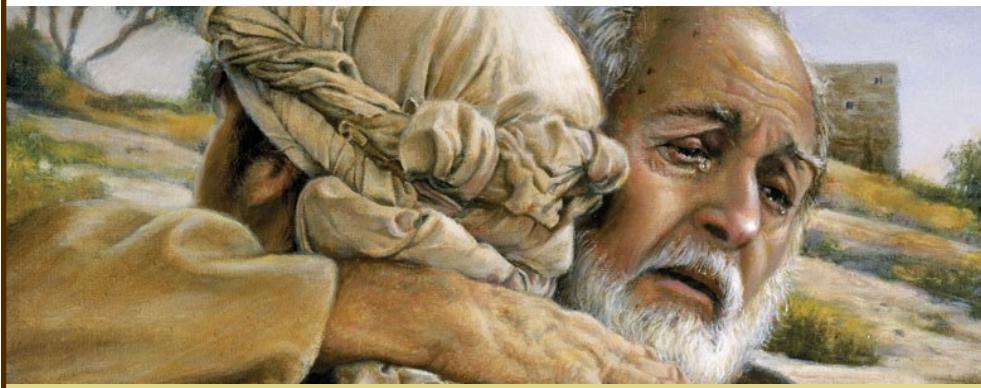
After my wife died, my Pastor asked me if I would like to go on a Widow/Widowers retreat. I went and walked away with three prayers I pray every day:

Thank you Lord for waking me up this morning so I can enjoy your beautiful masterpiece, I ask that you Bless me with the Holy Spirit so I will know what to say and do today and with you by my side Lord there is nothing I can't handle! After joining this parish two years ago, I became a Lector, transferred my KC membership, run the blood drive for St. Mary's and am sparing the choir. As a Hospice Volunteer, I help their transition by sitting with them, reading to them or just holding their hand letting them know God is with them. May you enjoy God's masterpiece , May Holy Spirit bless you and May God be at your side!

# rec·on·cil·i·a·tion

rekən'silē'āSH(ə)n/

*Noun* the restoration of friendly relations



## Parish Advent RECONCILIATION Service Wednesday, December 17 6:30pm

**"Everyone say to himself:**

**'When was the last time I went to confession?'**

And if it has been a long time, don't lose another day! Go, the priest will be good. And Jesus, (will be) there, and Jesus is better than the priests – Jesus receives you. He will receive you with so much love! Be courageous, and go to confession.

Forgiveness is not something we can give ourselves. One asks forgiveness, one asks it of another person, and in confession, we ask forgiveness from Jesus.

Forgiveness is not a result of our efforts, but is a gift. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit who showers us with mercy and grace that pours forth unceasingly from the open heart of Christ crucified and risen.

Don't be afraid of confession. When someone is in line for confession he feels all these things – even shame – but then, when he finishes confessing, he leaves (feeling) free, great, beautiful, forgiven, clean, happy. The sacrament of reconciliation is a sacrament of healing. When I go to confession, it's for healing: healing the soul, healing the heart because of something that I did to make it unwell.

**Every time we go to confession, God embraces us with open arms."**

—Pope Francis

## Journey Through Life with Jesus Resources for Daily Prayer In Advent

**The Word Among Us** (print copies in church gathering space)

**Sign-Up to receive daily email reflections:**

- † 60 Second Reflection on Mass reading: [www.guslloyd.com](http://www.guslloyd.com)
- † Advent Reflections by Fr. Barron: [www.wordonfire.com](http://www.wordonfire.com)
- † 3 Minute Retreat Experience: [www.loyolapress.com](http://www.loyolapress.com)

**Download Apps:**

- † Laudate #1 Catholic App
- † Mea Culpa Learn about Reconciliation



## What is Eucharistic Adoration?

Christ is present in Scripture, the person of the priest through the Sacraments and in the community of believers, the church. But his presence in the consecrated host is real, in the fullest sense. There he is truly present, body and blood, soul and divinity: *This is my body.*

The one who walked to Calvary for us, helped the woman at the well, cured the ten lepers, calmed the seas, is truly present in the Eucharist. We can be with the one who gives great kindness and mercy, healing and hope, forgiveness and love.

Adoration is a showing of deep love and respect. During Eucharistic Adoration, the consecrated host is put in a Monstrance and placed on the altar for people to come and spend quiet time in prayer. We enter the pew and kneel or sit. It is two friends talking and listening, two friends with deep love and respect for one other.

**New to adoration and not sure what to do?** Pick up a prayer book from one of the two baskets in the back of church. Turn to the "prayers & petitions" section of the hymnal and pray one of the songs. Or just sit quietly in his presence.

**"O come, let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord!"**

Like the shepherds in the manger 2,000 years ago, we too can kneel in adoration before the Christ, the Messiah sent to save us; the Lord who gave his life for us. In the business of holiday preparations, let's not forget the holiness of the season. Let's spend some time with the one who can give us true joy, hope and peace.



*"As we come to adore Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, we should remember that Mary and Joseph are with him, just as they were the night he was born. The Holy Family cannot be separated; they remain a circle of love, and they invite us to enter the circle."* [www.PaulThigpen.com](http://www.PaulThigpen.com)



If only we could visit Bethlehem,  
enter the stable and kneel by Jesus.

**We can!** Come to Him in:  
*Eucharistic  
Adoration*

## O Come Let Us Adore Him, Christ Our Lord

**Monday Evenings:**

6:00pm-10:00pm

**Friday Mornings:**

7:30am-noon



### *Thoughts from parishioners on Eucharistic Adoration:*

#### **JIM & MARGARET HENNES**

I am a convert from 1960 and even though I was very involved in the parishes I have belonged to—I did not know anything about adoration. While living in Branson, Missouri our local parish began promoting Adoration and encouraging people to sign-up to spend an hour with Jesus. I wanted to do my part, but I was wondering, “What in the world would I do for an hour in silence?” So I went to a life-long Catholic friend to find out. She said it was the most wonderful time, you could say the rosary, read scripture, there were books with many meditations, just be still and talk to God or listen and if you fell asleep it was ok, you were in His presence. I signed up for the 3:00 time slot on Wednesdays, but not Jim, who didn’t seem too excited. Well, lo and behold, he started going with me and we both found it to be the most wonderful experience. No TV, phones, just peace. If neighbors wanted to plan something, Jim became more dedicated than me and said we could not do anything on Wednesday afternoons. It is so wonderful! I wish we could impress on everyone to just give it a try. We are so glad St. Mary’s offers Adoration and it really has meant so much to us.

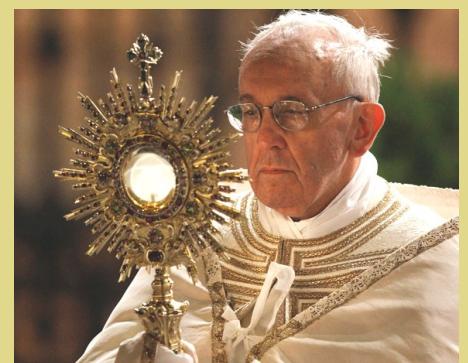
#### **SCOTT JOHNSON**

I like spending time with my friend, Jesus. Though I try to come to Adoration during a set time on Monday evenings, I don’t always make it. It is a great comfort to know that Jesus is always there for me when I need Him. I recently came from a medical appointment for a family member on a Friday morning and found myself drawn to the church. There was Jesus, the Blessed Sacrament, waiting for me! After a short prayer of greeting and thankfulness, I sat down in the pew and simply listened. There was great peace. I wasn’t there for very long. Just long enough to know that I wasn’t alone. I know I’ll be back to spend some time with my friend, Jesus. He is always there for us!

#### **ALAN WIESKAMP**

Prior to coming to St. Mary's I participated in adoration at a parish with 1800 families. And with so many, we could have perpetual adoration, 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week. My time was Wednesday mornings at 4:00 am. The time allowed me to reflect in silence. To open my heart to the Holy Spirit and listen to what Jesus or his Blessed Mother wanted me to hear. Adoration allowed me a chance to read the Bible and study the Gospel readings for that week. I also enjoyed the chance to substitute for others if they were unable to make it. What a privilege to have this quiet time with our Lord, to have him to ourselves! It is one I am happy is being continued at St. Mary's.

*Pope Francis encourages Catholics to ask if when “adoring Christ truly present in the Eucharist, do I allow myself to be transformed by him? Jesus speaks in the silence of the mystery of the Eucharist and reminds us each time that following him means going out of ourselves and making our lives not something we ‘possess,’ but a gift to him and to others.”*





# K-4th Grade Monthly Family Faith Gatherings

God places the heart of a child into the hands of the parents.  
God entrusts them with the spiritual care of the child's heart,  
allowing his Son's presence to enter, so it may grow and bear good fruit.



The K-4 family gatherings held one Sunday a month have been great to attend with our 2nd grader. He seems to really enjoy the one on one time with us as well as the breakfast treats that are provided. :-) Families (not just kids) are introduced to a new theme each month and are given materials, tools and suggestions to take home with them to help formulate a family plan together. These gatherings offer simple ideas that we as parents can act upon in our daily lives. It makes bringing our faith to our homes and sharing our faith with our children seem so easy.

So far the monthly themes have included love, joy and peace. We, as parents, are encouraged to bring that love, joy and peace into our homes and into our daily lives. Dropping our children off for an hour on Wednesday nights for someone else to teach them was not enough. This brings our faith into our homes where our children can experience first hand the love, joy and peace that God would want us to share with them and each other. Not only is our second grader involved, but our older children can participate as well. It is something we do with our entire family. We might not follow through with our plan every day, but there's always tomorrow...

**BRIAN & MOLLY BOCK**

## **THIS YEAR'S THEMES: Fruits of the Spirit**

When Christ becomes the center of a family: behaviors, values, and priorities change. Watch the "fruit of the spirit": love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control blossom in your family! Not one, but all!



We enjoy the K-4 family gatherings and it is nice to relate to what we learn every month with the kids. The kids enjoy the gatherings as they love having us learn with them and bring what we learn into their every day lives.

**LISA HAVLICEK**

As parents, each day, we strive to be the example we expect of our children. St. Mary's Faith Formation provides additional tools to be that good example. In addition, it's an opportunity for much needed time of reflection as a family unit on how we include Christ in our daily life. **AMBER JEDICKA**

I have nothing but good things to say about the new religious ed format. The most important responsibility as a parent is for me to grow God's kingdom by showing His love to my children. Religious education begins at home, and the new format of faith formation provides the tools and encouragement to do just that. Our kids love it! We talk about it and incorporate into our daily lives.

I especially enjoy the few minutes when the kids are pulled aside to work on a project, letting the adults have a few minutes to review the materials. **ANDREA CARTER**

I love the k-4 shift from Wednesday nights to Sunday mornings. Instead of faith formation being just another thing to run to on a weeknight (often meaning we miss or rush eating dinner as a family), it's become an activity we can enjoy together. I think the format is ideal as well. Videos (and food) keep kids happy, and lessons are quick, applicable, and family focused. **STEPHANIE HOEPER**

# Mentoring



## 5-6-7th Graders...

- Want to be accepted for the person they are
- Want a place where they can be themselves
- A place where it is safe to question and discuss faith and life issues
- Want to know their ideas are welcomed, their concerns are addressed

I love the new ministry model. My daughter is in 5th grade. She loves the small group and she is so much more willing to share thoughts and feelings especially since it is a group of all girls. She is great about reading the information in the book and about going to class. I have had the pleasure to help with the class and the information was very true to her age and deals with real life issues. My son is in 7th grade. He too, enjoys going to class with Tom Bell and goes willingly each week. **LYNETTE PATTISON**

As a mentor for one of the 5-7 groups, I have seen great things happening. The small groups explore developmentally appropriate age related topics together with their mentor. It is an environment in which the boys and girls can hopefully feel comfortable with each other and feel safe in sharing their thoughts and ideas. The class generates great conversations and discussion. The 7th grade girls are a great group to work with. Each week we cover a short lesson in the book that has been chosen for their age group. And we reflect on the upcoming Gospel. It is a very relaxed atmosphere. The girls are very supportive to one another; they really enjoy their time together. **MOLLY BOCK**



My 7th grader is enjoying her faith gatherings more this year than in the past. She actually comes home excited and talks about what they do and how it relates to her life. **LISA HAVLICEK**



# A look back at FALL



Dennis & Christine Newell Family—Grand Prize Raffle  
Winners of the Hawkeye Football Suite.

*Getting raffle tickets ready to sell—before Harvest Festival.*

# Harvest Festival

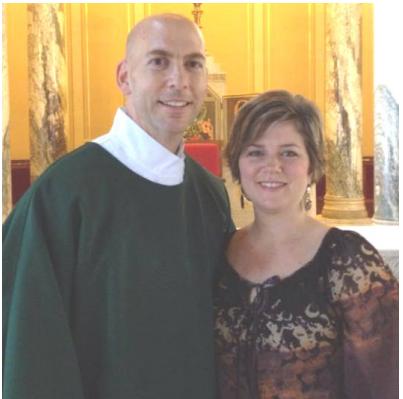
SAVE THE 2015 DATE  
September 20

Thank you to everyone who supported this year's Harvest Festival—through your donations, work and purchases. It was a great success ! We look forward to seeing you next fall, when the our parish festival takes place within the weekend of the 175th anniversary celebration for the city of Solon.



**Family Fall Walk**  
On October 4th, St. Mary's held their second annual Fall Walk at the MacBride Recreation Area. Despite a blustery, chilly morning, 20 families joined in a 30 minute trail hike and returned to the shelter for some snacks, while the children enjoyed playing and running around and the adults enjoyed some fellowship.





## October Marriage Enrichment: Joel & Lisa Schmidt

On Saturday, October 18, Joel & Lisa Schmidt from Des Moines gave a talk to 15 couples from St. Mary's. They discussed why it is so important to have a balance of praying (especially praying together as a couple), working, resting and playing. They referred to the 8 Beatitudes of Marriage as a way to strengthen the Mr. & Mrs. Finally, they discussed how to have a family social media plan. They gave us the *Ten Commandments of Social Media Use* to help us remember to put God first, observe the Sabbath day and to honor those who are physically present.

Joel & Lisa were a very engaging, dynamic couple who gave us some realistic rules to live our lives by to keep our marriage strong and faith centered.

## November Marriage Enrichment: Service Project



Five couples met early Saturday morning on November 15th to help clean the food pantry, restock shelves, sort, etc. It was a great opportunity for the couples to see and hear how big of a need the pantry is for the surrounding communities, as well as to get an idea of what items are accepted or in need of. They are specifically asking for venison, so if anyone has any extra venison they don't know what to do with, please contact the North Liberty Food Pantry to donate it.



## Coming Up...Save the Date

### Parish Mission February 2-3-4

*Coming to us from Savannah, Georgia:* Deacon Eddie Ensley and Deacon Robert Herrmann are both nationally known authors and speakers. They have over thirty years experience leading parish missions, retreats and conferences. Passionately overwhelming their audiences, they teach the same way Jesus taught the crowds, by telling stories and parables. Infectious wit, down-to-earth insights and truly holy inspiration are the hallmarks of their message. Many pastors and parish leaders say the team's missions attracted the largest crowds they had ever had for a mission.

### Men's Conference February 28

*Coming to us from Texas:* Marcellino D'Ambrosio is a popular speaker for men's conferences across the United States. He brings a practical, down-to earth, and humorous perspective, that makes his words easy to understand and enjoyable to hear. He has an uncanny ability to make profound subjects understandable and relevant to everyday life.

### Women's Conference March 7

A great line-up of Iowan presenters—sure to inspire!



## OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY

**Sunday, February 15th**  
following 8:30 & 10:30am Masses

This short gathering is designed for those who are new to our parish or would like to know more about us. Get a "behind the scenes" look at our parish, learn about our ministries, and take a tour of our facilities. Remain in the pews after Mass and we'll begin our "open house" from there.

**Who can you invite?  
Do you know someone who would like to learn more about St. Mary?**

# A look back at SUMMER



Fr. Tim Sheedy, installed by Bishop Amos, as the new pastor for St. Mary Parish. Pictured with Deacons David Krob and Mitch Holte and the 4th Degree Knights of Columbus.



**FREE LUNCH PROGRAM** An eager group of volunteers pitched in to help with our first meal at the Free Lunch Program on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Our volunteers prepared and served a picnic meal to over 130 appreciative guests.

*"We expected to feel good about doing something to help those less fortunate, but we learned that the program is about much more. The meal was open to anyone and many of the guests were not homeless, but attended for other reasons. Our favorite part was talking to the people who came for lunch and hearing their stories." ~ The Roskopf's*

*"I enjoyed visiting and eating with our guests....(they) were so appreciative; it made the hard work worthwhile and wanting to do more for them. I'd love to have my grandchildren share and participate in such a wonderful experience. It was nice being with some men and women from St. Mary's, which made me feel more a part of the church. What a super day."*  
~ Deann Zmolek

*"I liked talking to the people and seeing their smiles."*  
~Karly Benzing    *"I liked making burgers and brats."* ~Jake Benzing

St. Mary is scheduled to prepare & serve lunch on the first Friday of odd numbered months. **If you would like to help** either by preparing food in your home or helping on-site

## 2nd Annual FAMILY SUMMER PICNIC



## Our Parish's 10th trip to the STEUBENVILLE CATHOLIC TEEN CONFERENCE in St. Paul



## MISSION TRIP with Glenmary Missionaries in Rutledge Tennessee/Appalachia

A week-long service trip helped with: housing improvements for local residents, spent time with some of the elderly citizens who do not get many visitors, worked in school communities, and volunteered at a summer camp for low income



## Our 8th Vacation Bible School: WEIRD ANIMALS!

Where Jesus' Love is One-of-a-Kind!! God filled the world with a lot of unique creatures...including us!

**JOIN US IN 2015: July 13-17 for VBS "Hometown Nazareth—Where Jesus was a Kid"**



St. Mary Church  
1749 Racine Ave NE  
Solon, IA 52333  
319-624-2228  
[www.solonstmary.org](http://www.solonstmary.org)

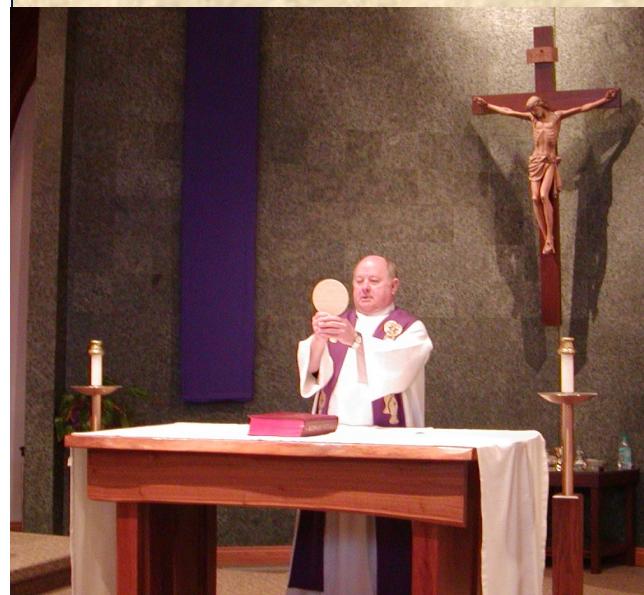
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Blessed be the Lord,  
the God of Israel,  
For he has visited and  
brought redemption to his people.  
Luke 1:8

ADDRESS SERVIICE REQUESTED

## Welcome to the Table of the Lord



Come and Be Fed by  
his Good News and  
his Eucharistic Body & Blood

### Pope Francis Special Prayer Intentions for December, 2014

Dear Lord Jesus,  
During this season of Advent, we pray that all Christians will deepen their knowledge of Christmas as the hope for humanity. May your birth, Jesus our Redeemer, bring peace and hope to all people of good will.

We also pray, dear Lord, for all parents throughout the world. May every father and mother become true evangelizers, and pass on to their children the precious gift of faith.

