

THE CATHOLIC CHURCHES OF



ST BERNARD

201 Main St, Blencoe, IA



ST JOHN

1009 13th St, Onawa, IA



ST JOSEPH

510 TIPTON ST, SALIX, IA

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 10, 2023

Parish Staff

Pastor, Rev. Michael J. Erpelding

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Director of Faith Formation, Michelle Rethman

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Secretary – St. John & St. Bernard, Colleen Maule

(712) 423-1004

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Office Hours: Monday – Thursday
7:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Secretary – St. Joseph, Mary Brady

(712) 946-5635

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Office Hours: Monday – Friday
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Websites – St. John: www.stjohnonawa.com

St. Joseph: www.stjoesalix.com

Sacraments

Reconciliation: 30 min. before Mass or by appointment

Baptism: St. John – Sunday, 9:00 a.m.

St. Joseph – Sunday, 11:00 a.m.

Baptism Class: Contact the Director of Faith Formation

Marriage: Arrangements at least six (6) months prior to marriage. Interview with the pastor is required before date for marriage can be given.

Questions of the Week

Adults: With whom could you be more patient this week, as God has been patient with you?

Children: With whom can you be more patient?

We like to think we are totally free, but the bitter truth is we simply are not. Or better put, our freedom is limited on every side – by governments, corporate giants, physical and mental frailties, genetic shortcomings, and even the boundaries of time and space, and above all, the burden of our sins and pending deaths. In our day, we are perhaps particularly aware that we are not free to disconnect from the technocratic rulers of the air. If you doubt me, try not paying your internet bill and see what happens. We are not totally free.

It's nothing new, of course. In Jesus' day, everyone felt the crushing weight of the Roman Empire. You can say you're free all you want. But try not paying your taxes to Rome and see what happens.



Once we feel this burden in our own lives – however it comes – we are ready to hear the

stunning announcement that commences Mark's gospel, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." It's not a simple perfunctory introduction, but a dramatic announcement of new freedom. The word "gospel" was a political, even military, term. It meant: a great victory has been won and a new king is in charge. This Jesus – not the Roman emperor – is God's son, and he has defeated all that crushes human freedom. It's time to follow him and be truly free. This week let's refuse to submit our freedom to false rulers – especially that of sin. And let's rejoice that Christ is coming to make us perfectly free from all our oppressors.

– Father John Muir
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WEEK OF DECEMBER 10, 2023

Mass Schedule for St. John and St. Joseph Churches

Day	Date	Time	Mass Intentions	Location
Monday	December 11		No Mass	
Tuesday	December 12	9:00 AM	Fran Mitchell	St. Joseph
Wednesday	December 13	9:00 AM	Bob Bruns	St. John
Thursday	December 14	9:00 AM	Pauline & Walter Scott	St. Joseph
Friday	December 15	9:00 AM	Paul Benjamin	St. John
Saturday	December 16	4:00 PM	Parishioners of St. John, St. Joseph & St. Bernard	St. Joseph
Sunday	December 17	9:00 AM	Deacon Glenn & Tom Heisterkamp	St. John
		11:00 AM	David Menard	St. Joseph

GROWING IN OUR FAITH

Religious Education News

Religious Education Schedule	
December	
13 th	Classes, 6:30 – 7:30 PM
20 th	Christmas Pizza Party!, 6:30 – 7:30 PM
27 th	No Religious Education Classes
January	
3 rd	No Religious Education Classes
10 th	Classes, 6:30 – 7:30 PM
17 th	Classes, 6:30 – 7:30 PM
24 th	Classes, 6:30 – 7:30 PM
31 th	Classes, 6:30 – 7:30 PM
February	
7 th	Classes, 6:30 – 7:30 PM
14 th	No classes – Ash Wednesday Masses
21 st	No classes – Lent Reconciliation
28 th	Classes, 6:30 – 7:30 PM

Attention Parishioners: This year presents a special occurrence as the Fourth Sunday of Advent falls on December 24th, immediately followed by Christmas Day on December 25th. Please note that each of these days is a separate holy day of obligation. We kindly remind you to attend two distinct Masses, one for the Fourth Sunday of Advent and another for Christmas, to fulfill your sacred obligations.



4th Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 23	4:00 pm	St. Joseph-Salix
Sunday, December 24	9:00 am	St. John-Onawa
Sunday, December 24	11:00 am	St. Joseph-Salix

Christmas

Sunday, December 24	4:00 pm	St. Joseph-Salix
Sunday, December 24	6:00 pm	St. John-Onawa
Monday, December 25	9:00 am	St. John-Onawa
Monday, December 25	11:00 am	St. Joseph-Salix



Prayer for the 2nd Week of Advent

Dear Lord,
 Open our eyes to the people
 You have specifically placed in our
 path
 so that we can speak healing
 and comfort to them.
 Help us to prepare for the coming
 of Your kingdom, together.

Amen.

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LIVE THE LITURGY - INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

Christ is making a journey into each of our hearts this Advent. Clear away whatever blocks his way. Make straight the path. Invite him in.

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ST. JOHN & ST. BERNARD NEWS

St. John & St. Bernard Weekly Offering	
Registered Families: 185 November 26, 2023	
Envelopes and Loose Giving	\$1424.00
E-Offering	
Food Pantry	
St. Bernard	\$85.00
Christmas Flowers	\$100.00
Camp. Human Development	\$40.00
Total for Nov. 26, 2023	\$1649.00

ST. JOSEPH NEWS

St. Joseph Weekly Offering	
Nov. 25-26, 2023	
Envelopes and Loose Giving	\$2578.00
E-Offering	\$325.00
Maintenance	\$10.00
Candles	\$63.00
Total for Nov. 25-26, 2023	\$2976.00



Now is the time to continue the tradition of donating Christmas Flowers to decorate our Church for the beautiful Christmas Season. Please use the envelope in your packet or just mark an envelope "Christmas Flowers" and list the names you are donating in memory of/in Honor of. These will be published in the Christmas week bulletin.



Don't forget your bells for the procession at Christmas Eve Mass!

St. John's 2024 Calendars are here. Please pick yours up at the entrance of the Church.



Learn about some unique Christmas traditions from around the world!



GERMANY

Starting in the 16th Century, Germans hide a pickle somewhere within the branches of their Christmas tree. Whatever child finds it receives a gift!

TIME Talent TREASURE

As we begin a new liturgical year, please prayerfully consider serving in one of the many ministries within our parish. St. Joseph parishioners recently received a ministry sign-up form in the mail. Please spend a few minutes in quiet contemplation and listen to where the Holy Spirit is calling you to serve. We are in particular need of catechists and aides for our Religious Education program and altar servers for mass. If you did not receive a giving statement and ministry form in the mail, please contact the parish office. Your information may need to be updated in our database. If you are in need of a ministry form or parish registration form, they are available at the back of church.

Don't forget to pick up your copy of "the Word among us" for daily Advent reflections and meditations. Booklets are on the table at the back of church.

A reminder that Father Erpelding is available for confessions before the 4:00pm Saturday mass at St. Joseph. Receiving this sacrament during Advent is a beautiful way to prepare yourself for the coming of Jesus Christ at Christmas.



"Thank you" to all who helped get the missalettes changed out for the new church year. Many hands make light work. It was greatly appreciated!

God Laughs

A Rabbi and a Priest were sitting together on a train, and the Rabbi leans over and asks, "So how high can you advance in your organization?" The Priest says "If I am lucky, I guess I could become a Bishop." "Well, could you get any higher than that?" asks the Rabbi. "I suppose that if my works are seen in a very good light that I might be made an Archbishop" said the Priest a bit cautiously. "Is there any way that you might go higher than that?" "If all the Saints should smile, I guess I could be made a Cardinal", said the priest. "Could you be anything higher than a Cardinal?" probed the Rabbi. Hesitating a little bit, the Priest said "I suppose that I could be elected Pope, but..." So the Rabbi says "And could you be anything higher than that?, is there any way to go up from being the Pope?" "What!!! I should be the Messiah himself!?" The Rabbi leaned back and said "One of our boys made it."

PARISH	GOAL	PLEDGES	REMAINING
ST. JOHN	\$8,987.00	\$5660.00	\$3327.00
ST. JOSEPH	\$12,481.00	\$9257.00	\$3224.00



Together as One (TAO) supports the Peace and Justice Commission. The commission works to make Catholic Social Teaching come alive by providing programs, projects and various advocacy efforts for parishes and individuals.

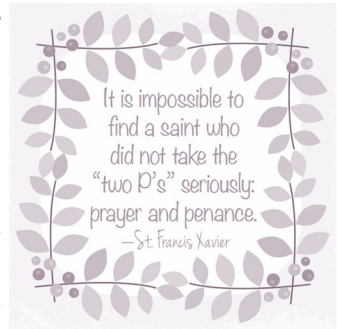


Is Father asking for help?

Texts and emails that appear to be from pastors of parishes in our diocese have been sent, requesting assistance through the purchase of gift cards. Please note that these messages are a **SCAM** and that your pastor would not contact you via text and email to ask for gift cards. You should not reply to the message or click on any links. If you are in doubt regarding the message's legitimacy, you can contact the parish office directly.

First Reconciliation

First Reconciliation, one of the Sacraments of Healing, is around the corner for our delightful second grade students. Below is the schedule for each parish. Please contact Michelle Rethman, Director of Faith Formation, at 712-202-6641 if you have



questions or concerns. Parents, regarding the dates below, we invite both parents to participate; however, we ask that at least one parent attend the meeting, retreat, and first reconciliation. We look forward to walking with your children as they prepare for the sacraments this year!

St. Joseph Church

- ☞ **Parent Information Meeting:**
Wednesday, January 10, 2024, 6:45 PM
- ☞ **Retreat:**
Wednesday, January 24, 2024, 6:30 PM
- ☞ **First Reconciliation:**
Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 5:00 – 5:30 PM

St. John Church

- ☞ **Parent Information Meeting:**
Wednesday, January 17, 2024, 6:45 PM
- ☞ **Retreat:**
Wednesday, January 31, 2024, 6:30 PM
- ☞ **First Reconciliation:**
Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 6:00 – 6:30 PM

