

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

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 17, 2023

Parish Staff

Pastor, Rev. Michael J. Erpelding

(712) 423-2656

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Director of Faith Formation, Michelle Rethman

(712) 202-6641

michelle@stjohnparishonawa.com

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

(712) 423-1004

secretary@stjohnparishonawa.com

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

Secretary – St. Joseph, Mary Brady

(712) 946-5635

secretary@stjoeparishsalix.com

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: What work of justice could you do this week to bring someone joy?

Children: What could you do for someone this week to make them happy?

Why do we believe in Jesus and the Catholic Church? Why should we continue to do so? We've never seen him face-to-face (at least not most of us, I assume). Most of us have never had mystical visions of angels or saints. We live in the same world as our atheist and secularists friends. Why do we believe in Christ if we've never seen him?

The simple, symbolic answer the Gospel presents to us this week might surprise us: we believe because of John the Baptist. Early in John's Gospel we hear:

"There was a man sent from God, his name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him." The Baptist powerfully announces Jesus. This is a historical fact, and it is also now a pattern at work in our lives.

John the Baptist stands for the entirety of the old covenant, everything entrusted to the Jewish people. And yet he prophetically opens the door to something entirely new in Jesus, to the revival and fulfillment of God's promises. In every generation, and in every human life, God continues to do this. He has done it through people named Augustine, Francis, Catherine, Theresa, and countless others. In my life, the Baptist's spirit has come through persons named Eric, Paul, Mary, and Ron. I challenge you to name at least three people through whom God has announced the coming of Jesus in your life. Consciously thank God for their testimony. And let's commit ourselves to listening to the spirit of John the Baptist testify again this week so that we might more strongly believe in the light.

– Father John Muir

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WEEK OF DECEMBER 17, 2023

Mass Schedule for St. John and St. Joseph Churches

Day	Date	Time	Mass Intentions	Location
Monday	December 18		No Mass	
Tuesday	December 19	9:00 AM	Bud & Rita Brassfield	St. Joseph
Wednesday	December 20	9:00 AM	Deb Ballantyne	St. John
Thursday	December 21	9:00 AM	Pete & Shirley Copple	St. Joseph
Friday	December 22	9:00 AM	Dean Murrell	St. John
Saturday	December 23	4:00 PM	Maurice Welte	St. Joseph
Sunday	December 24	9:00 AM	Brynnlie Hausman	St. John
		11:00 AM	Parishioners of St. John, St. Joseph & St. Bernard	St. Joseph
		4:00 PM	Ben Cooper Family	St. Joseph
		6:00 PM	Breyn Maule	St. John

GROWING IN OUR FAITH

Religious Education News

Religious Education Schedule	
December	
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 3rd Week of Advent

Dear Lord,
Give us boldness as we move through the motions of the holiday season, to reflect and remind those around us of Your deep and abiding love for them.

Allow them to encounter Your love, through us.
Amen.

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LIVE THE LITURGY - INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

God sends a John the Baptist into every person's life – someone who prepares His way, who calls out His truth. Look for the John the Baptist in your life. Pray you can be this person for someone else.

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ST. JOHN & ST. BERNARD NEWS

St. John & St. Bernard Weekly Offering

Registered Families: 185
December 3, 2023

Envelopes and Loose Giving	\$1301.00
E-Offering	\$74.70
Food Pantry	
St. Bernard	\$95.00
Christmas Flowers	\$220.00
Camp. Human Development	\$10.00
Total for Dec. 3, 2023	\$1700.70



It is not too late if you want to donate Christmas flowers in memory of your loved ones. Just drop an envelope by the office or in the collection basket, with Christmas Flowers written on it and the names of those you choose to honor. A list of donors and their loved ones will be in the bulletin for Christmas Week. Thank you!



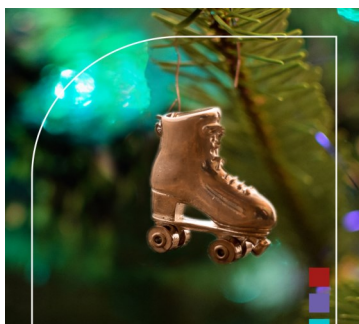
Children, Don't forget your bells for the procession at Christmas Eve Mass! Let's meet in the back of the Church!

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



NEW ZEALAND

On the island, Christmas trees look a little different. Residents use the native pōhutukawa tree, with its bright crimson flowers, as their symbol for Christmas.



VENEZUELA

Every year, roads are closed to traffic in the city of Caracas to let people participate in *las pantinatas* — "the skating" where everyone roller skates to Christmas Mass.

ST. JOSEPH NEWS

St. Joseph Weekly Offering

Dec 2-3, 2023

Envelopes and Loose Giving	\$4223.55
E-Offering	\$183.00
Maintenance/Emergency	\$50.00
Candles	\$80.00
Food Pantry	\$150.00
St Joseph Education/Christmas	\$30.00
Christmas Flowers	\$495.00
Total for Dec 2-3, 2023	\$5211.55

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.

An annual tradition our parish has observed at the Christmas Eve mass is for the children to process in with the baby Jesus, ringing bells. We invite *all children* to gather at the back of church before mass for this procession. Children can bring any type of bell from home. We will have a few extra bells in the back, should someone need one. Following the procession, the baby Jesus will be placed in the manger at the front of church signifying the birth of our Savior.



Thank you to Deb and Fred Craig for all of your work in various ministries, especially decorating the church throughout the liturgical year. You create an environment that helps us enter more deeply into the season at hand and accentuate the beauty of our sacred spaces.

God Laughs

A minister needed to paint his church but ran low on paint. He watered the paint to stretch it out and finally finished the job. A crashing rainstorm came and washed away the paint. And the Lord said to the thrifty minister: Repaint, repaint and thin no more.



PARISH	GOAL	PLEDGES	REMAINING
ST. JOHN	\$8,987.00	\$5660.00	\$3327.00
ST. JOSEPH	\$12,481.00	\$9457.00	\$3024.00



Together as One (TAO) supports the Propagation of the Faith. The Propagation of the Faith seeks prayer, sacrifice and financial support for the Church's missionary work.

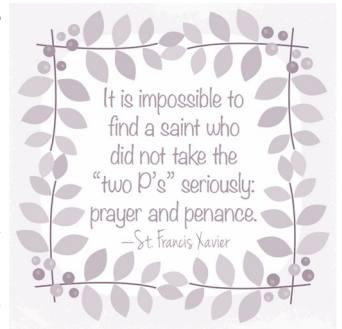


Is Father asking for help?

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

