



Our Lady OF THE Prairie

CATHOLIC CHURCH

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday | 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

Mass Schedule

Weekend Masses

Saturday | 4:15pm

Sunday | 8:00am, 10:00am

Weekday Masses

Tuesday | 6:30pm

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday | 8:30am

Holy Days & Holidays

Consult bulletin.

Eucharist Adoration

Wednesday | 9:00am - 10:00pm

Sacraments

Sacrament of Confession

30 mins prior to Mass.

Sacrament of Marriage

Make arrangements with the Parish Office six months prior to proposed wedding date.

Sacrament of Baptism

Congratulations! Thank you for accepting and caring for one of God's greatest gifts. As part of Baptism preparation, expectant parents are required to attend Mass weekly. Please contact the Parish Office (952) 873-6564. We look forward to getting to know you and your baby.

Bulletin Announcements

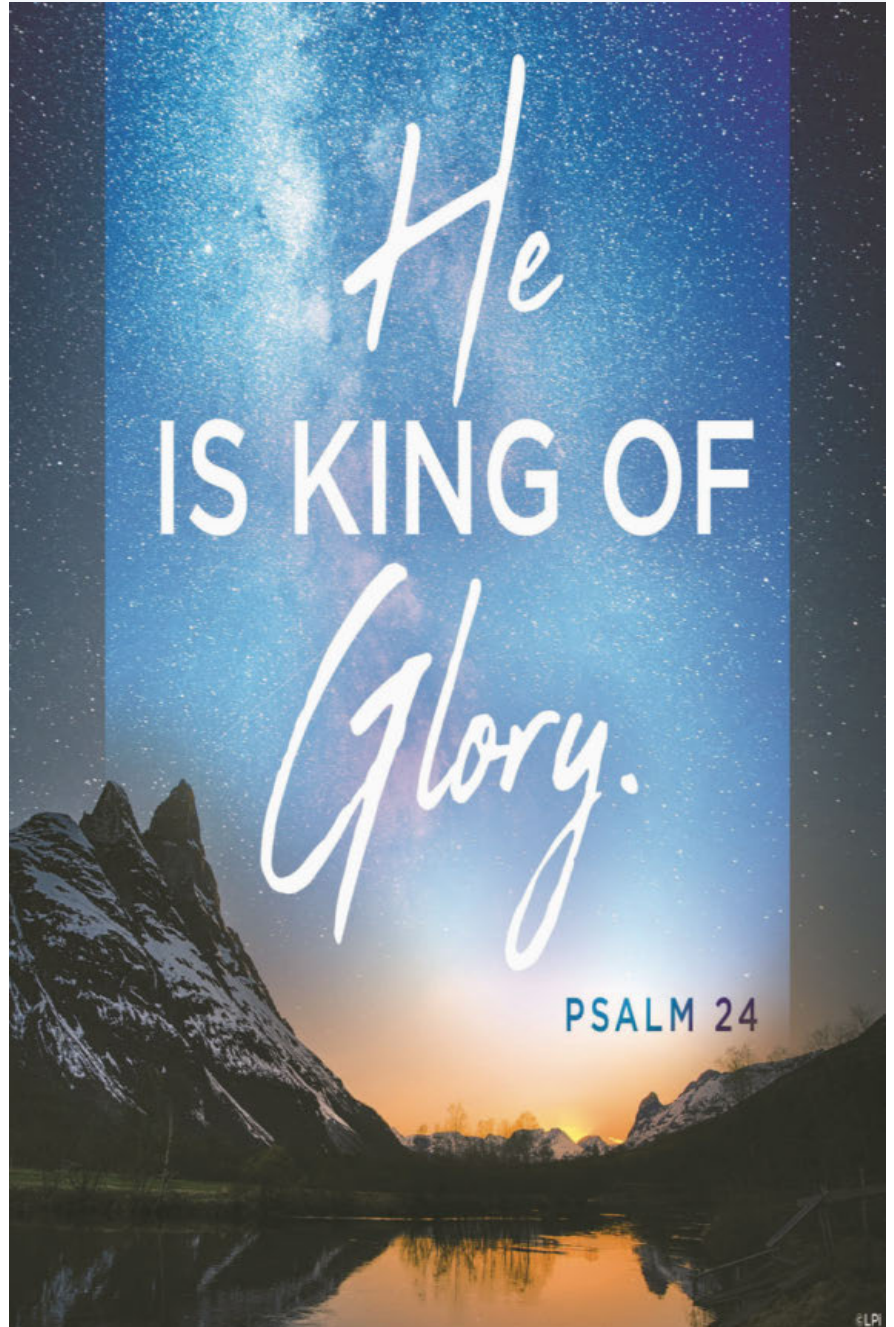
If you would like to post in the bulletin, please send an email to: bulletineditor@olp.church by noon on Monday for the following Sunday. (Holidays may have earlier deadlines)

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

Please contact 952-992-0140

200 East Church Street |
Belle Plaine, Minnesota 56011

November 24, 2024



©LPI

PARISH STAFF

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LAY LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

TRUSTEES

Charlotte Mulroy, Sue Schultz

PARISH COUNCIL

Mike Buchanan, Dan Flynn, Ginny Morgan, Allen Schmitz, Ty Buesgens, Renee Schultz, James Fogarty, Brian Berger, Joan Brueggemeier, Bob Smith, Susan Cole, Greg O'Brien

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Ashley Simons, Matt Offerdahl, Loni Scheff, Danielle Campos, Kim Baltus

FINANCE COUNCIL

Dan Neisen, Maria Tracy, Jerome Flaherty, Joe Vandermark, Jim Koeppe

PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY



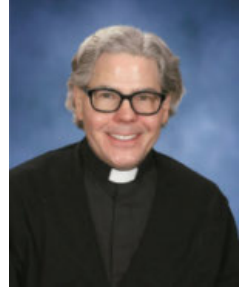
Natalie (Covington) Ruiz
Jordan Ruiz
David May
Dylan May
Sean Alander
Alex Vandermark

and for all military members & their families.

If your family has an enlisted service member, please contact Ginny Morgan: (701) 212-3109 (leave a message).

A MESSAGE FROM FATHER MICHAEL . . .

This weekend concludes the church year with the solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. Jesus Christ is the universal king and judge of all, the central truth of our Christian faith. The readings this week focus on the kingship of Jesus and our need to recognize that kingship in our lives. It is a kingship that offers salvation for those who acknowledge his might and majesty.



The Gospel is a reminder that truth is found in the person of Jesus Christ and those who seek the truth are carefully listening to his voice. It is a voice that calls us to follow God's ways. Our attentiveness to God's activity in the world and in our lives helps us to recognize the many titles ascribed to Jesus in the second reading from the book of Revelation. Jesus truly is all of them and even much more: faithful witness, firstborn of the dead, ruler of the kings, alpha and omega, the one who is, was and will be and truly the almighty! If we remember that through the kingship of Jesus in our lives, we can achieve salvation and everlasting life, then we are strengthened in our resolve to grow in virtue!

As we close out the church year, we also consider that next week we begin a new liturgical year. It is a time to make resolutions, grow in holiness and desire to make changes in our lives. May we resolve to stay close to the Church so that we can discover the beauty of truth and goodness. We always have opportunities to better learn our faith and witness our dedication to evangelize. When we are close to the Church, we are close to heaven! And heaven is the destiny for those who acknowledge Jesus as Lord and King!

God bless you!

Father Michael Kaluza

Prepare your heart for the Lord . . .



ADVENT COMMUNAL PENANCE
Wednesday, December 4
6:30 PM

Several visiting pastors will hear confessions.



PRAYER LIST

If you know of someone you would like added to the prayer list, please notify the bulletin editor or Parish Office. Obtain the permission of the person you wish to add before calling or emailing. Names will remain on the list for four weeks.

Bud Steen

Bob Koenig

Matt Hennen

Deacon Bob Raleigh

Ron (Franny) Gerres

Mona Bentfield

Rajen Sidhu

Don Morrison

Dave Buesgens

Eileen Effertz

Elmer Lambrecht

Lisa Pobuda



**Belle Plaine
Police Department
10th Annual Toy Drive**

The Belle Plaine Police Department will be accepting donations of brand new toys for children in need. All donated toys will be distributed to local children whose families are unable to purchase gifts this holiday season. This is an opportunity to help someone in need.

November 13 - December 23

Toy distribution to families will begin on Wednesday, December 11. Although we will collect toys until Monday, December 23, we ask that you donate before December 11, so families can have a good selection of toys to choose from.

- All toys should be new and unwrapped.
- Gifts are accepted for children up to 17 years of age.
- Realistic looking toy weapons and gifts with food will not be distributed.

While purchasing items for smaller children is a pretty simple task, donors often wonder what to get pre-teens. We recommend sporting equipment, board games, books, hand-held electronics and gift cards.

Drop off locations will be at the City of Belle Plaine, Hardware Hank, Coborn's, First National Bank, Cornerstone State Bank, Matt Saxe Chevrolet-Buick, **Our Lady of the Prairie Church**, Trinity Lutheran Church, St. John's Lutheran Church and the Belle Plaine Police Department.

Feel free to contact Belle Plaine Police Department with any questions (952) 873-4307.

Families in need of toys can call the Belle Plaine Police Department Monday through Friday (7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.) to make a reservation.



Retirement Fund for Religious

**Please give to those who
have given a lifetime.**

Collection on December 7 & 8

The Best Gift

Tuesday, December 17
following 6:30pm Mass

Our Lady of the Prairie
Catholic Church

*A Christmas Musical
Performed by
Our Lady of the Prairie
Catholic School Students*

* Kingsway Performance
Wednesday, December 18
9:30am

This multigenerational play is based on a grandparent sharing the true story of Christmas.

Come share in the joy of discovering the best gift ever, the birth of our Lord and Savior!

Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion Training



For new and current EMHCs

November 30th/Dec 1st Following all Masses

Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service

An Ecumenical Community Thanksgiving Service, sponsored by Belle Plaine area congregations will be hosted by First Presbyterian on

Monday, November 25th at 7:00 pm.

Refreshments will be served by First Presbyterian Church.

The Thanksgiving Worship is also intended to remember the needs of others. In this regard, people are encouraged to bring two kinds of offerings with them to the church.

One is an offering of nonperishable food items to be donated to a local food shelf. Food shelves in our area have made it known that the need is great, and so a generous response would be welcome.

The second offering goes the local "Good Samaritan Fund," that provides help for transient people in our area. And is supported by participating churches.

The community is welcomed and invited to attend.



EAT, GATHER & BE GRATEFUL

THE FEAST

A BELLE PLAINE COMMUNITY EVENT

GRACIOUSLY FUNDED BY MOODY ENTERPRISE

An event for community members to come together and show gratitude for each other and celebrate our wonderful community. Activities, open gym, arts & crafts and a warm meal will be served.

Sunday, November 24

11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Oak Crest Elementary

- Free Will Donation -

Free will donation goes towards scholarships for our youth!

Interested in meal delivery? Call - (952) 649-2499



STEWARDSHIP & ATTENDANCE

For the Week of November 17, 2024

Collection and attendance totals were not available at time of publishing due to an early print deadline.

Total Registered Active Families 486
Total Registered Active Members 1,293

Automatic Contributions

Did you know your contributions can be automatically deducted from your checking, savings, or credit card account? For more information call the parish office at 952-873-6564 or check out our website.



Holiday Boutique

Dec 7th 3:00-6:00pm
Dec 8th 9:00am-Noon.

OLP Church
200 E Church St - Rodel Hall

Join us for holiday shopping while supporting OLP School students.



Empowering men to live their faith at home, in their parish, at work and in their communities.

Join Today at www.kofc.org/Join or by scanning QR Code



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monday, November 25

No Mass at OLP
 6:30-8:00pm Consecration to Jesus thru Mary in Roedel Hall
 7:00pm Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service at First Presbyterian Church

Tuesday, November 26

6:30 pm Mass
 1:30pm Mass at Kingsway
 7:00pm Church Night Meetings

Wednesday, November 27

8:30am Mass
 5:00-7:00pm Women's Small Group in Conference Rm
 6:20pm No Religious Education - Thanksgiving Break

Thursday, November 28 Thanksgiving Day

Parish Office Closed
 8:30 am Mass

Friday, November 29

Parish Office Closed
 8:30 am Mass

Saturday, November 30

4:15 pm Mass
 EMHC Training after Masses

Sunday, December 1 1st Sunday of Advent

8:00 am Mass
 9:00 am Choir Practice
 10:00 am Mass
 EMHC Training after both Masses

Saturday, November 30, 4:15 pm

Greeters: Volunteer
 Lector: Charlotte Mulroy
 EMHC: Charlotte Mulroy, Dan Flynn, Volunteers (2)
 Ushers: Jim Fogarty, Joe Hartman, Scott Williams, Chris Weldon
 Servers: Elijah Williams, Volunteer
 Gift Bearers: Volunteers

Sunday, December 01, 8:00 am

Greeters: Eric & Lisa May
 Lector: Sharon Beach
 EMHC: Rita Halquist, Sharon Schmitz, Susan Cole, Bob Fahey
 Ushers: Mark Hartman, Calvin Hartman, John Edberg, Paul Guertin
 Servers: Henry Hennen, Luke Hennen, Peter Hennen
 Gift Bearers: Volunteers

Sunday, December 01, 10:00 am

Greeters: Rick & Ginny Morgan
 Lector: Mary Randklev
 EMHC: Paula Covington, Jim Covington, Edsel Faunillan, Volunteer
 Ushers: Jim Gerres, Jim Covington, Jeff Klein, Johan Miller
 Servers: Cole Chessen, Emmett Strauss, JD Vandermark
 Gift Bearers: Volunteer
 EMHC: Mike Buchanan (Kingsway) Georgine Gansen (Lutheran Home)

MASS INTENTIONS

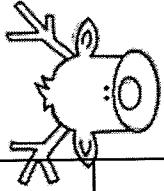
Mon 25 Nov † No Mass
 Tue 26 Nov 6:30 pm † d. Gary McCue
 Wed 27 Nov 8:30 am † d. Jake & Irene Balk
 Thur 28 Nov 8:30 am † d. Susan Fahey
 Fri 29 Nov 8:30 am † d. Frank & Bea Bigaouette
 Sat 30 Nov 4:15 pm † d. Phyllis Muecke
 Sun 01 Dec 8:00 am † d. Lynn Skelly
 10:00 am † For the Parish

READINGS

Readings for the Week of November 24, 2024

Sunday: Dn 7:13-14/Ps 91:1, 1-2, 5 (1a)/Rv 1:5-8/Jn 18:33b-37
Monday: Rv 14:1-3, 4b-5/Ps 24:1bc-2, 3-4ab, 5-6/Lk 21:1-4
Tuesday: Rv 14:14-19/Ps 96:10, 11-12, 13/Lk 21:5-11
Wednesday: Rv 15:1-4/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 7-8, 9/Lk 21:12-19
Thursday: Rv 18:1-2, 21-23; 19:1-3, 9a/Ps 100:1b-2, 3, 4, 5/Lk 21:20-28
Friday: Rv 20:1-4, 11—21:2/Ps 84:3, 4, 5-6a and 8a/Lk 21:29-33
Saturday: Rom 10:9-18/Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 11/Mt 4:18-22

OUR CLASSROOM DECEMBER schedule

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	NOTES	
1 Saint of the Month St Teresa of Avila	2 All School Assembly Week 1 Advent Prayer NWEA Data Analysis	3	4 2 nd -3 rd grade mass Saint of the month	5	6 Saint Nicholas Feast Day	7 Holiday Boutique 3-5 pm	"The surest way to determine whether one possesses the love of God is to see whether he or she loves his or her neighbor. These two loves are never separated. Rest assured, the more you progress in love of neighbor, the more your love of God will increase" (St. Teresa of Avila).	
8 Holiday Boutique 3-5 pm	9 Immaculate Conception All School Assembly Week 2 Advent Prayer	10	11 5 th -6 th grade mass Teacher/Staff meeting	12 Our Lady of Guadalupe	13	14		
15 All School Mass - 10:00am	16 All School Assembly Week 3 Advent Prayer	17 Christmas Musical beginning with 6:30pm mass Staff Christmas Party	18 2 nd -3 rd grade mass/St of the month Kingsway Newsletter Due Accreditation mtg Divine Mercy 2:15	19	20 All School Assembly Week 4 Advent Prayer	21		
22	23 Christmas Break	24 Christmas Eve	25 Happy Birthday, Jesus	26 Christmas Break	27 Christmas Break	28 Holy Innocents Martyrs		
29 Holy Family	30 Christmas Break	31 New Year's Eve	"We shall never learn to know ourselves except by endeavoring to know God; for, beholding his greatness, we realize our own littleness; his purity shows us our foulness; and by meditating upon his humility we find how very far we are from being humble." (St Teresa of Avila)					

December 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 8:00 am d. Lynn Skelly 9:00 am Choir Practice 10:00 am For the Parish EMHC Training after both Masses	2 6:30 -8:00pm Consecration to Jesus thru Mary (RH)	3 6:30 pm d. Rev. Larry R. Johnson 7:00 pm KC Meeting(PH) 7:00 pm CCW Meeting (RH)	4 8:30am d. Pauline Holcomb 12:00 pm Ecumenical Lunch 6:20 pm Advent Confession Religious Ed Gr.3-5 arrive with Family 6:30 pm Communal Penance 5-7pm Women's Small Grp Mtg. (CR)	5 8:30 am d. Carl Gansen 6:30-7:30pm Men's Small Grp (CR)	6 8:30 am d. Mary Farrell	7 4:15 pm d. Bob Johnson 3-7:00 pm Holiday Craft Boutique (RH) CCW using Kitchen CCW Treats & Fellowship following Mass (RH)
8 8:00 am For the Parish 9:00 am Choir Practice 10:00 am d. Teresa Fritz 8am-12pm Holiday Craft Boutique(RH) CCW Treats & Fellowship following Masses (RH)	9 Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Not a Holy Day of Obligation) 6:30 pm d. Gerald Bigaouette Consecration Day(to Jesus thru Mary)	10 1:30pm Kingsway 6:30 pm d. Rev. Robert Valit	11 8:30am d. Carl Gansen 6:20pm Religious Ed Class 5-7pm Women's Small Grp.(CR)	12 8:30am d. Jim(Stubby) Brown 2:00 pm Lutheran Home 6:30-7:30pm Men's Small Grp (CR)	13 8:30am d. Garman Elder	14 4:15pm For the Parish 3:15 pm Choir Practice 2-4pm ME Kitchen
15 8:00 am d. Brent Meyer 9:00 am Choir Practice 10:00 am CCW Members 10:00 am All School Mass 11:00am KC Exemplification (after 10:00am Mass) ME Treats & Fellowship following Masses 7:00 pm ME Meeting (RH)	16	17 1:30 pm Kingsway 6:30 pm Rev. Larry R. Johnson 3:30 pm Staff Christmas Party School Christmas Muisical after 6:30 pm Mass	18 8:30 am d. Bob & Catherine Lambert 6:20pm Religious Ed Class 9:30-10:15 am Christmas Musical Performed at Kingsway 5-7:pm Women's Small Grp.(CR)	19 8:30am d. Gary Halloran 6:30-7:30pm Men's Small Grp (CR)	20 8:30am d. Brent Meyer	21 4:15pm liv.& d. Leo Sullivan Family
22 8:00am d. Kevin Schmitt 9:00am Choir Practice 10:00am For the Parish CUF Treats & Fellowship following Masses	23	24 Office Closed 3:00pm d. Mike Fogarty 4:15pm liv. & d. Don Murphy Family	25 Office Closed 8:00am d. Susan Fahey 10:00am For the Parish No Religious Ed (Christmas Break)	26 8:30am d. Ernesto & liv.Florentina Faunillan 6:30-7:30pm Men's Small Grp (CR)	27 8:30am d. David Gerrish	28 4:15pm For the Parish
29 8:00am d. Teresa Witt 9:00am Choir Practice 10:00am d. Jeff O'Brien KC Treats & Fellowship after 8 & 10 Masses	30	31 6:30pm d. Rev.Robert Valit	1 Office Closed No School No Religious Ed 8:30am d. Beth Zehnder	2 School Resumes 8:30am d. Rev. Robert Valit	3 8:30am d. Paul & Pat Keup	4 4:15pm d. Mary Farrell
5 8:00 am d. Susan Flaschenriem 9:00am Choir Practice 10:00 am For the Parish	6	<i>Notes</i>	Adoration: Every Wednesday 9:00 AM-10:00 PM *RH - Roedel Hall Gathering Space) *CGS - Catechesis of the Good Shepherd *TGA - The Great Adventure	Sacrament of Confession: Half Hour before mass each day *PH - Parish Hall *CI - Catechetical Institute		

A Note from the Principal . . .

Adoration

You and your family are invited to sign up in the office for a 15 minute (or longer) adoration time. Our Adoration Chapel is open every day with the beautiful shade that can be electronically lifted each time a person enters the chapel to adore our Lord.

Easy steps to take:

1. Go to the office and have your family's name added to the list of adorers.
2. Office will give you a code so that you can enter the chapel from the outside door if entering after school hours. Can enter through the door in Roedel Hall during school hours.
3. Pick a day and time that your family can commit to on a weekly basis. You can always add more days and times. Start small & build.
4. Upon entering the chapel, there is an electronic switch on the back wall. Push the up arrow to expose our Lord in the Monstrance.
5. Reverently greet our Lord. He will be so very pleased that you are visiting him.
6. Spend the next fifteen minutes (or longer) adoring Jesus. Use the link below for suggestions to help you get started.
7. Come as a family. Start slow. Receive our Lord's beautiful grace and blessings.
8. Just like all meaningful acts, you will grow stronger with perseverance.

<https://www.catholic.sg/48-things-adoration/>

Saint Therese of Lisieux (the Little Flower - October Saint of the Month, Pray for us.

Mateo Campos is the November saint of the month in kindergarten. **Mateo** embodies the qualities of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux through his everyday actions, often focusing on the little things that make a big difference. **Mateo** shows kindness to others everyday. **Mateo** brings a warm smile and friendly greeting which is an absolute gift to those around him. **Mateo** often lets others go first, and includes everyone in games on the playground. **Mateo** shows concern for others if they get hurt or are sad and is also forgiving to others. Through these small, thoughtful actions, **Mateo** exemplifies the spirit of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux. His quiet kindness and willingness to help others shows that love is often found in the simplest gestures.



Kenan Otto is one of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd grade Saint Therese of Lisieux saints of the month. **Kenan** stands out by the joy he brings to the classroom every morning. **Kenan** has a kind smile and a joyful story to share. **Kenan** brings joy to his classmates with warm friendship by using kind words to helping others feel happy. **Kenan** does kind acts and deeds such as picking up belongings of others if they forgot them, and **Kenan** also loves to spend time telling joyful stories just to see a friend smile! ~Mrs. Hennen

David Koehn is the second saint of the month in Mrs. Hennen's classroom who exemplifies Saint Therese of Lisieux. **David** also likes to do small, kind acts and deeds for others. **David** does little jobs around the classroom such as straightening things up and making sure items get back in the right places. If someone needs help clearing their things away, **David** will help throw trash away, put their books away, keep i-pads in order, and pick up anything that can be put away. **David** enjoys helping whenever asked to help. ~Mrs. Hennen

5th-6th Grade The 5th/6th Grade Saint of the Month is **Garrett Simons**. **Garrett** consistently shows small acts of kindness. He is kind to his teacher by being attentive and following directions. He is kind to his classmates by offering to help when he sees someone in need. Recently, when a classmate spilled, he helped pick crumbs from the carpet. Not only did this help his classmate, it helped our facilities manager. **Garrett** is conscious of other people's feelings and responsible when talking. **Garrett** is a leader to all students in our school. He sets a quiet steady example of how small kindness makes a big difference.

November Service Project - Corporal Work of Mercy - Clothe the Naked

On November 6 OLP students brought in items and packed Boxes of Joy to be sent across the ocean to children who are less fortunate. The joy of giving was felt.

Mrs. Hendricks

A Word from Father Michael . . .

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament has a long history in the church. Perpetual adoration – continuous time before the Blessed Sacrament - can be traced back to the sixth century. It was first called “continuous praise” and found mostly in monasteries and convents. However, one of the earliest locations is the cathedral in Lugo, Spain where adoration was continuous for more than 1,000 years. It took many people to rotate through shifts enjoying the luxury of quiet time alone with Jesus.

In 1226, King Louis VIII of France, introduced adoration at the Chapel of the Holy Cross in Avignon in thanksgiving for his successful efforts to end heresy. It was a remarkable effort to counter those who rejected the real presence of Christ in Eucharist. The people of Avignon prayed night and day in the Holy Cross Chapel for the next 500 years!

In the 15th century adoration continued to expand throughout Europe and now can be found throughout the world. We have an adoration chapel that is open each and every day for prayer before the Blessed Sacrament at any time day or night. I hope that you will spend time in adoration each week. It is a good practice for the entire family and a wonderful way to teach your family to pray.

God bless you, Father Michael Kaluza

Here's what's happening in the classrooms . . .

Pre School

With grateful hearts we entered the month of November. Students observed and explored God's Creation with an "Autumn Investigators" theme. They used their 5 Senses to discover what autumn looks like, smells like, sounds like, feels like and tastes like. Our little artists assembled a tasty paper pie, added feathers to a colorful owl paper bag puppet and bubble wrap printed an acorn. Our STEM activities were focused on the leaves changing colors and how animals prepare for winter. Our hearts were full filling boxes with treasure during the "Box of Joy" service project. Our Letter Jj "Jesus Loves Me" theme taught us about how much Jesus loves each of us. Students cut out a cross and created a heart collage. Mrs. Ross has been conducting assessments as we prepare for Parent- Teacher Conferences. Each student is invited to share a fruit for our "Friendship Fruit Salad" that we will feast on during our Thanksgiving Celebration.

Mrs. Ross



1st/2nd/3rd Grades

Greetings Families,

This month our classroom has been buzzing with energy, creativity and joy. We have put together a 'Thankful Turkey paper bag book' where we listed many things in our lives we are thankful for. We are grateful each day for many gifts from the Lord!

In 1st and 2nd grade students have been practicing strategies for adding and subtracting; 2nd grade has 2-digit numbers to add and subtract; 3rd grade is practicing multiplication. In reading we are decoding and reading by using the skills taught for one syllable words and words with more than one syllable. In 3rd grade our reader is helping us get a little geography on Korea. Our Religion lessons are about the liturgical year and getting ready to start Advent. We had some great shadow activities with our Mystery Science. Our Social unit in 3rd grade is about adapting to the environment and surviving where we live. We have discussed what happens in a natural disaster and how to prepare for the unknown events also. 1st and 2nd grade are studying early settlers and the pilgrims coming to start a new life in America.

Blessings,

Mrs. Hennen



Mrs. Hendricks and Josie sharing a Bible Story

Kindergarten

In the kindergarten classroom, we've been hard at work identifying letters and sounds, and learning how to write them in our workbooks. Our daily phonics games include listening for sounds at the beginning and ending of words, chopping out syllables, and rhymes. In math, we have been practicing writing ordering, and counting numbers. Each morning we keep track of how many days we have been in school and count them by tens and ones. This week we made it to our 50th day in kindergarten! In science we are in a unit all about animal needs: food, shelter, and safety. In Catechesis, we are looking at the geography of Israel including the important cities and regions and making maps.

God Bless,

Ms. Schroers



More happenings on page 3 . . .

Here's what's happening in the classrooms (continued from page 2) . . .



Mrs. Hennen's
1st/2nd/3rd
Grade Students



Our Preschool - 6th grade students are working hard on our upcoming Christmas Musical

"The Best Gift"

Please join us following 6:30pm Mass on
Tuesday, December 17th
at Our Lady Of the Prairie Catholic Church.

All are welcome!

We will also be performing our musical at
Kingsway Retirement Living
Wednesday, December 18th at 9:30 am.

- Mrs. Gleason

Mrs. Moonen's 5/6th Grade Stars Shine Bright!

The age-old question, "What came first, the chicken or the egg?" has finally been answered! The Stars have been studying the anatomy of eggs and chickens while learning about chicken behavior and ethical farming practices. This engaging unit will conclude with hands-on lessons at the Hennen Farm. Additionally, the Stars braved a cool and rainy morning at the Ney Center to search for evidence of raccoon activity. Can you guess what they discovered?

In social studies, our Civil War unit is wrapping up, with each student presenting a key component of this pivotal time in history. From the Underground Railroad to battlefield strategies, the Stars are diving deep into our nation's past.

Meanwhile, in literature, we've been traveling through time with book reports on the classic *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle. Language lessons have focused on direct objects and transitive verbs, culminating in heartfelt letters to veterans in honor of Veterans Day.

In math, numbers have been factorized, vocabulary words have been defined and woven into sentences, and spelling words have been mastered!

As we move into December and prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, we aim to operate with excellence and grace, always keeping our focus on God. We continue working with Dr. Hendricks to explore His Word, using it as a guiding truth for our class. We look forward to sharing His love and wisdom in all we do.



PE: In November, we have been focusing on the fundamentals of soccer, which includes dribbling, passing and shooting like basketball but with our feet instead of our hands. Rainy weather has kept us inside a few times, but that doesn't slow us down!

Art: K-2 has started their next Famous Artist study - Jackson Pollock. We learned that he took a very different approach to painting than most artists of his time, and he had a big impact on the world of art. And it is a lot of fun to do! Grades 3-6 started their first Global Art unit, working on a paper version of Kente Cloth from Ghana. We learned about the rich tradition of kente cloth, the meaning behind the colors and how the fabric is used today. All K-6 students also worked on posters for a Recycling Poster contest.

Mrs. Vandermark



More happenings on page 4 . . .

A Season of Faith and C-STEM Learning at Our Lady of the Prairie

Dear Families,

I'm thrilled to share updates from our C-STEM program, where each Friday I have the joy of guiding your children through hands-on projects that connect faith and STEM learning. Here's an overview of what we've been up to in September and October, and what we're looking forward to this November.

September Highlights: Robotics and Weather Technology

We kicked off the year in September with a focus on robotics and weather technology, helping students explore the relationship between science, technology, and stewardship.

- **Robotics:** Students engaged with age-appropriate robotics tools to learn programming and engineering basics:
 - Kindergarten and Grades 1-3 used [Sphero robots](#), which introduced them to coding and problem-solving through movement and control activities.
 - Grades 4-6 worked with [LEGO EV3 robots](#), building and programming robots for tasks that encouraged critical thinking and collaboration.
- **Weather Technology:** We also explored technology related to weather reporting, using our school's official weather station for the City of Belle Plaine ([viewable on Weather Underground](#)). Students learned how weather data is collected and used to make forecasts, linking these insights to real-world stewardship.

October Recap: Engineering with KEVA Planks and Continued Robotics

In October, we shifted focus to engineering principles and creative problem-solving using KEVA Planks, and continued our robotics work from September.

- **KEVA Planks:** Students from all grades used [KEVA Planks](#) to explore building, balance, and engineering design. These projects encouraged discussions on gravity, friction, and the beauty of order in God's creation.
- **Robotics Review:** We revisited programming concepts with Sphero and EV3 robots, reinforcing the skills learned in September and fostering a deeper understanding of how technology can be used thoughtfully and responsibly.

November: Scratch Programming and STEM Fair Preparation

In November, we're launching into new activities that combine coding and creativity, along with beginning preparations for our school's upcoming STEM fair.

- **Scratch Programming:** Each class is working on projects in [Scratch](#) that celebrate God's creation through digital storytelling. Students are using the [Scratch curriculum](#) to create animations that reflect the wonders of the natural world, building programming skills while reinforcing their faith.
- **STEM Fair Planning:** We've started planning for the [Big Bang Catholic STEM Fair](#), encouraging students to choose topics they're curious about, design experiments, and prepare presentations. This project allows them to connect their scientific discoveries with our faith, demonstrating how science and religion can work together to reveal God's world.

Supporting Learning at Home

Here are some ways you can get involved and support your child's learning:

- **Discuss Creation:** Talk about the beauty of nature and our responsibility as caretakers of God's creation.
- **Build Together:** Try making structures at home with materials like blocks or KEVA Planks to explore building and balance concepts.
- **Explore Scratch:** Let your child show you their Scratch projects and explain what they're learning.
- **Brainstorm STEM Fair Ideas:** Encourage your child to brainstorm possible STEM fair topics and support them as they begin their projects.

Thank you for your support in this journey! Together, we're helping our students grow in both faith and knowledge, building a deeper appreciation for the wonders of God's creation.

Blessings,

Joe Vandermark

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 Blessings to all:
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