



Our Lady of the Prairie Catholic Church

200 East Church Street | Belle Plaine, Minnesota 56011 | (952) 873-6564 | ourladyoftheprairie.com

Parish Office Hours

Monday - Friday | 7:30 am - 3:30 pm

MASS SCHEDULE

Weekend Masses
Saturday | 4:15pm
Sunday | 8:00am, 10:00am

Weekday Masses
Tuesday | 6:30pm
Wed, Thur, Fri | 8:30am

Holy Days & Holidays
Consult bulletin.

Eucharist Adoration
Wednesday | 9:00am - 10:00pm
Available 24 hours / 7 days a week

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.

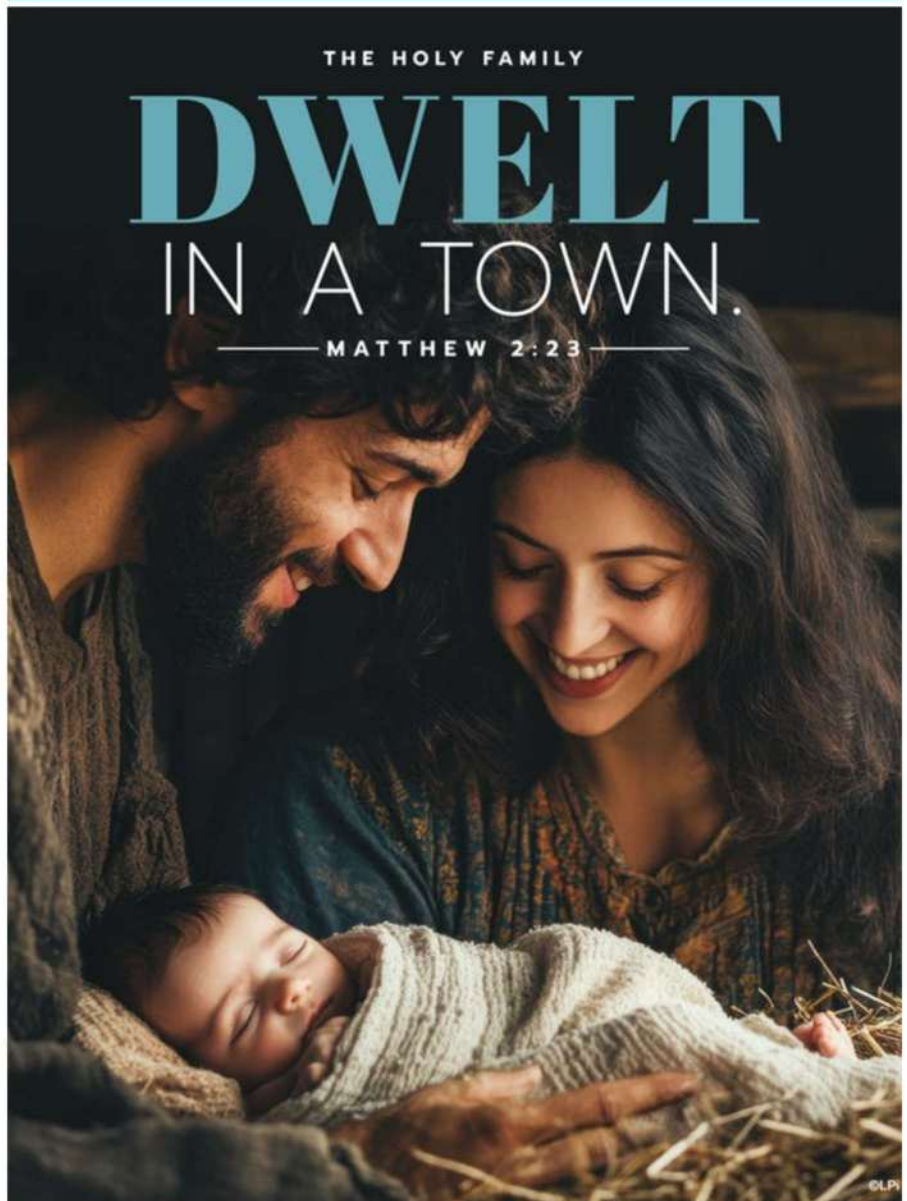
Bulletin Announcements

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

DECEMBER 28, 2025



“Thou shalt call His Name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.” The month of January is dedicated to the **Holy Name of Jesus**, which is celebrated on **January 3**. The first ten days of January fall during the liturgical season known as Christmas which is represented by the liturgical color white, the color of light, a symbol of joy, purity and innocence. The remaining days of January are the beginning of Ordinary Time, which is represented by the liturgical color green. This symbol of hope is the color of the sprouting seed and arouses in the faithful the hope of reaping the eternal harvest of heaven, especially the hope of a glorious resurrection.

PARISH STAFF

(952) 873-6564

Pastor

Fr. Michael Kaluza | mkaluza@olp.church

Business Administrator |

Safe Environment Coordinator

Kelly Pumper | kpumper@olp.church

Administrative Assistants

Anita Glisczinski | Bonnie Weber

frontdesk@ourladyoftheprairie.com

Principal of Parish School

& Preschool Director

Sheila Hendricks | shendricks@olp.church

Facilities Manager

Marty Huss | 952.873.6564

Director of religious Education

Mark Simons |

msimons@ourladyoftheprairie.com

Cemetery Caretaker

Keith Heitkamp |

heitkampkeith@gmail.com

LAY LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Trustees

Charlotte Mulroy, Sue Schultz

Parish Council

Mike Buchanan, Dan Flynn, Ginny Morgan, Ty Buesgens, James Fogarty, Brian Berger, Susan Cole, Greg O'Brien, Jim Glisczinski, Tom Otto, Mona Altman, Edsel Faunillan

School Advisory Council

Ashley Simons, Matt Offerdahl, Kim Baltus, Stephanie Otto, Danielle Campos

Finance Council

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



MESSAGE FROM FATHER MICHAEL . . .



The Holy Family

Merry Christmas! On our first weekend after Christmas we celebrate the Holy Family! Our gatherings with family this week remind us about the importance of belonging and the memories we create become treasures to be remembered over and over. Scripture uses few words to describe the life in the home of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, but the verses that are dedicated to their home life are filled with love, protection and wisdom. Our first reading from the Book of Sirach comes from the Israelite wisdom tradition and offers an ideal for life in the home. The inclusion of both father and mother in the life of a child is essential and confirms the blessings that both offer in their own unique manner. It also reminds us that kindness begins at home and we take that gift from the home to help us on our pilgrimage through life.

The second reading from Saint Paul gives a common-sense approach that can also be translated to home life offering mercy and forgiveness. As we learn from experience, those who we love the most can also cause the most grief. That's why the peace of Christ is an essential element at home. We learn about relationships at home and they translate into our dealings with others. Of course, it was not easy for the Holy Family to flee to a foreign land and then return to create a new life. It is an important lesson for us to know that even the Holy Family encountered opposition, discouragement and trouble. Throughout all of the obstacles of life, they continued to pursue love and harmony.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph pray for us!

Merry Christmas!

Father Michael Kaluza



Prayer
REQUESTS

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Bud Steen | Fred Welsch | Bob Weldon |
| Deacon Bob Raleigh | Kelly Scott | Ron (Franny) Gerres |
| Mona Bentfield | Jan Walerius | Annette Schmit Mann |
| Elmer Lambrecht | Pat Sexe | Mary Ann Bigaouette |
| Don Morrison | Betty Wolf | Bruce & Cathy Halloran |
| Lisa Pobuda | Mary Tuma | Barb Wentworth |
| Kurt Kruger | Briar Fritz | Melissa Kjonaas |
| Katie Cates | Doris Fahey | Maureen Millard |
| | | Betty Chard |
| | | Kevin Halloran |
| | | William Busch |
| | | Dan Flynn |

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 at least four weeks.



17th annual
“Blankets Because We Care”

New or Gently Used
 Blankets, Coats, Socks

November 22 - January 19

Look for the bin in back of church.

Donations will be given to Sharing & Caring Hands, Loaves & Fishes, and the Children’s Hospital in Mpls.



Weather Policy

If school is delayed, closes early or is closed due to poor weather conditions the following activities will not meet:

- All meetings (e.g. CCW, Knights of Columbus, Marriage Encounter).

The following activities will continue unless further notification is provided:

- Daily Mass: Mass is always celebrated Tuesday – Sunday
- Religious Education classes and Adoration.



**Kwik Trip Ultimate Car Wash
 Order Your Card through OLP**

Makes a great gift for any occasion.

Keep on hand & always have a great gift ready!

For \$36 you can purchase a Kwik Trip card preloaded with 5 “Ultimate Car Washes” (a \$50 value)!

Complete this form and return it to the OLP Parish Office with your check (payable to Our Lady of the Prairie).

Place your order by January, 14

Pick up the cards in the office after January 21

Includes:*

- Under Carriage Flush
- Presoak
- High Pressure Wash or soft Foam Wash
- Triple Shine Enhancer
- Spot Free Rinse
- 95 second Super Dry

* Wash amenities may vary by location

Name _____

Phone _____

Number of Cards _____



BASKET COLLECTIONS

Weekly Collection Goal: \$8,344

Date	Amount	(+/-) Goal
Sunday, December 14	\$9,542	+\$1,198
Retirement Fund	\$2,955	

Basket Collection and Attendance totals for the weekend of December 21st were not available due to early holiday publishing deadlines.

ATTENDANCE

Saturday, December 13	4:15 pm	228
Sunday, December 14	8:00 am	144
	10:00 am	260
Livestreamed		37

Total Registered Active Families 512

Total Registered Active Members 1,301

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.



Our Lady of the Prairie welcomes our new parishioners



Tyler & Paige Pekarna
 Paisley and Carson

Coleman Elliott & Deisy Gil
 Elyse, Everly, Alexander, Emsly

Please make them feel at home in their new parish community.

OUR LADY OF THE PRAIRIE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Pancake Breakfast

Knights of Columbus

Sunday, January 4

8am - 12Noon

Serving Pancakes, Sausage, Orange Juice, Milk, Coffee.

FREE WILL Offering

SAVE THE DATE: Second Annual Sock Hop
 January 31, 2026, after 4:15 PM Saturday Mass.
 The Shaw Brothers will perform live.
 Tickets will go on sale mid-January.

MASS INTENTIONS				
MON	29	DEC	No Mass	
TUE	30	DEC	6:30 pm	† d. Teresa Witt (aod)
WED	31	DEC	8:30 am	† liv & d. Thomas & Yvonne Miron Family
			6:30 pm	† d. Wayne Mattison (aod)
THU	1	JAN	8:30 am	† d. Duane Busch
FRI	2	JAN	8:30 am	† d. Rev. Thomas H. Sieg
SAT	3	JAN	4:15 pm	† For the Parish
SUN	4	JAN	8:00 am	† d. John Anthony Schilz III
			10:00 am	† Shannon & LaJeunesse Families



You're Invited



KINDERGARTEN ROUNDUP

SAVE THE DATE
 Wednesday,
 January 7, 2026

WHO?
 STUDENTS AND PARENTS
 THAT WILL BE
 KINDERGARTEN READY
 FOR THE 2026-27
 SCHOOL YEAR

8:30-9:00
 CHILDREN'S MASS LED BY OLP SCHOOL.
 COME CELEBRATE MASS WITH OUR STUDENTS.

9:00-9:20
 KINDERGARTEN PARENT INFORMATIONAL MEETING
 MEET IN THE KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM.
 PARENTS ARE FREE TO LEAVE FOLLOWING THE MEETING.

9:30-12:30
 KINDERGARTEN READY STUDENTS WILL SPEND THE
 MORNING EXPLORING THE KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM.
 THEY WILL RETURN TO PRESCHOOL FOLLOWING LUNCH
 OR CAN BE PICKED UP BY PARENT

RSVP BY DEC. 31

ASIMONS@OURLADYOFTHETRAIRIE.COM



Council of Catholic Women
CHRISTMAS FLOWER FUND
In Memory of



Donation forms in back of church

Excess funds will be used for flowers throughout the year.

READINGS

Readings for the week of December 28, 2025

Sunday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14/Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5/Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

Monday: 1 Jn 2:3-11/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6/Lk 2:22-35

Tuesday: 1 Jn 2:12-17/Ps 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10/Lk 2:36-40

Wednesday: 1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13/Jn 1:1-18

Thursday: Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6 and 8/Gal 4:4- /Lk 2:16-21

Friday: 1 Jn 2:22-28/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4/Jn 1:19-28

Saturday: 1 Jn 2:29-3:6/Ps 98:1, 3cd-4, 5-6/Jn 1:29-3

CALENDAR OF EVENTS	
Monday, December 29	
No School - Christmas Break	
Tuesday, December 30	
No School - Christmas Break	
6:30 pm Mass	
Wednesday, December 31 New Year's Eve	
Parish Office OPEN - Christmas Break No School / No Religious Ed	
8:30 am Mass	
6:30 pm Solemnity of Mary (Vigil Mass)	
Thursday, January 1 Solemnity of Mary	
<i>Holy Day of Obligation</i> Parish Office Closed No School - Christmas Break	
8:30 am Mass	
Friday, January 2	
Parish Office Closed No School - Christmas Break	
8:30 am Mass	
Saturday, January 3	
<i>The Most Holy Name of Jesus</i>	
4:15 pm Mass	
Sunday, January 4 The Epiphany of the Lord	
8:00 am Mass	
8:00am-12N Pancake Breakfast <i>- sponsored by Knights of Columbus</i>	
9:00 am Choir Practice	
10:00 am Mass	

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God is a liturgical feast that occurs on January 1st, marking the Octave Day of Christmas. This solemnity celebrates Mary's unique role as the mother of Jesus Christ, who is both fully divine and fully human.

Wednesday, December 31, 6:30 pm New Year's Eve	
<i>Solemnity of Mary - Vigil Mass</i>	
Greeters	Volunteers (2)
Lector	Volunteer
EMHC	Paula Covington, Joe LaJuenesse, Kristen LaJeunesse, Karen Vandermark
Ushers	Volunteers (4)
Servers	Volunteers (4)
Gift Bearers	Volunteers (2)

Thursday, January 1, 8:30 am New Year's Day	
<i>Holy Day of Obligation - Solemnity of Mary</i>	
Greeters	Volunteers (2)
Lector	Sharon Beach
EMHC	Rita Halquist, Sharon Schmitz, Sharon Beach, Georgine Gansen
Ushers	Volunteers (4)
Servers	Volunteers (4)
Gift Bearers	Volunteers (2)
Saturday, January 3, 4:15 pm	
<i>The Most Holy Name of Jesus</i>	
Greeters	Volunteers (2)
Lector	Joe Shimota
EMHC	Betty Weldon, Dan Flynn Joe Shimota, Volunteer
Ushers	Keith Heitkamp, Randy Schumacher, Brad Schultz, Matt Schultz
Servers	Volunteers (4)
Gift Bearers	Volunteers (2)
Sunday, January 4, 8:00 am	
Greeters	Mark & Leticia Fogarty
Lector	Dr. Tim Halloran
EMHC	Susan Cole, Janice Teal, Mary Randklev, Volunteer
Ushers	Mark Hartman, Calvin Hartman, Volunteers (2)
Servers	Teresa Fogarty, David Fogarty, Jeffrey Teal, David Koehn
Gift Bearers	Volunteers
Sunday, January 4, 10:00 am	
Greeters	Al & Dorothy Bartolomei
Lector	Rick Morgan
EMHC	Nora Wermerskirchen, Hannah Wermerskirchen, Joe Vandermark, Karen Vandermark
Ushers	Caleb Wermerskirchen, Ben Covington, Peter Feddersen, Max Wermerskirchen
Servers	Stella Scheff, William Scheff, Paisley Scheff, Volunteer
Gift Bearers	Volunteers
EMHC	Mary Moriarty (Kingsway) Sue Halloran (Lutheran Home)

January 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28 8:00am For the Parish 10:00am Jeff O'Brien	29 No School	30 6:30pm d. Teresa Witt	31 8:30am liv.& d.Thomas & Yvonne Miron 6:30pm d. Wayne Mattison (Vigil Mass for 1/1) No School - Christmas Break No Religious Ed Class (K-8)	1 Holy Day of Obligation Solemnity of Mary 8:30am d. Duane Busch Office Closed No School Christmas Break	2 No School Christmas Break Office Closed 8:30am d. Rev. Thomas H. Sieg	3 Most Holy Name of Jesus 4:15pm For the Parish
4 The Epiphany of the Lord 8:00am d. John Anthony Schilz III 10:00am Shannon & Lajeunesse Families 8:00am - Noon KC Pancake Breakfast	5 School Resumes	6 Father Kaluza Out of Office Father Dvorak Presiding 6:30pm d. Rev. Thomas H. Sieg	7 Father Kaluza Out of Office Father Dvorak Presiding 8:30am liv. Special Intention 6:20pm Religious Ed Class (K-8) Kindergarten Roundup	8 Father Kaluza Out of Office Father Dvorak Presiding 8:30am d. Mary Kolter	9 Father Kaluza Out of Office Father Dvorak Presiding 8:30am Sister Theresa Collison	10 4:15pm For the Parish
11 Baptism of the Lord 8:00am d. Susan Flaschenriem 10:00am d. Phyllis Korkowski Treats & Fellowship following Mass - Catholic United Financial	12	13 1:30pm Mass at Kingsway Mass 6:30pm d. Colleen Murphy McCreight	14 8:30am d. Mike Fogarty 6:30pm Religious Ed Class (K-8) 2:00pm Office Staff Meeting	15 8:30am d. Deacon Jim Thornton 2:00pm Mass at Lutheran Home	16 8:30am liv&d. Susan & Elizabeth Miron End of 2nd Quarter / 1st Semester	17 4:15pm d. Donald & Mary Jane O'Brien
18 8:00am d. Michael John Leuwer 10:00am For the Parish	19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Office Closed School	20 Father Kaluza Out of Office Father Dvorak Presiding 6:30pm d. Msgr. John Richter	21 Father Kaluza Out of Office Father Dvorak Presiding 8:30am d. Susan Flaschenriem 6:20pm Religious Ed Class (K-8)	22 Father Kaluza Out of Office Father Dvorak Presiding 8:30am Gerold Adamek	23 Father Kaluza Out of Office Father Dvorak Presiding 8:30am Dick Hayden	24 4:15pm d. Father Pat McLaughlin
25 Catholic Schools Week 8:00am d. Robert Koenig 10:00am All School Mass 10:00am For the Parish 8:00am-noon School Waffle Breakfast	26 Catholic Schools Week	27 Catholic Schools Week 1:30pm Mass at Kingsway 6:30pm d. Rita Goblirsch	28 Catholic Schools Week 8:30am d. Susan Fahey AOD 12:00pm Deanery Meeting 6:20pm Religious Ed Class (K-8)	29 Catholic Schools Week 8:30am d. Rev. Thomas H. Sieg	30 Catholic Schools Week 8:30am d.Sheila Murphy Ferraro	31 Blessing of Throats 4:15pm d. Joseph & Thelma Ott 5:15pm 2nd Annual Sock Hop
1 Blessing of Throats 8:00am d. Robert Koenig 10:00am For the Parish Treats & Fellowship following Masses - CCW	2 7:00pm - 9:00pm CI Online Application Class (RH)	Notes	Adoration: Every Wednesday 9:00 AM-10:00 PM Sacrament of Confession: Half Hour before mass each day *RH - Roedel Hall Gathering Space *CGS - Caticesis of the Good Shepherd *TGA - The Great Adventure *PH - Parish Hall *CI - Catechetical Institute *ME - Marriage Encounter			



January

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

Saint Michael The Archangel, Pray for us

1

Solemnity of Mary
Mother of God
Happy New Year

2

Christmas Break

3

Most Holy Name of
Jesus

4

Epiphany of the
Lord

5

School resumes
NWEA testing
through Jan. 23

6

7

6th grade mass
Kindergarten
Roundup

8

9

C-STEM

10

11

Baptism of the
Lord

12

13

14

3rd grade mass

15

16

End of 2nd quarter/1st
semester
10:00am School Rosary
School Newsletter Due

17

18

19

Martin Luther King
Jr. Day - no school

20

8:30am Divine
Mercy Chaplet

21

1st-2nd grade mass
Teacher/staff
meeting
Grades due

22

23

NWEA testing window
closes
C-STEM
Report cards sent
home

24

25

Celebrate Catholic
Schools Week
ALL School Mass
10:00
Waffle Breakfast

26

Celebrate Catholic
Schools :
K-6 Ice Skating
PreK Wacky games

27

Celebrate Catholic
Schools
K-6 Skateville
PreK Gingerbread Day

28

Celebrate Catholic
Schools
3rd grade/Saint mass
Tie Blanket Service
Project
PreK-6th Bowling

29

Celebrate Catholic
Schools
Science Fair
Presentations

30

Celebrate Catholic
Schools
Grandparents/Special
Friend 6th grade Mass
Talent Show

31



& CLASSROOM REPORT

O.L.P. School News

IN CHRIST WE GROW

200 East Church Street, Belle Plaine, Minnesota 56011

DECEMBER, 2025

A Message From The Principal . . .

November Saint of the Month: Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, Pray for us.

Kindergarten

Esme Otto best exemplifies the qualities of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary by trying her best. Even when things are difficult, Esme keeps going, finding success and growth in small and steady ways. Esme plays kindly with many different friends on the playground and in the classroom, and is working hard to solve problems in kind ways, and asking for help when needed. Esme has a gentle heart, determination, and sweet smile and is a blessing to those around her. Each day, Esme enters our classroom with a quiet joy and a willingness to learn, grow, and play, reflecting the loving spirit of Saint Elizabeth. ~ Miss Schroers



1st-2nd Grades

Elyse Elliott chosen this month from our classroom for November saint of the month, Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, has a kind and gentle heart. She is calm and on the quiet side when using her voice. This is so peaceful and reflects what many saints try to be like. Elyse asks the lonely person on the playground to play with her. Mrs. Hennen has witnessed Elyse allowing others to join in the game being played.

Elyse works hard to complete assignments, not giving up has helped her become a better reader. Likewise in math class so that adding and subtracting is more fluent. When others are hurt or sad, Elyse shows compassion.

Genuinely, Elyse lives each day peacefully and joyfully in the classroom. ~ Mrs. Hennen

3rd Grade

Geno Campos is an active participant in devotional reading time and reflection. Geno encourages his classmates to put into practice the scriptural passage messages that have been discussed in class prayer time and shows compassion for his classmates by helping them during their daily routine in the classroom; very often Geno puts others' needs before his own. When lunch ends, and line up time for recess begins, Geno routinely, and patiently helps younger students put on

[Continued on page 2 . . .](#)

A Word from Father . . .

Merry Christmas!

As we approach Christmas vacation may we take time to thank God for the wonderful holiday that celebrates the incarnation (word made flesh)! Jesus came to us as a child so that we might not be frightened of God's appearance on earth and that we might rejoice at the coming of the Lord! Jesus is truly the reason for the season and the one who allows us to have life in God and the possibility of eternal life.

Christmas is a favorite celebration that brings families and friends together to celebrate. It is because God chose to become incarnate that we can all the more appreciate the gifts of mercy and salvation that are bestowed upon us as God's family. May we treasure the gift of Christmas and allow it to help in our conversion to make our lives ever more holy! Upon our return from Christmas vacation, we will spend time learning more about ourselves, the church and God!

God bless you,

Father Michael Kaluza

November Student Saints continued from page 1 . . .

their outdoor gear. Geno speaks with a gentle and soft tone when assisting younger students as well as when he reads to reading buddies. Geno was the first person to joyfully bring classroom food donations for the food shelf, and urged his classmates to be charitable to those in need. Geno demonstrates leadership skills in the classroom and strives to be fair and just to each of his classmates and is always excited to serve or read at Mass; his love of Jesus shows in his eyes while reading or serving at Mass. Geno shows many traits and characteristics of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, a faithful servant to Jesus. ~ Mrs. Eischens

6th Grade

St. Elizabeth of Hungary was known for noticing people who were often overlooked such as the poor, the hungry, the lonely. She chose to help them with kindness and respect.

William Scheff shows the same spirit when he looks out for schoolmates who need a friend. In addition, he consistently shares what he has, or offers help without expecting anything in return.

St. Elizabeth used her position to make a difference. She gave away food and clothing, and she cared for sick and injured people by building hospitals. Similarly, William makes his school community better by including others, showing leadership through kindness, and standing up for what's right. Not only is William attentive to his peers, he also is helpful to his teachers, by noticing and acting when tasks need completion. He assists them in directing younger students and making sure our environment is set up for learning. Also, William notices when things are out of place, and he helps organize and maintain our spaces for learning.

William helps classmates with homework and gently corrects them when they've made errors. Recently when working with Least Common Multiples and Greatest Common Factors, he shared his mastery of these concepts with a classmate who'd inadvertently confused them. He is ever patient and quietly works or reads when he completes his work before others.

William is the thoughtful, generous 6th-grade boy who is most like St. Elizabeth of Hungary in the way he treats others.

~ Mrs. Moonen

December Saint of the Month: Saint Nicholas, Pray for us.

Kindergarten

The qualities of Saint Nicholas is someone who quietly but beautifully lives out their faith each day. **Devyn Thoennes** is faithful and has a strong love for God. Devyn participates reverently at Mass-singing, following along, and fully joining in the prayers. During Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Devyn listens carefully, remembers the works, and always has thoughtful answers to share with her classmates.

Saint Nicholas was known for his generosity and joy, and this Devyn reflects that spirit as well. Devyn comes to school with a smile on her face and a happy, positive attitude. Devyn is a good friend to others and helps make our classroom a kinder place. ~ Miss Schroers

1st-2nd Grades

Advent is a great time to be like our saint of the month, St. Nicholas, and be generous and kind to others. St. Nicholas showed us to share our talents.

Mateo Campos is always kind to others. Mateo shows kindness daily by letting others join in the group, working and playing fairly with them. Mateo is always willing to share the classroom games and toys during recess and comes into the classroom with a joyful attitude and smile. The way Mateo talks to his peers and his teacher, gives us joy to be around him and puts a smile on our faces. Having Mateo in our class has brought positivity and enthusiasm, enhancing the learning environment of the classroom and supports a welcoming atmosphere. The contributions Mateo makes with his talents and kindheartedness is a meaningful difference in our class. Mateo takes his classroom assignments seriously and continually improves on his writing, reading, and math skills. This also is a way to show simple talents freely given like St. Nicholas. ~ Mrs. Hennen

3rd Grade

James Offerdahl shows humility daily as he acknowledges, and praises his peers' positive behaviors, and thoughtful actions while he remains quiet and humble about his positive, and thoughtful actions. James seeks to lift up his peers by offering meaningful reflection statements, and encouragement to his peers during devotional prayer time. James shows



Continued on page 3 . . .

November Student Saints continued from page 2 . . .

profound compassion for his peers when they are having difficulty in a subject area and frequently comes to the aid of another peer by offering reassurance, and support. James is generous with giving his time, talents, or tangible items to his peers, and teacher. When it was James' birthday, he thought of others before himself and joyfully gave small gifts to each of his peers. When projects are discussed in the classroom, James always finds a way to contribute to the project supply list, set up, or clean up and frequently reflects on his actions, and words. Keeping true to the teachings of the Catholic Church is a priority for James as he seeks to actively grow, and defend his faith. James shows many traits and characteristics of Saint Nicholas; he is a faithful servant to Jesus. ~ Mrs. Eischen

6th Grade

Peter Hennen and St. Nicholas share many important qualities, even though they lived in very different times. Both show kindness by thinking about the needs of others before themselves. Peter shares his time, snacks, and school supplies to help his classmates. Similarly, St. Nicholas was known for quietly helping people in need, especially the poor and children. Both Peter and St. Nicholas demonstrates selflessness. Peter gives without expecting praise or rewards, just as St. Nicholas gave his money and help anonymously, focusing on doing what was right rather than being recognized. In addition, they share compassion—they notice when others are struggling and feel moved to help. Peter sees when classmates need support and patiently walks them through assignments, whether solving tricky math problems or answering comprehension questions.

St. Nicholas knew great loss. His parents died when he was very young, yet he continued to live with joy and kindness. Peter has also suffered a great loss, as a beloved family member recently passed away. Throughout this difficult season, he has remained cheerful even in his grief. When people are hurting, it can be very difficult to remain compassionate, but Peter is a true role model of grace.

Finally, Peter inspires friends and schoolmates to act kindly, just as St. Nicholas continues to inspire people today through stories of his generosity and care for others. ~ Mrs. Moonen

December Service Projects: Christmas program performance at Kingsway.



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

Preschool

Merry Christmas!

It's wonderful to share the excitement of the holiday season with the preschoolers. This month is a special time of year. The students have learned about "Advent" focusing each week, our relationship with Jesus, with hope, peace, joy and the love he brings to us. Along with many festive projects, discussing the Feast of Saint Nicholas traditions and how it is celebrated. The students participated in the Christmas Musical along with a visit to Kingsway Senior Living for more Christmas music, they all did an amazing job. I wish each one of you a Christmas filled with blessings, love and joy. May the New Year bring you peace and happiness.

Blessings, Mrs. Smith



Thank you to all who attended our Tuesday evening preschool-6th grade Christmas performance. The students did such a great job! I am extremely proud of their efforts and honored to be their teacher. The shadow nativity was beautiful to watch. I wanted to point out that there wasn't a single adult up there directing the students during the nativity. They had it down and took it very seriously.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas!

Carolyn Gleason, School Music Instructor



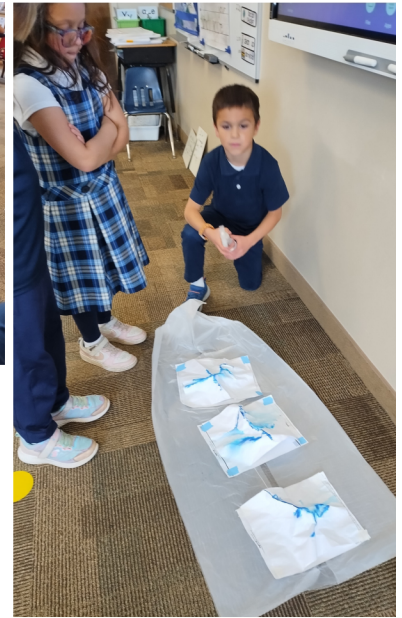
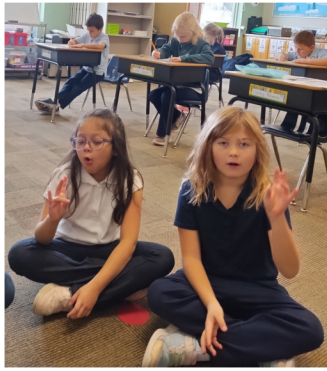
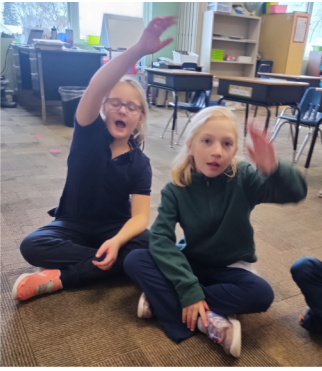
Kindergarten

What a beautiful season of Advent it has been as we prepare our hearts for the birth of Jesus. Throughout this month, we've been reflecting on the Annunciation to Mary, the Nativity of the Shepherds, the Visitation, and the prophecies from Isaiah. "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light." We are joyfully waiting and preparing for Jesus! In kindergarten, the students are continuing to build their knowledge of letter names and sounds. We've been building words in our pocket chart and blending sounds to read them. Students are also being introduced to sight words and learning what makes a complete sentence. In math, our unit has focused on two-dimensional shapes-identifying shapes by their sides and corners, drawing and tracing them, and searching for shapes all around us. We even created shape Christmas trees to decorate our classroom!

Wishing you and your family a blessed and joyful Christmas!

Ms.Schroers





Grades 1st and 2nd

This month we have been busy preparing our hearts for the coming of our Lord. In our Catechesis of the Good Shepherd we heard how Isaiah proclaimed the Prophecy of the Valleys and Mountains, The Prophecy of the Shoot of Jesse, and The Prophecy of the Peaceable Kingdom. All three help us prepare for the second coming and remind us of the promise of old. We enjoy singing Advent songs too!

In our Mystery Science we are learning Erosion and the Earth's Surface. This week we mapped mountains and rivers and did an experiment that helped us understand if we floated down the river we would end up at the ocean. We sprayed crumpled paper representing mountains with water to see the flow of water. In Social Studies we are learning about land and water resources and how we care and use these resources.

We are busy measuring and learning place values to 120 in our math.

In reading we've learned nouns and verbs in first and second grade. First grade is spelling and reading words with the suffix -s and soon -es. Second grade is reading and spelling contraction words and soon possessive nouns. We continue to get outside and experience the snow and weather. Our extra centers this month are art projects that relate to the season, making Santa Claus, ornaments, gingerbread art. Blessings, Mrs. Hennen



3rd Grade

In December students participated in Advent prayer services, and studied the meaning of each week of Advent. Students created a

classroom Advent wreath to aid in the preparation for the coming of Jesus. In reading, students learned about the history of Native American Nations in Minnesota.

In math, students are learning multiplication facts, and how to solve math word problems.

In science, students charted daily weather, and studied weather patterns that were observed and documented.

In social studies, students enjoyed exploring the history, art, culture, and traditions of the Dakota, Ojibwe, and Lakota Native American Nations.

In religion students planned and participated in school Mass, attended Divine Mercy, and school Rosary prayer time. Students attend CGS weekly. Students learned about Saint Nicolas during the month of December. Students studied Our Lady of Guadalupe, and celebrated the Feast Day by attending Mass. Students studied Psalm 23. Blessings, Mrs. Eischens

Mrs. Moonen's 6th Grade Stars had an unexpected treat this month during their trip to the Ney Center. They enjoyed an adventurous day of cross-country skiing- learning new skills and appreciating the winter landscape.

In science the Stars studied microbes and bacteria. They translated this knowledge to a practical science and life skills activity, and made venison jerky. This may be a new tradition as the lab went over very well!

The Stars are mastering how to reduce improper fractions and converting fractions to decimals. They also competed in their second round of Catholic Math League and continue to prepare for upcoming competitions. They are currently ranked 66 out of 96 schools.

Most of the Stars Language Arts, Social Studies and Religious Studies classes are cross circular. While they just finished, Roald Dahl's James and the Giant Peach, they're also exploring character development, conflict resolution, and themes, while learning about key people of Catholic history, such as St. Nicholas and Juan Diego. They are observing Advent together and exploring biblical stories through the Jesse Tree, reflecting on the themes of hope, peace, joy, and love.

The Stars religion in action played out in several ways this Advent season. They visited the Lutheran Home, where students played Christmas carols and read books to residents. They lit 97 candles at The Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration, helping to prepare it for our city's annual Traditions event. They also wrapped up their sock drive event, collecting over 500 pairs of socks and \$502. With the money raised, the Belle Plaine American Legion Auxiliary purchased Christmas gifts for veterans living at the Lutheran Home. Thank you to everyone who participated!





Art

In K-3, we used the work of our next Famous Artist, **Paul Klee**, a Swiss-born German artist, to explore the use of Line in art. Klee once stated that a line is a “dot that went for a walk.” He used lines of all types in his work - thick, thin, curly, straight, short and lines that never ended. For our studio project, students drew a long, continuous looping line and then transformed the shape into a silly creature by adding details and whimsical color.

In our Global Art series, our 6th graders are looking at a lasting and beautiful form of art that was common in **Medieval Europe**: stained glass windows. Students learned that advancements in Gothic architecture enabled the addition of many windows to soaring cathedrals, adding much-needed color and light while telling Biblical stories. They then designed their own cathedral stained glass windows, creating “lead” with black glue and adding color with Sharpies.

Merry Christmas to you and your family!

Mrs. Vandermark



Physical Education
 This month we are learning how to play Pickleball. Through generous donations of paddles and a net, students have the opportunity to learn this game. Thank you for the awesome gift!
 Mr. Palo

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