



SHARING OUR NEWS

JANUARY 2025

The Catholic Parishes of Western Holt & Boyd Counties

Assumption BYM ~ Lynch | St. Boniface ~ Stuart | St. Joseph ~ Amelia
St. Joseph ~ Atkinson | St. Mary's ~ Spencer | St. Patrick's ~ O'Neill
Ss. Peter & Paul ~ Butte

Weekend Masses

St. Boniface—Stuart—Saturday @ 5:00 pm

St. Joseph—Atkinson—Sunday @ 9:00 am

St. Joseph—Amelia—Sunday @ 11:15 am

St. Patrick—O'Neill—Saturday @ 5:00 pm and Sunday @ 10:30 am

Sacred Heart of Boyd County:

Saturday:

Week 1: St. Mary's—Spencer @ 7:00 pm

Week 2: St. Mary's—Spencer @ 7:00 pm

Week 3: St. Mary's—Spencer @ 7:00 pm

Week 4: Ss. Peter & Paul— Butte @ 7:00 pm

Week 5: St. Mary's—Spencer @ 7:00 pm

Sunday:

Ss. Peter & Paul— Butte @ 8:00 am

Ss. Peter & Paul—Butte @ 8:00 am

Ss. Peter & Paul—Butte @ 8:00 am

St. Mary's—Spencer @ 8:00 am

Ss. Peter & Paul—Butte @ 8:00 am

MASS SCHEDULES

Weekday Masses

Monday

5:30 pm—Stuart

Tuesday

5:15 pm—O'Neill

5:30 pm—Stuart

Wednesday

*School Masses subject to change

*8:10 am—O'Neill

*8:15 am—Atkinson

6:30 pm—SHBC Rotation

Thursday

7:00 am—O'Neill

Friday

7:00 am—O'Neill

8:15 am—Atkinson

2025

HAPPY NEW YEAR

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!
In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

ECCLESIASTES 3:11

MINISTRY OF PRAISE—A WORD FROM DEACON FILIPS



Merry Christmas Prayer Warriors!

Contrary to popular belief, Christmas season did not start on Black Friday. It began with Christmas vigil Mass December 24th and continues until January 5th on the Feast of the Epiphany. I think we should use this time to consider what it means for God to come down to earth intentionally, to suffer and die for lowly creatures such as us. We Christians like to think, "Oh yes, we know Christmas is about Jesus coming to earth for our salvation, we know it's not just about Santa Claus." But do we really comprehend how amazing that is? God is so far above us in glory and power, and we are so small in comparison, that we need to contemplate this in terms we can understand.

God did not have to do this. He could have left us in our sin, or He could have redeemed us with a snap of His fingers, but He did it the hard way; Becoming completely human so He could represent us but remaining completely God so He would be the perfect, infinitely valuable sacrifice when He offered himself to the Father as a sacrificial lamb to pay for our sins.

I think Jesus did it the hard way, the way of the cross, instead of snapping His fingers, because He wanted to make a statement. "You don't think your friendship with me matters? You don't think I love you? Hold my beer and watch this! Watch how I, a God, humble myself for you, first in the manger, then at the pillar, then on the cross, and finally, in the tomb. Then watch me blow that tomb wide open and destroy death itself, from the inside!

This month let's pray for our families and country that we all have a good 2025 and get our lives back on track. Following is the continuation of the chapter on Protestantism from my book "Pearls of the Universal Church" available from www.spiritualworkspress.com.

There have been countless issues over which Protestants have split. Is Baptism necessary? Must Baptism be by immersion? Can we lose our salvation? Is the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist true? Should they ordain homosexual or female ministers and bishops? They have no way to settle these arguments except by splitting again. Jesus never could have intended Sola Scriptura to be the way to run His Church because for the first 1,500 years most people couldn't read and there were no cheap Bibles for the average person to own. The printing press was invented about 100 years before Luther.

Jesus did not write the Bible. The Bible did not fall from heaven. There was nothing written down for the first 20 years after Christ died. All of the New Testament books of the Bible were written in the first 100 years A.D. by Catholics who believed what we believe and celebrated Mass much the same way we do.

The Bible does not come with a table of contents saying which writings were to be included. The books included in the Bible were selected by Catholic Church councils and ratified by Popes. They rejected other books from the canon of the Bible because they did not match what had been handed down orally, were not being used in Mass, and they did not judge them to be inspired by the Holy Spirit.

The Bible does not say the words "Sola Scriptura" anywhere in it. If Protestants only follow what is in the Bible and that principle is not in there, where does that leave them? Protestants do not always follow Sola Scriptura themselves. They do not really allow everyone to read the Bible and personally interpret it. Their ministers preach from the Bible and the congregants usually accept the minister's interpretation. Although if they do not, they can fire him or go out and start a new Church that teaches what they do agree with!

Saint Paul tells Christians "So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter." (2 Thessalonians 2:15). The oral teachings of the Apostles that were not written in letters canonized in the Bible are what we call Sacred Tradition.

Until next month . . . Deacon Roger Filips

In Loving Memory . . .

FRANCIS "FRANK" RHODE

July 31, 1929—November 28, 2024

St. Patrick—O'Neill

SHARON BRUEGMAN

September 3, 1945—December 12, 2024

SHBC - Assumption BVM—Lynch

TOM EARLY

May 24, 1950—December 14, 2024

St. Patrick—O'Neill

DAVID MURPHY

April 28, 1969—December 15, 2024

St. Patrick's—O'Neill

CHERYL LOUISE LEE

September 11, 1948—December 17, 2024

St. Patrick's—O'Neill

DON'T SHINE SO OTHERS CAN SEE YOU.
shine so that through you,
OTHERS CAN SEE HIM.
→→→

Welcome to the Newly Baptized . . .

BARRETT EDWARD LUDWIG

Son of Justin & Erin Ludwig

November 24, 2024

SHBC—St. Mary's—Spencer

HENRY DAVID OLSON

Son of Joseph & Laura Olson

November 29, 2024

St. Joseph—Atkinson

BRAYDEN LEE JOHNSON

Son of Benjamin & Taylor Johnson

December 14, 2024

St. Patrick—O'Neill

DEKLAN RAY CAVANESS

Son of Colton & Jacie Cavaness

December 15, 2024

St. Joseph—Amelia

MACRADEE MARIE GAMBILL

Daughter of Lane & Kelly Gambill

December 21, 2024

St. Boniface—Stuart

COLTER RAY ERBST

Son of Tate & Alexis Erbst

December 22, 2024

St. Patrick—O'Neill

PUSH

A man was sleeping at night in his cabin when suddenly his room filled with light, and God appeared. The Lord told the man He had work for him to do and showed him a large rock in front of his cabin. The Lord explained that the man was to push against the rock with all his might. So, the man did, day after day. For many years, he toiled from sun up to sun down with his shoulders set squarely against the cold, massive surface of the unmoving rock, pushing with all of his might.

Each night, the man returned to his cabin sore and worn out, feeling that his whole day had been spent in vain. Since the man was showing discouragement, Satan decided to enter the picture by placing thoughts into the weary mind: "You have been pushing against that rock for a long time, and it hasn't moved." giving the man the impression that the task was impossible and that he was a failure. These thoughts discouraged and disheartened the man. "Why kill myself over this?" he thought. "I'll just put in my time, giving just the minimum effort, and that will be good enough."

And that is what he planned to do. However, one day he decided to make it a matter of prayer and take his troubled thoughts to the Lord. "Lord," he said, "I have labored long and hard in your service, putting all my strength to do that which you have asked. Yet, after all this time, have not even budged that rock by half a millimeter. What is wrong? Why am I failing?"

The Lord responded compassionately, "My friend, when I asked you to serve Me and you accepted, I told you that your task was to push against the rock with all of your strength, which you have done. Never once did I mention to you that I expected you to move it. Your task was to push. And now, you come to Me with your strength spent, thinking that you have failed. But, is that really so? Look at yourself. Your arms are strong and muscled, your back sinewy and brown, your hands are calloused from constant pressure, and your legs have become massive and hard. Through opposition, you have grown much, and your abilities now surpass that which you used to have. Yet you haven't moved the rock. But your calling was to be obedient and to push and to exercise your faith and trust in my wisdom. This you have done. Now I, my friend, will move the rock."

At times, when we hear a word from God, we tend to use our own intellect to decipher what He wants, when actually what God wants is just a simple obedience and faith in Him. By all means, exercise the faith that moves mountains, but know that it is still God who moves mountains.

DON'T CLING TO THE FIREWOOD

They're just a young couple, I can tell. These mouseholders who have taken up residence in the woodpile are just starting out in life. They've built a nest under the pile of oak firewood I am loading into the back of our station wagon.

We had our first frost a few days ago, and had spent several days winterizing our house. So had this mouse couple. At the bottom of the woodpile their nest would be dry and warm in all but the wettest of storms, ready for the young ones that would surely be coming soon.

I think of my wife and me in our first apartment many years ago. So excited, so optimistic.

These are tiny mice, equipped with miniature jumping legs, their little bodies only 2-1/2 inches long -- if you don't count the tail. I must seem like a huge giant as I deconstruct their carefully built lives, one log at a time.

I feel sorry for them. Such cute little creatures, so hopeful for the future, yet so filled with terror at what is happening to them.

"What's going on, dear?" the mouse bride cries.

"I don't know," her husband answers. "Nothing like this has ever happened before."

He's wrong, of course. Change happens -- constantly. But, thankfully, it's not too often that our entire lives are altered forever by external events.

A few weeks after my bride and I had moved into our first apartment, I received a draft notice: "Greetings from the President of the United States." Yes, greetings to you, too, Mr. President. Our carefully constructed lives suddenly took a sharp turn.

You've had some of those turns, too.

The death of someone very close to you.

Divorce.

Loss of a job.

Failure of a business.

An illness or injury.

Suddenly, life is not the same and never will be again. Everything's different. And we try to cope -- sometimes in healthy ways, sometimes in self-destructive ways.

I keep loading the firewood into the back of the wagon. I'm about to stack it higher yet when I see one of the tiny mice clinging to a piece of firewood in the back of the car. Another few seconds and he would have been crushed. I pick him up by his long tail, set him on the ground, and go back to get more logs. When I return he is still at the same place on the ground where I put him -- stunned by these events, barely able to get out of harm's way.

We're so mouse-like sometimes.

Life goes on. The props change, sometimes all too often. We're so tempted to cling to the props as they are being dragged off the set. And sometimes we're hurt because of our inability to let go, so attached to the accouterments of the past that it's impossible for us to welcome the future.

Change requires courage, great helpings of it. My mind goes to Joshua in the Bible. For nearly forty years he has been an understudy to the great leader Moses. Now Moses is dead and leadership is thrust fully upon Joshua. Ahead is the Jordan River running at flood stage, and beyond that the fortified cities of Canaan -- the "Promised Land" that seems so elusive. Talk about change? Joshua has change swirling all around him.

And God speaks to him a word: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified, do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9).

Our mouse couple looks up as their world is trembling. One by one the logs that comprise their shelter are disappearing, and soon only open sky is above. What do you do?

Do you cling to the firewood and risked being crushed by it? Or do you cling to God's promise to you?

God has promised to be with you wherever you go. He has promised never to leave you or forsake you. What he asks of you is faith to overcome your terror. Courage to meet your discouragement. And confidence to draw on his strength.

Change is a constant. No part of our lives will endure unchanged for more than a few years, a few decades at most. But the Lord our God is unchangeable. He is forever. You can put down your roots into him, knowing that in this way you will never be utterly uprooted again.

I think of Mr. and Mrs. Mouse. My heart goes out to them. I've been where they are, and so have you. And I hope that, even as I am writing these words, they are dragging their nest into another shelter in the woods to keep them dry and warm this winter. I hope that Mr. Mouse has finally got over his shock and got with the program. Older now, and wiser they are.

And if I could offer just one word of advice for them and for you -- and for me -- it would be this: Don't cling to the firewood.

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Sign up today at formed.org.

Sign up as a parishioner with the zip code 68763

REMINDER

Just a reminder that end of the year donations should be postmarked or made by December 31st.

REACH MORE TRAINING

Reach More is NOT a program. It's a twelve-week adventure of discovery, prayer, community, skills, and habit formation to help you become a happier, more effective: friend, spouse, parent, co-worker, neighbor, listener, witness... Catholic. It's for Catholics who want to: grow closer to Jesus, learn how to make more of an impact for God's Kingdom within their existing relationships, and build community with fellow parishioners who strive for the same things. New training groups will be starting soon. Contact Jan Kunz @ 402-340-2303 or MJ Kersenbrock with questions or for more information. Let us help you become the best disciple for Christ by living out your baptismal call to reach others and share the Good News. Watch the following video for more on Evangelical Catholic's Reach More training:

<https://www.ecreachmore.com/pages/faq-reach-more>

SIGN UP FOR FLOCKNOTE NOTIFICATIONS:

Keep in touch with us via email and text. Text the number of the parish you'd like notifications for below:

St. Patrick—O'Neill
68763

St. Joseph—Amelia
68711

Sacred Heart of Boyd Co.
68722

St. Boniface—Stuart
68780

St. Joseph—Atkinson
68713

OR

HOLTBOYDCATHOLIC
(for information from ALL parishes)
TO
84576

or connect online at:
holtboydcatholic.flocknote.com



Above: Millie & Harper Benson showcase their Advent Calendar from the Family Advent Calendar Challenge.

MORE . . . NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

- Listen **more** than you talk.
- Give **more** than you get.
- Smile **more** than you frown.
- Compliment **more** than you criticize.
- Be fascinated **more** than you're frustrated.
- Be accepting **more** than rejecting.
- "Walk the walk" **more** than you "talk the talk".
- See the cup "half full" **more** than "half empty".
- Think "we" **more** than "me".
- Help **more** than you hinder.
- Work **more** than you whine.
- Laugh **more** than you cry.
- Believe in yourself **more** than you doubt.
- Above all, love **more** than you ever have.

ST. PATRICK'S YOUTH GROUP

Meeting Dates:

January 15
January 22

Grades:

9-12

Meeting Place:

Basement of St. Mary's Grade School

Time:

7:00 p.m.

ST. PATRICK'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Grades:

K-6

Meeting Place:

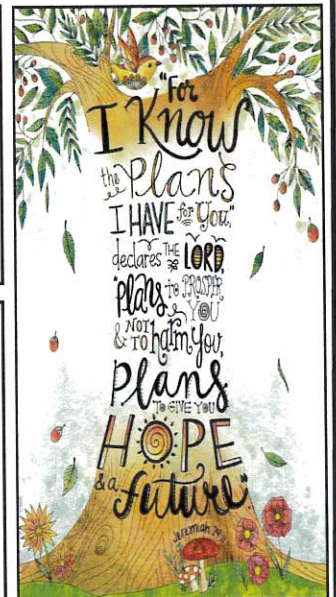
St. Mary's Grade School

Time:

6:30—7:30 p.m.

Meeting Dates:

January 8
January 15
January 22
January 29



ST. BONIFACE—CCD HAPPENINGS



The St. Boniface Kindergarten class was busy throughout December preparing for the coming of Christmas. The photo on the left showcases the Advent wreaths made the bunch and the right photo is of their shoebox nativity scenes.



Families that participated in the Family Advent Calendar challenge included (from left to right): Vazquez Perez Family—Ana, Borg Family—Harper & Grady and the Tubbs Family—Emma.



Emily Wallinger is pictured below receiving a Klothes 4 Kids donation from our Advent Corporal Works of Mercy Challenge. The Religious Ed program raised \$530 with acts of kindness and chores! She is pictured with many of the kids who met the challenge with their donations.



A small but lovely 2nd and 6th grade Christmas Caroling group on Dec. 18th. The nursing home residents really enjoyed it and the kids were such good sports! They sang to a good sized group in the lobby and then sang down the hallways too. When they returned back to the classroom, they had hot chocolate and cookies. It was a good day to spread Christmas joy!

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." ~ Acts 20:35

ST. JOSEPH—AMELIA—CCD

Below are pictures from the CCD kids making 50 caring gift bags for residents of the Chambers community filled with homemade treats, gifts, and all sorts of other goodies and surprises. The bags were delivered Sunday afternoon the 15th. The kids have been doing this community service project for several years now.

The CCD Classes will also lead the parish in a couple songs on Christmas Day.



"For it is in giving that we receive." ~ St. Francis Assisi



The picture below is of the CCD Christmas party. The kids made snow globes of the Nativity that they got to take home. Then they enjoyed some treats together afterward.



JANUARY



CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

- 1st—Happy New Year! Parish Office Closed
- 1st—Solemnity of Mary—HDO—(See schedule elsewhere)
- 3rd—Mass @ Parkside—2:00 p.m.—Stuart
- 4th/5th—Seminary Appeal Collection
- 5th—OCIA—Parish Office Conference Room—4:00 p.m.
- 5th—COR Men's Group—7:00 p.m.—O'Neill
- 6th—KC Meeting—7:30 p.m.—Stuart
- 8th—Rosary—2:25 p.m.—O'Neill
- 8th—Religious Ed/Confirmation/Youth Group (Various Parishes)
- 8th—KC Meeting—8:00 p.m.—O'Neill
- 9th—Ss Peter & Paul CCW Mtg—7:00 p.m.—Butte
- 12th—Divine Mercy Chaplet/Rosary—3:00 p.m.—O'Neill
- 12th—OCIA—Parish Office Conference Room—4:00 p.m.
- 13th—4th Degree KC Meeting—7:30 p.m.—O'Neill
- 14th—Mass @ Good Sam—10:00 a.m.—Atkinson
- 14th—Parish Council Meeting—7:00 p.m.—Atkinson
- 15th—Rosary—2:25 p.m.—O'Neill
- 15th—Mass @ Butte Senior Living Center—3:15 p.m.—Butte
- 15th—Religious Ed/Confirmation/Youth Group (Various Parishes)
- 19th—Divine Mercy Chaplet/Rosary—3:00 p.m.—O'Neill
- 19th—OCIA—Parish Office Conference Room—4:00 p.m.
- 19th—COR Men's Group—7:00 p.m.—O'Neill
- 20th—Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 21st—Parish Council Meeting—7:00 p.m.—Stuart
- 22nd—Religious Ed/Confirmation/Youth Group (Various Parishes)
- 22nd—Finance Council Meeting—7:00 p.m.—O'Neill
- 23rd—Ladies Guild—2:00 p.m.—Stuart
- 26th—Feb. 1—CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK
- 26th—Divine Mercy Chaplet/Rosary—3:00 p.m.—O'Neill
- 26th—OCIA—Parish Office Conference Room—4:00 p.m.
- 26th—KC Stag Night—5:00 p.m.
- 27th—St. Mary Altar Society—7:30 p.m.—Spencer
- 29th—Religious Ed/Confirmation/Youth Group (Various Parishes)



CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE:

holtboydcatholic.org

You will find . . .

- ◆ websites for individual parishes
- ◆ a detailed calendar of Masses and events
 - ◆ live stream of the Mass
 - ◆ St. Mary's & St. Joseph's Catholic Schools information

**SPIRIT CATHOLIC RADIO
TUNE IN & TURN IT UP!**



NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

The newsletter is available on the last weekend of each month in the entryway of each parish. It will also be available on-line. If you or someone you know would like the newsletter mailed please contact Jan Kunz @ 402-340-2303 or call the Parish Office. If you have any parish news that you would like in the newsletter, please email Jan Kunz @ jkunz@holtboydcatholic.org or jankunz9@gmail.com.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Fr. Bernard Starman ~ Pastor
bgstarman@archomaha.org

Fr. Ross Burkhalter ~ Senior Associate Pastor
rcburkhalter@archomaha.org

Dcn MJ Kersenbrock ~ Director of Operations
mjkersensbrock@gmail.com

Jan Kunz ~ Director of Evangelization & Catechesis
jkunz@holtboydcatholic.org

Dcn Roger Filips
rfilips@archomaha.org

St. Patrick—O'Neill & St. Joseph—Amelia
Office: 301 E Adams, O'Neill, NE 68763

Phone: 402-336-1602

Fax: 402-336-1533

Hours: Monday—Friday—8 a.m.—4 p.m.

After hours emergency number: 402-340-0277

Parish Receptionist:

Nancy Tomjack—nmtomjack@archomaha.org
Business Manager:

Cheleigh Sholes—crsholes@archomaha.org
Director of Stewardship & Development:

Jennifer Wallwey—jmwallwey@archomaha.org
Youth Director:

Bridget Bulau—bbulau@smcards.org
Religious Ed. Coordinator:

Whitney Shaffer—whitney.shaffer7@gmail.com

Sacred Heart of Boyd County

Office: PO Box 8, Butte, NE 68722

Phone: 402-775-0067

Hours: Monday—Thursday 8 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

Secretary:

Marge Nolan—mnolan@archomaha.org
Youth Minister/Religious Ed. Coordinator:

Charlotte Mitchell—

charlottehuckmitchell@gmail.com
402-336-7826

St. Joseph—Atkinson

Office: PO Box 220, Atkinson, NE 68713

Phone: 402-925-2122 Fax: 402-925-2104

Hours: Wednesday—Friday 8 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Secretary:

Gayle Jungman—stjoechurchatkinson@gmail.com
Religious Ed. Coordinator:

Brooke Farewell—brookefarewell@gmail.com
402-340-2115

St. Boniface—Stuart

Office: 106 E 4th St. PO Box 190 Stuart, NE 68780

Phone: 402-924-3262

Hours: Tuesday—Thursday 8 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

Secretary:

Deb Kramer—stbonifacestuart@gmail.com
Director of Ministries/Religious Ed. Coordinator:

Jan Kunz—jankunz9@gmail.com

402-340-2303

UPCOMING KC EVENTS



Jan 26th
KC Stag Night
5:00 p.m.

KC HALL IN O'NEILL

WITH A GRATEFUL HEART

Generosity is defined as "the act of giving others freely and abundantly, often more than is unexpected or usual." In my work, I see this generosity all the time, often many times a day. I see generosity in the faithful volunteers who come to the Parish Office each week, without fail, willing to do whatever needs to be done, whether it is running errands, light cleaning, or office work. I see it in the wrestling team who brings in all the Christmas decorations for the church, item after item, all with smiles on their faces as they go back out for another round. I see it in a random check that showed up in the mail from someone who has no connection to our school besides "we have a grandchild at Norfolk Catholic Schools and we wanted to support another worthy need." I see it in a Christmas Closet that's set up to allow families the experience of giving as well as receiving gifts. I see generosity in businesses in town who are donating funds for school lunches, animal shelters, and meals for families in need. I see it in the musicians who offer their time and talents to play and sing for masses for weekends, school masses, and holy days. I see it from the area schools and churches and families and businesses who did fundraisers to "help as much as we can" with the costs after our explosion. I see it on the list of names that are on the Veteran's Wall at St. Mary's.

My heart is full, and I am grateful not only for all they do, but for the inspiration that it offers me to become a more generous person. For the reminders I am granted daily to look for ways that I can do more, give more, be more for those in need. So my gratitude today is to those who show me the true meaning of generosity, of unconditional love and sacrifice, and remind me that there is truly good in every day, and I too, can be the source of that. Thank you for your reminders and for listening and responding to that voice of God that whispers in your ear. My prayer is that in one way or another, I can be that reminder to someone else.

Jennifer Wallwey

Director of Stewardship & Development

St. Patrick Church & St. Mary's Schools

CATHOLIC PARISHES OF WESTERN HOLT & BOYD COUNTIES

LENTEN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

EXPERIENCING GOD'S FORGIVENESS

WHEN:

MARCH 29, 2024
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

WHERE:

ST. MARY'S PARISH HALL
SPENCER, NEBRASKA
304 E South St.

FEATURED SPEAKER • Linda DeTurk

*Spend a day discovering God's love and forgiveness,
even when we find it hard to forgive ourselves.*

(Day will include Adoration & Confession)

**ALL
WOMEN
WELCOME!**

REGISTRATION:

9:00—9:15 am
Breakfast provided by
St. Mary's Altar Society

COST:

\$20/individual or
\$100 for a Table of 6

RSVP:

by March 20th
or
\$30/individual
after March 20th or the
day of the conference

CONTACT:

Ann Filips
605.929.4726
annfilips@icloud.com
or
Jan Kunz
402.340.2303
jankunz9@gmail.com

Name _____ Parish _____

Lunch Provided: Gluten _____ Other Food Allergy _____

\$20 per person _____ \$100 for a table of 6 (list names on the back) _____

Mail to: Jan Kunz—PO Box 160—Stuart, NE 68780

\$30 at the door. Limited spots available.

SHBC—SS PETER & PAUL—BUTTE



The Religious Ed students and teachers celebrated the upcoming birth of Christ with a day of crafting, playing games, and watching A Charlie Brown Christmas. Merry Christmas!



CATHOLIC ETIQUETTE

1. Arrive in the church before the Mass begins.
2. Chewing gum is NEVER appropriate.
3. Please turn off your phones prior to the Mass beginning.
4. Do not eat or drink in the church.
5. Children are welcome to be an active part of our parish community but be mindful of their behavior.
6. Silence is most appreciated in the church.
7. Do not leave early unless there is an urgent issue. Wait until the priest exits before you leave the Mass. We should stay to the end of the recession and the hymn that accompanies it, if there is one. Remember who left the Last Supper early (Judas). We should show respect for God, for the priest and our fellow worshippers.



ST. JOSEPH—ATKINSON



SOUP SUPPER

January 16, 2025
Starting at 4:30 p.m.
West Holt High School



Sponsored by:
The Atkinson Ministerial Association

KC FREE THROW CONTEST

Sunday, January 19, 2025
West Holt High School



Doors open at 12:30 p.m.
Contest begins at 1:00 p.m.

CELEBRATE OUR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



St. Mary's
Catholic School
O'Neill
.....
St. Joseph's
Catholic School
Atkinson

Catholic Schools Week 2025
JANUARY 26 - FEBRUARY 1, 2025

JUBILEE HOLY YEAR 2025



Throughout 2025, the Catholic Church celebrates a yearlong "event of great spiritual, ecclesial, and social significance in the life of the Church." The Holy Year, under the theme of "Pilgrims of Hope," marks the 2,025-year anniversary of the Incarnation of the Lord. Catholics are encouraged to make pilgrimage during the year, either to Rome or to a sacred site within their local diocese/eparchy. The Holy Father has also marked special celebrations throughout 2025 for various needs and communities.

The Jubilee Prayer

Father in heaven,
 may the *faith* you have given us
 in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
 and the flame of *charity* enkindled
 in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
 reawaken in us the blessed *hope*
 for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us
 into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
 May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the
 whole cosmos
 in the sure expectation
 of a new heaven and a new earth,
 when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
 your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee
 reawaken in us, *Pilgrims of Hope*,
 a yearning for the treasures of heaven.
 May that same grace spread
 the joy and peace of our Redeemer
 throughout the earth.
 To you our God, eternally blessed,
 be glory and praise for ever.
 Amen

More information about the entire Jubilee Holy Year can be found on the USCCB website at:

<https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025>

How to participate in Jubilee 2025 . . .

Make a pilgrimage to Rome. Some dioceses, parishes and other organizations will be coordinating pilgrimages, but you may also go on your own.

Participate in a local celebration of the jubilee. Some dioceses, parishes and other organizations will coordinate local celebrations for those unable to travel to Rome.

Obtain the Jubilee Indulgence through one of the other means (works of mercy and penance, making a pilgrimage to your cathedral, etc.).

Pray for the pope, the Church and all who take part in the jubilee.

ARCHBISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

"By supporting this year's Archbishop's Annual Appeal, you can further spread the Gospel in the mission fields of northeast Nebraska. Your gift will help foster priestly vocations and form deacons, equip leaders in our parishes and schools, place chaplains in nursing homes and hospitals, allow the incarcerated to encounter our Redeemer, serve the homeless and working poor and so much more. Please consider a generous gift to this year's Annual Appeal. Your support will allow more of our neighbors to encounter Jesus and experience His infinite love for them. Thank you for all you do for your parish and the Archdiocese of Omaha in northeast Nebraska."

Most Reverend George J. Lucas, Archbishop of Omaha

The following are the contributions & goals for each of our parishes—as of December 24th.

Parish:	Contributions:	Goal:	Remaining:
Sacred Heart – Boyd County:	\$10,593.50	\$13,172.50	\$2,579.00
St. Boniface – Stuart:	\$6,585.44	\$8,604.44	\$2,019.00
St. Joseph – Amelia:	\$3,085.65	\$3,600.65	\$515.00
St. Joseph – Atkinson:	\$8,965.74	\$12,084.74	\$3,119.00
St. Patrick – O'Neill:	\$35,555.72	\$47,022.39	\$11,466.67
Cumulative goal for ALL PARISHES:	\$64,786.05	\$84,484.72	\$19,698.67

A PIECE OF CAKE

A daughter is telling her Mother how everything is going wrong. She's failing algebra, her boyfriend broke up with her, and her best friend is moving away.

Meanwhile, her Mother is baking a cake and asks her daughter if she would like a snack. The daughter says, "Absolutely Mom, I love your cake."

"Here, have some cooking oil," her Mother offers.

"Yuck" says her daughter.

"How about a couple raw eggs?"

"Gross, Mom!"

"Would you like some flour then? Or maybe baking soda?"

"Mom, those are all yucky!"

To which the mother replies, "Yes, all those things seem bad all by themselves, but when they are put together in the right way, they make a wonderfully delicious cake!

God works the same way. Many times, we wonder why He would let us go through such bad and difficult times, but God knows that when He puts these things all in His order, they always work for good! We just have to trust Him and, eventually, they will all make something wonderful!

NO TIME

I knelt to pray but not for long;
I had too much to do.

I had to hurry and get to work
For bills would soon be due.

So I knelt and said a hurried prayer
And jumped up off my knees.
My Christian duty was now done.
My soul could rest at ease.

All day long, I had no time
To spread a word of cheer.
No time to speak of Christ to friends.
They'd laugh at me I'd fear.



No time, no time, too much to do;
That was my constant cry.

No time to give to souls in need,
But at last the time, the time to die.

I went before the Lord.
I came, I stood with downcast eyes.
For in his hands, God held a book;
It was the book of life.

God looked into his book and said,
"Your name I cannot find.
I once was going to write it down
But never found the time."

OUR DEEPEST THANKS

We would like to thank the many people who made Christmas such a meaningful and beautiful season for us this year. Thank you to Will Otte, the musicians, and the readers who presented The Lessons and Carols of Christmas. Thank you to all who contributed to and set up the decorations at the church, especially Karla Herley. Thank you to the St. Mary's 5th Graders who shared the Living Nativity, and the preschool and pre-K students for their sweet Christmas programs. Thank you to those who helped to decorate at the Parish Office. Thank you to each and every one who brought by treats, cards, gifts, or somehow shared their kind gestures over the Christmas season with our staff. We are so grateful for all of this, and I'm sure much more that we have missed.

St. Patrick's & St. Mary's Priests, Deacon, and Staff

thank you

2025 Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

As we embrace 2025, guide our steps in this ever-changing world. Fill us with wisdom and strength, keeping our focus on Your eternal love.

We pray for global peace, healing where there's hurt, and unity in our communities. May our leaders act with justice and truth, reflecting Your heart.

Bless our young people with growth and purpose. Revitalize our church, letting the Gospel's message shine brightly. Deepen our bond with You, teaching us to love as Jesus did.

Lord, as we journey through 2025, we trust in Your plan and grace.

In Jesus' name, Amen.



Spencer St. Mary's Religious Ed Christmas Caroling

Caroling around Spencer was followed by a parish soup supper and a visit from Santa.



CIO coordinates the annual mitten collection during Advent - young and old alike bring hats and mittens to send off to St. Joseph's Mission at Ft. Thompson

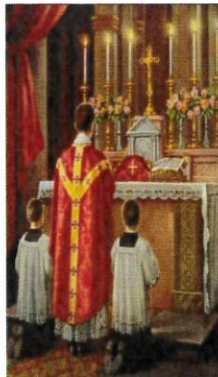
Another 'collaboration project' is underway at Spencer St. Mary's. A new outdoor Rosary Garden, to be built east of the main entrance of the church, will be laid out so we can walk from bead to bead while praying the Rosary. It will also include a grotto and benches. Parishioners may purchase one or more beads as memorials for families or loved ones. Cost is \$25 per bead. We are also encouraging donations of labor and supplies, so everyone can have a role in creating this last memorial of our faith. Chairs for the project are Melissa Koenig (402-340-6635) and Breg Finnegan (402-340-7757). Contact them to find out how you can contribute and collaborate with us on our new Rosary Garden.

Let all
you do
be done
in Love

- 1 CORINTHIANS 16: 14 -



SKIPPING MASS



"Skipping Mass affects no one but myself and God." *And God?* Since when are human persons more important than God? There is an infinite difference between measuring God by our standards and measuring ourselves by His. We have to start with God when we look at everything. Since He came first, He comes first. He is not just a bigger version of us. He has commanded us to "Keep holy the Lord's day," and He has a right to demand this of us. Anything of value in our lives (including human life) has value only because of His infinitely greater value. But Mass is not just a matter of acknowledging His sovereignty, which is what worship is. It is being present at the foot of the cross and giving thanks for the Passion and death that He endured for our benefit. He loves us so much that He underwent all that suffering to demonstrate His love for us in a way we could somewhat understand. To skip Mass is one of many ways of turning our backs on that love.

-Fr. Vincent Serpa, O.P. (Catholic Answers)

GROWING IN GOD



www.facebook.com/IAmACatholicByHeart

9 DAYS FOR LIFE

JANUARY 16-24

9 Days for Life is a novena for the protection of human life. Each day's intention is accompanied by a short reflection and suggested actions to help build a culture of life.



DAY 1 9 DAYS FOR LIFE

May the tragic practice of abortion end.

DAY 2 9 DAYS FOR LIFE

May each person suffering from Parkinson's or Alzheimer's find forgiveness, hope, and healing in Christ.

DAY 3 9 DAYS FOR LIFE

May every pregnant mother receive compassionate care and support to sustain the life in her womb.

DAY 4 9 DAYS FOR LIFE

May every father of a preborn child bravely support the mother of his child in welcoming new life.

DAY 5 9 DAYS FOR LIFE

May every pregnant mother find wisdom, advice, and grace and support in embracing her living sign.

DAY 6 9 DAYS FOR LIFE

May all who support or participate in abortion experience a conversion of heart to love and cherish the Lord's beautiful mercy.

DAY 7 9 DAYS FOR LIFE

May all preborn children be provided the love and care they need.

DAY 8 9 DAYS FOR LIFE


May every mother work for the protection of all human life in every stage and circumstance.

DAY 9 9 DAYS FOR LIFE

May all who support or participate in abortion be converted to love and cherish the Lord's beautiful mercy.

JOIN TODAY: 9daysforlife.com

NEW ROUTE & VENUE THIS YEAR!
Scan Here!




2025
Nebraska
WALK FOR LIFE
Hosted by Nebraska Right to Life

February 1, 2025

9:00 AM Mass at St. Mary's Catholic Church
Sponsored by Nebraska Catholic Conference

10:00 AM Rally on north steps of State Capitol
WALK begins immediately after

11:00 AM Speaker Elizabeth Gillette following
Immediately, inside Cornhusker Hotel





Save the Date

Nebraska Walk for Life
2. 1. 2025
FEATURING ELIZABETH GILLETTE
SATURDAY MORNING
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

& Gala
1. 31. 2025
FEATURING JIM CAVIEZEL
FROM PASSION OF THE CHRIST
& SOUND OF FREEDOM
FRIDAY EVENING
LA VISTA, NEBRASKA

MORE DETAILS TO COME!

NEBRASKA
Right to Life
RECEIVE UPDATES





PRO-LIFE MASS & NEBRASKA WALK FOR LIFE

Saturday, February 1, 2025

9 AM | Pro-Life Mass | St. Mary's, Downtown
10 AM | Nebraska Walk for Life | State Capitol

Meet on the north side of the State Capitol for the walk.



NEBRASKA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

NEBRASKA *Right to Life*

Boyd Holt Right to Life is fielding interest for these events. We'd love to have you join us at the Gala! Just let us know you have bought tickets so we can add you to our table(s), as seating will be assigned. If there is enough interest, we will try to coordinate a day trip to Lincoln for only the walk... roughly 6 am to 6 pm from O'Neill. Cost will be around \$20. Mass at St. Mary's before the Walk is always inspiring!!! Call 402-340-5087 asap as we need to make advance arrangements...or message us on Facebook.

Boyd Holt Right to Life will also host their booth at the annual KBRX Farm and Home Show. We hope you'll stop by and support us. If you are available to help at the booth, call Ann Pongratz at 402-336-3973, or Jeanie Miller at 402-340-5087.

Everyone interested in sponsoring ProLife Perspective at 8:55 am weekdays on KBRX, at a cost of \$7.00 per day or \$35 per week should call 402-340-5087.

Our humble thanks to all who joined us to amend our state constitution to protect babies and their moms in the second and third trimesters. Now we need to work even harder to extend protections in the first trimester. Each of you were - and are - essential to changing hearts and minds. We look forward to collaborating with you in 2025!! Boyd Holt Right to Life



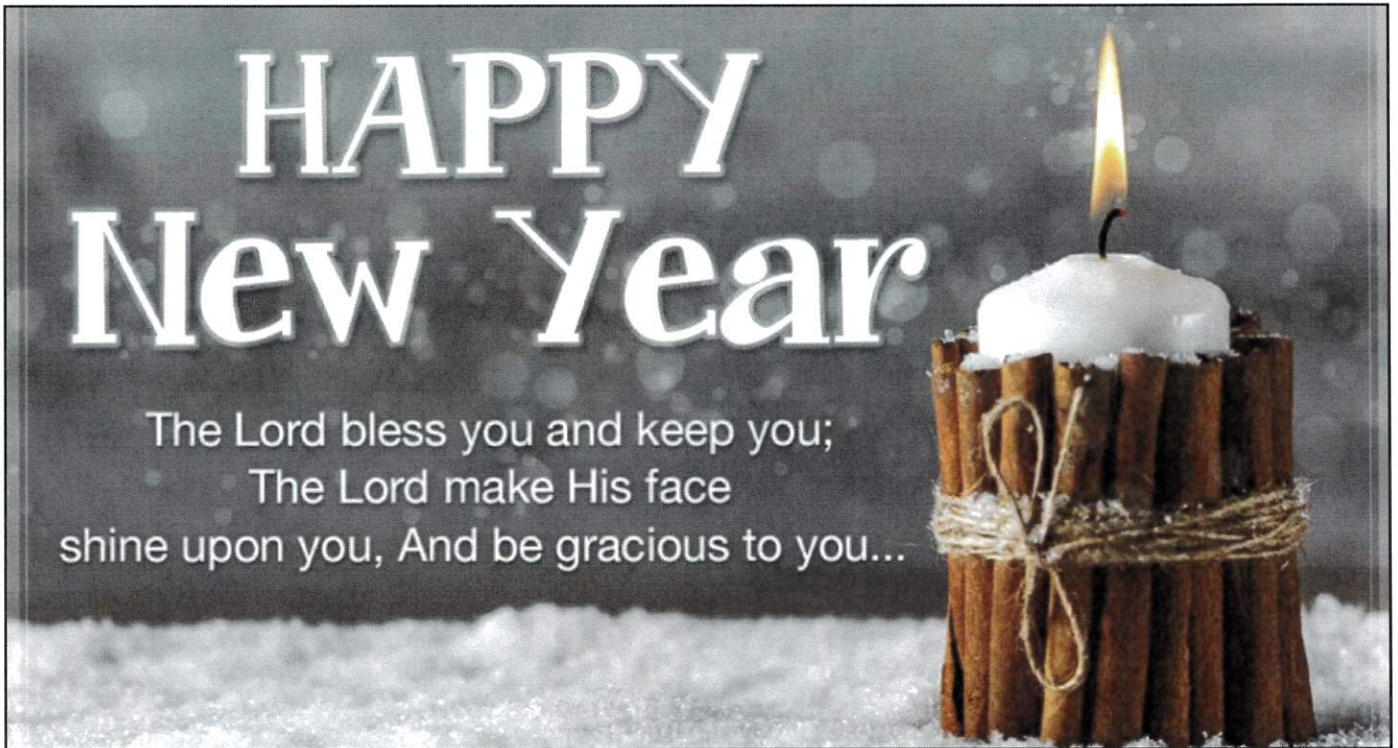
3RD ANNUAL RED CARPET GALA

The highly anticipated 3rd Annual St. Mary's Red Carpet Gala will take place on March 22, 2025! Mark your calendars for an unforgettable evening, and stay tuned for more exquisite details. This elegant event welcomes all to join in a night of glamour and celebration!

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

FYI

Following the explosion of St. Patrick's Parish Office, there was some inevitable loss of financial records, particularly for the Capital Campaign. If your giving statement is incorrect, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will get things corrected. Thank you for your patience! You can call the office at 402-336-1602 or email Jennifer (jmwallwey@archomaha.org) or Cheleigh (crsholes@archomaha.org).



SOLEMNITY OF MARY—Holy Day of Obligation

December 31—Vigil of Solemnity of Mary

5:00 p.m.—St. Boniface—Stuart
6:30 p.m.—Assumption BVM—Lynch

"By her motherhood, Mary shows us that humility and tenderness are not virtues of the weak but of the strong." ~ Pope Francis

January 1—Solemnity of Mary

9:00 a.m.—St. Joseph—Atkinson
9:00 a.m.—St. Patrick—O'Neill
11:15 a.m.—St. Joseph—Amelia



"It is Christmas every time you let God love others through you . . . yes, it is Christmas every time you smile at your brother and offer him your hand." ~ St. Mother Teresa