

Fr. Joseph's Corner

"Does God Still Speak to Us?"

A YOUNG MAN had been to his Wednesday night Bible Study. The Pastor had shared about listening to God and obeying the Lord's voice. The young man couldn't help but wonder, "Does God still speak to people?" Afterward, he went out with some friends for coffee, and they discussed the message. Several talked about how God had led them in different ways. It was about 10 o'clock when the young man started driving home. Sitting in his car, he just began to pray, "God, if you still speak to people, speak to me. I will listen. I will do my best to obey."

As he drove down the main street of his town, he had the strangest thought: **Stop and buy a gallon of milk.** He shook his head and said out loud, "God? Is that you?"

He didn't get a reply and started on toward home. But again, the thought: **Buy a gallon of milk.** The young man thought about Samuel and how he didn't recognize the voice of God, and how little Samuel ran to Eli. "Okay, God, in case that is you, I will buy the milk."

It didn't seem like too hard a test of obedience. He could always use the milk. He stopped and purchased the gallon of milk and started off again toward home. As he passed 7th Street, he again felt the urge: **Turn down that street.**

This is crazy he thought and drove on past the intersection. Again, he felt that he should turn down 7th Street. At the next intersection, he turned back and headed down 7th. Half jokingly, he said out loud, "Okay, God, I will."

He drove several blocks, when suddenly, he felt like he should stop. He pulled over to the curb and looked around. He was in a semi-commercial area of town. It wasn't the best, but it wasn't the worst of neighborhoods either. The businesses were closed, and most of the houses looked dark like the people were already in bed. Again, he sensed something: **Go**

and give the milk to the people in the house across the street.

The young man looked at the house. It was dark and it looked like the people were either gone or they were already asleep. He started to open the door and then sat back in the car seat. "Lord, this is insane. Those people are asleep, and if I wake them up, they are going to be mad, and I will look stupid."

Again, he felt like he should go and give the milk. Finally, he opened the door, "Okay, God. If this is you, I will go to the door, and I will give them the milk. If you want me to look like a crazy person, okay. I want to be obedient. I guess that will count for something, but if they don't answer right away, I am out of here."

He walked across the street and rang the bell. He could hear some noise inside. A man's voice yelled out, "Who is it? What do you want?" Then the door opened before the young man could get away. The man was standing there in his jeans and T-shirt. He looked like he just got out of bed. He had a strange look on his face, and he didn't seem too happy to have some stranger standing on his doorstep. "What is it?"

The young man thrust out the gallon of milk., "Here. I brought this to you." The man took the milk and rushed down a hallway, speaking loudly in Spanish. Then from down the hall came a woman carrying the milk toward the kitchen. The man was following her holding a baby.

The baby was crying. The man had tears streaming down his face. The man began speaking and half crying, "We were just praying. We had some big bills this month, and we ran out of money. We didn't have any milk for our baby. I was just praying and asking God to show me how to get some milk."

—Prayerful wishes, Fr. Joseph

St. Joseph Catholic Church

150 E First St., P.O. Box 1315, Prineville OR 97754
December 31, 2023 † The Holy Family—Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Vigil Mass Saturday	5:00 p.m.
Sunday Mass (English)*	9:00 a.m.
Sunday Mass (Spanish)	12:00 p.m.
Holy Days	8:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Mondays • Tuesdays • Thursdays	8:00 a.m.
Wednesdays • Fridays	12:00 p.m.

*Coffee and Donuts are served after the 9 a.m. Mass.

Pastor ♦ Very Rev. Fr. Joseph Kunnelaya T.

Secretary ♦ Darlene Counts

Parish Office Hours ♦ Monday – Thursday ♦ 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Parish Office Telephone: (541) 447-6475

Fr. Joseph: 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. ♦ (541) 420-4458

Parish Website: <https://stjosephsprineville.org>

Email: stjosephparish@bendbroadband.com

Pastor: fatherjoseph@bendbroadband.com / joekunel55@gmail.com

Facebook: St. Joseph Parish / Instagram: st._josephparish

Director of Religious Education ♦ Barbara Dalton

RCIA ♦ Jim Friese



Confessions

Wednesdays: 11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Saturdays: 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

(other times by appointment)

Anointing of the Sick

Contact Fr. Joseph for this Sacrament

- ♦ DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET AND CENACLE GROUP: Every Monday after the 8 a.m. Mass.
- ♦ FRIDAY ROSARY at 11:30 a.m., MASS at 12:00 p.m., EXPOSITION of the Blessed Sacrament immediately following Mass, EUCHARISTIC ADORATION 1–2 p.m., BENEDICTION AND REPOSITION



Baptisms

Baptisms will be held on Saturdays.

Parents of children to be baptized must be registered members of the parish 6 months prior to baptism.

A Baptismal Preparation Class is mandatory for both parents and godparents.

For more information, call the Parish Office.

Marriages

Couples need to make an appointment with Fr. Joseph 6 months before the proposed date.

A Marriage Preparation Course is mandatory.

MASS INTENTIONS / DAILY READINGS

The practice of requesting a Mass to be offered for loved ones, living or deceased, is a beautiful and wonderful part of our Catholic tradition.

👉 Please Call the Parish Office to Have a Mass Intention Reserved 👈

Monday	01/01/2024	8:00 a.m.	Lu Streetman (D)	Nm 6:22-27; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:16-21
Tuesday	01/02/2024	8:00 a.m.	Edward Ordway (D)	1 Jn 2:22-28; Jn 1:19-28
Wednesday	01/03/2024	12:00 p.m.	David Geiman (D)	1 Jn 2:29-3:6; Jn 1:29-34
Thursday	01/04/2024	8:00 a.m.	Dorice Ordway (D)	1 Jn 3:7-10; Jn 1:35-42
Friday	01/05/2024	12:00 p.m.	Darlene Counts (L)	1 Jn 3:11-21; Jn 1:43-51
Saturday	01/06/2024	5:00 p.m.	Howard Tocher Family (L)	Is 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12
Sunday	01/07/2024	9:00 a.m.	Joan Gerke (D)	Is 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12
Sunday	01/07/2024	12:00 p.m.	Parishioners of St Joseph (L)	Is 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12

(L) Living ♦ (D) = Deceased

2024

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Today's Homily

The Sunday after Christmas is celebrated as the feast of the Holy Family. Christmas itself is the feast of God entering a family to stay with the humans. It appears that God thought it to be wise to start the decisive phase of salvation history from a family.

In the story of the fall, the very first negative consequence of sin was visible in the family of the first parents; they distanced themselves from God, blamed one another, and their life together became difficult, painful, and filled with suffering.

God deemed it fit to restore the broken family bonds as an important step towards the restoration of the ruptured relationship the human race had with God. When God sent His son as the member of the family of Joseph and Mary, he was undoing the mistakes of the first parents.

The Church has always presented the family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph as a model family for Christians to imitate, calling it to be the Holy Family. But for the people living in the 21st Century, there is very little that makes it attractive to them. Jesus' family was just too simple and ordinary. It was a family which lived under the threat of the powerful and the influenced; evicted to Egypt from their homeland, and forced to live as migrants in Galilee. It did not have any financial or social security. It struggled hard to win its daily bread and did not receive any privileges from any quarters.

Many of the features that we cherish and long for were absent in the family of Jesus. Still, the Church calls it a model family and a holy family. **Do you know why?** It is because in this family, **Jesus, the Word incarnate, was its center, His bonds of love and respect for the family members were very strong, and the only philosophy of its members was to seek the will of God and to obey it.** Any family that follows these principles would be a model family always and everywhere.



Parents must learn to keep **Jesus at the center of their married life.** It would help them tackle many problems that might arise in their life. If Jesus is the center of their life, they would learn the art of making the family from Jesus' perspective.

Letting Jesus enter our families and keeping Him at its center is the big challenge the couples of our time face. In the Gospel we see Jesus entering the homes of many. His presence in a home guarantees a solution to the most waxing prob-

lems affecting it (as happened in the wedding home at Cana). Still, many are afraid to let Jesus in—in their home.

The other characteristic that is noticeable in the Holy Family was its commitment to follow the will of God in everything. All the members of the Holy Family sought the will of God wholeheartedly. There was no trace of selfishness and vested interest in their life. Their unwavering faith in the providence of God enabled them to accept the joys and sorrows of life with serenity. They did not complain about anything. They accepted every happening in the family with humility. They were convinced that whatever happened to them was the Lord's doing.

This attitude of theirs increased their love and respect for one another. They trusted each other as they trusted God. So, they stood united in the ups and downs of their life.

What we see in the families around us is the lack of openness to God and one another—and the consequent disunity. When we push up our own selfish agenda, it will hurt both God and other members of our family.

On this Feast day of the Holy Family, let us recollect what the Psalmist has to say:

*Unless the LORD builds the house,
those who build it labor in vain.*

January—Month of the Holy Name of Jesus

A Message from Father Joseph

- Thank you to **Chuck, Diane, and Brant Giovanini** for everything they do for our Parish, but specifically for cleaning our Church all year long! It does not go unnoticed and is much appreciated.
- Thank you to **Steve Schilling and the Knights of Columbus** for illuminating our Church grounds this Christmas season. It looks beautiful, and we have received many compliments.
- Thank you to **Karin Davis, Sue Williams, Cookie Benton and all others** for decorating the inside and outside of the Church and Rectory. You all did such a great job!
- Thank you to **Jim and Kathy Friese** and everyone else who helped out and contributed to our Christmas Dinner. What a wonderful day spent with our Parish family!

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The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Today, we celebrate **The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.** The Feast of the Holy Family is a celebration in the Catholic Church, in honor of Jesus, His mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and His father, St. Joseph.

This feast urges us to see in the Holy Family a shining example for all family life. In their mutual love and forbearance, in their patience in times of trial, and in their total obedience to God's will for them, the Holy Family shows us how to live together in peace.

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The Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God

Tomorrow, **January 1st**, is the Feast day of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We honor her motherhood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It reminds Christians of the role she played as the Blessed Virgin, which eventually led to their salvation. After all, the birth of Christ wouldn't have been possible without Mary!

Knights of Columbus

And as everyone knows, the Knights of Columbus have a raffle during their **1st Sunday of the month Pancake Breakfast on January 7th.** Please keep them in mind for donating your gently used items. You can drop them off at the Parish Office, or contact **George Gerke.**

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ACTS Bible Study

ACTS will resume on **Wednesday, January 3rd.** We will be finishing our last program with a question and answer session. On **Wednesday, January 10th, at 1:30 p.m.,** we will start a new series, "Catholicism—The Pivotal Players" by **Bishop Robert Barron.** This series is about the most influential people of the Catholic Church. Everyone is welcome to join us in the Parish Hall, Room 2.

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A Lifeline for Marriage

Retrouvaille helps couples through difficult times in their marriages. It is designed to help get your marriage back on track and examine your lives together in a new and positive way. Visit www.helpourmarriage.org for program information and emotional testimonials. For confidential information or to register for the **January 26th–to 28th weekend** at Our Lady of Peace Retreat Center in Beaverton, OR, call (503) 225-9191.

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Diocesan Lenten Retreat

All young adults are invited to a Lenten Retreat on **February 17th and 18th**, entitled "Sacrificial Love: The Redemption of Suffering," featuring **Bishop Liam Cary**, at the Cascade View Retreat Center, in Powell Butte, OR.

Registration fees: \$85/Single; \$125/Married Couple. Registration Deadline: **February 11th.** For more information or to register, go to: DioceseofBaker.org. (Supported by the Bishop's Annual Appeal.)



Please Pray for Those on Our Prayer List:

David Leonard ♦ Steve Forrester ♦ Carl Johnson ♦ Dolores Koivisto ♦ Anita Marquez
Ben Guyger ♦ Georgia Fitzgerald ♦ Lloyd Rodgers ♦ Pierre Jones ♦ Sammi Pedersen
Steven Clifton ♦ Jordan Ortega ♦ Chuck Renwick ♦ John Huthmacher
Ed McNamara ♦ Duncan Osgood ♦ Doni Bachand