

Fr. Joseph's Corner

"Things Happen for a Reason"

THE NEW PASTOR and his wife were assigned to their first ministry—to reopen a church in suburban Brooklyn.

When they saw the church, it was very run down and needed much work. So, they set a goal to have everything done in time to have their first service on Christmas Eve.

They worked hard, repairing pews, plastering walls, painting, etc., and on December 18th, they were ahead of schedule and just about finished.

Then, on December 19th, a terrible rainstorm hit the area, and it lasted for two days.

On the 21st, the pastor went to the church, and his heart sank when he saw that the roof had leaked, which caused a large area of plaster to fall off the front wall of the sanctuary, just behind the pulpit. He cleaned up the mess on the floor, and not knowing what else to do but postpone the Christmas Eve service, he headed home.

On the way, he noticed a local business was having a flea-market sale for charity, so he stopped in. One of the sale items was a beautiful, hand-made, ivory-colored, crocheted tablecloth with exquisite work, fine colors, and a cross embroidered right in the center. It was just the right size to cover up the hole in the front wall. He bought it and headed back to the church.

By this time it had started to snow. An older woman running from the opposite direction was trying to catch the bus. She missed it, so the pastor invited her to wait in the warm church for the next bus 45 minutes later.

She sat in a pew and paid no attention to the pastor while he worked to put up the tablecloth as a wall tapestry. He could hardly believe how beautiful it looked, and it covered up the entire problem area.

Then he noticed the woman walking down the center aisle. Her face was like a sheet. "Pastor," she asked, "Where did you get that tablecloth?" The pastor explained, and the woman asked him to check the lower right corner to see if the initials EBG were crocheted into it there. They were.

These were the initials of the woman—and she had made this tablecloth 35 years before—in Austria. The woman could hardly believe it as the pastor told how he had just bought the tablecloth. The woman explained that before the war, she and her husband were well-to-do people in Austria. When the Nazis came, she was forced to leave. Her husband was going to follow her the next week, but he was captured, put in prison, and she never saw him or her home again.

The pastor wanted to give her the tablecloth; but she made the pastor keep it for the church. The pastor then

insisted on driving her home—it was the least he could do. She lived on the other side of Staten Island, and she was only in Brooklyn for the day for a housecleaning job.

They had a wonderful Christmas Eve, and the church was almost full, the music, and the spirit were just great.

After the service, the pastor and his wife greeted everyone at the door. One older man, whom the pastor recognized from the neighborhood, just continued to sit in one of the pews and stare ahead. He wondered why the guy wasn't leaving. Then the man came up to ask where the pastor got the tablecloth on the front wall—because it was identical to one that his wife had made years ago when they lived in Austria before the war, and how could there be two tablecloths so much alike? He told the pastor of how the Nazis came, how he forced his wife to flee for her safety, and how he was supposed to follow her, but he was arrested and put in a prison. He never saw his wife or his home again in all the 35 years in between.

The pastor then gently asked the man if he would allow him to take him for a little ride. They drove to Staten Island—to the same house where the pastor had taken the woman three days earlier.

He helped the man climb the three flights of stairs to the woman's apartment, knocked on the door, and then saw the greatest Christmas reunion he could ever imagine!

[This is a true story, submitted by Pastor Rob Reid, who says, "God does not work in mysterious ways. I asked the Lord to bless you as I prayed for you today, to guide you and protect you, as you go along your way. His love is always with you, His promises are true, and when we give Him all our cares, you know He will see us through. So, when the road you're traveling on seems difficult at best, just remember that I am here praying, and God will do the rest. When there is nothing left but God, that's when you find out that God is all you need.]

—Prayerful wishes, Fr. Joseph



St. Joseph Catholic Church

150 E First St., P.O. Box 1315, Prineville OR 97754
January 7, 2024 † The Feast of the Epiphany

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	01/08/2024	8:00 a.m.	Lu Streetman (D)	Is 42:1-4, 6-7; Mk 1:7-11
Tuesday	01/09/2024	8:00 a.m.	George Arndt (D)	1 Sm 1:9-20; Mk 1:21-28
Wednesday	01/10/2024	12:00 p.m.	Jim & Naomi Blankenship (D)	1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20; Mk 1:29-39
Thursday	01/11/2024	8:00 a.m.	Geraldine Arndt (D)	1 Sm 4:1-11; Mk 1:40-45
Friday	01/12/2024	12:00 p.m.	Thad Davis (L)	1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22a; Mk 2:1-12
Saturday	01/13/2024	5:00 p.m.	Sister Barbara Julian Etter (L)	1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19; 1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20; Jn 1:35-42
Sunday	01/14/2024	9:00 a.m.	Elle Edgerly (L)	1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19; 1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20; Jn 1:35-42
Sunday	01/14/2024	12:00 p.m.	Parishioners of St Joseph (L)	1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19; 1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20; Jn 1:35-42

(L) Living ♦ (D) = Deceased

Today's Homily

ONE OF THE favourite images of Christmas is that of the “wise men” traveling by camel through a star-lit night. One star dominates the sky as they arrive on the crest of the hill overlooking Bethlehem. When the star appeared, these wise men must have been living a certain type of life. But when they saw the star, they decided to follow it. They stopped whatever they were doing. They were ready to take risks because they knew the meaning of this special star.

The journey must have been a long trip from a country far away in the East. There have been dangers along the way. For them it was a journey to the faith. The wise men, through the grace of God, came to faith in Jesus.

We each have a journey to make to Jesus because none of us is yet fully converted, and each of us has corners in our hearts and lives in need of Jesus' healing and redemption. As we continue to celebrate the Christmas season, we are strongly reminded that we must continue to seek out God's presence in our lives and in our world. Having celebrated Christ's birthday a few days ago, the Church is now asking us to consider how we must still search for Christ. The “search” here is not in the sense that we are searching for something that we have never found. Rather, we are continuing to look for a deeper knowledge and experience of the Christ in whom we already believe.

One of the facts that today's Gospel gives us is that the wise men came with special gifts for the newborn king. The gospel writer tells us, “They went into the house, and when they saw the child with his mother, Mary, they knelt and worshiped him. They brought out their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and presented them to him.”

To us these might seem rather useless gifts, but what do you give this child who is the all-powerful



God who controls the stars to such an extent that a particularly bright star travels westward and stops over the place where Jesus and his parents were living? Their gifts were symbolic adoration to the Divine King. When God so loved the world that he gave His only Son for our salvation, what can we give in return?

The best gifts that we can offer the Christ-child are the gifts of ourselves.

In actual fact, the gold, frankincense and myrrh of the wise men are trivial and quite useless to the God of all creation, and the saviour of all people. He has all the gold, frankincense, and myrrh He ever needs. After all, He is the creator and owner of all these gifts. But as useless as these gifts are for God, they are a sign of the way the wise men gave of themselves.

We are told, “They went into the house, and when they saw the child with his mother, Mary, they knelt down and worshiped.” Here are these men—learned, wealthy, wizards of the East—non-Jews and probably pagans, kneeling at the tiny toddler's feet of the true God. Even as they paid homage, they would have realized that even the gift of themselves was something far too small for this king of kings.

What we give to our Lord may seem so trivial and modest and poor, but if they are representative of the giving of ourselves to God, this is our most important gift. Even then, this is still so small in comparison to what God has gifted us.

Like the wise men, all of us are on a journey to get closer to Jesus, our Savior. Like the wise men, we too are relying on the grace of God to lead us to the light of Jesus, our Savior. Like the wise men, let us offer ourselves at His feet. The Epiphany reminds us: May our hearts seek Christ. May our hearts find Christ. May our hearts love Christ.

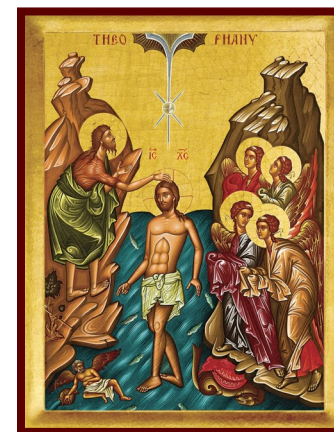
January—Month of the Holy Name of Jesus

The Epiphany of the Lord

The Feast of the Epiphany celebrates the revelation of Jesus, the Son of God, to the world. The Epiphany is the manifestation of Jesus as Messiah of Israel, Son of God, and Savior of the world. The holiday also marks the day the Magi, or the three kings, visited the baby Jesus in Bethlehem.

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The Baptism of the Lord



Monday, January 8th, is the Feast Day that commemorates the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. The Baptism of the Lord is notable because it marks the beginning of Jesus' ministry and confirms His identity as the Son of God. This event is documented in all the gospels except John.

After Jesus was baptized, He came up immediately from the water; the heavens were opened to Him; and He saw the Spirit of God descended like a dove and alighting upon Him. (Matthew 3:16)

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January Meetings

- Tuesday, January 9th--Pastoral Council, at 3 p.m., in parish hall.
- Tuesday, January 16th-- Knight of Columbus, at 7 p.m., in parish hall.
- Monday, January 22nd—Youth Group Formation Planning, at 6 p.m., in parish hall.

ACTS Bible Study

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 Catholic Church's most influential people. Everyone is welcome to join us in the Parish Hall, Room 2.

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Marriage Saving—the Post Session Phase

The post-weekend phase of Retrouvaille (pronounced retro-vi with a long i) is as crucial to the healing of a troubled marriage as the initial weekend experience. During the post-weekend sessions, the weekend technique is further developed and combined with additional tools to explore other areas of the marriage relationship. Come Friday, January 26th, through January 28th, at Our Lady of Peace Retreat Center in Beaverton, Oregon

For confidential information about or to register for the program call 1 (503) 225-9191 or email: portland@retrouvaille.org or visit www.helpourmarriage.org.

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Inviting Young Adults, 18–39: Diocesan Lenten Retreat

“Sacrificial Love; The Redemption of Suffering”
February 17–18, 2024*

Come begin your Lenten journey with engaging speakers (including Bishop Liam Cary, Sr. Ignacia Carrillo, FMA, Fr. Caleb Cunningham), Eucharistic Adoration with an opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance (with Bp. Cary, Fr. Mena, or Fr. Cunningham), time for personal prayer and reflection, small group fellowship, and Sunday Mass celebrated by Bishop Cary at the beautiful, peaceful Cascade View Retreat Center, Powell Butte. For more info, or to register, visit DioceseofBaker.org.

*early/late arrival/departure available by request.

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