

# The Community of Blessed Sacrament

## Community Connections

Volume 4, Issue 1

Advent 2013

### Upcoming Special Events

- November 30/December 1st: First Sunday of Advent
- Reconciliation: 7:40 AM Each Tuesday and Friday (Before 8:00 AM Mass)
- December 4: FIRE Celebrating Advent; 5:30 Parish Center
- December 5: 7:00 PM, Reconciliation Workshop
- December 6: 8:30 AM, Liturgy at Blessed Maria Middle School (No 7:40 AM Reconciliation)
- December 7: 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM, Blood Drive, Parish Center; 9:00 AM Breakfast with Santa
- December 7 & 8: Second Sunday of Advent
- December 9: 8:00 AM, Immaculate Conception Liturgy
- December 14 & 15: Third Sunday of Advent
- December 15: 4:00 PM Communal Penance
- December 19: Reconciliation 5 PM, 6 PM and 7 PM
- December 20: Reconciliation 7:40 AM and 12:00 PM (noon)
- December 21: Reconciliation 12:00 PM (Noon) and 3:30 PM
- December 21 & 22: Fourth Sunday of Advent
- December 22: 2:00 PM Communal Penance at Saint Edward Church
- December 24: 4:00 PM, 6:30 PM and 10:00 PM Liturgies, Vigil of the Nativity of Our Lord
- December 25: 9:00 AM Christmas Day Liturgy
- December 31: 5:30 PM, Liturgy, Vigil of Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
- January 1, 2014: 9:00 AM Liturgy, Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
- January 4 & 5: Liturgies, The Epiphany of the Lord
- January 26 to 31: Catholic Schools Week
- January 26: 10:30 AM, Kickoff Liturgy for Catholic Schools Week followed by Open House at School

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### SCRIP News

Please buy and use SCRIP.

Wonder is a feeling or reaction we often hear used at Christmas. The wonder in a child's face at all that they see in stores, or the wonder striking us as lights transform the cold December darkness into welcoming neighborhoods. Most of all, hopefully a renewed sense of wonder within as Christmas turns our hearts to consider the amazing reason for this season: the incarnation—the enfleshment—of Divine love in a brother human, Jesus Christ.

Isn't what we find wonderful, what we can't fully explain, or are surprised by, or what holds my attention as I try to understand it? All of those can be reactions to what God did, and does, for us in the birth of Jesus Christ. I used to wonder at how Santa knew when we would all be out of the house caroling or at Midnight Mass! THAT wonder lasted only the seconds it took to get from the doorway to our gifts! Advent hopes to call forth within a wonder that we carry through the year; wonder expressing itself as gratitude to God, awareness that God now uses all of creation to reveal His presence, and reverence for the incarnation of God's image in each fellow child of God.

“Making This Your Best Advent Ever” was Dr. Allen Hunt's theme during our Waterloo area Parish Mission earlier this month. Now we have arrived at the door of Advent 2013! In the midst of all the

preparations for Christmas, I offer a gain his practices for making this your best Advent ever.

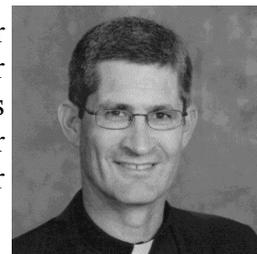
\*In Advent's 1<sup>st</sup> week, spend 10 minutes each day talking and listening to God in prayer

\* The 2<sup>nd</sup> week add reading 5 pages per day from the Bible, or some faith-topic book or newspaper like The Witness. I can love better those I know better!

\* The 3<sup>rd</sup> week take one week's worth of your usual parish annual giving, add 1% of that annual amount, and donate it to a worthy charity. Our God is a giver and we reflect God's image best when we give!

\*4th Week: Evangelize! Take one opportunity to invite a loved one who is not practicing his or her faith to join you for Mass this Christmas. Incarnate God's invitation to relationship we all received at His birth!

I will add a 5<sup>th</sup> practice: spend some time wondering at God's ongoing goodness to us in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament this Advent. Stop by anytime during the day and most evenings. Call me for other opportunities to spend time with God in this way. Let the mystery of God's love sink in, and give you a wonderful Advent! **Fr. Tom**



**Fr. Tom McDermott**  
Pastor

## Stewardship

Hospitality at Blessed Sacrament begins with welcoming visitors. Welcoming visitors is not necessarily about membership. If someone only comes for one Sunday, then we have ministered to them in some way. If people are with us for a while and decide not to join, we feel we've contributed to their discernment process. If people come from another parish because the mass time is convenient or there is a family event being celebrated, we are ministering to their needs. Welcoming visitors is a ministry.

The most important person for a visitor to talk to in order to feel at home in a new church is you. It is not the pastor, or the greeter, but a regular attendee. Visitors are guests of God, not strangers. Be yourself! You are loving! You have a good thing going! You have the capacity to love more people, and to love more deeply. Practice making people feel special and what you give to others will be returned to you.

The Stewardship Committee has

welcoming of visitors and new members as two of their goals. They have made several endeavors that they believe will add to the welcoming that you do in the pews. The bookmarks in the missals are an easy way for visitors to get more information about Blessed Sacrament, the Catholic faith, or joining our parish. There is no one pattern for the way people enter, engage, and join our parish. Every person and every situation is different. The members of our Welcoming Group have found this out first hand. After Father Tom has visited with new members their names are passed on to our Welcoming Group. Someone then makes a visit to their home with a homemade food item and a packet of information about our parish. This personal visit gives the new members one familiar face at Mass and a chance for us to get to know them. During the following year the new members receive

personal invitations from their visitor to other events, such as Fall Festival, Men's Breakfast, Salad Supper, and small group faith sharing.

New members are also invited to an informal gathering of other new members on a monthly basis, usually the second weekend of the month after one of the Masses. This is a great opportunity for new members to get to know each other and find out they aren't the only ones new to the parish. Many times they find they have something in common besides being new to the parish.

By knowing each other we are able to support each other in our faith journey. Name tags at Mass and hospitality after Masses are opportunities for everyone in the parish to become better acquainted.

Bev Seger, Stewardship Committee

## School News

It is hard to believe that our school year is nearing the half way point! Our staff and students are working hard to portray and live our theme this year: **Lead with Faith!** We actively participate in weekly liturgies and have planned two all-day, all-school retreat events for Advent and Lent. Please join us when they are announced in the weekly parish bulletins.

In September Cedar Valley Catholic Schools hired a new system administrator. Dr. Dale Monroe began his duties on September 9th. Dr. Monroe was the executive director of research and assessment for Waterloo's public schools from 2004-2006. He has been manager of the Iowa New Jobs



Training Program at Kirkwood Community College and superintendent of the Anamosa School District.

He earned his teaching degree

from Briar Cliff University, a master's degree from Minnesota State University, and a doctorate at the University of Iowa. Dr. Monroe worked as a teacher at St. Edmond Catholic School and in the Sioux City School District.

Dr. Monroe's focus for the Cedar

Valley Catholic Schools will be on curriculum and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) activities. Dr. Monroe has frequently visited Blessed Sacrament School for liturgies, staff meetings, professional planning and participated in a "Crusader's Walk." We welcome Dr. Monroe and wish him the best in his position with the CVCS.

Thank you Blessed Sacrament Parish for your faithful support of Blessed Sacrament School. From monetary donations to Milk Moola caps and Hy-Vee receipts, we appreciate them all! Blessings.

Nancy Stirm, Principal



## Daily Disciple: Betty Gauger

Harland Robinson

Our Daily Disciple for this issue is Betty Gauger. Betty and her late husband, Bob, have been members of Blessed Sacrament for over 50 years.

A native of Waterloo, Betty attended Sacred Heart School and she and Bob were married at Sacred Heart. They became

members of Blessed Sacrament when the parish opened and raised three children, Terri, Tim and Trent; all of whom attended Blessed Sacrament School.

Betty and Bob became involved with the Community Meal over 20 years ago at the urging of Jim and Lori Freet and have served as Coordinators continuously for many years. Betty is especially appreciative of the service and donations provided by the many volunteers who support the community meal without being asked.

As a Sacristan, Betty has worked

with fellow Sacristan, Mary Teel, to provide clean linens for Mass for over 25 years; a “labor of love” for both of them.

Betty has also coordinated the parish’s Meals on Wheels program participation for over 20 years, scheduling volunteer drivers to provide 90 to 120 meals to shut-ins twice each month.

Betty cherishes the warm, friendly, “at home” atmosphere of the Blessed Sacrament community and is inspired by the commitment of her fellow parishioners to serve others - a commitment she feels has always been encouraged by our pastors and parish staff.

## Forward in Faith

Barb Duggan, Dir. of FF

The Forward in Faith, our parish religious education program, is off to a great start! We are blessed to have a great team of catechists in the classrooms teaching our children about the Catholic faith. Monthly student led prayer services, community building activities, and service activities supplement the curriculum. During October the students learned about Catholic Social Teaching and the dignity of life. All students, kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, participated in a month long service project to raise money to support Catholic Relief Services. They did

a great job earning \$360.40 to support this worthwhile cause that

ministers to the poor throughout the world.



From left to right, back row: Barb Duggan, Hannah Apling, Lynne Johnson, Hailey Johnson, Jim Fineran, Mandy Fineran  
Front Row: Joann Apling, Isabel Hart, Lisa Schneider, Laci Ernst and Lori Zabler

## Caring Bag Program

Scott Zabler, Social Justice Committee

The Social Justice Committee will once again be organizing our Caring Bag Program. Last year we were able to reach 430 families with lunches during the holiday season. We hope to beat that goal and we need your help.

Beginning the weekend of November 30th and continuing through the week of December 14th, we will have people in the gathering space at each Mass to hand out and receive bags for the program.

The bags will have the items that need to be purchased outlined and we are again working with the Hy-Vee on University located near the church. We would appreciate your support.

## THE COMMUNITY OF BLESSED SACRAMENT

650 Stephan Avenue  
Waterloo, Iowa 50701

Rectory Phone 319-233-6179  
FAX 319-233-6051  
School Phone 319-233-7863  
Day Care Phone 319-236-6131

Reconciliation: 3:30 PM Saturday or see bulletin  
Masses 4:30 PM Saturday  
8:30 AM & 10:30 AM Sunday  
8:00 AM Tuesday, Thursday, Friday  
9:00 AM Wednesday during school

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
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Permit No. 1870  
Waterloo, Iowa

We're on the Web!

[blessedsacramentwaterloo.org](http://blessedsacramentwaterloo.org)

## Youth Minister



### John Knight, Youth Minister

Hello Blessed Sacrament, my name is John Knight and I have been invited to join you in ministering to the high school youth of the four Waterloo parishes. Since I'm told in Proverbs to raise my kids in the ways of the Lord and they will not depart from him, I look forward to helping you create some space for our Lord to introduce himself to your children and let him do his magic. My children Andrew, James, and Julianne are thirteen, eleven and five. I am quite fond of them, but please don't tell them. I need to keep their heads at a reasonable size. I imagine they are wondering what life is going to be like north of the Mason Dixon line right now since they have lived in the Dallas area all their life. Although they still have some Texas rough and rowdy in them, I hope they will quickly find true friends up here. Denise, my wife of 18 years, and I have spent most of our life in Texas. She has a master's degree in special education and is still pretty cute for a Longhorn. Being a special education teacher she writes me really specific "honey-do" notes. She's been the James Brown of the family these last couple years. She coaches and teaches life skills to severely autistic kids, and has developed a full slate of clients who are quite unhappy with me for taking her

away. She is looking to continue this type of work in Waterloo. After graduating from Texas A&M, I worked as a youth minister for a suburban parish in Dallas. While my educational background is all public, my folks used to needle me for majoring in church when I was at A&M. I loved being a part of the Catholic Community present at A&M and participated in many of the student-led retreat and outreach programs. After developing a great appreciation for how hard the clergy works in my first youth ministry stint, I was drawn to serve a wider range of publics and took a job with a municipality. I spent the next thirteen years programming recreation classes for preschool, youth, adults, and seniors. I worked in a senior center, the Douglass Community Center in the African American Community, and finally managed my own high school based recreation facility. After my foray into civil service, I decided to slow down our fast paced life and spend more time with my family. I stayed at home with my daughter for her first couple years, supported my step-dad in caring for my mother in the last stages of Alzheimer's disease, became a decent cook, coach, catechist, pastoral council member, yard man, family accountant, and Kool-Aid dad for some of the neighborhood kids. Except for the isolation of being a rare dad at home, I enjoyed the freedom of managing home responsibilities while supporting my wife in a career she loves without neglecting the kids.

I enjoy spiritual reading, country music, Aggie football, spending time with my family, my black lab Lizzie, and silly comedies.

Although I spent most of my life in Texas, I am actually a Waterloo boy who enjoyed many carefree summer days off Ridgeway. I am thankful for the many kind people of this community who helped make my early childhood a pretty happy time for me here in Iowa. I attended St. Edward and Blessed Sacrament when we lived in Waterloo. I'm told I used to crawl three pews ahead, pop my head up, and wave at my family when I was a hyper toddler at St. Ed's. Who knows, my mom might be in heaven right now just on the weight of having to raise me.

While hired to serve the high school youth of all the Waterloo parishes, I hope my efforts will benefit the whole community. I think we can work together to build up a community of adults and young people excited to meet and do God's will. I hope to contribute to fun and edifying retreat and youth rally experiences; that we can find some opportunities to link different groups to serve others in our community; and to help create a place where young people want to be.

I look forward to meeting more of the community and partnering with you in being there for the young people of Waterloo. Thanks for taking the time to read this and please call me if you have questions, suggestions, or a desire to serve in the ministry.