

Our Lady of Lourdes

Catholic Parish, Waterloo

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PARISH TEAM

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Feast of the Holy Family



DEC 31 to JAN 5

TUESDAY – DEC 31 New Years Eve, Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God	5:00 p.m.	In Thanksgiving – Earnest & Suja Biber
WEDNESDAY– JAN 1 New Year’s Day, Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God	10:00 a.m.	Mass
THURSDAY– JAN 2 Memorial – St. Basil	7:00 p.m.	No Mass
FRIDAY– JAN 3 Ferial Christmas Season	8:30 a.m.	In Thanksgiving – Maria Richelt Smit
SATURDAY– JAN 4 Solemnity of Epiphany of the Lord	9:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	First Saturday Devotion Special Intention – Brenden Biber
SUNDAY– JAN 5 Solemnity of Epiphany of the Lord	9:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m.	Holy Souls – Joan Cassidy Living & deceased members of our parish



Today we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family. This feast is part of the Christmas season, and we should place today's Gospel in the context of what Luke's Gospel tells us about the birth of Jesus. Luke has been answering the question "Who is Jesus?" through his stories of the births of John the Baptist and Jesus. Today's Gospel reading continues this theme. It has no parallel in the other Gospels and is the conclusion of Luke's Infancy Narrative.

Mary, Joseph, and Jesus are presented in this Gospel as a faithful Jewish family. They are participating in the annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, an event shared each year with family and friends. When Jesus is found, Luke describes him as seated in the Temple in the midst of the Jewish teachers. Although he is young, Jesus seems not to need teaching about his Jewish tradition. In his dialogue with these learned teachers, Jesus astounds them with his insight and understanding. Jesus is a child of Israel. His Father is God.

The dialogue between Mary and Jesus contains many references to family relationships. In fact, in this Gospel reading Mary and Joseph are never identified by name. Instead, they are referred to by their relationship to Jesus. Ultimately, this emphasizes Luke's point about the identity of Jesus. When Mary and Joseph find Jesus in the Temple, they question Jesus and express their anxiety. Jesus replies in words that many have thought to be disrespectful. Jesus says that he was never lost; he was at home. Jesus is God's Son, and he is in his Father's house. Luke will continue to suggest that faith in Jesus establishes new family relationships as he describes Jesus' public ministry.

In Luke's Gospel, Mary's importance is even greater than her role as Jesus' mother. Mary is the first disciple and will be present with Jesus' disciples after his Resurrection at Pentecost. (*Loyola Press*).



HELPING CHILDREN THROUGH OUR BOWING ANGEL: A long-standing tradition at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish is the presence of the bowing angel by the manger scene, who graciously bows her head after an offering is made. Again, this year, all donations received from the bowing angel will be sent to the School Sisters of Notre Dame Children's Project in Kenya who work with children whose parents have died of HIV-AIDS. Since the bowing angel cannot digest paper, a plate will be by the angel to accept paper offerings. (Cheques should be made payable to "Our Lady of Lourdes Church".)



TREE OF LIFE: It is a tradition here at Our Lady of Lourdes to call the large tree in the sanctuary the "Tree of Life" for the decorations on it reflect two of the great Christian mysteries: **birth and death**. On the tree, there will be **32 angels** each inscribed with the name of a child baptized in the parish since last Christmas, and **15 crosses** in memory of those born to eternal life. When the Christmas season is over, these personalized ornaments will be available as mementos to family members. Parents with children baptized this year are encouraged to have a photo taken with the child by the tree and to keep this with the ornament.



THE POPE'S JANUARY INTENTIONS FOR 2025

For the right to an education

Let us pray for migrants, refugees, and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected.



HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

SOLEMNITY OF MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD

JANURAY 1ST, NEW'S YEARS DAY



Today's reading is a continuation from the Gospel proclaimed at the Christmas Mass at midnight. In it the shepherds act upon the message they receive from the angel and go to find Jesus in the manger in Bethlehem. In their visit to the manger, the shepherds find things just as the angel had said. The shepherds' visit, therefore, is a moment of fulfillment, manifestation, and the beginning of the

salvation we receive through Christ.

In the context of today's Solemnity, this reading also helps us focus on Mary as the Mother of God. The reading tells us at least three things about Mary as a mother. First, Mary is described as a reflective person, keeping the reports of the shepherds in her heart. Second, we are reminded of how obedient Mary was to God when she named the baby *Jesus* as the angel Gabriel had directed. Third, this reading shows Mary and Joseph faithfully observing their Jewish tradition by having Jesus circumcised.

Mary's faithfulness to God is evident in all three of these things. Her reflection upon the events in her life indicates that she was a person of prayer. This prayer made possible her obedience to God and God's will, even if the outcome was not clear. Finally, her faithfulness to a community of faith grounded her relationship with God and enabled her to participate in God's plan of salvation.

Because of Mary's faithfulness to God, she was able to receive the gift of God's Son and accept her role in God's plan for salvation. By doing so, she models for us the path of discipleship and is also called Mother of the Church. Our call to discipleship also includes these three aspects. First, discipleship means prayer and reflection on the events of our lives that we might see God's presence and work in our lives. Second, discipleship means obedience to God and God's will. Third, discipleship includes fidelity to a community of faith.

As we move into another New Year, we ask for our Blessed Mother's protection and guidance on us and our loved ones.

*Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen*

HOLY YEAR

As proclaimed by Pope Francis, December 24, 2024, marked the beginning of the Jubilee Holy Year with the theme, Pilgrims of Hope. To inaugurate this in Diocese and Parish, there will be a special ritual to proclaim the Jubilee Year and

begin our journey as Pilgrims of Hope. Prayer books for families of the parish will also be available to guide us in prayer through this year.



12 Days of Christmas

Christmas Day, December 25th to Epiphany, January 6th.



- 1 True Love refers to God
- 2 Turtle Doves refers to the Old and New Testaments
- 3 French Hens refers to Faith, Hope and Charity, the Theological Virtues
- 4 Calling Birds refers to the Four Gospels and/or the Four Evangelists
- 5 Golden Rings refers to the first Five Books of the Old Testament, the "Pentateuch", which gives the history of man's fall from grace.
- 6 Geese A-laying refers to the six days of creation
- 7 Swans A-swimming refers to the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven sacraments
- 8 Maids A-milking refers to the eight beatitudes
- 9 Ladies Dancing refers to the nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit
- 10 Lords A-leaping refers to the ten commandments
- 11 Pipers Piping refers to the eleven faithful apostles
- 12 Drummers Drumming refers to the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostle's Creed

Prayer for the New Year

O God of new beginnings and wonderful surprises,

thank you for the gift of a new year.

May it be a time of grace for me,
a time to grow in faith and love,
a time to renew my commitment
to following your Son, Jesus.



May it be a year of blessing for me,
a time to cherish my family and friends,
a time to renew my efforts at work,
a time to embrace my faith more fully.

Walk with me, please,
in every day and every hour of this New Year,
that the light of Christ might shine through me,
in spite of my weaknesses and failings.
Above all, may I remember this year
that I am a pilgrim on the sacred path to you.

Amen



Thinking of buying or selling? I can HELP! I have a team of professionals who will make the process go as smooth as possible. I have been a member of Our Lady of Lourdes church for 25 yrs and would love the opportunity to help my fellow parishioners with their real estate needs.

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