

Welcome to the Holy Family Parishes of  
Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Parish  
Lost Nation & Toronto

Sacred Heart Parish ~ Oxford Junction  
Ss Philip & James Parish ~ Grand Mound



December 15, 2019— Whom Are We Looking For?

Cluster Parish Information

**Pastor: Rev. Francis V. Odoom**  
Cell: 515-357-8798  
Email: odoomf@diodav.org  
Web: holyfamilycluster.com

**Deacon: Michael Sheil**  
Cell: 563-613-0607

**SS Philip & James Church**  
606 Fulton Street— P.O Box 7  
Grand Mound, IA 52751  
Telephone: 563-847-2271

**Administrative Assistant**  
**Bulletin Editor: Christine Meyer**  
EM: grandmssphilipjames@diodav.org

**Our Lady of the Holy Rosary**  
903 Main St., P.O Box 127  
Lost Nation, IA 52254

670 Mill Street  
Toronto, IA 52777

**Sacred Heart Church**  
309 Church Street  
Oxford Junction, IA 52323  
Web [www.sacredheartoj.org](http://www.sacredheartoj.org)

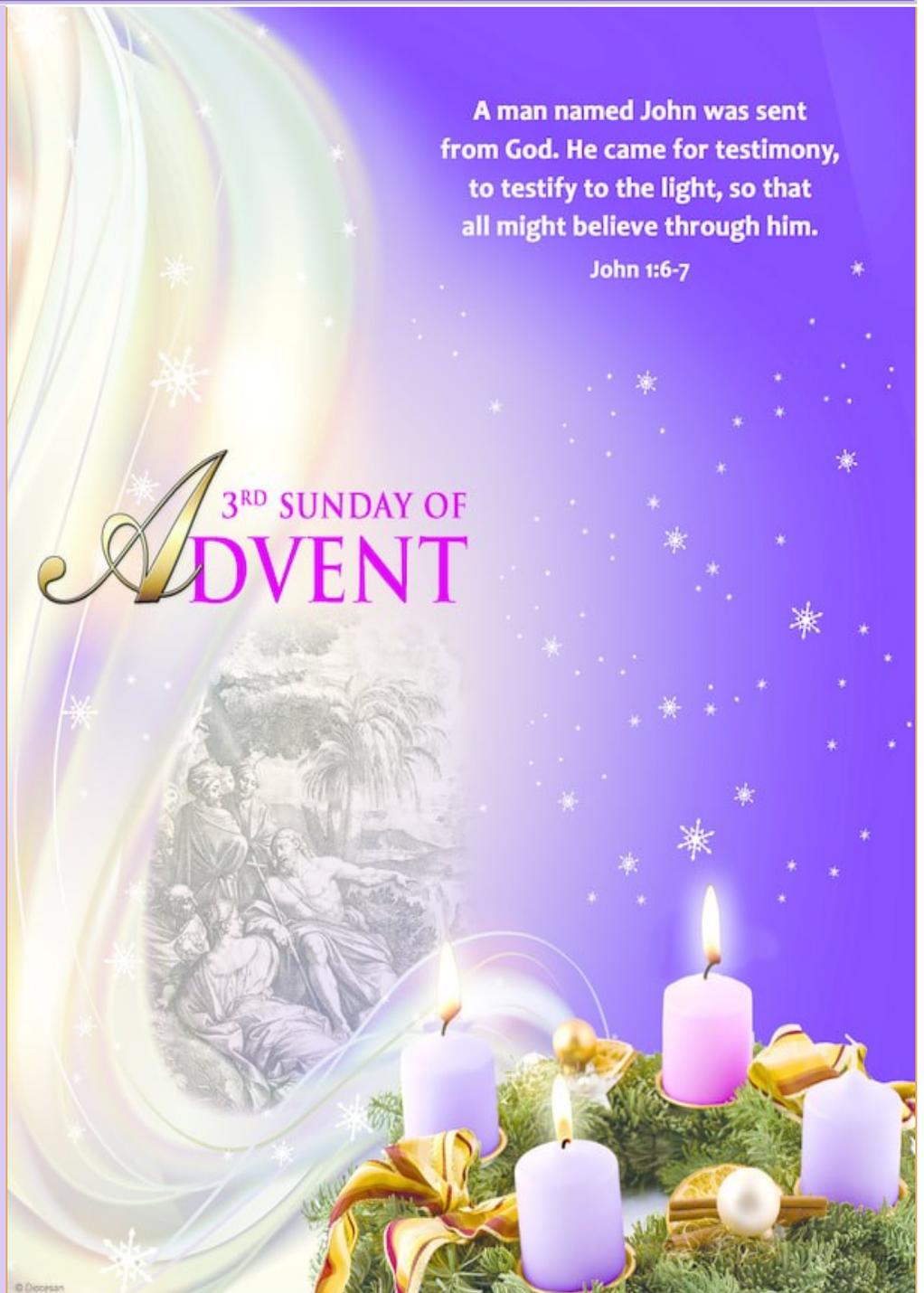
Cluster Office Hours

Monday: 9:00 am—2:00 pm  
Tuesday: 9:00 am—2:00 pm  
Friday: 9:00 am—2:00 pm

Telephone: 563-847-2271

Bulletin Deadline Tuesday 12:00 noon  
(unless otherwise noted).

- Sacrament of Baptism: Please call the rectory for arrangements.
- Sacrament of Matrimony: Please contact Pastor 9 to 12 months prior to wedding date.
- Catholic Radio Station 92.5FM



A man named John was sent  
from God. He came for testimony,  
to testify to the light, so that  
all might believe through him.

John 1:6-7

Dear Parishioners,

We have made it into the third Sunday of Advent. At this point, let us ask ourselves about our preparation so far. Are we at a point where we are ready to receive the Lord at Christmas into our souls and into our families? What are those things that impede our readiness to receive the Lord?

Let us **identify** the nature of the obstacles that block the way to our hearts. What are the valleys, mountains, hills and winding roads of our lives? We need to figure out for ourselves the nature of the road before us and the obstacles we are dealing with in order to make them ready for the Lord. For instance, if it's a lack of sincerity which has become a valley that traps people who are dealing with us, we would need to fill it up by consciously learning to be genuine in our relationships and in our faith.

And, if we have built mountains of anger and hatred due to accumulated unforgiveness, we would need to make that mountain low by letting go of our hurts and pains gradually through prayer and the sacrament of reconciliation. Let us continue to search our hearts and make the efforts to straighten up things, surely, he who has begun a good work in us will bring it to a completion in Christ (Phil 1:6).

I would like to invite you to Eucharistic Adoration this Sunday and to our morning worship in one of our Churches.

Shalom!

Fr. Francis Odoom  
Pastor

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### Third Sunday of Advent: Whom Are We looking for?



The ancient people believed that if there was a prophet among them, they were blessed. If there was no prophet, this was a sign that people's sins had turned God away from them. In the time of Jesus' life, it had been two hundred years since the people of Israel had a prophet in their midst. Two hundred years of no communication with God.

Then, John the Baptist appeared. He was dynamic and his message wasn't new: he told the people to repent and reform and prepare for their God. There was a power these people had never seen before in his words. John added something; he said that God is coming *now*. The Kingdom of God is *at hand*. People were drawn to John. It was obvious to them that God was once more blessing his people.

John did not offer people a semi-spiritual and emotional experience. He demanded that the people remain faithful to their traditions. He followed Isaiah's reading "Strengthen the knees that are weak, the hands that are feeble, and say, "Be strong, fear not. Here is your God." John was not a fad. He was not a reed in the wind, changing the way it leans with every new gust of air, every new whim. John was a rock, -- anchored on his faith in God. His vitality led people to a strict belief to their faith. They accepted his baptism as a sign of their participation in a new world order, the Kingdom of God.

We modern people are also looking for a prophet. But what type of prophet are we looking for? A convenient one that fits our ways of the world? What type of prophecy do we seek? Are we looking for a prophet like John who is going to tell us to hold on to our faith, change those hidden parts of our lives that are self-destructive? Maybe he will tell us to give up that grudge we love to nourish, or perhaps that secret meanness to others that is only a secret from our conscience but quite apparent to all around us.

Are we looking for someone to tell us to stand up for our faith, or are we looking for a reed shaken by the wind? We have to admit there is a part of us that would love to hear someone tell us that our secrets are now no longer sinful. We'd love to hear someone say, "These are modern times, this or that is OK now, even if it was unacceptable before." We'd love to follow a reed that is bent by the winds of moral decay. But then we would not be listening to a prophet. We would not be listening to God's voice. We would only be hearing our own selfishness.

Whom do we go out to the desert to see? Someone who will give us a lovely emotional experience while permitting us to compromise on morality. Or do we go out to the desert to see someone who will encourage us to stand up against the pressures our society places upon us and compromise our consciences. We come to Church not for entertainment but for the strength to be ready for the Lord to enter our lives. Do you understand that we have to prepare our lives and soul for that day? There is not very much time left. Our lives are really very short. And the Kingdom of God is at hand.

This material is used with permission of its author, Rev. Msgr. Joseph A. Pellegrino, Diocese of St. Petersburg, FL  
These homilies are Msgr. Pellegrino's gifts to you. Hopefully, you will find them helpful in your own private reflections

# PARISH CLUSTER NEWS

## NEWS AND EVENTS

For Christmas Week Worship Schedule; please read information on Page 4B of bulletin.

### COMMUNAL PENANCE

If you missed Communal Penance this past week, there will be reconciliation today, Sunday, December 15th at 3:00pm at St. Joseph's Church in DeWitt. Communal Penance will also be held on Saturday, December 21st at Prince of Peace Church in Clinton at 11:00am.

### **Bulletin Deadlines:**

**Please follow the bulletin deadlines as LPI is on publishing overdrive.**

- December 29 is due Wednesday, December 18
- January 05, 2020 is due Tuesday, December 24.

### Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Lost Nation/Toronto

Our next project will be the Reverse Advent Boxes or bags and lace an item for each day Advent. These can be socks, gloves other winter warmth items, candy, games for kids. These will help for Christmas. Toronto items will be taken to Carroll Assistance Center in Wheatland and Lost Nation items will be taken to Lost Nation Food pantry.

### SS Philip & James- Grand Mound



Angel Tree Referral Center: Take a minute and go back in time and remember when we were children how excited it was to have gifts under the Christmas Tree. Your compassion, kindness for all the Angel Tree gifts are a blessing because you helped make Christmas special for children in our community. Your gift gives them the joy we were given many years ago through the innocent eyes of a child. God Bless you. Referral Center staff is very grateful for your giving heart.

Beginning January 2020, church ministries will be to serve on a monthly basis instead of weekly. Please check for schedule in future bulletin.



The Year 2020 is around the corner; please pick up your contribution envelopes in the church vestibule: December 15 - N thru W

George Green Family: Our entire Pastorate joins together in expressing deepest sympathy in the passing of George Green. Only in hours like this do we know in fullest measure the consolation of God's promise: *"I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live"* - John 11:25. In the fellowship of our faith, we extend a loving hand of sympathy and understanding.

Time Change: Eucharistic Adoration is now set at 4:00 pm on Sunday until further notice.

### **Religious Education News**

Wednesday, December 18th at 6:00 P.M. Children's Program with refreshments to follow. All families and Parishioners are invited.



January Coffee hour will be hosted by Diane Skinner and assisted by the families of Kathi Fausnaught, Aaron Gorzney, Dan Donahue, Richard Azinger, Paul Hasenmiller, Teresa Bunce, and Philip Butt.

New Church Tradition: This year we are asking each family to donate an ornament for our parish Christmas tree. This may be a homemade ornament, or something you already have in your decoration box. It is our intention to store all the ornaments with the tree and other decorations at church unless you request to have it returned to you after the holidays.

The Altar Rosary Christmas Lunch and meeting will be Monday, December 16, 2019 at Buzzy's. Lunch at 11:30 am, short meeting, and play cards after. All ladies of the parish are invited.

### Sacred Heart - Oxford Junction



We are asking our parish family to again donate winter flowers to decorate our altar during the Christmas season. Decorating will be done on December

23-24. If you want to donate a flower but are unable to get someplace, please call Doris at 319-480-6963 or Karen at 319-981-3906.

Thank you to all of you who brought cookies for the cheer plates delivered to folks around town, surrounding towns and various nursing homes. We had a delicious potluck and put together nearly 40 plates of goodies and fruit for our friends and family members. Thanks also to those of you who were able to deliver the goodies!



We have set up a "giving" tree for your donations of mittens, gloves, scarves, caps, etc. which will be donated

to the elementary school at Oxford Junction after the holidays. If you have "gently used" winter coats for children or adults, they may also be put under or near the tree. There is always a need in our communities for warm clothing.

The Cleaning sign-up sheet for January-June, 2020, is on the table in the hallway. We are doing this as a parish project. Ideally we would like four different families to sign up for a month, and then you would be responsible for assigning duties to the committee, however it would work out. This isn't a hard job, but it could take an hour or two each week, depending on season of year and how much cleaning you do. There are supplies and a check list in the furnace room. We would like our church to be clean and welcoming for, not only our family members, but those who come visit. Thank you to all of you who have participated in the cleaning project, and we know that we'll have more of our family members signing up in the next few months.

January 2020 liturgy sign-up sheet is on the table in the hallway. If you have a certain weekend in January you wish to serve, please sign up. Karen is currently working on the January schedule.

## GENERAL INFORMATION 4A

God in the night  
God at my right  
God all the day  
God with me stay  
God in my heart

- **Our Lady of Holy Rosary:** Jeanene Cavey, Dick Nodurft, Melvin Duwa
- **SS Philip & James Church:** Deacon Mike Sheil, Natalie Regan, Elmer & Dorothy Hasenmiller, Grace Kinney, Betty Forret, & Carolyn Schwien.
- **Sacred Heart Church:** Betty Anderson, Rich Kleineck, Dennis Koppes, Wendy Larive, Jerica Christensen, Marilyn Stevenson, Rhonda Murphy, Leonard Lasack.



12/24/19: Christmas Eve Mass  
Grand Mound 4:00 pm  
12/24/19: Christmas Eve Mass  
Oxford Junction 4:00 pm  
12/25/19: Christmas Day Mass  
Lost Nation 9:00 am  
12/31/19: Solemnity of Mary Mass  
Toronto—5:30 pm  
01/01/20: Solemnity of Mary Mass  
Grand Mound 8:00 am  
Oxford Junction 10:00 am

### SS Philip & James Church Ministries

#### December 22, 2019

Lector: Tom Kinney  
E. Min: Jean Maher & Maureen Schrader  
Ushers: Paul Rock, Joe Dierickx, & Bryan Whitman  
Servers: Ellen & Olevia Olson, Ruth Whitman

#### December 24, 2019

Lector: Dick Azinger  
E. Min: Joyce Barnes & Diana Scott  
Ushers: Dan Donahue, Bill Looney, Doyle Fox  
Servers: Natalie & Nathan Butler, and Tynley Boussetot

#### December 29, 2019

Lector: Barb Morrissey  
E. Min: Mary Ann Schanze and Diane Skinner  
Ushers: Kurt Looney, Mike McNeil, Julius Michel  
Servers: Brian & Megan Forret, Kylee Fischer

## MASS INTENTIONS 4B

Saturday 12/14/19/Lost Nation  
05:00pm Richard Vens  
Sunday 12/15/19  
08:00am Grand Mound/ John Moffit  
10:00am Oxford Junction/  
Glen Regennitter  
Monday 12/16/19 **No Mass**  
Tuesday 12/17/19 Grand Mound  
08:00am Holy Name Society  
Wednesday 12/18/19/Grand Mound  
08:00am Harold Green  
10:00am Wheatland Manor/Manor Residents  
Thursday 12/19/19/Lost Nation  
05:30pm Scott Benischek  
Friday 12/20/19/Oxford Junction/  
08:00am Matt & Mary Stender  
Saturday 12/21/19/Toronto  
05:00pm Robby Gilroy  
Sunday 12/22/19  
08:00am Grand Mound/  
Howard & Gerard Green  
10:00am Oxford Junction/Rosine Regennitter  
04:00pm Eucharistic Adoration/Grand Mound

### Readings for the week of December 15, 2019

Sunday: Is 35:1-6a, 10/ Ps 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10 [Is 35:4]/Jas 5:7-10/Mt 11:2-11  
Monday: Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a/Ps 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9 [4]/Mt 21:23-27  
Tuesday: Gn 49:2, 8-10/Ps 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17 [cf. 7]/Mt 1:1-17  
Wednesday: Jer 23:5-8/Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19 [cf. 7]/Mt 1:18-25  
Thursday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17 [cf. 8]/Lk 1:5-25  
Friday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6 [cf. 7c and 10b]/Lk 1:26-38  
Saturday: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21 [1a; 3a]/Lk 1:39-45  
Sunday: Is 7:10-14/ Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 [7c, 10b]/ Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24

