

## January 10, 2021



# THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

This is what John the Baptist proclaimed: "One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." - Mk 1:7-8

#### Visitors & New Parishioners

We warmly welcome you to our parish family. Thank you for coming to worship with us.

### Parish Offices

#### ST. MARY

320 E. Washington Ave, Tomahawk WI 54487Phone715-453-2878Fax715-453-6678Website: www.stmaryschurchtomahawk.comHours: Monday—Friday 8:00AM-3:30PM

#### ST. AUGUSTINE

 N10090 County Rd B, Tomahawk, WI 54487

 Phone
 715-453-2561

 Fax
 715-453-4813

 Hours: Tuesday 8:00AM-3:00PM

#### ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

5209 Willow Road, Tripoli, WI 54564 Please note: There is no office at this location, please see St. Mary Parish Office.

## Weekend Mass/Service Schedule

St. Francis-Pier Willow St. Mary -Tomahawk St. Mary-Tomahawk St. Augustine- Harrison St. Mary -Tomahawk

#### Weekday Mass/Service Schedule

St. Augustine-Harrison St. Mary-Tomahawk St. Mary-Tomahawk St. Mary-Tomahawk

#### Rosary

St. Augustine-Harrison St. Augustine-Harrison St. Mary -Tomahawk St. Mary-Tomahawk St. Mary -Tomahawk e Schedule Saturday 4:00PM Saturday 6:00PM Sunday 8:00AM Sunday 9:30AM Sunday 11:00AM

#### Ce Schedule Tuesday 8:30AM Wednesday 8:45AM

Thursday 8:45AM Friday 8:45AM

Sunday 8:55AM Tuesday 8:00AM Wednesday 8:15AM Thursday 8:15AM Friday 8:00AM Adoration with Reconciliation St. Mary-Tomahawk Following 8:45AM Mass on Fridays

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus with Adoration & Reconciliation St. Mary-Tomahawk Following 8:45AM Mass on first Fridays

#### Reconciliation

St. Mary-Tomahawk Saturdays at 9:00AM\* St. Francis-Pier Willow Saturdays at 3:30PM\*

### Anointing of the Sick

**St. Mary-Tomahawk** Following 11:00AM Mass on Sundays\* \* or by appointment (715-453-2878)

## GENERAL INFORMATION

#### Pastor

Fr. Louis Maram Reddy pastor@smctomahawk.com

#### **ST. AUGUSTINE**

715-453-2561 Parish Coordinator, Kathy Voermans Email: kathy.staugustinechurch@yahoo.com Deacon Dan Towle 715-453-2848 Email: dtowle55@gmail.com **RCIA** Deacon Dan Towle 715-453-2848 Cemetery Sexton, Dennis Goulee Pastoral Council Chair, Nancy Swan Financial Council Chair, Jim Evers

## **ST. MARY & ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI**

#### 715-453-2878

Parish Secretary, Tracy Benaszeski Email: smparishoffice@smctomahawk.com Finance/Business Manager, Laura Reiter Email: finance@smctomahawk.com Director of Music & Liturgy, Janice Huseby Email: jhuseby@smctomahawk.com Coordinator of Religious Education/ Youth Ministry, Marianna Merkatoris Email: dreyouth@smctomahawk.com

Deacons		
David Bablick	715-224-3472	
Cliff Eggett	715-453-5217	
Darrell Smerz (Retired)	715-453-8203	
RCIA		
Deacon David Bablick	715-224-3472	
Kathy Ramassini	715-453-3822	
Parish Nurse Ministry		
Ann Jelinek RN, PN	715-453-4573	
Mary Bailey RN, PN	715-453-3793	
Cemetery Sexton		
Matt Wohlt	715-453-7030	
Pastoral Council Chair, Mickey Loka		
Financial Council Chair, Scott Swenty		
Endowment Fund Advisory Board President,		
AJ Theiler	715-453-0010	

## **ST. MARY'S THRIFT CELLAR**

715-453-2878	
Hours:	
Tuesday	4:00PM-7:0
Wednesday	9:00AM-3:0
Friday	9:00AM-3:0
Volunteer Coordinator,	
Nancy Hoff	715-453-4

## **BULLETIN DEADLINE:**

Information for the parish bulletin must be in St. Mary's parish office by 8:00AM on Tuesday.

## Mission Statement

Our Catholic Communities are committed to be an extension of the universal Catholic church by daily living of the teachings of Jesus Christ for the spiritual growth of all in our parish and community.

## Reflection

The reflection for the week can be found on our website at www.stmaryschurchtomahawk.com.

### **Sacraments & Faith Formation**

#### Sacrament of Baptism

We ask that parents of a child to be baptized contact the parish office to arrange attendance of a Baptismal Preparation Class. Classes are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month. It is not necessary to wait until the child is born to make arrangements.

#### Sacrament of Matrimony

Anyone seeking to set up a wedding must contact Fr. Louis, our pastor, at least 6 months prior to the marriage. Wedding guidelines are available at www.stmaryschurchtomahawk.com.

#### Sacrament of Anointing the Sick

Please call the parish office to notify us of the people who are in need of this care. This Sacrament is also available to those who wish to receive it after the 11:00AM Mass on Sunday.

#### Sacrament of Reconciliation

(Confession) is celebrated individually each Saturday at 9:00AM. Individual times can be arranged at any time by calling the parish office.

#### **Faith Formation**

The Sacraments of First Holy Communion and First Reconciliation take place during 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade. Confirmation Preparation begins in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and takes place on Wednesdays. Students are confirmed in the fall of 11<sup>th</sup> Grade. Classes for Grades K-12 are on Wednesdays.

#### Pray for the Sick

Colette Matthews	Darrell Smerz	Steve Malin	Sherry Martinco
Lawrence	Joseph Swan	Jack Huston	Jim Witucki
Matthews	Ted Ingman	John Loka	Karen Torell
Judy Rau	Joan McCormick	Vivian Mitchell	LeRoy Wolf
Tucker Van Ryen	Char Seetan	Roberta Meyer	Peter Flammang
Dale Klutsenbaker	Dan Bassett	Joann Meyers	Jean Flammang
Tom Fishbeck	John W. Colwell	John Chruscielski	Mary Schlegel
Bonnie Murphy	Tim Davis	Stephen Christian	Therésè Quirion
Howard Elliott	Charlene Marks	Barbara Trevino	Gus Feind
Melinda Meyers	Ken White	Jeff Langfeldt	Laura Ludke
Gerald Ruiter	Laura Jo Pearson	Helene Warner	Richard Seufzer
Christine Taylor	Evelyn Brown	Marlene Erickson	Phyllis Day
Joyce Weizenicker	Nicholas Peterson	Joan Crowell	Don Gerum
Margaret Congdon	Donna Underdale	Gary Petrouske	
Joseph	Martin & Judy	Don Chamberlain	
Montgomery	Vander Sanden	Polly Kinate	

All the sick in the hospitals and all the residents in our Nursing Homes. To keep our list current, all names are removed on a monthly basis. If our parish's thoughts and prayers are still needed for you and yours, you must contact us to ensure that your loved ones are on the prayer list.

### Pray For All the Priests of our Diocese:

Each week we are asked to pray for all the Priests of our Diocese. The monthly calendars are available at catholicdos.org/chancery-bulletin.

#### ST. MARY'S PARISH SCHOOL

715-453-3542 Principal, Rita Lee Email: smsprincipal@stmarystudents.com Secretaries: Linda Ploeckelman & Loretta Wanta Email: smsoffice@stmarystudents.com

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## **OUR FAITH COMMUNITY**

## **From the Pastor**

## HAPPY NEW YEAR! Make new determinations: Be What You Want To Be

It is your willpower that is going to determine what you are able to do - nothing else - not your past habits. Doubt can destroy everything, but faith can accomplish anything. Let nothing weaken your conviction that you can be whatever you want to be. Not to use your will is to be inert like a stone. There is always a way to find it if you think hard enough until it is luminous enough to reveal to you the way to your goal. The power of suggestion is very strong. The ability to accomplish is all in the mind. Remember that as a child of God you are endowed with the same potentialities as the most excellent among men. Cast away all negative thoughts and fears. Fear of death is ridiculous. We, all believers, have a share in the Resurrection of Christ.

In every situation be calmly active and actively calm. Your trials did not come to you to punish you, but to awaken you – to make you realize that you are a part of Spirit and that just behind the spark of your life is the flame of Infinity; great light of God; all fulfilling

Mass Intentions & The Week Ahead

love of God. <u>Your fulfillment lies not in</u> <u>obtaining the objects of your carnal desires,</u> <u>but in the unfoldment of your soul qualities in</u> <u>making the efforts to succeed in worthwhile</u> <u>endeavors.</u> Bad habits are the worst enemies you can have. You are punished by these habits. Every day should be a transition from bad habits to good habits and that is the end of it. Stay away from those things that



stimulate bad habits. Do not test yourself with temptations.

Enter the New Year with new hope. Whenever you think of yourself, think of others. When you are making others happy, you are making yourself happy and pleasing God. Remember, you are a child of God so be proud of it. No matter what comes, believe it is the Lord who is allowing it to come to you and you must succeed in conquering those daily challenges. Do His Will and nothing can hurt you. You are safe and secure in the hands of God. "<u>The Lord is</u> my shepherd , there is nothing I shall want". (*Psalm 23*)

Fr. Louis Maram Reddy

#### 1/10 8:00AM Mass @ St. Mary: For the People of the Parishes Sunday 8:55AM Rosary @ St. Augustine 9:30AM Mass @ St. Augustine: Erv Van Strydonk by Jean 11:00AM Mass @ St. Mary: Jeanette Powell by Paige Heikkinen Anointing of the Sick following Mass Monday 1/11 NO MASS 4:00PM Yoga Tuesday 1/12 8:00AM Rosary @ St. Augustine 8:30AM Mass @ St. Augustine: Ted & Whil Amelse by Jay & Kathy Van Ryen 4-7PM Thrift Cellar Wednesday 1/13 8:15AM Rosary @ St. Mary 8:45AM Mass @ St. Mary: Pat Genelin by Ron & Karla Kammer 9AM-3PM Thrift Cellar Thursday 1/14 8:45AM Mass @ St. Mary: Pat Genelin by Julie Thompson 10:00AM RCIA Class in the CCC Friday 1/15 8:00AM Rosary @ St. Mary 8:45AM Mass @ St. Mary: Genieve Reich by Family 9AM-3PM Thrift Cellar 9:15AM Adoration with Benediction Saturday 1/16 9:00AM Reconciliation 4:00PM Mass @ St. Francis: Pat Genelin by Rick & Kathy Kuhn 6:00PM Mass @ St. Mary: Eugene Kerkhof by Dick & Jan Huseby Blood Pressures after Mass in the CCC (Tentative) Sunday 1/17 8:00AM Mass @ St. Mary: For the Living & Deceased Members of the Gerum & Statz Families Blood Pressures after Mass in the CCC (Tentative) 8:55AM Rosary @ St. Augustine 9:30AM Mass @ St. Augustine: For the People of the Parishes 11:00AM Mass @ St. Mary: Tom Behling by Paige & Alan Heikkinen Anointing of the Sick following Mass

Blood Pressures after Mass in the CCC (Tentative)



LIKE us on Facebook! "St. Mary's Catholic Parish Tomahawk, WI". We will update you on events, keep you posted

on things happening in our parish and send out important announcements! You will find Catholic content as well! Please like and share!

**Prayer Chain** - Anyone with a personal prayer intention is invited to call Ruth at 715-453-3397, and caring persons will pray on your behalf. Your request can be anonymous, or you may choose to include your name. Please respect the privacy of others, and do not share a prayer request on behalf of a third party.

St. Joseph the Worker Committee

Will be working on Tuesday, January 12 from 9:00AM-11:30AM. Your help is always appreciated whether you can work all or part of this time. Thank You!



This is what John the Baptist proclaimed: "One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." - Mk 1:7-8

## THIS WEEK \_\_\_\_



**Liturgy & Music Notes from Jan** Today we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord, which officially ends the Christmas season. The decorations will be packed away for another year, we return to the Ordinary Time for a few weeks, and then we will begin the season of Lent.

One of the bittersweet events that we marked in this Christmas season was the passing of an unforgettable friend, Charlie Berg. Charlie was very special to me, and to many, and I'd like to share some thoughts about Charlie—the friend, the teacher, the singer, the "poster child" for the term "servant". For me, the litmus test for a servant heart is humility—quiet, unassuming, selfless giving to others—which Charlie passed with flying colors. Looking back through many years of choir photos, Charlie was the constant presence of the Parish Choir (summer and winter), **Resurrection Choir, Advent Concert** Choir, Parish Mission Choir, and Men's Choir (for which Charlie personally recruited members—"no" was not an option). Charlie was the over-achiever, and if I congratulated him for recruiting 30 men, his answer was always "shoulda' been more". Charlie's watch must have been set on Eastern time, because he was an hour early for every event, which I enjoyed because it gave me time to visit with him. I know there were times when he didn't feel well, or strong enough to stand for a long time, but he persevered and viewed his physical ailments as annoyances that slowed him down. He loved our choir parties and was amused by our antics and silly games. Charlie's life was an illustration of devotion and faith in action. He taught me that "love" is a verb, and that life becomes a prayer that honors God by the way we care for others. I will miss him deeply ... "may the circle be unbroken". Thank you, Charlie.

## Weekly Readings and Observances

Sunday, January 10 (The Baptism of the Lord): Is 42:1-4, 6-7/Ps 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10 [11b]/Acts 10:34-38/Mk 1:7-11 or Is 55:1-11/Is 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6 [3)]/ 1 Jn 5:1-9/Mk 1:7-11

Monday, January 11: Heb 1:1-6/Ps 97:1 and 2b, 6 and 7c, 9 [cf. 7c]/Mk 1:14-20 Tuesday, January 12: Heb 2:5-12/Ps 8:2ab and 5, 6-7, 8-9 [cf. 7]/Mk 1:21-28 Wednesday, January 13 (*St. Hilary, Bishop and Doctor of the Church*): Heb 2:14-18/Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8-9 [8a]/Mk 1:29-39



Thursday, January 14: Heb 3:7-14/Ps 95:6-7c, 8-9, 10-11 [8]/Mk 1:40-45 Friday, January 15: Heb 4:1-5, 11/Ps 78:3 and 4bc, 6c-7, 8 [cf. 7b]/Mk 2:1-12 Saturday, January 16: Heb 4:12-16/Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15 [cf. Jn 6:63c]/Mk 2:13-17 Sunday, January 17 (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time): 1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19/Ps 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10 [8a, 9a]/1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20/Jn 1:35-42

Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father

A new six-week study, the Consecration to St. Joseph, will begin at St. Mary's Church on February 10. In the midst of crisis, confusion, and a world at war with the Church, it's time to come home again to our spiritual father, St. Joseph. In this richly researched and lovingly presented program of consecration to St. Joseph, Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, brings to life the wonders, the power, and the ceaseless love of St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church and the Terror of Demons.

Please call the parish office at 715-453-2878 to register, noting if you would prefer a morning, afternoon or evening session. Books have been ordered, and a \$15 donation towards the cost of the book is greatly appreciated.

#### **Young Adults Group**

Attention everyone age 18-35, whether you're just back from college for a few weeks over the holidays, have lived in the area for some time or may be entirely new to the Northwoods, if you would love to meet other young adults who share your same faith and desire for new friendships, welcome! Come join us for outdoor adventures, sports, sleigh rides, coffee mornings, Bible studies, and anything else we decide we'd like to do as friends. This new little group is the perfect place for us young adults to share our faith with one another, have fun, and just be together. Call or text Theresa Berscheit (715-490-0883), Drew Rakers (262-327-0669), or Ashley Heid (414-587-0575) to find out more. Hope to meet you soon!!!



## Youth & Religious Ed News

"I come as a pilgrim of peace and an apostle of hope" – *Pope Francis* 

Greetings St. Mary's parish family! I am excited to begin serving in the role as Director of Religious Education. I come to you with a varied and diverse background with one commonality - service to the Church. I have been a Catholic school elementary teacher (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>), Faith Formation Coordinator, and worked for the Archdiocese of St. Louis in the Office of Education and Formation. My undergraduate degree is in elementary education and my graduate degree is in Franciscan Studies with an emphasis in theology.

While I have worked in Arizona, Ohio and Missouri, it is good to be back in my home state of Wisconsin! Now I live within 2 hours of my family and my hometown of Green Bay. After being in the city of St. Louis for the past 12 years, I look forward to spending more time outdoors with my two dogs, boating with family, and checking out the breweries in the state.

- Favorite Religious Book: The Journey of the Mind to God
- Favorite Book: The Historian
- Favorite Movie: The Italian Job
- Favorite Color: Blue
- Favorite Drink: Coffee
- Favorite Bible Verse: Job 40:4-5

I hope to meet all of you in the coming days/weeks.

Blessings! ~ Marianna Merkatoris

## PARISH HAPPENINGS



## Registration

It's hard to believe it, but it is already time to start planning for the next school year! Registration will open next week. These are the enrollment periods for the 2021-2022 school year:

- January 18 Registration for current families
- January 31 Registration for all parish cluster families
- February 15 Open enrollment begins

Current families who register by Friday, February 12 will receive 50% off their registration fee. We anticipate large numbers in our Preschool, 4K and Kindergarten classes. We encourage interested families to register early.

## Many Gifts, One Nation

Save the date! Again this year, St. Mary's School is participating in the 4<sup>th</sup> annual "Many Gifts, One Nation: A Day of Giving to Catholic Schools" from February 2-3, 2021. The National Catholic Education Association is pleased to present this online giving campaign. You can make your gift to St. Mary's School by going to our donation page or watch our Facebook page for a convenient link. Thank you for supporting our school.

### **Catholic Schools Week**

One of our favorite weeks of the year is just around the corner! Catholic Schools Week! We are busy planning a fun week for our students. Here are a few highlights:

- Saturday, January 30: 6:00PM Kick-Off Mass
- Sunday, January 31: Family Snow Fun Day
- Monday, February 1: Themed Dress Up Day
- Tuesday, February 2: School Spelling Bee
- Wednesday, February 3: Bishop's Mass (virtual)
- Thursday, February 4: All School Retreat
- Friday, February 5: Grandparent themed activities

Traditionally, we invite grandparents to join us for the final day of Catholic Schools Week. We are disappointed that this is not possible this year due to COVID-19 restrictions. Students will spend time that day working on special grandparent projects to share with our families at a later time. We look forward to going back to our normal traditions again next year!

### The Wise Men Arrive

One of our traditions when we return to school after Christmas break is having the Wise Men travel around the school and arrive at the Nativity scene at the end of the day on January 6.



## From the Parish Nurse

Whoever said the Creator doesn't have a sense of humor? And boy could we use a bit of humor to refresh our spiritual health. A story used in the past, but worth repeating to give hope.

Dwight Nelson told this true story about his Pastor. He had a kitten that climbed up a tree in his backyard and was afraid to come down. The Pastor coaxed, offered warm milk, etc.. The kitten would not come down. The tree was not sturdy enough to climb, so the Pastor decided that if he tied a rope to his car and

drove forward so the tree would bend down, he could then reach up and get the kitten. He did all this, checking his progress in the car frequently, then figured if he went just a little bit further, the tree would be sufficiently for him to reach the kitten. But, as he moved a little further forward, the rope broke. The tree went "boing!" and the kitten instantly sailed through the air and out of sight. The Pastor felt terrible. He walked all over the neighborhood asking people if they'd seen a little kitten. No... nobody had seen a stray kitten. So, he prayed, "Lord, I just commit this kitten to your keeping", and went about his business. A few days later he was at the grocery store and met one of his parishioners. He happened to look into her shopping cart and was amazed to see cat food. Now this woman was a cat hater, and everyone knew it, so he asked her, "Why are you buying cat food when you hate cats so much?" She replied, "You won't believe this" and told him how her little girl had been begging for a cat, but she was refusing. Then a few days before, the child had begged again so the mom finally told her, "Well, if God gives you a cat, I'll let you keep it!" She told the pastor, "I watched my child go out in the yard, get on her knees and ask God for a cat. And really, Pastor, you won't believe this, but I saw it with my own eyes. A kitten suddenly came flying out of the blue sky with its paws outspread, and landed right in front of her."

Never underestimate the power of God. Things happen for a reason. "Dare to dream, for in the daring there is defiance to live beyond your circumstances." (Su Williams)

God Bless ~ Ann Jelinek RN, PN



## PARISH HAPPENINGS

## St. Mary & St. Augustine Liturgical Ministries

6:00PM @ St. Mary, Satu	rday, January 16, 2021
Reader	Terry Winchell
Musician	Adam Gessler
Cantor	Lisa Breaman
Communion Minister	Tom Oscar
8:00AM @ St. Mary, Sund	lay, January 17, 2021
Reader	Kate Reilly
Musician	Jan Huseby
Cantor	Lynn Grube
Communion Minister	Ann Swenty
9:30AM @ St. Augustine,	Sunday, January 17, 2021
Reader	Pat Haskin
Greeters	Matt Boyle & JoAnne Lem
11:00AM @ St. Mary, Sun	day, January 17, 2021
Reader	Kathy Ramassini
Musician	Jan Huseby
Cantor	Sandy Bishop
	Musician Cantor Communion Minister 8:00AM @ St. Mary, Sund Reader Musician Cantor Communion Minister 9:30AM @ St. Augustine, Reader Greeters 11:00AM @ St. Mary, Sun Reader Musician

Communion Minister

## **2020** Catholic Services Appeal

Jean Whalen

St. Mary	St. Augustine	St. Francis
Goal: \$52,861	Goal: \$10,854	Goal: \$4,523
Payments/Pledges:	Payments/Pledges:	Payments/Pledges:
\$37,191	\$6,010	\$3,963
Envelopes	Envelopes	Envelopes
Received: 170	Received: 20	Received: 15
70% of Goal	55% of Goal	88% of Goal
Remaining to be	Remaining to be	Remaining to be
Raised:	Raised:	Raised:
\$15,670	\$4,844	\$560

The Spirituality of the Evangelist: Virtual Retreat with St. Paul Street Evangelization's Adam Janke. All are welcome for a Catholic Biblical School of Michigan (CBSM) sponsored virtual retreat on Saturday, January 23 from 9:00AM-3:00PM, held on Zoom. The retreat will include talks by Adam Janke, times of quiet away from the computer for reflections, opportunities for group discussion, and guided prayer. Cost is \$10/household. Please register by January 18 at cbsmich.org/retreat.

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### **Our Gifts to Our Lord**

For the weekend of December 20, 2020 & December 25, 2020

St. Mary's Collections:	
Adult Envelopes	\$8,306.72
Loose Collection	\$4,048.00
Online Giving	\$610.00
Heating Project	\$1,328.00
School Collection	\$162.00
Maintenance Fund	\$120.00
Total	\$14,574.72

St. Francis' Collections:	
Adult Envelopes	\$2,550.00
Loose Collection	\$603.00
Total	\$3,153.00
St. Augustine's Collections	
Adult Envelopes	\$2,065.00
Loose Collection	\$358.00
Special Projects	\$500.00
Heat/Fuel	\$121.00
Backpack Program	\$46.00
Total	\$3,090.00

## Reflection

#### The Baptism of the Lord

We need history. We need it in order to understand ourselves, personally and collectively. The pieces of our histories may not have always been the most positive, honest, exemplary, dignified, proud, and best moments of our lives, but they are ours. We have to acknowledge, remember, accept, and often heal them. We cannot forget them or pretend that they never existed. As horrible as the atrocities of events like Auschwitz, brutal injustices committed throughout the human journey, or personal painful experiences in our own stories, we need to remember. These times when humanity in general or people in particular have lost their way are times that need to be reconciled and redeemed.

If we lose the memories, we will make the same mistakes again. The human soul needs a strong sense of affirmation, direction and clear purpose. Without these essentials, we will easily run amuck and repeat the sins of our past. God's voice throughout history has spoken precisely about this! We are reminded through the voices and example of many prophets and witnesses not to make the same mistakes again, come back to center, discover the purpose given to us by God, maintain a sense of proper direction, seek healing for wounds, and be reconciled to our Creator.

Baptism is so incredibly important for the salvation of humankind, not only eternally, but here and now. Our existence depends upon it. It gives us the affirmation we need from God by gifting us with the same intimate relationship Jesus had with the Father. We are blessed with the direction and clear purpose we need in order to be productive stewards and faithful Christians. Baptism calls us to remember, accept, and deal with the sins and inequities of our past regardless of how hurtful and serious. We consciously choose to turn away from them and put on the new life of Christ. To do this well, we must look hard and long at our sins and failings, listen to what they are saying and learn from them. If we ignore the past, collectively or personally, or pretend that it never happened, we will never grow. We will surely die.

People need to hear the message, lived and spoken, delivered by the baptized members of the Body of Christ. It is an essential message of hope that is layered with visions of justice, peace, reconciliation, redemption, blessing, and healing. It is a message that helps us remember what has gone before, the graces and the sins, and bring ourselves by God's help where we need to be. We are called to do much more than sit home behind our closed doors. We have a message to deliver. Are we ready to do so?



**Advertiser of the Week** 

