Dear Parishioners of Divine Savior and our Cherished Visitors:

Today we celebrate the Feast of THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH. The Gospel passage for today describes the presentation of Jesus in the temple in addition to other features. Mary and Joseph abided very thoroughly by what religious custom prescribed. By Luke’s describing this event as he does, we get the sense that this action was done because it was meaningful and wasn’t just a matter of fulfilling the letter of the law.

This is important as we consider holiness. We grow in this virtue as we discover and are conscious of what meaning is involved in anything we do. We can easily imagine Mary and Joseph sharing with Jesus as He grew the rituals they celebrated and what those rituals meant to them. This would have gone a long way toward Jesus’ ability to question the people, especially the religious leaders, when He observed them performing similar rituals just to observe the letter of the law.

The offering of turtledove or pigeons, was an indication of how poor Joseph and Mary were, but despite that fact they found a way of expressing their profound gratitude for the gift of Jesus and the privilege of forming Him spiritually. We continue to customize what we gather for Mass; one of our ways of offering thanks to God is not by offering birds or animals but a percentage of our financial wherewithal, as well as our time and talents.

Simeon and Anna are examples of how Jesus would later in life draw upon the story of Mary and Joseph. We notice that Simeon is responding to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Like a loving grandpa figure, Simeon takes Jesus into his arms for the first time. This would have gone a long way toward Jesus’ ability to question the people, especially the religious leaders, when He observed them performing similar rituals just to observe the letter of the law.

We pray that we reflect on who the Savior of the world is, regardless of any pushback we have to deal with. We accept the gift of God’s love that Jesus was sent to share, we too pray that we will find ways of staying committed to making known the love of God.

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Just as Simeon prepared Mary to realize that not all people would accept the gift of God’s love that Jesus was sent to share, we too pray that we will find ways of staying committed to making known the Savior of the world regardless of any pushback we have to deal with.

Anna, because of her disciplined faith, easily thanks God for the gift of Jesus and speaks of Him to many. We pray that we reflect on who the Savior of the world is, regardless of any pushback we have to deal with.

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Is God calling you?

Interested in becoming a Catholic?

Have you been coming here and want to know more about the Catholic faith? Never been baptized? Want to make your First Communion? Contact Sharon at the parish office, 989-7400 or sharon@divinesavior.com. She will explain the process called RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults), which provides a safe place for you to explore your spiritual desires using the scriptures and receiving support and guidance from the parish community.

Small Faith Groups – Looking for Homes and Facilitators to begin in Lent

Would you like to have an amazing Lent? Discussing a topic that will deepen your faith while meeting new people in the parish community is a wonderful way to make Lent meaningful. I’m looking for facilitators, who will select a book/video topic and can get a discussion started. Divine Savior supports you by providing an orientation, finding a meeting place, and having a Sign-Up Sunday, which is Feb. 3-4. Divine Savior recently acquired 300 DVD’s of famous authors and speakers. You are welcome to use our materials or provide your own. Length of commitment is usually 6 sessions followed by a parish pot luck. Contact Sharon Laitinen, 989-7400 or sharon@divinesavior.com.

THANKS FOR ALL INVOLVED WITH CHRISTMAS LITURGIES

My heart is full of joy and love as I reflect on our Masses for Christmas Eve and Day. They were truly celebrations of a community dedicated to learning as much as possible about Jesus and finding every way of celebrating the wonder of it all as well as proclaiming by the way that we minister and live what we experience in worship. My thanks to:

a) All the people that gathered for worship. Some visitors were amazed to learn that all four Masses were well attended;

b) All those involved in music ministry hopefully realize what a great blessing they were. It was such a pleasure to hear the voices of all involved blend but also to empower all in the church to join in, making the celebrations truly community events. It was particularly awesome to hear the wide range of musical selections and how challenging ranges were sung with strong and confident voices;

c) Those who prepared the church for the celebrations: the gradual process of decorating the church and the awesome task of moving 275 chairs from storage to the church and back again;

d) It was a pleasure to know that all other liturgical ministry positions were filled and with all involved doing their important parts with confidence and due reverence;

e) Lastly, the parish depends significantly on the Christmas collection to supplement Sunday collections. These offerings of thanksgiving empower us to offer the various ministries that our parish provides. Our Christmas collection was $30 070; the collection for the Fourth Sunday of Advent was $18,213; gifts offered came to $10,160; our Capital Campaign collection increased by $9,959. A $76,000 plus weekend says volumes about the depth of gratitude that the people of Divine Savior have for God’s blessings to us all. Despite the changes in the tax laws, I hope that we all will do our best to continue this level of giving/gratitude so that the present ministries of our parish will continue and prosper and that we are able to seriously consider developing additional ministries.

As we continue to celebrate the Christmas Season for another 8 days, I pray that we continue to experience deeply and personally the gifts of this season, love, hope, joy and peace.

–Fr. Roman Mueller, S.D.S.

MINISTRY TO THE HOMEBOUND

Our entire ministry would like to wish each and every one of you a very Happy New Year, one filled with much joy and peace in your lives! If you are interested in this ministry, you may contact Mary at mtthmaryk@outlook.com for information.

Moving on Fellowship: Will meet Monday, January 8th at 10:30am. Join us for a no-host brunch at Annie’s Restaurant on the corner of Beech & Greenback. Will discuss ways to avoid loneliness. We are an informal group of widows and widowers who try to offer support, encouragement, prayer, and practical help to the bereaved, in order to “move on” to a meaningful life after the death of a loved one. All are welcome. For more information, please call Pat Bisassi, 530-307-2147.

January is ‘National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month’

“One of the most troubling of the open wounds (in the world) is the trade in human beings, a modern form of slavery. It violates the God-given dignity of so many of our brothers and sisters and constitutes a true crime against humanity.” – Pope Francis, Nov. 7, 2016, RENATE Conference (Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation)

“Human trafficking is a crime against humanity. We must unite our efforts to free victims and stop this crime that has become ever more aggressive, that threatens not just individuals, but the foundational values of society.” - Pope Francis, Dec. 12, 2013 Rome

WATCH THE BULLETIN FOR EVENTS PLANNED FOR OUR PARISH EDUCATION AND ACTION!!

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday:
Nm 6:22-27; Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:16-21

Tuesday:
1 Jn 2:22-28; Ps 98:1-4; Jn 1:19-28

Wednesday:
1 Jn 2:29 – 3:6; Ps 90:1, 3cd-6; Is 2:20-23

Thursday:
1 Jn 3:7-10; Ps 98:1, 7-9; Jn 1:35-42

Friday: 1 Jn 3:11-21; Ps 100:1-5; Jn 1:43-51

Saturday:
1 Jn 5:5-13; Ps 147:12-15, 19-20; Mk 1:7-11 or Lk 3:23-28 [23, 31-34, 36, 38]

Sunday:
Is 6:1-6; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12