

*Fourth Sunday of Advent*



*The Lord is Near*

**Christmas Liturgies**

**Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24th**

**4:30 pm Vigil Mass**

**7:30 pm Vigil Mass**

**10:00 pm Vigil Mass**

**Christmas Day, Friday, December 25th**

**9:00 am Christmas Day Mass**

**The Holy Christmas Season**

**Feast of the Holy Family**

**December 26/27th**

**Masses 4:30 pm Saturday**

**8:30 and 10:30 am Sunday**

**Solemnity of Mary of the Mother of God**

**Holy Day of Obligation**

**Thursday, December 31st**

**7:00 pm**

**Friday, January 1st 2016**

**9:00 am**

**Feast of the Epiphany**

**January 2/3rd 2016**

**Masses 4:30 pm Saturday**

**8:30 and 10:30 am Sunday**

***\*Blessed chalk will be provided for the blessing of the home***

**Feast of the Baptism of the Lord**

**January 9/10th 2016**

**Masses 4:30 pm Saturday**

**8:30 and 10:30 am Sunday**

***\*holy water will be blessed for the faithful to take home***

*From the Pastor's Desk*

### The Lord is near

I learned a long time ago, joy does not depend on circumstances, but on relationships.

Primarily a relationship with Jesus. A relationship with the Lord who always comes to those who have eyes opened by living faith. St. Josemaria Escriva writes: ***I am every day more convinced that happiness in Heaven is for those who know how to be happy on earth.*** (The Forge, 1005)

This is something that has become more and more apparent to me these past few years with my health. I heard someone say once: "if you have your health, you have everything." I couldn't disagree more with this statement. Poor health is nothing but a reality of our broken human nature. I would say rather, "If you have a relationship with the Lord, you have everything you need."

I am going into surgery again in January, with a long recovery ahead, and the temptation is to get depressed and discouraged. But I will not give in to this. Because I know that the Lord uses everything, every circumstance to help us become holy. Often, these situations are not of our choosing, and the control freak in us, or more often, the selfish, self-centered ego in us throws a fit. We want to complain and make sure everyone knows about our problems.

That is when I hear the voice of my mother, Jeannette Anna Blais Howard (she would say our full name if she was upset or wanted to get our attention) "Dennis, offer it up." She was the greatest example of this I've ever known. She suffered so much with her cancer and right up to the end didn't complain and offered her sufferings up.

***Difficulties, stress, and even tragedy - experiences which at first glance seem to cause us to respond with anything but joy, can be transformed in the life of a believer and actually become its very source.***

The Lord is near! Often our fears and our pride and selfishness blind us to the truth that the Lord is near. Jesus is the source of Joy not our circumstances. Christian joy is not rooted in the circumstances and struggles of our daily lives. Often, they are the bad fruit of the disorder and brokenness caused by sin. Christian Joy finds its root in the relationship we now have in and through Jesus Christ, with the Father, in the Holy Spirit.

In a matter of days we will celebrate the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord. As Christians we know that the Lord has already come, in the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. The Word has become flesh and He has dwelt among us. Life is forever changed and the world is being recreated in Him.

The point is an important one. Because the Lord is near we must live differently. The way of joy passes along the path of self emptying, the way of humility. ***The Baptizer reminds us that we must decrease so that we can be filled with Jesus, the source of all joy. The way to joy is through self emptying love. This lifestyle change should characterize Christians. It is why, before they were called Christians, they were referred to as "the Way"*** (See, e.g., Acts 22:4). By living our lives "in the Lord" we can find joy.

Lastly, our Holy Father, Pope Francis has reminded us

through the Jubilee Year of Mercy that we can find joy and peace through conversion and the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. I have often said to our confirmation candidates that the fruits of the spirit "love, joy, peace, patience..." cannot be conjured up by us. This is the work of the Spirit. What we must do is live in obedience to His plan, and then the Holy Spirit produces His fruits – love and joy and peace etc. in us. So we could say that the person who is encouraging, life-giving, peaceful, a worker of mercy, a one with the servant-attitude is manifesting the reality that they are living in obedience to God.

I think that makes the saints truly appealing. The saints went through extraordinary trials, but they were always joyful. Joy does not mean happiness, as Blessed Theresa of Calcutta and St. John of the Cross both spoke about extended periods of time where they could not find happiness, but they still found joy.

St. Francis of Assisi, after his initial conversion would constantly pray; "Who are you Lord and who am I?" He became and still is one of the greatest saints in Christendom. I think his prayer helps us – as with all the saints. First, they sought God and to do His holy will. That's the key. ***"Happiness in Heaven is for those who know how to be happy on earth."*** It's a choice. It's not what happens to you that makes you happy, it's what you do with what happens to you that makes you happy or not. The Lord is near!

God bless,

Fr. Dennis

### Announcements

#### Young Adult Evening of Adoration and Social Time

*My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior* - Luke 1:46-47

An evening of Adoration for young adults over Christmas break. Whether you are single, married, in college, or working in the real world, Most Holy Trinity invites you to prepare for Christ's coming by spending time with Him in the Blessed Sacrament and praying with old friends in the Fowler, Pewamo, and Westphalia area.

The Holy Hour begins at 6:00pm on Tuesday, December 22nd and there will be dinner and a time for discussing current events and theology (and maybe some Mafia) at 7:30pm in the Fr. Ray Youth Center next door.

#### Unbound Ministry

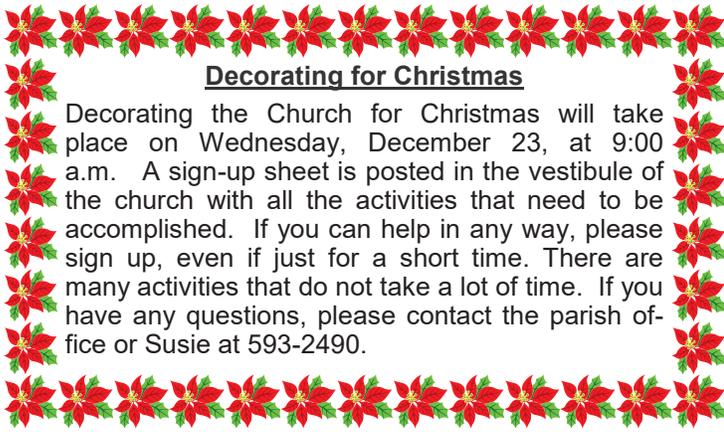
The Unbound - Michigan team will be joining us at MHT on Saturday, February 20th, to speak about the Five Keys of the Unbound deliverance ministry. This conference will begin at 9:00 am and conclude at around 4:15 pm in the activity center. Please contact Adam Halfman at the parish office or [mhtyouth@gmail.com](mailto:mhtyouth@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

#### Parish Festival

It's almost time to start planning for next summer's Parish Festival! We're looking for volunteers that want to help lead the festival this year. Ken and Kay Pohl are going to take on a smaller role and we are planning on breaking up the Chair and Co-chair responsibilities to make it more of a team led weekend and eliminate having so much pressure on one or two couples. Please contact Adam Halfman if you would like to know more about what we are thinking.



EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE  
OF  
**MERCY**  
DECEMBER 8, 2015 - NOVEMBER 20, 2016



### Decorating for Christmas

Decorating the Church for Christmas will take place on Wednesday, December 23, at 9:00 a.m. A sign-up sheet is posted in the vestibule of the church with all the activities that need to be accomplished. If you can help in any way, please sign up, even if just for a short time. There are many activities that do not take a lot of time. If you have any questions, please contact the parish office or Susie at 593-2490.

The family of **Barbara (Thelen) Skowenski** wishes to extend our heartfelt thanks to our many relatives, friends and neighbors for their kindness and support, Masses, and food brought in. A special thank you to Fr. Dennis for celebrating the Memorial Mass and to Rosie VanElls and choir for the beautiful music. May God bless all of you. In lieu of thank you notes, a Mass will be offered.

**Director of Youth Ministry**  
**Mary Schomisch - mhtyouthmary@gmail.com**

The youth center will NOT be open on Wednesday, December 23 and December 30th for Christmas break. We WILL still be meeting on Sunday, December 27th at 6:00 pm.

### Thank You

Where do we begin to thank you when our gratitude is beyond words? Our 2015 was an indescribable year. God has shined His light through you in so many ways and left us speechless. With the aggressive plan to try to help Joe, we couldn't think beyond the next day. God gave us what we needed through your prayers, thoughts, food, visits, cards, gift cards, rides for our children, etc. It is amazing! Thank you for living your Faith! Also, many thanks to Fr. Eric Weber for his guidance and the Christian Mothers & Women's Guild, Knights of Columbus, and St. Mary's School for the unity they bring. We are blessed to have you in our lives. May God bless you abundantly!

**Joe, Kelly, Alyssa, Hannah, Drew, and Dominic Bengel**

### Early Bulletin Deadlines

Because of New Years Day, the January 3 bulletin deadline will be Tuesday, December 22 at 8:00 am.

The Parish office will be closed December 24 & 25 for Christmas and December 31 & January 1 for the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God.



### Sponsor of the Week

*Our thanks to the many businesses that make it possible for the bulletin to be cost-free to our parish.*

**Dewey's Trading Post**

**Principal of Most Holy Trinity School**  
**Anne Hufnagel—AnneH@mhtparish.com**

*MHT School – Connecting Faith to Life*

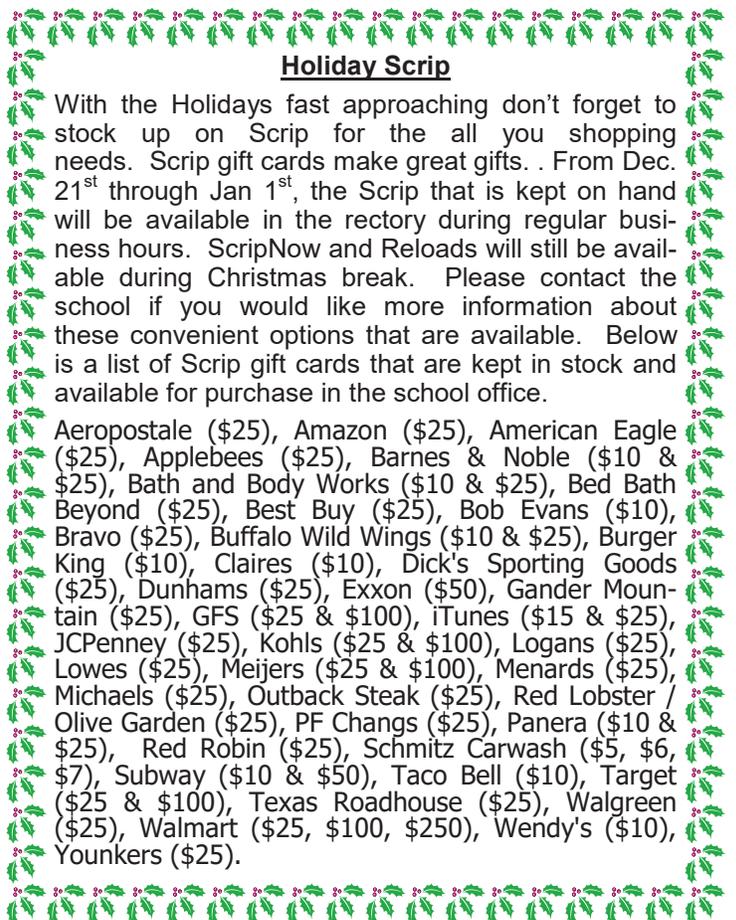
### **Important Dates:**

Dec. 21 – Jan. 3	Christmas Break
Monday, January 4	School Resumes
Tuesday, January 5	Mass @ 8:15 a.m.
Tuesday, January 12	Mass @ 8:15 a.m.

**Thank You:** I would like to take a moment to thank some of our recent anonymous donors. Whether it is helping to pay someone's tuition, items for the classrooms or gifts for the staff, your generosity and giving spirit are blessings to our school and faith community. I hope you see reward tenfold and have a wonderful Christmas season.

**Check Us Out:** Starting January 6, 2016, every Wednesday morning from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. a couple of our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be hosting visitors and taking them around the school. No appointment is necessary.

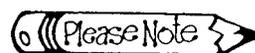
*May the true spirit of Christmas be ever present in your home as you remember the reason Jesus was born. **Merry Christmas!***



### Holiday Scrip

With the Holidays fast approaching don't forget to stock up on Scrip for the all you shopping needs. Scrip gift cards make great gifts. From Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> through Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, the Scrip that is kept on hand will be available in the rectory during regular business hours. ScripNow and Reloads will still be available during Christmas break. Please contact the school if you would like more information about these convenient options that are available. Below is a list of Scrip gift cards that are kept in stock and available for purchase in the school office.

Aeropostale (\$25), Amazon (\$25), American Eagle (\$25), Applebees (\$25), Barnes & Noble (\$10 & \$25), Bath and Body Works (\$10 & \$25), Bed Bath Beyond (\$25), Best Buy (\$25), Bob Evans (\$10), Bravo (\$25), Buffalo Wild Wings (\$10 & \$25), Burger King (\$10), Claires (\$10), Dick's Sporting Goods (\$25), Dunhams (\$25), Exxon (\$50), Gander Mountain (\$25), GFS (\$25 & \$100), iTunes (\$15 & \$25), JCPenney (\$25), Kohls (\$25 & \$100), Logans (\$25), Lowes (\$25), Meijers (\$25 & \$100), Menards (\$25), Michaels (\$25), Outback Steak (\$25), Red Lobster / Olive Garden (\$25), PF Changs (\$25), Panera (\$10 & \$25), Red Robin (\$25), Schmitz Carwash (\$5, \$6, \$7), Subway (\$10 & \$50), Taco Bell (\$10), Target (\$25 & \$100), Texas Roadhouse (\$25), Walgreen (\$25), Walmart (\$25, \$100, \$250), Wendy's (\$10), Youngers (\$25).



The Mass time on Wednesday, December 23rd has been changed to 8:15 am and there will be no Holy Hour.

There will be **NO 8:15 am Mass**, on Saturday December 26th.

### News & Events From Our Parish & Other Areas



#### Holiday "Returns" for Vocations

Most Holy Trinity Parish is blessed to have so many of our young men and women pursuing religious vocations and we are always looking for ways to continue to show our support for them. If anyone wishes to donate returnables from holiday celebrations or Christmas parties we will arrange to pick them up. Please call Kurt Koenigsknecht 224-4058 or Agnes Koenigsknecht 593-2614 to arrange for pickup.

#### Knights of Columbus Christmas Party

The Knights of Columbus will be having their Christmas Party on Saturday, January 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at the KC Hall. The council will provide meat, potatoes, drinks, and place settings. Everyone is asked to bring a dish to pass. Please RSVP to Paul Horak at [pvhorak@hotmail.com](mailto:pvhorak@hotmail.com) or 517-281-8838.

#### Homework Club

Starting in January, a Homework Club will be opened at Waldron Elementary for kindergarten-5th grade students. The club will run on Tuesday's and Thursday's from 3:15-4:15 and 4:30-5:30. The charge is just \$10 per session and it is open to both Waldron and MHT students. If you are interested in a place for your child to get a jump start on homework, then please visit <https://goo.gl/UZdzYM> to register. If you have further questions, feel free to email, call or text Erin Schafer at 517-490-6388 or [erin1001@hotmail.com](mailto:erin1001@hotmail.com)

## Most Holy Trinity Parish Adult Retreat February 12th - 14th

Bethany House, DeWitt  
7PM on Friday until  
Noon on Sunday

Time to pray,  
Build relationships with parishioners,  
Learn about the vision for our parish,  
Be ministered to by our parish staff,  
Encounter the Lord in the Sacraments.

"I've been to a lot of different things at the parish between men's retreats, encounter series, and different speakers and this was the best experience out of all of them"  
- Jerry Klein

\$125 per person.

To register, please fill out the online form found at <http://goo.gl/forms/ft5hePNrJb>  
Or contact the parish office: 593-2162

### Make Someone's Christmas a Little Brighter



If you would like to send a Christmas greeting to those that cannot be home this year, following is a list. If you know of anyone we have missed, please call the parish office and we will gladly add them to the list.

**Francis Halfman:** Laurels of Fulton, 4735 W Ranger Rd. Perrinton, MI 48871

**Regina Martin, Adam Schaefer, Maryann Esch** Hazel Findlay Country Manor, 1101 S. Scott Rd., St. Johns, MI 48879

**Genevieve Simon, Eugene L. Thelen, Therese Weber:** Clinton Commons, 1105 S. Scott Rd., St. Johns, MI 48879,

#### Fertility Classes

Creighton Model of FertilityCare is a method of natural family planning that is extremely helpful for couples struggling with infertility to be able to conceive naturally, without artificial reproductive technologies. Rita Johnson is a parishioner at Resurrection Parish in Lansing. She has recently begun teaching the Creighton Model of FertilityCare, at the New Life Center in Lansing and at St Mary's in Westphalia and can also offer online teaching. An introductory session is being held at St Mary's in Westphalia in January. For more information call (517)775-7229 or email Rita at [littlekerrysacres@gmail.com](mailto:littlekerrysacres@gmail.com).

#### NOTICE TO RESIDENTS WHO RECYCLE

It has been brought to the attention of the Clinton County Department of Waste Management that county residents using the Village of Fowler Recycling Site are not separating their items and instead are dumping everything all mixed together in whatever bin has space. This is causing a major problem for the Village's DPW department who is left to sort out the mess. We have several signs at this site labeling the bins and what goes into them. Failure to follow these rules could result in the closure of the Fowler Recycling Site. Thank you for your cooperation!

**Director of Music Ministry**  
**Eduardo Guerra - [eddieguerra@icloud.com](mailto:eddieguerra@icloud.com)**

**Children's Choir:** Rehearsal will be on December 22nd from 3-4:30 pm. For December 24th 4:30 Mass, please arrive at 4:00 pm for warm up.

**Bell Choir:** Rehearsal on December 22nd from 3:45-4:30 pm. For December 24th 4:30 pm Mass, arrive at 4:00 pm. December 25th 9:00 am Mass, please arrive at 8:45 am.



**The Rosary** is prayed before the 8:15 a.m. weekday Mass. The intention for this week is to pray for the members of our parish community, may we, like the Virgin Mary, surrender to the will of God in our daily lives.

**Please pray for our friends and relatives who are sick or recovering especially:** Frieda Gallagher, Carl Stump, Regina Martin, Sean Dush, Evan Pung, Charlene Thelen, Davison Curtin, Adam Schaefer, Jeffrey Lee Thelen, Luke Martin, Sara Sanchez, Melissa Schulte, Kenny Briganti, Jenny Scott, Jeff Pline, Sharon (Thelen) Droste, Theresa Fox, Marie Hengesbach, Edward Wohlscheid, Linda Rogala, Sarah Weber, Jean Schafer, Don Simon, Roman Arens, Roy Frechen, Paul Soyka, Julie Wieber Schafer, Irene (Luttig) Weber, Maryann Esch, Bill Barns, Bob Marshall, Dennis Smith, Sandy Herta, Fr. Bill Koenigsknecht, Dick Rehmann, Cindy Russell, Roy Weber, Joanne McNamara and a special intention.

**Please contact the parish office to inform us when we can add or remove a person's name from the list. Thank you.**

*Let us also keep in our prayers all those from the Parish Community who are in the Armed Services.*

#### **Readings for the Week of December 20, 2015**

<b>Monday</b>	Song of Songs 2:8-14 or Zephaniah 3:14-18a; Psalms 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21; Luke 1:39-45
<b>Tuesday</b>	1 Samuel 1:24-28; 1 Samuel 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd; Luke 1:46-56
<b>Wednesday</b>	Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24; Psalms 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10, and 14; Luke 1:57-66
<b>Thursday</b>	2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Psalms 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, and 29; Luke 1:67-79
<b>Friday</b>	Night: Isaiah 9:1-6; Psalms 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14 Dawn: Isaiah 62:11-12; Psalms 97:1, 6, 11-12; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:15-20 Day: Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalms 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14
<b>Saturday</b>	Acts of the Apostles 6:8-10, 7:54-59; Psalms 31:3cd-4, 6, 8ab, 16bc, 17; Mathew 10:17-22

#### **Our Parish Stewardship God's Treasure at Most Holy Trinity**

Amount needed each week.....	\$13,200.00
December 12 & 13 Collection.....	19,871.00
Overage.....	+ 6,671.00
Envelopes used: 195	



**Maxwell Curtis Turner;** Son of Curtis & Tricia (Blakely) Turner.

We welcome Maxwell to our parish family.

#### **Most Holy Trinity**

**December 20, 2015**

**Pastor - Fr. Dennis Howard**

**Parish Office Hours 8am-12pm & 1pm-3pm**

**To Contact Us:**

**Parish Office: 593-2162**

**Fax: 593-2171**

**E-Mail: [office@mhtparish.com](mailto:office@mhtparish.com)**

**Website: [mhtparish.com](http://mhtparish.com)**

**Most Holy Trinity School: 593-2616**



**Masses For The Week**

#### **Monday - December 21**

7:00 p.m. + Steve Spicer & Living & Deceased Members of the Family

#### **Tuesday - December 22**

8:15 a.m. + Kenneth Simon & Living & Deceased Members of the Family

#### **Wednesday - December 23**

8:15 a.m. + Carl Koenigsknecht, Including Cindy & Living & Deceased Members of the Family

#### **Thursday - December 24 - Christmas Vigil**

4:30 p.m. + Jeff Wieber

7:30 p.m. + Patricia & Paul Koenigsknecht, Including Ann & Ken

10:00 p.m. + Henry & Jeannette Howard

#### **Friday - December 25 - Christmas Day**

9:00 a.m. + Alvin Fox

#### **Saturday - December 26**

8:15 a.m. **No Mass**

4:30 p.m. + Stephen Schrauben

#### **Sunday - December 27**

8:30 a.m. A Special Intention

10:30 a.m. People of the Parish

#### **Ushers for December 24 & 25 - Christmas Eve & Christmas Day**

4:30 p.m. - Tony Schaefer, Jerome R. Thelen, Lonnie Schueller, Volunteer

7:30 p.m. - Jim Braman, Jerome Spitzley, John Hufnagel, Kurt Thelen

10:00 p.m. - Don Martin, Chris Conner, Steve Spitzley, John Rademacher

9:00 a.m. - Christmas Day - David Klein, Brent McCarty, Roy Witgen, Neil Feldpausch

#### **Ushers for Saturday & Sunday, December 26 & 27**

4:30 p.m. - Larry Jandernoa, Gerry Arens, Craig Arens, Volunteer

8:30 a.m. - Bill Armbrustmacher, Tom O'Rourke, Bruce Schaefer, Dean Schrauben

10:30 a.m. - Brett Stump, Kirk Phillips, Dale Koenigsknecht, Hilary Stump

#### **Mass Servers for December 24 & 25 - Christmas Eve & Christmas Day**

4:30 p.m. - Tyler & Logan Klein, Brandon Platte, Kendra Koenigsknecht

7:30 p.m. - Jace, Tricia & Amy Feldpausch, Hunter Ward

10:00 p.m. - Clayton & Owen Simon, Randy Koenigsknecht, Mariele Feldpausch

9:00 a.m. - Christmas Day - Madison & McKenzie Koenigsknecht, McKenzie Feldpausch, Chad Klein

#### **Mass Servers for Saturday & Sunday, December 26 & 27**

4:30 p.m. - David & Brian Armbrustmacher, Megan & Nikolai Conner

8:30 a.m. - Hanna, Nathan, Jena & Nick Epkey

10:30 a.m. - Gabrielle, Sidney & Dominic Horak, Jared Snyder

#### **Mass Servers During This Week**

Mon., 7:00 p.m. - Logan & Zoe Kramer

Tues., 8:15 a.m. - Emma & Brycen Halfmann

Wed., 8:15 a.m. - Austin Vandegriff & Drew Armbrustmacher