

PASTOR'S NOTES

Dear Friends,

You couldn't miss John the Baptist: a man dwelling in the desert, clothed in camel skins, a leather belt, eating grasshoppers and wild honey, a near reincarnation of the Prophet Elijah.

John, like his prophetic predecessor, had only one task: to point out God. Nothing else mattered. All else ought to be dispensed with—clothing, food, comfort—so as not to hinder discerning the Lord's approach.

Today he alerts us to the Lord's impending arrival and that if we thought John was distinctive, the Messiah will be even more so. Not even geography will stop the Messiah's coming—paths will be made straight, valleys filled, and mountains razed.

Mysteriously, according to the Gospels, when Jesus appears on the banks of the Jordan and gets in line to be baptized, no one recognizes him but John.

I wonder if John's singular and radical devotion to undistracted watchfulness helped him see God where and when no one else did.

John reminds us to keep life simple and to persistently return to the basics: constant prayer, a simple lifestyle, and remaining vigilant for the Lord's unexpected entrance into our lives.

As Jesus said in last week's Gospel: "Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap."

And if you are so busy you feel that this is impossible, do what you can. An attempt at prayer is prayer, and Jesus will make the most of even the shortest glances we cast his way in search of him.

Because once we glimpse sure sight of him, we too, even if we look nothing like John the Baptist, will point him out to those around us.

With gratitude and joy for the holy days ahead!
Fr. Seth

OUR GIFTS TO GOD

THE WEEK OF 12/2/18

St. Mary's \$1587	Budget (\$1,900) -\$313
Sacred Heart \$868	Budget (\$900) -\$32
Visitation \$238	Budget (\$400) -\$162
St. Sebastian \$260	Budget (\$400) -\$140

\$682.00 was mailed to our Sister Parish,
St. Anthony of Padua, on December 4, 2018.

LONGITUDE

2018 Dec 9 SUN:

Second Collection: Retirement Fund for Religious.

2018 Dec 11 Tues:

10:00am, Cookie Exchange Party, Parish Office Building,
New Berlin. Everyone is invited.

2018 Dec 12 & 19, Wed:

6:30pm, Advent Study on King David, Parish Office
Building, New Berlin.

2018 Dec 24, Mon: Christmas Eve

4:00pm, Sacred Heart, Franklin.

6:00pm, St. Mary's, New Berlin.

8:00pm, St. Sebastian, Waverly.

Second Collection: Catholic Children's Home.

2018 Dec 25, Tues: Christmas Day

9:00am, Visitation BVM, Alexander.

Second Collection: Catholic Children's Home.

Thursday Adoration & Confession

Thurs, December 13 :

6:00-8:00pm, St. Sebastian, Waverly.

Thurs, December 20:

6:00-8:00pm, Sacred Heart, Franklin.

Thurs, December 27:

6:00-8:00pm, St. Mary's, New Berlin.

PRAY FOR THE SICK

Barb Johnson, Hershel Fitzpatrick, Mary Lee Staley,
Marilyn Fitzpatrick, Joe Gaston, Lisa Richardson, Judy
Byer, Mary Hemberger, Nancy Flach, Cecelia Peters,
Roseanne Hartley, Calyssa Richie, Dale Fitzpatrick, Mary
McCray, Carl Bertolotti, Heather Boudreau, Jean Knight,
Tina Green, Sy & Judy Haber, Donna Reichart, Presley
Kerber, Joyce Henn, Olivia Loving, George Eck, Opal
Sutera, Tony & Theresa Yates.