

ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY

HECKER, ILLINOIS 62248

REV. LINUS UMOREN, ADMINISTRATOR

PARISH OFFICE 618-473-2217 FAX 618-473-9141

E-MAIL ADDRESS: staug@htc.net

PARISH WEBSITE: <https://www.staugustineofcanterburyhecker.com>

**To contact Father Linus Umoren, CM; when not in Parish Office,
Cell #618-666-2217**

St. Vincent de Paul Help Line 618-792-4059

House of Neighborly Service Help Line 618-939-8680

Confessions: heard each Saturday night from 4 to 4:45 pm

Parish Office Hours: Mondays and Thursdays, 8:30 am to 3:00 pm.

VOL. 58 NO. 52– December 24th, 2023

THEME FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT: David's posterity shall endure forever. His kingship finds its fulfillment in the son of Mary, Jesus the Christ. To him be glory and praise forever.

MASS INTENTIONS:

Fri. 12/22 8:00am- Wally and Mike Amann and A Special Intention

Sat. 12/23 5:00pm- For Our Parish at St. Augustine's

Sun. 12/24 8:00am- Joe Jung and Dennis Holle
4:00pm- For Our Parish at St. Augustine's

Mon. 12/25 8:00 am- Don Braun, Philip & John Rheinecker, and Jerry Mollet

Fri. 12/29 8:00am- Norbert Wittenauer, Joe Wittenauer, and Delmar Wachtel

Sat. 12/30 5:00pm- For Our Parish at St. Augustine's

Sun. 12/31 8:00am- Roy Schreder



OUR SACRIFICE MADE TO GOD FROM 12/17/23:

Envelopes (39)- \$1,527.00

Loose- \$211.00

Youth-\$11.00

Parking Lot/Resolution Projects Donations-**\$2,700.00**

*Scholarship Fund - \$1,442.00 (Total Donated since
8/1/2023)*

Thank you very much for your generosity!

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK

Saturday, December 30th, 5pm

Set Up: Kevin Schreder

Servers: Mehrmanns

Lector: Kevin Schreder

Extraordinary Minister: Elaine Rader

Extraordinary Minister (W): Annette Schreder

Extraordinary Minister (W): Barb Bruss

Camera:

Sunday, December 31st, 8:00am

Set Up: Sr. Joan Weiler

Servers:

Lector: Betty Schreder

Extraordinary Minister: Bernadette Gregson

Extraordinary Minister (W): Donna Rheinecker

Extraordinary Minister (W): Ryan Grohmann

Camera:



Please pray for the following:

Darlene Frisch, Jeanelle Dinan, Marge Abel, Madalyn Killebrew, Kenny Kern, Marcia Rheinecker, Ricky Wittenauer, Lois Papenberg, Ava Kern, Nancy Grohmann, Jim & Joanne Cowell, Helen Parker, Mike Rheinecker, Evelyn Kelley Marquart, Roger Cortner, Frank Kohler, Josh Middendorf, Ethel Mae Kreher, Shirley Wittenauer, Annette Lovelace, Mel Parker, Debra Harbaugh, Geri Griffin, and Melissa Stellhorn.

For Active Service Personnel: Justin S. Bushong, United States Coast Guard, Austin Grohmann, United States Marine Corps, and Austin Gregson, United States Marine Corps.



PRAY FOR Doris (Neff) Firnkes, niece of Ruth and Shirley Wittenauer, who died this past week. Please remember her and her family in your prayers. May her soul and all souls of the faithful departed, rest in peace.

PRAY FOR Gary L. Brinkman, who died this past month. Please remember him and his family in your prayers. May his soul and all souls of the faithful departed, rest in peace.

FROM THE PASTOR...

FR. LINUS UMOREN. C.M.

Reflection for the Fourth Sunday of Advent

Many of us are familiar with the Annunciation story. Moreover, we have the annunciation painting on one of our stained-glass windows in Ss. Peter and Paul Church—how God, through Angel Gabriel announced the conception of Christ to Mary. Therefore, this weekend I would like to reflect on the annunciation event not just as a story of a distant past, but how God continues to intervene in human history from time to time.

Some years ago, selected grade school kids were preparing a Christmas play. Little Melissa did not like the part she was assigned to play. She wanted to change parts with her friend Emily. When the teacher asked her why, she answered, “Because it is easier to be an Angel than to be Mary the mother of Christ.” Perhaps little Melissa was right. I imagine that the role of the Angel is simply to announce the message and his mission is accomplished. But Mary is a star character in the play. Everybody would watch and listen to her more closely.

The story of the Annunciation calls our attention to the fidelity and the immensity of God. God chose Mary to bring forth the Word so that the world may experience the mercy of God in a more intimate way. In this event, we reflect on Mary’s example of faith and obedience to God. Her faith allowed her to say to the Angel, “I am the handmaid of the Lord.” The mystery of God choosing a woman to be the mother of God and the woman offering herself entirely for this purpose is what we prepare to celebrate at Christmas. It is both a stunning mystery and thoroughbred reality.

Like Melissa in our story, playing Mary in the drama of life is not an easy task. This is because all of us want to be in control, get things done and move on to the next project. We would like to determine how we move from one thing to another. When things happen that we cannot control, we get nervous. On the contrast, even though Mary did not comprehend all that was happening, she believed that God was in charge leading all to His glory. Consequently, Mary’s role in the annunciation event invites us to treasure the virtue of surrender. The experience of surrender is the heart of faith. It is “the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrew 11:1). Like Mary, we are invited to be people of faith who recognize God’s saving plan in our life. Sometimes, we must admit that God’s way of doing things is beyond our comprehension. We wish we would understand God much more than we do. But the fact remains that the more we live our life forward, the better we understand it backward. In the Christmas story, Mary and Joseph give us the witness of how we may respond to the mystery into which God invites us. Merry Christmas!!

MAY THE JOY OF THE
CHRISTMAS
CELEBRATION BE WITH
YOU & YOUR FAMILY!
ENJOY A SAFE &
MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!



**Flower Donations during the Christmas holidays were made in
memory of and in honor of the following:**

Cyril & Emmie Haudrich; Wally and Mike Amann; Bill & Jeannie Happel, and members of the Biffar, Eckart, Happel, and Brueggmann Families; Bushong and Warnecke Families; David Bruss; George H. Christiansen; Judy Fizer and Toby Reaka; Virgil Gregson; Arnie, Quentin, and Veronica Gregson; Dale Griffin; Edmund and Esther Eckart; Gene & Teresa Triller and Kenny Grohmann; Don Haudrich and the Leo Toenjes Family; Dennis Holle; Deceased Members of the Kuehn and Kaiser Families; John D. Link, Joseph & Virginia Parker, and Richard & Sylvia Link; Jerry Mollet; Clem Orlet; Victor, Elizabeth, & Fern Papenberg, and Edward & Helen Kohler; Deceased Members of the Huss and Powell Families; Roy Schreder; Stellhorn and Roscow Families; Norbert Wittenauer, Louis Kern and Martha Neary Families; and A Special Intention.

Thank to ALL who donated to the Christmas Family this year!! Deliveries have been made!! Also, a special thank you to the Blessed Virgin Altar Sodality and Knights of Columbus for their donations towards the food purchased for our family this year!



*Signed,
Joan Powell*



St. Augustine's Parish ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The 2024 Contribution Envelopes are now available at the front entrance of Church. Please pick up when you are able to!
- Give the Gift that keeps on Giving... *The Messenger!*
To subscribe online for Family or Friends go to: www.bellevillemessenger.org or Call 618-233-8670.
- January/February 2024 Edition of The Word Among Us is available in both mailboxes and inside church.
- Wednesday, January 10th, 2024-Knights of Columbus Meeting 7:30pm
- Monday, January 15th, 2024, 7pm- Finance Committee Meeting
- Monday, January 22nd, 2024, 7pm- Parish Council Meeting
- Tuesday, February 6th, 2024- Ladies Sodality Meeting 7pm
- Super Bowl Bingo, Sunday, February 11, 2024

In case you've been wondering... YES WE ARE PLANNING TO HAVE OUR ANNUAL SUPER BOWL SUNDAY DINNER, BINGO & RAFFLE!!!

You should receive your raffle tickets and letter with detailed information about a month before the event on **Sunday, February 11th, 2024!**
Please put that date on your calendar and plan to volunteer to help that day!!!

KIRCHENFEST 2024 – will be held on **Saturday, August 17th, 2024!!!** Please write this date on your calendars now!!!

St. Augustine's 200th Year Celebration will be held on Saturday, October 19th, 2024- time TBD.

**2023 ADVENT & CHRISTMAS
SCHEDULE & INFORMATION FOR OUR PARISH HERE AT
ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY-HECKER**

COMMUNION

Will be brought to the home bound, please call the office at 473-2217 to schedule.



CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

**CHRISTMAS EVE – SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2023
Vigil Mass – 4:00 p.m.**

**CHRISTMAS DAY – MONDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2023
Mass – 8:00 a.m.**



**The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
Sunday, December 31st, Mass at 8:00am**

**Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God- New Year's Day
Monday, January 1st, 2024
Not a Holy Day of Obligation (No Mass at St. Augustine's)**

**2023 ADVENT & CHRISTMAS
SCHEDULE & INFORMATION FOR OUR PARTNER PARISHES OF:
*Ss. PETER and PAUL (WATERLOO) & ST. MARY'S (VALMEYER)***

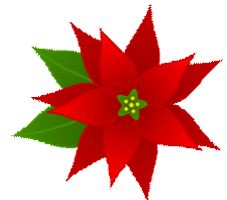
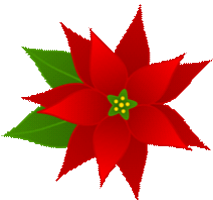
**Sunday, December 24th- Fourth Week of Advent
8 a.m. Ss. Peter and Paul, Waterloo
10 a.m. St. Mary's, Valmeyer**

**Sunday, December 24th- Christmas Eve
5p.m. Vigil Mass, Ss. Peter and Paul, Waterloo
6 p.m. Vigil Mass, St. Mary, Valmeyer**

**Monday, December 25th- Christmas Day
12 a.m. Christmas, Ss. Peter and Paul, Waterloo
8 a.m. Ss. Peter and Paul, Waterloo
10 a.m. St. Mary, Valmeyer
10 a.m. Ss. Peter and Paul, Waterloo**

**Sunday, December 31st- New Year's Eve
8 a.m. Ss. Peter and Paul, Waterloo
10 a.m. St. Mary, Valmeyer
10 a.m. Ss. Peter and Paul, Waterloo**

**Monday, January 1st, 2024- New Year's Day
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
*No obligation to attend Mass
8 a.m. Ss. Peter and Paul, Waterloo**





NEWS FROM GIBUALT HIGH SCHOOL

Apply to the Class of 2028

Winter break is the perfect time to get your application in! Apply by Jan. 26, 2024, in order to be part of this year's Acceptance Day festivities. Application available at: <https://bit.ly/GCHSApply>
Visit Gibault!

We'd love to see you in 2024! Our Shadow Program and Private Tours resume in January. On select Tuesdays and Fridays, your 7th or 8th grader or current high school student can spend the day at Gibault as a Shadow Visitor. Shadows will be matched with a current student with similar interests and together, they'll attend classes, meet teachers, enjoy lunch in our cafeteria, and more! We also offer Private Tours for the whole family. See our campus and get your questions answered by our Director of Enrollment. Get started at: <https://bit.ly/GCHSInquire>

Family Sports Pass

Show you're #gibaultproud all year long! For \$125, Hawk Fans can purchase a Family Pass that covers admission to most of our home games (some exclusions apply.) This pass is valid for girls' and boys' volleyball, girls' and boys' basketball, girls' soccer, softball, baseball, and select boys' soccer home games throughout the 23-24 school year!
Visit [GCHSSportsPass.givesmart.com](https://gchssportspass.givesmart.com) to purchase your pass!



Kings House at the
NATIONAL SHRINE of
OUR LADY of the SNOWS

Kings House at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows Visitors Center – I Want to See You

Friday, January 5, 4:00 pm through Sunday, January 7, at 2:00 pm., given by Fr. Salvador Gonzalez and Peggy Keilholz

Friday, January 12, 4:00 pm through Sunday, January 14, at 2:00 pm., given by Br. Pat McGee and Danielle Harrison

Friday, January 19, 4:00 pm through Sunday, January 21, at 2:00 pm., given by Fr. Mark Dean and Virginia Herbers

Our men's retreat allows you to experience our "I Want to See You" retreat while encompassing your inner light. This retreat centers on the story of the man born blind. Come and share the experience of being noticed by Jesus, touched, healed and called to witness to the new sight God's love provides.

Cost: \$200.00 per person (includes lodging and meals).

Register online at <https://kh.snow.s.org/events/> or call 618-397-0584.



DIOCESAN INFORMATION

RESPECT FOR LIFE CORNER

“O Blessed Mother, at the angel’s word you went in haste to the aid of your cousin Elizabeth. Although pregnant yourself, you placed her needs before your own. By your example of radical solidarity, teach us to reverence and protect those in need, without conditions or expectations... Obtain for us the grace to bring Christ to any expectant mother who is alone and afraid.”

USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities

Prayer for Radical Solidarity (www.respectlife.org/prayer-for-radical-solidarity)

DIocese OF BELLEVILLE -- PROJECT RACHEL

Project Rachel is an active ministry in the Diocese of Belleville!!! Planned Parenthood continues to see women (some report one woman every 20 minutes six days a week). It is so vital that we be there for these women to offer free and confidential help in their time of need. It is our hope to continue to foster a sense of compassion in our communities making them a safe place to welcome those who suffer after an abortion and encourage reconciliation and healing in Jesus Christ. Those in need of help and counseling can confidentially contact someone by phone or email. Here’s a link to Project Rachel on the diocesan website with additional information: <https://www.diobelle.org/respectlife/project-rachel>.

To stay informed of Pro-Life events in our Diocese, like and follow our FaceBook page,
Respect Life Apostolate – Belleville

The Catholic Service and Ministry Appeal 2023

The one who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord - Psalm 15

The true joy of Christmas is in the everlasting love of Christ. May you find His peace, love and joy now and in the coming New Year. With deepest gratitude for your prayers and generosity,

-Bishop Michael McGovern and
Ministries and Programs Funded by
The Catholic Service and Ministry Appeal

Pledges to Date: 36 \$6,403.00 100% of our goal has been matched!!

THANK YOU to all who contributed!!!!

2024 VARIOUS QUILT OF THE MONTH RAFFLES IN THE AREA

- St. Michael, Paderborn – January thru December 2024. \$20 per ticket. 12 Chances to win!! Picture of quilts available inside Parish office. Contact Sue Walsh 473-2798. Limited number of tickets available in Parish Office at St. Augustine's.
- St. Patrick's Ruma – January thru December 2024; \$20 per ticket; tickets available in the Parish Office at St. Augustine's. Questions call Kathy Schmidt at 618/284-7274.
- St. James, Millstadt – Quilt-A-Rama, Tickets drawn the first Monday of every month during 2024. Tickets are \$25.00 each. See your Parish Office for tickets or contact St. James, 618/476-3513.
- Our Lady of Good Counsel Renault Quilt of the Month!
Tickets are \$25.00 each for the year of drawings. Winner goes back into the box for a chance to be drawn next month. Please call Phyllis at 618-458-6854 or text Lisa 618-444-5544 to purchase a ticket.
- Holy Trinity Catholic Church- St. Ann's CCW, Quilt of the Month Raffle 2024
Tickets are \$25.00 each, drawings are held 2nd Wednesday of each month; Contact Carol Geluck for more info! 618-792-9439.



Today we again hear God's asking of Mary to be the Mother of the "Son of the Most High". Her total self-giving reply of "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word" is the greatest example of "listening" to the Lord's call. Do you hear a call from the Lord to be a sister or priest? In this season of giving, "give" some time to quiet reflection and "hear" what the Lord is asking of you.



The Serra Club of St. County is an organization of Catholic men and women dedicated to foster and affirm vocations to the Priesthood and vowed religious life. Our purpose is to pray for vocations and inform our community the need for vocations. We provide many social events for our Priests, Deacons and Nuns. We sponsor occasional visits to the Seminaries for our grade and high students guided by a priest or a seminarian. Our group meets every first and third Friday of the month at Corpus Christi Parish Hall 206 Rasp St. Shiloh, IL 62269. We begin Mass at 11:00 am, follow by lunch and a brief meeting, and a prominent speaker. Additional information please call Marvin Winkeler (402 214-1155 or Mel Lucash 618-531-4244 Serra has a new web page: serrastclair.org

PLEASE PRAY FOR VOCATIONS!



National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows – Shrine Grounds and Visitors Center

From November 17 through December 31, 2023, 5:00pm to 9:00pm. Indoor activities closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The Way of Lights Display depicts the journey of Mary and Joseph as they travel to Bethlehem using over 1.5 million beautiful lights. This year, we have added colored lights to celebrate the birth of Jesus and continue to offer activities for young and old alike!

Cost: No charge for display, donations accepted and additional charges for some activities.

For more information, call 618-397-6700 or visit our website at <https://snows.org/wayoflights>

UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS- UPDATED WEEKLY!!

- **Queen of Hearts Drawing-** Benefitting Ss. Peter & Paul Catholic School
Tuesdays, Outsiders in Waterloo, IL,
Ticket sales end @6:30pm, drawings are held @ 7pm
- **NEW! Queen of Hearts Drawing-**Benefitting Freeburg High School Athletics
Wednesdays, 6:30pm ticket sales, drawings held at 7pm
- **St. Barbara's Catholic Church- Parish Hall**
2nd and 4th Thursday of each month
305 N Front St, Okawville, IL 62271, Doors open @5pm, Bingo @ 6pm
Food, drinks, and desserts for purchase- All games pay out \$50.00
- **Saturday, January 27th, 2024- Hecker Volunteer Fire Department Trivia Night**
at the Hecker Community Center...Silent Auction, raffles, gun raffle, and cash prizes for Trivia...call 618-473-2597 for reservations!
- **Saturday, February 24th, 2024- Hecker Community Center Chicken & Beer**
Dance...Musci by Freefall. Call 618-473-2970 for ticket information.



LOVE

You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

Luke 2:12

For Parents:

There is no love like the love of God. No matter what we do, God's love is consistent and never failing. Children are capable of intense love whether it be for their favorite character, pet or family members. Make a point each day to have a quiet moment as a family to focus on God's everlasting love.



For Kids:

This is the last week of Advent and when we learn about **Love** and **Christ**. Jesus taught us how to love one another. He tells us all throughout the Bible how to love and care for our friends and family, but also for people we do not know. Talk with your family about how you can show more love to each other as well as those around you. How will you keep doing this once Christmas is over?

If you have a manger scene at your house, place Jesus in the manger on Christmas Day.

*How do you show your friends and family that you love them? How can you show love to a stranger? Color in the candle of **Love** and open the envelopes on your Advent calendar.*



She wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

DID YOU KNOW... ?

Date and Time of Christ's Birth

Originally, Jesus' birth was celebrated as part of the feast of Epiphany. Around the year 330, however, the Church of Rome assigned the celebration of Christmas to December 25. There were some early Church leaders and writers who claimed that December 25 was Christ's actual birth date, although there was never an official reason given for the ecclesiastical decision. Church scholars contend that the date was chosen to counteract the Roman feast of the "Birthday of the Sun" which took place on December 25. The tradition of a midnight Mass on Christmas originated in the pious belief that Christ was born at that hour. Don't look for historical evidence.

Symbols of the Seasons

Advent

Empty throne, dew falling from heaven, rising sun, fleece, anchor of hope, violet color, O Antiphons, scroll of prophecy.

Immaculate Conception

Shield with Marian monogram or symbol, Mary treading a serpent, moon.

Christmas

Crib, star, two interlocked circles, Trinity, tree, lambs, angels, trumpet, Holy Family symbols, three steps, candies, crook, throne, shepherds, hand of God, dove, hawthorn, Glastonbury thorn in blossom.

Epiphany

Three crowns, three gifts, wise men, five-pointed star