

**GOSPEL MEDITATION: FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**

In my second-to-last year of seminary, I woke up one September morning to devastating news: two beloved classmates had died in a car crash. I was overwhelmed with grief and anger like I had never known. I entered therapy for the first time and had intense conversations with my spiritual director. For months I felt lost in a spiritual wilderness. But something unexpected happened: I encountered Christ there. The fear and sorrow didn't destroy me. In fact, that spiritual desert was a time of intense growth in faith.

Today's Gospel begins: "Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil" (Matthew 4:1). The word "led" denotes a gentle, humble submission to the Spirit. Jesus does not send himself into this desolate place where wild beasts roam and Satan tempts. Who wants to be around roaming, wild beasts? The Church Fathers saw them as symbols of our inner chaos: fears, temptations, wounds. The Spirit leads us there, sometimes against our wishes. But those same Fathers also saw that this deserted place is also where angels ministered to Jesus, amidst his great trial and temptation.

Lenten Challenge: This Lent and throughout life's struggles, the Spirit leads you and me into the wilderness. Name one "desert" into which the Spirit has led you: perhaps grief, fear, silence, change, disappointment. Ask for the grace to go there willingly. The beasts may be real, but they will not harm you. There, the angels are waiting to minister to the Christ living in you, who always goes where the Spirit leads.

— Father John Muir

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**February 22, 2026  
First Sunday of Lent**

**Holy Apostles Pastorate**

**Fr. Thomas Clement, Pastor**  
605-337-3710  
Email Address:  
frthomasclément@sfcatholic.org

**Fr. Jim Friedrich, Parochial Vicar**  
384-5518 or 605-933-9042  
Email Address:  
frjimfriedrich@sfcatholic.org  
Parish Office: 384-5518  
Email Address:  
wagner@holypostlessd.org

**Sr. Maribeth Wentzlaff, OSB**  
**Director of Discipleship & Evangelization**  
605-760-5295  
mwentzlaff@yanktonbenedictines.org

**Marty Royston, Facilities Manager**  
facilities@holypostlessd.org/605-770-2595

**Bailee Mogck, Business Manager**  
parkston@holypostlessd.org

**JoNell DeHaan,**  
**Administrative Assistant/Communications**  
office@holypostlessd.org

**St. John the Baptist Catholic Church**  
107 High Avenue SW (PO BOX 637), Wagner

**Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
Catholic Church**  
416 Haines Street, Dante

**St. Paul Catholic Church**  
102 Church DR (PO Box 266), Marty

**Connect with all 9 parishes within Holy Apostles Pastorate  
by visiting [holypostlessd.org](http://holypostlessd.org).  
Here you will find Mass times, bulletins, a calendar of events,  
faith formation information & more!**

**Check out Holy Apostles Pastorate on  
Facebook and Instagram!**



**St. John's Parish  
Contact Information**

Rectory/Basement Kitchen 384-5518  
CCD Center 384-5157  
Bulletin:  
Theresa Koupal 481-1565  
dkoupal@hcinet.net  
Prayer Chain:  
Dorothy Holzbauer 491-2699  
Parish Website: [https://  
stjohnthebaptistcatholicchurch.weebly.com/](https://stjohnthebaptistcatholicchurch.weebly.com/)



**St. Paul Parish  
Contact Information:**

*Catholic Mission  
of the  
Yankton Sioux People*

St. Sylvester Convent 384-3305  
Sister Miriam 384-3234  
Prayer Chain  
Alice Cournoyer 491-2453  
Kateri Circle/Judy Pena 469-5755  
Life/Rhonda Kuhlman 384-4257  
Faith Formation  
Cathy Kreeger 384-3234  
Amy Doom 469-5797



**Assumption Parish  
Contact  
Information:**

Rectory 384-5518  
Church/CCD Center 384-5155  
Bulletin:  
Danielle Krcil 491-2202  
daniellekrcil@gmail.com  
Prayer Chain:  
Cindy Krcil 384-3585  
Marilee Krcil 286-3907

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

We are to come to "Our Father" together, as a people, as his Church in these days of special grace. As Jesus turned from the three temptations of Satan, we counteract the temptations of Adam & Eve: what appeared to them "good for food" with FASTING, "pleasing to the eye" to possess with ALMSGIVING, and "desirable for gaining wisdom..to be like

gods" in pride with PRAYER to God. Time tested and true, the wisdom of the Church directs us and unites us with generations before us as we take part in the Lenten Masses, Stations of the Cross, Rice Bowl offerings, daily Scripture readings, prayer partners, book studies, etc. Take and highlight on the legal size sheets in the entry what you can do.

A blessed Lent,  
Fr. Jim

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS MEETING**

Monday, March 2  
7:00 p.m.

St. John's Church Basement

Please note that the meeting was moved to Monday night because of township meetings.



**WAGNER-DANTE  
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS  
FISH FRY**

Friday, March 27

St. John's Church Basement

Watch future bulletins for more details!



**SOUP DINNER**

Sunday, March 15

Serving from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

Serving: Chili, Chicken Noodle Soup/  
Ham Sandwiches,  
Chicken Salad Sandwiches/  
Pies/Desserts/Beverages

Sponsored by Wagner-Dante  
Catholic Daughters of the Americas

**CONFESSION SCHEDULE**

**Wednesday, February 25**  
4:15 p.m. - St. John's  
**Friday, February 27**  
1:30 p.m. - St. Paul's  
**Saturday, February 28**  
4:30 p.m. - St. John's  
**Sunday, March 1**  
8:15 a.m. - Assumption

**THIS WEEK ON FORMED: FEBRUARY 22**

- ◆ Foretold
- ◆ Saint Peter
- ◆ Saint Polycarp: Catholic Saints



Please keep the following in your thoughts & prayers: Mary Hurd, Brenda George, Joe Nedved, Keith Kuca, Sylvia Beeson, Waylon Koupal (infant son of Tyler & Tayleigh Koupal), Eleanor Andersh. Contact Theresa

Koupal if you would like a name added to the list. Names of those on the list are also added to the daily Rosary intention list at St. John's.

**FIRST CATHOLIC LADIES SLOVAK  
MEETING & LUNCHEON**

The First Catholic Slovak Ladies will host their March meeting and luncheon on Sunday, March 1, 2026, at 12:30 PM at the Blahagio. Please join us for great food and fellowship.

**VOCATION EVENTS**

JPII Vocation Camp (Guys Ages 12-15)

July 28-31

Camp Goretti (Girls Ages 12-16)

June 1-3

Quo Vadis (Guys Ages 16-22 – For Those Thinking About

Priesthood)

July 5-9

Operation Andrew Dinner (Guys Age 16+)

Seminary Visits (High School Guys)

Nun Runs (Local Pastorates)

For more information or to register for any of these events, please visit <https://sfccatholic.org/vocations/>

**PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, Son of the Eternal Father and Mary Immaculate, grant to our young people the generosity necessary to follow Your call and the courage to overcome all obstacles to their vocation in life. Give their parents that faith, love and spirit of sacrifice which will inspire them to offer their children to God's service and to rejoice whenever one of their children is called to the priesthood or religious life. Let Your example and that of Your Blessed Mother and Saint Joseph encourage both young people and parents and let Your grace sustain them. Amen

**MASS SCHEDULE**

Day	Date	Memorial/Feast Day	Mass Location/Time	Intention
Monday	February 23	Lenten Weekday/ Saint Polycarp, Bishop & Martyr	5:00 p.m. - Grey Eagle Apts.	Cheryl Selwyn †
Tuesday	February 24	Lenten Weekday	NO MASS	.....
Wednesday	February 25	Lenten Weekday	5:00 p.m. - St. John's	Jon Doom †
Thursday	February 26	Lenten Weekday	10:00 a.m. - GSC	Joanne Kirchgassler †
Friday	February 27	Lenten Weekday/ Saint Gregory of Narek, Abbot & Doctor of the Church	1:00 p.m. - St. Paul's	Benefactors
Saturday	February 28	Vigil of the Second Sunday of Advent	5:30 p.m. - St. John's	Jim Geaghan †
Sunday	March 1	Second Sunday of Lent	9:00 a.m. - Assumption 11:00 a.m. - St. Paul's	Dorothy Dixon † Margie Pavin †

**FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS NEEDED!**

The local food pantries are in need of donations of non-perishable food items as well as personal care items (body wash, shampoo, laundry detergent). Parishioners of all parishes are asked to leave their donations in the containers in the entryways of their churches. The ROCS Community 15Closet is also in need of children's and men's clothes. Clothes can be dropped off at the Community Closet. Thank you, in advance, for your generous donations to this worthy cause!



**UPCOMING EVENTS  
AT ABBEY OF THE HILLS  
February 27-March 1, 2026  
Women's Lenten Retreat  
"Finding Hope in Suffering"  
March 5, 2026**

**St. Benedict and St. John's University  
Chamber Choir**

Directed by Bradley Miller- Conductor.

7:30 p.m. – Free Will Offering – No Tickets Required

**March 10, 2026- Day of Recollection- Fr. Micheal Griffin**  
"Joy on the Journey: Thoughts from an Oblate of St. Benedict."  
Registration is required.

**March 13-15, 2026- Men's Lenten Retreat**  
"Through Him, With Him, and In Him"

**March 17, 2026- St. Patrick's Day Dinner**  
Serving from 5-8 PM. Gather your family and friends, wear your green, and come celebrate with us at the Abbey.

For more information regarding these and future events visit [www.abbeyofthehills.org](http://www.abbeyofthehills.org) or email [events@abbeyofthehills.org](mailto:events@abbeyofthehills.org) or call 605-398-9200.



**.STATIONS OF THE CROSS  
THIS WEEK**

**Wednesday, February 25**  
7:00 p.m.

Assumption (By FCCLA)

**Friday, February 27**  
6:00 p.m.

St. John's (After Rosary)

MINISTRY SCHEDULE				LOOKING AHEAD	
<b>"Serve the Lord with gladness"</b> <small>-Psalms 100:2</small>				<b>Monday, February 23</b>	
Saturday, February 28 5:30 p.m. - St. John's				Daily Rosary at 4:30 p.m. at Grey Eagle Apartments Mass at 5:00 p.m. at Grey Eagle Apartments	
Sunday, March 1 9:00 a.m. - Assumption				<b>Tuesday, February 24</b>	
Sunday, March 1 11:00 a.m. - St. Paul's				NO MASS Book Study at 3:30 p.m. at St. John's Daily Rosary at 5:30 p.m. at St. John's	
<b>EM</b>	Bonnie Soukup/ Don Koupal	Mike Beeson	Karen	<b>Wednesday, February 25</b>	
<b>Lector/ Cantor/ Intercessions</b>	Buzz Durham	Mike Beeson	Emma/ Sr. Miriam/ Georgia	Adoration & Confessions at 4:15 p.m. at St. John's Mass at 5:00 p.m. at St. John's/Daily Rosary Following CCD at 6:00 p.m. at St. John's Potluck/Family Night at 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul's CCD at 6:45 p.m. at Assumption Stations of the Cross at 7:00 p.m. at Assumption	
<b>Altar Servers</b>	Clarah Soukup/ Windsor Soukup/ Willow Soukup	Wes Koupal/ Lane Koupal	Nariah/ Tegan	<b>Thursday, February 26</b>	
<b>Music</b>	Lisa Cihak	Bernie Koupal		Mass at 10:00 a.m. at Wagner GSC/Daily Rosary Following <b>Friday, February 27</b>	
<b>Ushers</b>	Gene Niehus/ Colin Soukup/ Paul Eggers/ Lynn Soukup/ Jim Eggers	Bud Koupal/ Derek Koupal	Bennett/ Briggs	Mass at 1:00 p.m. at St. Paul's Adoration & Confessions at 1:30 p.m. at St. Paul's Benediction at 5:00 p.m. at St. Paul's Daily Rosary at 5:30 p.m. at St. John's Stations of the Cross at 6:00 p.m. at St. John's	
<b>Greeters</b>	Theresa Koupal		Mary Jo	<b>Saturday, February 28</b>	
<b>Gift Bearers</b>	Matt & Mieke Slaba Family	Derek Koupal Family	Jason, Lindsey, & Family	Confessions at 4:30 p.m. at St. John's Daily Rosary at 5:00 p.m. at St. John's Mass at 5:30 p.m. at St. John's	
<b>Rosary</b>	Don & Theresa Koupal			<b>Sunday, March 1</b>	
<b>Sacristan</b>	Don Koupal			Confessions at 8:15 a.m. at Assumption Mass at 9:00 a.m. at Assumption Mass at 11:00 a.m. at St. Paul's Lenten Study at 1:30 p.m. at Assumption	
<b>Collection Counters</b>	Jim Eggers/ Mary Kuhlman	Lynn Stather/ Donna Smejkal	Ramona/ Judy	 <p><b>MERCY HOUR</b> Sunday, February 22 3:00 p.m. St. John's Catholic Church <i>Eucharistic Adoration - Opportunity for Confession - Praise/Worship Music</i></p>	

**ST. JOHN'S COLLECTION**

Amount Needed Each Week	\$2750.00
February 14	\$2251.00
<b>Thank you for your generosity - every gift matters and is appreciated! The following amount was also received:</b>	
Earmarked Donation	\$ 50.00
Mass Stipends	\$ 20.00
January EFT/Online Donations	\$1150.00

**LENTE BOOK STUDY AT ST. JOHN'S**  
*The Seven Pillars of Catholic Spirituality*  
First Session: Tuesday February 23  
3:30 p.m.  
St. John's Church Basement



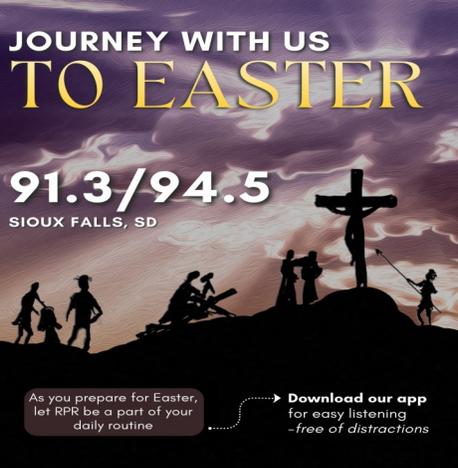
**FEBRUARY FELLOWSHIP FEAST**  
Thursday, February 26  
5:30 p.m.  
United Methodist Church  
*St. John's Altar Society will be serving the meal, and we hope to see you there!*

**MARCH POTLUCK**  
Saturday, March 7  
6:30 p.m. (After 5:30 p.m. Mass)  
St. John's Church Basement  
Everyone is invited to attend! We hope you can join us to enjoy great food and fellowship.

**NOTE TO ST. JOHN'S PARISHIONERS**  
If you have access to the internet, you can access and manage your profile and household and view your giving and You should have received an email from JoNell DeHaan with instructions regarding setting up your account to allow access to your information on Ministry Platform!

**LAST COLLAR STANDING**  
Mark your calendars! The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Last Collar Standing game show airs live on Sunday, Feb. 22 from 3-5 p.m. on our YouTube page. Last Collar Standing is an opportunity to raise both awareness of and funds for our diocesan Lumen Christi Missionary Program. The funds raised from this event are used to offset the cost to parishes by over 50%. For information on how to help the program with your contributions, visit <https://sfccatholic.org/lumenchristi/lastcollar/>.

**RAVINIA FIRE DEPARTMENT FISH FRY**  
(Drive Through Only)  
Friday, February 27  
4:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
(Or Until Sold Out)  
Ravinia Fire Station. Ravinia  
\$10 Per Plate



**JOURNEY WITH US TO EASTER**  
91.3/94.5  
SIOUX FALLS, SD

As you prepare for Easter, let RPR be a part of your daily routine

Download our app for easy listening - free of distractions

**LENTE STUDY OPPORTUNITY: BEGINS FEBRUARY 22**  
Assumption Parish will be offering a Lenten Study entitled **Life Everlasting: Heaven, Hell, Death, and Judgment**. This study is a five-session mini-study to help you understand what the Catholic Church teaches about death, judgment, heaven, and hell, and why these truths are meant to fill you with hope. Each study session includes a 30 minute video on DVD by Dr. Ed Sri and Dr. Jeff Marrow, along with discussion from the Study Book. Cost of the Study Book will be about \$20.00. The Study will begin on Sunday, February 22, 2026, at 1:30 pm at the CCD Center in Dante, and will run for 5 Sundays. Please contact Vicki Roth at [blindlady@goldenwest.net](mailto:blindlady@goldenwest.net) or 605-530-3284, if interested.

**DISCOVER WHO JESUS SAYS YOU ARE**  
An Interactive Lenten Workshop: Journey Through Your Personal Story, Saturday, March 28, from 9-11:30 a.m., at the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery, 707 W. 4th St. in Sioux Falls. Join The Lourdes Center for a personal exploration of your life story: the good moments, the hard times, the emotional wounds, and the lies we often tell ourselves. Like the wounded man in the parable of the Good Samaritan, we will uncover where Jesus, our compassionate Samaritan, meets us in our suffering and reveals our true identity in his eyes. The workshop will focus on remembering and embracing who Jesus says you are: loved, redeemed and connected to every life. This will include self-reflection, a creative project and chapel/prayer time. Please bring a Bible. Registration is required as space is limited. Cost is \$50. Visit [thelourdescenter.com](http://thelourdescenter.com) for more information or to register.



**Happy Birthday to these parishioners who will celebrate birthdays this week:**

February 23: Heidi Cimpl (A), Karol Kocer (A); February 24: Scott McNinch (A), Vera Beeson (A), Lindsay Beeson (A); February 25: Bud Koupal (A), Kenna Hanan (SJ), Ruben Ulrich (SJ); February 26: Preston Kafka (SJ); February 27: Doug Koupal, Sr. (A), Sharon Cihak (A); Allison Ekroth (SJ). March 1: Mark Cuka (A), Betty Soukup (SJ), Paul Eggers (SJ), Paulette Eggers (SJ), Slider Davies (SJ).

*Also, Happy Birthday to any St. Paul's parishioners who celebrate birthdays this week!*



February 23: Mike & Lisa Cihak (SJ); February 25: Richard & Dorothy Andersh (A), Jim & Tammy Thornton (SJ).

*Happy Anniversary to St. Paul's parishioners who celebrate wedding anniversaries this week!*

**DEVOTIONS, EXPLAINED  
FASTING**

The practice of fasting predates Christianity. The Old Testament is full of examples of righteous men and women mortifying their flesh for the purpose of making atonement or simply to grow closer to God. Jesus himself fasted for forty days and forty nights in preparation for the beginning of his public ministry, and we see his disciples following his example in the Acts of the Apostles.

Fasting continues to be an important part of Christian devotional life today. Many people feel the practice of fasting enhances their prayer and helps them fulfill St. Paul's advice to "put to death the deeds of the body" (Romans 8:13) to grow in the Spirit. Most Catholics will associate fasting with the liturgical season of Lent, which begins and ends with obligatory fasting for all members of the Latin Catholic Church between ages 18 and 59.

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**EVERYDAY  
STEWARSHIP –  
RECOGNIZE GOD IN  
YOUR ORDINARY  
MOMENTS:**

**THE 6  
CHARACTERISTICS  
OF AN EVERYDAY  
STEWARSHIP FOR  
LENT**

By Tracy Earl Welliver,  
MTS

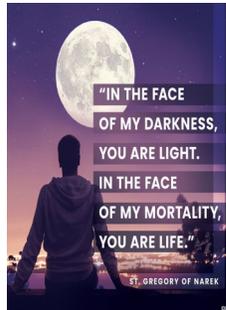
What is it that tempts you the most? Is it an action, a person, or a place? Is it something that seems innocent enough, like a food, a drink, or an event? When you really start reflecting, you find that there are many temptations all around. Even if you are strong and never succumb to a certain temptation, it is still there waiting for a weak moment in your life.

One difficulty in the life of a disciple trying to live a stewardship way of life lies in the temptations we never actually see. We are too busy thinking about past failures or

successes, or we are fixated on what possibilities the future holds that we miss the important things going on in the present. Jesus could be standing directly in front of us, but we miss him because we are looking everywhere except straight ahead.

Being mindful means that we are looking out for how and when God will call us this very day. Our decisions this day will have a huge impact on the future. If we only look to the future, we will miss those important calls to action. We may even find ourselves in a desert of sorts, looking for any way out we can find. However, God may need us to give of ourselves for a reason we cannot yet discern while in that desert. We need to stay awake, be aware, and look for His hand in all things. If we don't, we may even miss the pathway out of that desert when it presents itself.

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**PRACTICING) CATHOLIC -  
RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS**

**INTO THE DESERT**

By Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

When we first got married, I wanted to know everything my husband was thinking, exactly when he was thinking it.

Thirteen years later, I still want to know it all. But I want to know it after he's had a snack.

I think he still wants to know what I'm thinking, too. But he wants to know it after I've had 10 minutes without hearing the word, "Mommy!"

Life has taught us, you see, that it's hard to be a good person, a nice person, a gentle person, when your body doesn't feel good or nice or gentle. When you're hungry. When you're exhausted. When you're anxious.

It's not impossible, of course. It's just ... hard.

We're entering a penitential season, a time in which we purposefully deprive ourselves in certain ways. During Lent, we intentionally enter into the desert of physical hunger and weakness. Why, in preparation for Easter and in an effort to spiritually purify ourselves, do we go to this place where it's so hard to be good? Why do we go to the desert?

Because Christ has shown us that the desert is where decisions are made.

There are many reasons why the Word became flesh to accomplish God's plan for our salvation. But I think one of the most important reasons must have been that God wanted to show us that He knows, intimately, how easily the devil exploits our physical experience of this world. We see it in today's Gospel: Jesus, hungry and weary. Jesus, taunted and tempted.

We see him. We recognize him. We are him.

And we hear his voice, even though it trembles with fatigue: "Get away, Satan!"

Today, we enter the desert. Because the desert is where decisions are made.

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**Readings for the Week of February 22, 2026**

Sunday: Gn 2:7-9; 3:1-7/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17/Rom 5:12-19 or 5:12, 17-19/Mt 4:1-11  
Monday: Lv 19:1-2, 11-18/Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15/Mt 25:31-46  
Tuesday: Is 55:10-11/Ps 34:4-5, 6-7, 16-17, 18-19/Mt 6:7-15  
Wednesday: Jon 3:1-10/Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19/Lk 11:29-32  
Thursday: Est C:12, 14-16, 23-25/Ps 138:1-2ab, 2cde-3, 7c-8/Mt 7:7-12  
Friday: Ez 18:21-28/Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-7a, 7bc-8/Mt 5:20-26  
Saturday: Dt 26:16-19/Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8/Mt 5:43-48  
Next Sunday: Gn 12:1-4a/Ps 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22/2 Tm 1:8b-10/Mt 17:1-9

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**1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT**

