



FAITH FORMATION NEWSLETTER



December 2025

DEAR ST. JOHN'S PARISHIONERS

As I like to share with you, we have many great faith formation opportunities and activities happening at St John's all the time. Our K-12 programs continue for our wonderful children, young people, and their families. Please be aware, pray for, and participate as appropriate in our November 30 St Nicholas Breakfast and family activity time following the 8:30 am Mass, our high school students attending NCYC in Indianapolis Nov 20-24, our Advent Adoration and Reconciliation evenings for K-12 on December 3 and 10, and our Family Faith Night and Christmas program on December 17. The Adult Faith Formation Committee is championing and providing lunch and learns, small group Bible study, Wednesday evening adult faith formation instruction, personal faith journey sharing, Advent preparation program, books in the library, and gift books for your Advent and Christmas. Our OCIA now has nine (9) participants interested in joining the Church at Easter. Our Eucharistic Adoration team and Fr Michael continue to offer Adoration opportunities on Fridays and the second Tuesday of every month in the evening. We will have Rosary opportunities before every Mass soon. If you are interested in participating or learning more, PLEASE check the bulletin, the parish website, or contact me, Ed Anderson, at re@stjohnsadel.org or at 515-993-4590.

NEW LITURGICAL YEAR "RESOLUTIONS"

With all of these things happening, I'd like to focus this newsletter on two things: The End and The Beginning. As we come to the end of our Liturgical Year, and prepare for the start of a new year, let's discuss "resolutions". Both the end and the beginning should help us to resolve to grow in our faith. As adults, we all are busy, and I respect that. But, we are moving ever closer to our end times and our own last things. We should hunger and thirst for ways to grow in our faith, our love of God, and our love of neighbor. So, if you find yourself unable to participate in the various adult faith formation activities at St John's, don't despair! Contemplate your end and your opportunities for new beginnings. If you can do ONLY ONE thing in the New Liturgical Year that begins on Nov 30, 2025, let it be the Holy Mass!

There is nothing more beautiful and nothing more important than weekly attendance at Mass! We also have Tuesday through Friday daily Mass times. Through weekly Mass attendance, you will grow in your faith, grow in your love of Christ, His Church, and your neighbor. So, as your Liturgical Year 2026 new year's resolution, we encourage you to begin with the Mass. You'll be glad you did!

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OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE!

We all will die, the world as we know it will end, and Christ will come again in glory.

During the month of November, the Catholic Church leads us beautifully through the celebrations of the Feasts of All Saints and All Souls Days, and helps us to prayerfully focus on the saints in Heaven, our beloved dead, all the souls in Purgatory, our own end-times, and the end of the world. We call our study and reflection on end times and last things Eschatology, our individual eternal destiny and the culmination of history. We all will die, the world as we know it will end, and Christ will come again in glory (His Parousia, or Second Coming). Each of us will experience a personal judgement at the moment of our death and a final judgement on the last day. We have only two options; Heaven or Hell. Both are very real and we should prayerfully consider our mortality and life goals to know God, to love God, and to serve God in this world so we can be happy with God forever in Heaven. We take comfort and courage in the prospect of Purgatory as a purification or perfection period for our souls if we die in a state of grace, loving and choosing God, but still needing some detachment from our sinful natures before we enter heaven. All of our daily and weekend Mass readings during November help us to think about and prepare for end times and last things. This period in the Church year culminates with our celebration of Christ the King – or Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe! We know what's coming and we need not fear because we love our Lord and He is ruler of everything.

ADVENT: HOPE, PEACE, JOY & LOVE

With the end of one Liturgical Year, we commence a new Liturgical Year with the season of Advent. This year, Advent begins on November 30 and, as always, continues for four weeks in December leading us to Christmas. The Advent Season is another wonderful gift to us from Christ's Church. The color of Advent is purple (or lavender) to remind us that this is a penitential season of prayerful preparation and efforts to change and improve ourselves in aligning more and more with God's will and His wishes for our happiness and salvation. We are asked to pray and consider how we can grow closer to God and our neighbor as we prepare for three "comings" of Christ; His first coming as a man, the Word Incarnate, in history, His coming to us in our lives every day and at the end of our lives on earth, and His coming again at the end of time. We ask ourselves, "What can I do to change? How can I pray more, grow closer to God, and love my neighbor more?" During the weeks of Advent, we celebrate hope, peace, joy, and love. Once completed, we are ready to joyfully celebrate the Season of Christmas. A great reminder here: the Season of Christmas begins on Christmas Eve and ends on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (this year on January 11, 2026 – 18 days!). Prayerfully prepare during Advent and then take plenty of time to celebrate the Christmas Season!

