

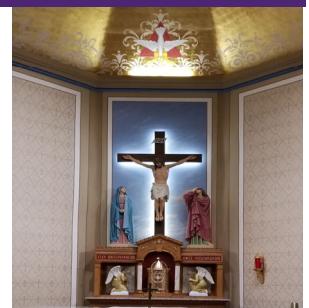
**CHURCH OF
THE ASCENSION**
323 Reform St. N.
NYA, MN. 55368

PASTOR

Fr. Abraham Kochupurackal CMI
OFFICE 952-856-1050
frabraham@st-bernard-cologne.org



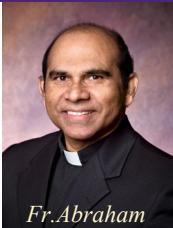
**ST. BERNARD
CHURCH**
212 Church Street E.
Cologne, MN. 55322



Website: AscensionNYA.org
Parish Office Hours:
Mon.—Wed & Fri. 9am—2pm
Office Phone: 952-467-3351
Business Administrator:
Virginia Hanson952-777-0110
busadmin@ascensionnya.org
Safe Environment Coordinator:
Sarah Smith....952-777-0111
bookkeeper@ascensionnya.org

Website: St-Bernard-Cologne.org
Parish Office Hours:
Tues 9am-2pm & Fri. 9am—12pm
Office Phone: 952-466-2031
Business Administrator:
Virginia Hanson952-856-1051
busadmin@st-bernard-cologne.org
Safe Environment Coordinator:
Sarah Smith....952-856-1052
bookkeeper@st-bernard-cologne.org

The Fourth Sunday of Advent – December 23 & 24, 2023



Fr. Abraham

Christmas, God's Indescribable Gift

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Two thousand years ago, the angel of the Lord said to the shepherds, “For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.” (Luke 2:11-12). Today we join the angels in celebrating the greatest day, the day on which our God became one of us. God became one of us, because, “God loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.” (Jn. 3:16). In Jesus, the Almighty “made Himself a tiny baby, so that we might love Him.” In Jesus, the Creator became a creature, so that He identified Himself with us. In the person of Jesus Christ, God decided to become a lowly human Being. He decided to declare His love for us in a way that we would understand and respond to freely.

Christmas is the feast of God’s sharing love with us. Jesus as our Savior brought the “good news” that our God is a loving, forgiving, merciful and rewarding God. Jesus demonstrated by His life and teaching how God our heavenly Father loves us, forgives us, and provides for us. All His miracles were signs of this Divine Love. Jesus’ final demonstration of God’s love for us Was His death on the cross and the institution of the Holy Eucharist.

We know that Jesus was born in Bethlehem; and Bethlehem means ‘House of Bread’ As in the first Christmas day, in every Mass the same Jesus is fully and substantially present under the appearance of bread. He became ‘Living Bread’ for us that has come down from heaven. Let us receive Him with faith, with reverence, and with love. Let us welcome Him with hearts and minds Purified of sin. He comes in our hearts, in our homes, and in our communities. Let us welcome His coming with great joy.

“When shepherds had seen Him, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds.” (Lk 2:17-18). With great joy in their hearts the shepherds shared the message about the birth of Christ, the Savior of the world. Similarly, we can follow the examples of the shepherds. Share this wonderful love story to each other, to our loved ones, and our neighbors highlighting the great joy and the unshakable hope that it brings to all. Tell them about God who became Man, and dwells in our hearts today. Tell them about Christ, and about the Mass because these are the focus of Christmas. This is what we are invited to do through the Small Groups as the part of the Synod Evangelization Process.

Christmas reminds us that God shared His love by giving us His Son. Hence, we also must share our love by sharing our gifts, wealth, talents and other blessings with others. Just as Jesus shared His love with all mankind we too are called to share our love with others, especially, the less fortunate people than us. Jesus is “God’s indescribable gift” (2 Cor 9: 15). The amazing thing is that not only are we able to receive this gift, but we are able to share it with others on Christmas and every day of the year.

May this Christmas be filled with joy and the infinite blessings of God for you, your families and all of your loved ones.

Rosary Intention: “For Christmas blessings of Love, Joy and Peace to all”

December 27th is the 32nd Anniversary of my Ordination to the Priesthood. Please keep me in your prayers. You are in my prayers and thoughts.

Merry Christmas.

Yours in Christ, Fr. Abraham Kochupurackal CMI, Pastor

Parish Mission Statement We, the family of St. Bernard and Ascension, united through Baptism, redeemed by Christs’ death and resurrection, and strengthened by his Word and Eucharist, are called to follow him by nurturing a rich sacramental and spiritual life, supporting strong Catholic faith formation and fostering fellowship and community.

