

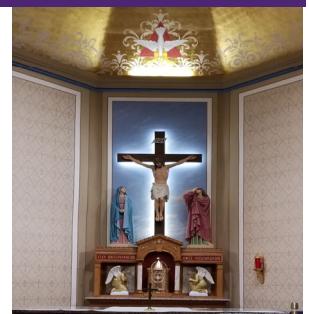
**CHURCH OF
THE ASCENSION**
323 Reform St. N.
NYA, MN. 55368

PASTOR
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OFFICE 952-856-1050
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Parish Office Hours:
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Office Phone: 952-467-3351
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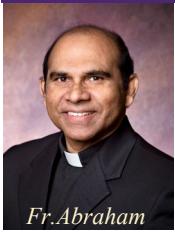
**ST. BERNARD
CHURCH**
212 Church Street E.
Cologne, MN. 55322



Website: St-Bernard-Cologne.org
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The Second Sunday of Advent – December 9 & 10, 2023

Make Clear the Way of the Lord



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

John the Baptist was the last of the great prophets. He had a unique and much needed message for the people of his time and for us today. John was announcing a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins to prepare for Jesus coming. That was also the basic demand of Jesus himself, for Jesus came saying, “Repent, and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:15).

During Advent, we “prepare the way of the Lord” (Isaiah 40:3) as we await His coming. On this second Sunday of Advent, the Church proclaims that a major way to prepare to receive Jesus our Savior is by repentance and the renewal of life. What is this repentance? The Greek word that Saint Mark used for repentance was “*metanoia*”. This means changing the attitude of our minds, by turning from a life centered on self to a life centered on God. Repentance is the very central idea of Christian faith, for repentance is the turning away from sin and the turning towards God and others that God means us to live. The essence of repentance lies in a change of heart, a change of conduct and a change of life. Concretely, what do these scripture readings mean for you and me right now? They mean the same thing for us that they meant for those who heard the preaching of John the Baptist. The people from throughout the Judean countryside and the people of Jerusalem went out to the Jordan River where John was preaching. They confessed their sins and were baptized. They presented them to God for forgiveness. They began a new life in Jesus.

What John the Baptist is telling us is to look within, change our own attitudes, and trust God to have the transformation of our lives. As Advent gets underway, we are called to change, to look at our behavior and to hold ourselves accountable. Certainly, we need to examine ways in which we truly fail, to repent and try to amend. Do we follow what the Lord asks of us in Holy Scripture? Or are we trying to make God accommodate himself to what is convenient for us? Do we cry out, as John the Baptist did, against injustice? Or do we accept it as part of daily life? Let us struggle against the tendencies that we all have: of trying to create a God in our own image and likeness or of saying, as others do, “If they are doing it, I can also do it.” Do we care for the poor and hungry? Do we find enough time to pray? Let us confess our sins and humbly do whatever penance is necessary.

This Advent is the time to say sorry to God and others; and ask for God’s forgiveness. The sacrament of Reconciliation is a sacrament of healing and a sacrament of forgiveness. We have a combined **Parish Reconciliation** on December 13th, Wednesday, 6:30pm at St. Bernard. Repentance gives way to a deeper joy of being forgiven. This is a very important condition for us to welcome Jesus worthily into our hearts. If we sincerely repent, then the salvation that Jesus brings will be ours. John the Baptist is presented to us as a model during Advent. We, too, are called to prepare the way for the Lord.

Rosary Intention: “For comfort and hope to all the sick and suffering.”

Yours in Christ, Fr. Abraham Kochupurackal CMI, Pastor

Parish Mission Statement We, the family of St. Bernard and Ascension, united through Baptism, redeemed by Christ's 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.



CALENDAR FOR ASCENSION AND ST. BERNARDS' PARISHES

Monday	Dec. 11	ASC. ST. B.	No Mass: No Mass:
Tuesday	Dec. 12	ST. B. ASC. ASC.	Quilting Group: 9am-12pm Adoration: 3pm-6pm Confessions: 5:45pm-6:05pm Mass: 6:15pm
Wednesday	Dec. 13	ST. B. ST. B. ST. B. ST. B.	Confession: 7:30am-7:50am Mass: 8:00am Adoration: 2:00pm-7:00pm Join Parish Advent Penance Service: 6:30pm
Thursday	Dec. 14	ST. B.	Mass: 8:00am
Friday	Dec. 15	ASC.	Mass: 8:00am
Saturday	Dec. 16	ST. B. ST. B. ST. B.	Confession: 4:30pm-4:50pm Mass: 5:00pm Linger Longer
Sunday	Dec. 17	ASC. ASC. ASC. ST. B. ST. B.	Mass: 8:00am Bible Study: 9:00am Christmas Decorating Mass: 10:00am Linger Longer

What is going on in our Parishes and in the Community:

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE:

Sunday Dec. 24th	4:00pm ASC. 6:30pm ST. B.
Monday Dec. 25th	8:00am ASC. 10:00am ST. B.

There will be no 8:00am Sunday Mass at Ascension on December 24th. Sunday Obligation Masses will Saturday December 23rd at 5:00pm at Ascension and Sunday December 24th at 10:00am at St. Bernard

Our Joint Advent Penance Service will be Wednesday December 13th at St. Bernard at 6:30pm

Faith Formation Update:

The Ascension Knights of Columbus once again will be sponsoring **"Keep Christ in Christmas"** poster contest. Age groups are: 5-7yr old, 8-10yr old, and 11-14yr old. Each age group local winner will receive \$25.

Each participant will receive a coupon for ONE free Bingo card, which can be used during the upcoming

KC Bingo's events scheduled on February 18th, March 17th & April 21th.

Registration forms can be picked up Wednesday at Faith Formation classes.

Poster must be turned in by December 20th.

Question please contact Kara Wickenhauser, Julie Kleindl or Donald Whitaker

Church of Ascension

Ascension Weekly Collection Report

Totals as of 11/26/2023

Weekly Operating Budget:	\$ 2,986.79
Weekly Envelopes/Plate:	4,111.00
Weekly E-Giving:	1,415.00
Collections Budget YTD:	65,709.38
Actual Collection YTD:	64,822.65
Total Collected Over (Under) YTD:	(886.73)

Capital Improvement Offering:	110.00
Capital Improvement-E-Giving:	90.00
Capital Improvement YTD:	9,158.00

Sign up for electronic giving at ascensionny.org
Under Links -> E-giving. Or call the parish office for more Information: 952-467-3351.

The Ascension Decorating Committee is looking for volunteers to help move the Christmas trees and Stable so that the church can be decorated for Christmas! If you are able, please stay after the 8am Mass on Sunday December 17th to assist. Thank you!

Church of St. Bernard

St. Bernard Stewardship of Treasure

Budget for week	3,133.49
Contributions 11-22-2023 through 11-28-2023	2,601.00
Total Actual Collection YTD	80,408.04
Total Actual Collection Over (Under) Budget	12,701.93
Forward in Faith	
Envelope Income	150.00
Electronic Donations	100.00
Forward in Faith Total	250.00
Forward in Faith YTD	9,459.60

Did you know you can have your contributions automatically deducted from your checking or savings account?
For more information call the parish office 952-466-2031,

Your Prayers are requested for the repose of the soul of **Harold Stacken**, father of Diane Worm, who passed away on November 21st. Harold's funeral was on December 6th, May he rest in peace and may his soul and all the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Please also pray for Harold's family.

Today, Dec. 10th after the 10:00 am Mass.

Decorations for Christmas

@ St. Bernard will be set up.

Volunteers are needed for this project.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Retirement Fund for Religious

Support a lifetime of service. Women and men religious have spent their lives serving others in prayer, ministry, education and care for those in need-usually for little or no pay. Today, their religious communities do not have enough retirement savings. As they age, they require essential care and medications. Please support them by giving to the Retirement Fund for religious. Your donation makes a difference for nearly 25,000 senior men and women religious. Please give generously.

Mass Ministry Schedule—December 16 to 17

Mass Ministry	St. Bernard Sat. 5:00 pm	Ascension Sun. 8:00 am	St. Bernard Sun. 10:00 am
Sacristan	Patricia Quinn	Rita Fahey	Patricia Quinn
Servers	Marshall Panning & Volunteer	Nathan Duenow & Brianna Duenow	Buckley Jones & Logan Pellegrino
Reader	Judy Glander	Brian Willems	Brenda Jones
Eucharistic Ministers	Andy Kleindl (H), Sarah Foley (C), Bernie Shambour ©	Steve Helget	Julie Clemensen (H), Helen Nicklaus (C) Meghan Stusynski (C)
Ushers	Tom Dahl & Ralph Laumann	Tim George Rick Ulrich	Kieran Allison & Bob Symanitz
Greeters	Monica Kooiman	Justin & Amy Buckentin	Casey Jones
Homebound Ministers	N/A	Rich & Sue Tellers	

Mass Times Intentions

Monday	Dec. 11		No Mass
Tuesday	Dec. 12 6:15 pm	Ascension	For All Souls in Purgatory
Wednesday	Dec. 13 8:00 am	St. Bernard	Fr. Bill Paron †
Thursday	Dec. 14 8:00am	St. Bernard	Warren Kahnke †
Friday	Dec. 15 8:00 am	Ascension	For the Dying
Saturday	Dec. 16 5:00 pm	St/ Bernard	Muriel Wickenhauser †
Sunday	Dec. 17 8:00 am	Ascension	Tom and Marion Hoppe ††
Sunday	Dec. 17 10:00 am	St. Bernard	Gerald Mohrbacher † & All Parishioners

Readings for the week of December 10, 2023

Sunday: Is 40:1-5, 9-11/Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14 (8)/2 Pt 3:8-14/Mk 1:1-8 **Monday:** Is 35:1-10/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14/Lk 5:17-26 **Tuesday:** Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab/Jdt 13:18bcde, 19/ Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47 **Wednesday:** Is 40:25 -31/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 and 10/Mt 11:28-30 **Thursday:** Is 41:13-20/Ps 145:1 and 9, 10-11, 12-13ab/Mt 11:11-15 **Friday:** Is 48:17-19/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6/Mt 11:16-19 **Saturday:** Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16, 18-19/Mt 17:9a, 10-13 **Next Sunday:** Is 61:1-2a, 10-11/Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54 (Is 61:10b)/ 1 Thes 5:16-24/Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

Bulletin copy is due by Thursdays @ NOON for the bulletin two weekends out;
St. Bernard copy must be emailed to:
bulletin@st-bernard-cologne.org
and pquinn55322@hotmail.com
Ascension copy must be emailed to:
busadmin@ascensionnya.org
All inserts and weekend Mass announcements can be emailed or a paper copy brought to the Parish office at St. Bernard or Ascension.

SACRAMENTS

Baptisms: By appointment.

Marriage Arrangements

The couple should contact the priest as soon as they become engaged. They must meet with the priest twice before setting a marriage date. These two meetings need to be completed 6 months before the proposed date.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Ascension: Tues. 5:45pm - 6:05pm

St. Bernard: Wed: 7:30am-7:50am

Saturday: 4:30pm—4:50pm
at parish hosting the Mass

By appointment with Father- Call 952-856-1050

Communion for Homebound

Ascension - Sue Tellers.....612-247-6881

St. Bernard - Barb Knorr.....952-466-2447

Anointing of the Sick

Call the parish office at any time.

Feast Days: Dec. 11-St. Damasus,
Dec. 12-Our Lady of Guadalupe,

Dec. 13-St. Lucy,

Dec. 14-St John of the Cross

St. Andrew's Novena

Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in the piercing cold.

In that hour vouchsafe, I beseech Thee, O my God, to hear my prayer and grant my desires through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and of His blessed Mother. Amen.



We like to think we are totally free, but the bitter truth is we simply are not. Or better put, our freedom is limited on every side — by governments, corporate giants, physical and mental frailties, genetic shortcomings, and even the boundaries of time and space, and above all, the burden of our sins and pending deaths. In our day, we are perhaps particularly aware that we are not free to disconnect from the technocratic rulers of the air. If you doubt me, try not paying your internet bill and see what happens. We are not totally free.

It's nothing new, of course. In Jesus' day, everyone felt the crushing weight of the Roman Empire. You can say you're free all you want. But try not paying your taxes to Rome and see what happens.

Once we feel this burden in our own lives — however it comes — we are ready to hear the stunning announcement that commences Mark's gospel, "**The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.**" It's not a simple perfunctory introduction, but a dramatic announcement of new freedom. The word "gospel" was a political, even military, term. It meant: a great victory has been won and a new king is in charge. This Jesus — not the Roman emperor — is God's son, and he has defeated all that crushes human freedom. It's time to follow him and be truly free. This week let's refuse to submit our freedom to false rulers — especially that of sin. And let's rejoice that Christ is coming to make us perfectly free from all our oppressors.

— Father John Muir

December 10, 2023
2nd Sunday of Advent