

I always found some enjoyment in looking at family Christmas cards that we sent out each year. It was without fail that the picture you saw of us all together in a Christmas photo was likely not as easy as it looked. While the photo would be completely manicured, and look great, there was usually a backstory. Two of my brothers could have been in a fight, someone's buttons were missing, or someone was fighting back tears from the struggle to get the photo taken. It may have looked "picture perfect" but there was certainly a little bit of a "messy" backstory to it! We tried to look like we had it "all together" even if we actually didn't!

When we celebrate the Holy Family, there is a tendency to think that there was no hardship or chaos in their life, and yet the Gospel flies directly in the face of that idea. The Holy Family- as much holiness and virtue as they had and practiced, they still lived in a broken and fallen world. They still had to flee to Egypt for Jesus's safety. They had a "reality" to deal with that was less than perfect. However, that reality did not deform them into something less than they were called to be in God's eyes.

And that is where we can take some inspiration and encouragement. We aren't called to be absolutely perfect and free from chaos or the messiness of our reality. We have to deal with many things as a family, to be sure (even as a parish family!). It may not all feel like we have it all together, but the great news is that the Holy Family teaches us how to continue to build each other up as members of that family, even in the midst of our reality, and our messiness.

-Fr. Belken



*St. Denis & St. Lawrence*

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<p>135 N. Winchester, Benton, MO 63736 PO Box 127, Benton, MO 63736 Phone: 573-545-3864 Web: <a href="http://www.stdenisbenton.org">www.stdenisbenton.org</a></p>	<p>1001 State Highway A, New Hamburg, MO PO Box 247, Benton, MO 63736 Phone: 573-545-3317 Web: <a href="http://www.stlnh.org">www.stlnh.org</a></p>
<p><b>Pastor: Rev. Daniel Belken</b></p>	
<p>Office Manager: Lisa Spalding, <a href="mailto:lisa@stdenisbenton.org">lisa@stdenisbenton.org</a> Bookkeeper: Marilyn Burford Parish Council President: Jeff Diebold</p>	<p>Office Manager: Billy Ray Johnson, <a href="mailto:billyray@stlnh.org">billyray@stlnh.org</a> Maintenance: Henry Beussink &amp; Gerard Dirnberger Parish Council President: Gary Reischman</p>
<p><b>St. Denis School</b></p>	<p><b>Sacraments</b></p>
<p>105 N. Winchester Benton, MO 63736 Phone: 573-545-3017 Web: <a href="http://stdenisbenton.eduk12.net">stdenisbenton.eduk12.net</a> Email: <a href="mailto:lindsay@stdenisbenton.org">lindsay@stdenisbenton.org</a></p> <p>Principal: Lindsay Wikle School Board President: Mr. Glenn Collom</p>	<p><b>Saint Denis</b> Mass: Sunday at 7:00am and 10:00am Wednesday-Friday at 8:00am Confessions: Tuesday @ 7:00pm or by appt.</p> <p><b>Saint Lawrence</b> Mass: Saturday at 4:00pm and Sunday at 8:30am Tuesday at 6:00pm and Wednesday at 7:00am Confessions: Saturday @ 3:15pm or by appt.</p>

## SAINT DENIS PARISH

### MASS SCHEDULE & INTENTIONS

Tues	30		No Adoration
Wed.	31		<b>NO MASS</b>
Thu.	1- 10am	+	Leon Halter
Fri.	2		<b>NO MASS</b>
Sun.	4- 7am	+	Bill Schlosser
Sun.	4- 10am		Parish Family

### LITURGICAL ROLES

#### Sunday January 4, 7:00am

Lector:	Anthony Scherer
EM:	Carla Robert
Servers:	Alyssa Dannenmueller Eli Eftink, Tate Shively
Greet \ Gifts:	George & Natalie Eftink

#### Sunday January 4, 10:00am

Lector:	Gera LeGrand
EM:	Gera LeGrand
Servers:	Brailey Ratledge Gabriel & Alexander Mack
Greet \ Gifts:	David & Rhonda Ratledge

### Parish Stewardship

The Week of December 21, 2025

Envelopes:	\$5,234.00
Loose:	\$222.05
Total Collection:	\$5,456.05
Weekly Est. Budget	\$5,009.00
Difference:	+\$447.05

### COMMITTEES AND MISCELLANEOUS ASSIGNMENTS

#### ST. DENIS PARISH

Church cleaning for Saturday, January 3:  
John & Diane Urhahn  
Decorating Committee December:  
Maryiln Schlosser

#### ST. LAWRENCE PARISH

Church Cleaning for Friday, January 2:  
Chairman: Travis & Jenny Estes  
Derek & Kelly Felter, Danny Joe & Connie  
Glastetter, Jacob & Kati Glastetter

## SAINT LAWRENCE PARISH

### MASS SCHEDULE & INTENTIONS

Tues.	30- 6pm		Vocations
Wed.	31- 4pm		Charles & Lucille Heuring
Thurs.	1- 8am		Al & Rose Kern
Fri.	2		<b>NO MASS</b>
Sat.	3- 4pm		Donna Bucher
Sun.	4- 8:30am		Parish Family

### LITURGICAL ROLES

#### Saturday January 3, 4:00pm

Lector \ EM:	Dorothy Deason
Musician:	Cheryl Kern
Cantor:	Jamie Essner
Gifts:	Mr. & Mrs. Gary Glastetter
Servers:	Noah & Caleb Vetter Bennett Essner
Ushers:	Ushers are now Volunteer

#### Sunday January 4, 8:30am

Lector / EM:	Gary Reischman
Musician:	Cheryl Kern
Cantor:	Kari Bickings
Gifts:	Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Glastetter
Servers:	Kynli & Leeland Duenne, Colin Felter, Oliver Beck
Ushers:	Ushers are now Volunteer

### Parish Stewardship

The Week of December 21, 2025

Envelopes:	\$4,520.00
Loose:	\$155.00
Online:	\$110.00
Total Collection:	\$4,785.00

### READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY

**The Epiphany of the Lord**  
**January 4, 2026**  
**Isaiah 60:1-6**  
**Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6**  
**Matthew 2:1-12**

## ST. DENIS ANNOUNCEMENTS

**THANK YOU** to all who helped with the decorating of the Church. Our workers are exceptional and their efforts were very much appreciated!

**ST. DENIS MARY, MOTHER OF GOD MINISTERS:**  
**January 1, 10am: Lector: Linda Urhahn EM: Larry Urhahn Servers: Brooklyn Legrand, Ethan Diebold, Volunteer Greeters/Gifts: Larry & Linda Urhahn**

**CHANGING OFFICE HOURS-** Please note that beginning January 2nd, the St. Denis Parish Office will open at 8:30am instead of 8:00am. Closing hours remain the same: 4:00pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and 12:00pm on Fridays. The office doors will not be opened before or after these times (unless you have a scheduled meeting with Father). Any requests that cannot be completed during office hours may be scheduled for the next business day. Thank you for your understanding!

### JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup> HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

Mass Times will be As Follows:

December 31st	4:00pm at St. Lawrence
January 1st	8:00am at St. Lawrence
	10:00am at St. Denis

Please remember that this is a Holy Day of Obligation. As a gentle reminder, if Mass on this day is missed, one should seek the Sacrament of Confession before receiving the Eucharist.



**Please Remember in Prayer: Todd Gosche, Boby Stull, Beck Martin, Duane Welter, Family of Eugene Seyer**



**THANK YOU:** Dear Saint Denis and Saint Lawrence Parish Families, I want to thank all of you who have taken the time to send me cards, greetings, and thoughtful gifts during this Christmas Season. Your generosity is truly humbling, and I am overwhelmed with gratitude. So many of you make me feel like a part of your family—even as your pastor. Though I would love to thank each of you individually, I know I would never manage such a task without accidentally overlooking someone! Please accept this note as my heartfelt appreciation. Know of my prayers for you—not only throughout this joyful season, but especially as we enter a new year. May 2026 be a year in which we are immersed in God's grace and continue to proclaim to all the Good News: Christ is born!

In Christ,  
Fr. Belken

## ST. LAWRENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY: OUR LADY OF FATIMA VISITATION  
December 28 - Pat Moore  
January 4 - Mary B. Glastetter

**Annual St. Lawrence Sausage and Pancake Breakfast** is Sunday, January 11, 8-11:30am in the Parish Center. \$10 adults, \$5 for kids ages 6-12, Five and under-FREE. Homemade sausage, eggs, pancakes and more! All are welcome! Hosted by the St. Joseph Men's Sodality. Butchering volunteers are needed Saturday, Jan. 10. Contact Jarret Moore for more info.

**THANK YOU** to all who helped with the decorating of the Church, Old Church, and the Grotto. Our workers are exceptional and their efforts were very much appreciated.

**THANK YOU** to all who helped make the Christmas Church Tour such a beautiful success. So many hands were involved in decorating, hanging lights, greeting guests, filling treat bags, preparing warm beverages, and providing heavenly music throughout the evening. What a wonderful way to show our pride for St. Lawrence and share our blessings. Thank you and Happy New Year.