





The debt on Fr. Luehrmann Hall has been restructured with Union Savings Bank per the request and blessing of the Archdiocesan Finance Office, Archbishop Schnurr and the St. Mary Parish Council. We have obtained a very good rate. The debt includes what we owe on Fr. Luehrmann Hall and the debt we owe to the Seminary. Our debt payment will not increase by any significant amount. The debt amount is \$325,000.00. More details to follow from our Business Manager, Patti Herron Karnes, C.P.A. It is my hope to pay off this debt before I retire or die. The note is for 15 years, which would make me 77 years old, the same age as when Fr. Luehrmann passed away. That means I have to stick around for a while. I will pay for you.

# Happy Birthday



January 7 .....Austin Bagshaw

January 9 .....Charles Wise

January 10 ...Lisa House, Gary Huff

January 11 ...Damon Shifflet, Richard Davis

January 12 ...Julianne Middleton, Lena Moenster

## NEWS AROUND THE PARISH

**The Christmas Celebration was spectacular.** Great decorations with the Christmas trees adorning the Manger donated by Joe Moses, Jr. many years ago. The Wright Family did an outstanding job. The St. Mary Choir, under the baton of Mrs. Lynn Turner, filled the Church with festive music, both sacred and popular. A personal thanks to Erica LaFontaine Martin for donating the Christmas Story, which captivated the Christmas message of love. A big thanks to everyone who set up the TV viewing room in the Narthex to handle the overflow crowd (a first in our 161 year history). Overall, a great time was had by all.

### BEWARE THOSE HOLIDAY PARTIES

Last Friday, Thomas was out on a Holiday Party evening with several long-time friends. He had his usual double Tanqueray martini, followed by several glasses of different great wines. Despite the jolliness and “good time” feeling, he still had enough sense to realize he was over the limit.

That is when he decided to do something that he had never done before: HE TOOK A CAB HOME!

Sure enough, there was a police check point on the way home, but since it was a cab, the police waived it past.

He arrived home safely and without incident.

This was both a great relief and surprise because he had never driven a cab before.

He doesn't even remember where he got it, and now that it is in his garage, he doesn't know what to do with it!

# Moments That Restored Our Faith In Humanity This Year.



## **FR. MIKE'S SERMON FOR EPIPHANY**

"Where is the newborn King?" These are the first words ever spoken by a human being in the entire New Testament. The story of the Three Wise men searching for God is really a story about our search for God. When God made us, He created an empty space, a void in our souls that nothing in this world could fill except God Himself.

Many people spend years trying to fill that empty space with things other than God – work, money, pleasure, lust, power, prestige, food and booze. Marriage can be satisfying, but the infatuation of new love wears off and gives way to the reality of daily sacrifices. I remember a newly married woman telling me she knew the infatuation was over when she noticed her husband had stinky feet. A little child will fill the void for a while, but that child will grow up and get a life of its own. The separation begins the first day a parent waves goodbye as the yellow school bus lumbers down the road.

God put that empty space there in the hope that you will welcome God into your busy life. When you fill that empty space with God then you will have peace when the world says you should be upset. You will have an inner joy when the world say you should be distraught. You will persevere when the cares of the world try to wear you down. St. Augustine said it so well, "Our hearts will not rest until they rest in thee."

God knows that we are looking for Him because He put that yearning in our hearts. I believe God uses everything in this world to manifest His presence so we can find Him. God can use everything that happens in our daily life as an Epiphany, a revelation in which He cries out, "I am here!"

I found myself on Christmas night at my house in Batavia recovering from six wonderful Masses that left me pooped but happy. I was sitting on the bed with my Blind Barbie kitty by my side. She likes to watch TV with me, especially her favorite show "Hawaii Five-O." Even though she's as blind as a bat, she thinks Steve McGarrett is a hunk.

She loves to have her back side vigorously rubbed. Her tail raises straight up as her tongue goes in and out as a way for her to say, "Oh...that feels good!" She usually thanks me buy licking the hand that rubbed her. But on this night she appeared to feel nothing. She just lay there almost limp.

Then something happened that blew me away. Blind Barbie has always been afraid of the only male cat in the house, Roeby. She can't see him but could smell him enough to respond with a hiss when he got too near. But on this Christmas night, the King of Peace revealed Himself. As Barbie lay there on the bed, Roeby slowly crawled to her from behind. As Roeby reached her side, he took his right arm and paw and gently lay it across her back. Barbie did not hiss. She allowed Roeby to lay by her side for a good thirty minutes, holding Barbie with his arm the entire time.

The next morning, around 9:00 a.m., Barbie was screaming with pain. She could no longer move her back legs. I saw her take two deep breaths then stop. She gave over her spirit as I held her. Roeby knew Barbie was dying on Christmas night. He made his peace. She accepted. God, Wonderful Counselor, God Hero, Prince of Peace revealed Himself in the goodbye between two cats.

So where can this newborn King be found? Whenever two people bury the hatchet and make up. Whenever someone comforts another who suffers. Whenever one satisfies the needs of another hungering for food or love or both. When you do these things, the empty space is no more, the void is filled.

Blessings...Fr. Mike