Pastor’s 2 Cents From: Fr. Jim DeBruycker

The evidence is contradictory on whether Herod did kill all the male children of Bethlehem. If you go by the relics of bones at the Basilica of the Nativity you tend to doubt the story. Even I can recognize the femur of a full grown adult from that of someone six years or younger. If Herod did kill all the boys, Bethlehem was a very small town and the number purported to have been killed were most likely fewer than the supposed hundreds or thousands as depicted in art work.

Most likely the whole story was told in order to create the setting for Jesus to become the new Moses with his life mirroring the great prophet so that once again salvation and Passover would be coming from Egypt.

But as often happens, the stories reflect the real life experiences of the reader. Maybe it was planned that way. How many refugees have seen their lives reflected in the Jesus story? How many families have found hope and a source of prayer in the struggles of Joseph, Mary and Jesus, beloved by God but sorely tested? How many have reached out to the alien because it might be the Holy Family in exile?

The beauty of Scripture is the many levels on which it informs and assaults our consciousness. In his first Christmas message Pope Francis highlighted the areas of the world where millions of refugee families are experiencing the exile of being away from home. We can look in our own back yards and witness homelessness.

The Gospel challenges us to see that the real economic principle is the trickle up theory. If the smallest level of society - the family - is strong and protected then the rest of society is also going to be okay. Of course the next question is; Define family. I think you will find Scripture has a few comments on that, too.

Finally, thanks for all who helped make our Christmas celebrations a great success.

New Member Dinner: Welcome to the St. Joan of Arc community. If you have registered as a member in the past few months, you and your family are invited to this informal dinner hosted by staff and volunteers on Wednesday, January 22 at 6:00 pm in Hospitality Hall. Were you unable to attend a previous dinner? Join us at this one! Please RSVP to the Parish Center by Jan. 17.

Recycle: Please use the labeled receptacles for compost, paper, glass, plastic, cans, waste and cups. By doing so we will be ecologically responsible and a big help to our maintenance staff as well. Thank you.
Looking Ahead...

**Tuesday and Thursday morning 8 am Mass** is celebrated in the Church

**Gym Masses:**
**Wednesday, January 1:** 10 am New Year’s Mass with an open mic for hopes for the New Year.
**Sunday, January 5:** Presider: **Fr. Cassidy.** Pre-Mass Speaker: **Michael Dahl,** of Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, will speak on The Light That Leads Us Home. The acclaimed **Lincoln High School Choir from Thief River Falls** will sing!
**Sunday, January 12:** Presider: **Fr. DeBruycker.** Pre-Mass Speaker: **Damon Thibodeaux** will speak on A New Life. Damon was exonerated after 15 years on death row in Louisiana’s Angola prison.
**Sunday, January 19:** Presider: **Fr. Cassidy.** Pre-Mass Speaker: Noted civil rights and community leader **Josie Johnson** will join us for MLK Sunday.

**Communion Ministers Needed:** Please sign up for Masses on the sheets outside of the Gym Sacristy or contact Marcia at the Parish Center.

**Gluten-free Communion** is available upon request. Please see any of the Sunday sacristans before Mass.

**Scripture Readings:**
Sun., Dec. 29: Sirach 3:2-6,12-14; Col 3:12-21; Matt 2:13-15,19-23
Mon. Dec. 30: 1 John 2:12-17; Luke 2:36-40
Tue. Dec. 31: 1 John 2:18-21; John 1:1-18
Fri. Jan. 3: 1 John 2:29-3:6; John 1:29-34
Sat. Jan. 4: 1 John 3:7-10; John 1:35-42
Sun., Jan. 5: Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 3:2-3a,5:6; Matthew 2:1-12

The Sunday Morning Registration and Information Office is located in the Parish Center. In the office you may register to become an SJA parishioner; get program information; sign up for a program; and register to volunteer. The office is open after both of our Sunday morning liturgies.

**Parking:** Please be considerate of our neighbors and their property. Do not block driveways or park in their “on-street” handicapped areas.

**Pastoral Ministries:**
**FFI on Pastoral Ministries** contact Mary Ann Kelly-Wright at 612.823.8205 ext 231 or via email: mkelly@stjoan.com.

**Mental Health Ministry:** Monday, January 13 at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 4100 Lydale Av S. Join us for a very special presentation by SJA parishioner, Al Kluesner. Al shares insights and stories about his family’s journey, coping with and healing from the loss of two adult children through completed suicide. Light supper at 5:45 pm; followed by program from 6:30 - 8:15 pm. Family members, mental health workers, all are welcome. Please RSVP for this event to Mary Ann Kelly-Wright at the Parish Center.

**Recommended Reading:** *The Chemistry of Joy* by Henry Emmons, MD with Rachel Kranz. Using western science and eastern wisdom to overcome depression.

**BeFriender Ministry:** Need someone to listen to you? To provide confidential and prayerful support in times of stress? Find out if a SJA BeFriender could be of help by contacting Carolyn Dobis, 651.485.2868 or Mary Ann Kelly-Wright in the Parish Center.

**SJA/TRUST Grief Support:** On Thursday, Jan. 16, Sr. Adaire Lassonde will speak on *Surviving This Change* at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 2914 W. 44th St., Mpls. Registration and refreshments, 6:15 pm; program, 7-8 pm. FFI call Norine Larson at 952.925.2437 or Mary Ann Kelly-Wright at the Parish Center.

**Rest in Peace**

Paul Lipetzky, husband of parishioner Charlene Kopp, Vern Opgaard, parishioner and husband of parishioner Mary Jo Opgaard, William Pomroy, parishioner and Zachary Robert Violet, grandson of parishioners John and Diane Greig have passed on to eternal life.

Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

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**A Book of Prayer** is located in our Gym vestibule. If you have a family member or friend who is ill, or who has recently died, please write their names in our Book of Prayer before Mass so we may include them in prayers during our Sunday Masses.

**Prayer Corner:** Please remember in your prayers those who are in need of healing:


**Prayer Corner Requests:** To keep prayer requests current, names will be included in the bulletin for four weeks and then removed. To renew your request, please call Nancy Becker at 612.823.8205 ext. 223.
Parish Life:

- **Sunday, January 19: Rondo '56:** Celebrate the MLK holiday with Dan Chouinard, the SJA choir and musical guests as we remember St. Paul's African-American Main Street through song and story. Always a sell-out!
- **Sunday, March 2:** So, Three Piano Guys Walk into a Church, Tommy Barbarella, Dan Chouinard and George Maurer share the keyboards with stories, special musical guests and an evening of fun!

All concerts at 7 pm. Concerts are $20.

**Wedding Policies at the Church of St. Joan of Arc:** Weddings at St. Joan of Arc are provided as a service to members of the parish community. Because of the large number of weddings it is not possible to provide the services of a Presider or our facilities for people who are not registered parishioners. For a wedding to take place at SJA it is necessary that one of the engaged couple be a registered member of the parish for at least six months before a wedding date can be set. A date can only be scheduled by one of the priests after an initial interview with the engaged couple. A minimum of six months from the time the date is set to the wedding is necessary in order to complete requirements. In cases where there has been a previous marriage ending in divorce it is not possible to set the wedding date until notice of an annulment is in hand. FFI call Mary Ann at the Parish Center.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>SJA CARE Fund Presentation: A Light in the Darkness.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 19, 10 - 11 am</td>
<td>Join our CARE Fund leaders for a report on this incredible ministry that provides emergency financial assistance to parishioners and neighbors at risk of losing housing or utilities. This ministry is led by dedicated parishioners who will share stories of their work - work made possible by your support of our SJA Outreach Fund. Please join us!</td>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>SJA GLBT Group Holiday Cheer</th>
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<td>Jan. 4</td>
<td>Join our gay and lesbian group for a holiday party beginning at 4:30 pm at a member's home - story reading for the kids (by one of our talented readers!), caroling and dinner. FFI/to RSVP, contact Julie Madden at the Parish Center.</td>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>EcoSpirits Morning of Renewal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 11</td>
<td>All are invited to join us for a half day of reflection, learning, and action planning to deepen our care for creation. FFI/to RSVP, please contact Julie Madden at the Parish Center.</td>
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<td>Jan. 13</td>
<td>Our next day together, rehabbing a home with Urban Homeworaks to provide beautiful and affordable housing, is Saturday, Feb. 1. No experience necessary. FFI/to join our team, contact Julie Madden at the Parish Center.</td>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Food Shelf Donations Are Needed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 11</td>
<td>You are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items with you when you come to Mass on Sunday and place them in our food shelf bins, located in the entrances to our church and gym. Your food offerings are donated to the Foodshelf at Sabathani Community Center each week. Thank you for your willingness to help those in need.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Peace & Justice News:**

**FFI on Peace & Justice** programs contact Julie Madden at 612.823.8205 ext 228 or jmadden@stjoan.com.

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**Come With Us to Guatemala!** On Sunday, Jan. 26, 10 - 11 am in the Parish Center Upper Room, our Sister Parish committee invites you to learn more about our upcoming delegation to Guatemala. Please consider joining this transformational trip of a lifetime!

**SJA Housing Ministry:** Our next day together, rehabbing a home with Urban Homeworks to provide beautiful and affordable housing, is Saturday, Feb. 1. No experience necessary. FFI/to join our team, contact Julie Madden at the Parish Center.

**Food Shelf Donations Are Needed:** You are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items with you when you come to Mass on Sunday and place them in our food shelf bins, located in the entrances to our church and gym. Your food offerings are donated to the Foodshelf at Sabathani Community Center each week. Thank you for your willingness to help those in need.

- Erwin Templin, Parish Director

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**Summary of contributions for the week and fiscal year.** Includes plate, envelopes and estimated Sustaining Member payments.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Budget</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
<td>$60,228</td>
<td>$64,039</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prior Year</td>
<td>$65,501</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>YTD (Jul 1</td>
<td>$834,976</td>
<td>$865,063</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 22)</td>
<td>Actual</td>
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**The Bottom Line:** Contributions last week were ($3,811) below budget. Year-to-date contributions were ($30,088) or (3.5%) below budget. There is still an opportunity to make a ‘special’ year-end and Christmas contribution to St. Joan of Arc. These contributions are very important if we are to meet our budget needs for the balance of the fiscal year. If you contribute via the Sustaining Member Payment Plan, please consider a special year-end gift. If you are an envelope contributor, please use the Christmas envelope for an additional donation. A gift of appreciated stock has significant tax benefits to the donor. Please contact me at the Parish Center if you would like to make a gift of stock. If we all do a little bit more, we can erase our fiscal year-to-date contribution deficit.

- Erwin Templin, Parish Director
Faith Formation and Adult Learning
We form the faith of our community through participation in prayer, liturgy, sacraments, education, community and works of justice.

Baptism: To have your child baptized at St. Joan’s you must be a registered member and participate in a 90-minute Baptism preparation class. FFI/to register call JP at the Parish Center.

Adoptive Families’ Book Club: Join a great book club in the New Year! Our next book is When I Found You, by Catherine Ryan Hyde. We’ll meet on Jan. 25 at Turtle Bread on Chicago) at 10 am. FFI contact Gabrielle at gdane@stjoan.com.

Adoptive Family Fun Night: Meet new families and reconnect with old friends at our Adoptive Family Fun Night. On Jan. 17, 5:30 - 8 pm, we’ll share a meal, some entertainment and lots of fun. FFI contact Gabrielle at gdane@stjoan.com.

New to SJA? Meet a Mentor Family! Do you love SJA but find it hard to connect with other parish families? Would you like to be part of the many SJA ministries, but don’t know how to get started? Sign up with a mentor family, they will join you for coffee and cookies after Family Mass to share ways their family found a home at SJA. FFI: Gabrielle at gdane@stjoan.com.

Nursery: FFI contact Jennifer Gessner, at 612.823.8205 ext. 240, or jgessner@stjoan.com.

Our Nursery, located in the lower level of the Parish Center, is open Sundays for children from birth to age 4. Volunteers from the parish care for the little ones while their parents worship at our Masses. Drop-ins are welcome!

Pre-school: (Ages 4-Kindergarten) FFI contact Therese Pendleton at 612.823.8205 ext. 230 or tpendleton@stjoan.com.

Grade School: (Grades 1-6) FFI contact Marie Bissonnette at 612.823.8205 ext. 229 or mbissonnette@stjoan.com.

Class Schedule: No Classes Dec. 29 or Jan. 5 Christmas break
Regular Classes resume Jan. 12

First Reconciliation parent/child information and registration meeting January 26 at 12:30 pm in the Gym. FFI contact Marie Bissonnette.

Youth Ministry: (Grades 7-12) FFI contact Donelle at 612.823.8205 ext. 241 or dpoling@stjoan.com.

Slopefest (grades 7-12): Join us for a weekend full of fun, faith, friends, skiing and snowboarding. Friday, Feb. 14-17. $275 for skiers/snowboarders, $235 for non-skiers + $10/day to rent skis, $20/day to rent snowboards. We will be hitting the slopes of Spirit Mountain in Duluth, staying at YMCA Camp Miller. Pick up permission slip in Parish Center, or online. FFI contact Donelle at dpoling@stjoan.com. Must register by Feb. 6.

Thank You to all the SJA youth, parents and volunteers who help make our youth ministry program fantastic! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Enjoy your break and we will see you Jan. 5 for MICAH Service Sunday and Confirmation and Jan. 12 for CLUB and Small Groups.

Adult Learning: FFI contact Julie McConaha at 612.823.8205 ext 226 or jmconaha@stjoan.com.

Parish Book Club: Everyone welcome, anytime. Join the email list by contacting jmconaha@stjoan.com. Meets monthly from 6:30 to 8 pm in the Parish Center.
- Jan. 8: Bel Canto by Ann Patchett
- Feb. 12: The Dovekeepers by Alice Hoffman
- March 12: The Glass Castle by Jeanette Walls

#SJAC<40 all adults under 40 invited anytime! Join the email list by contacting jmconaha@stjoan.com.
- Jan. 5: Brunch
- Jan. 25: Roller Derby
- Feb. 2: Brunch
- Watch for details on SJA Game Night in February

Looking in to the Next Year of Adult Learning: We are busy planning events for your consideration for early 2014. FFI please contact Julie at jmconaha@stjoan.com
- Men’s Retreat January 25
- WWSJA Event February 1
- Fr. Donald Cozzens February 9

Author Fr. Donald Cozzens, Author Father Donald Cozzens, advocate of building healthy parishes and author of Notes From the Underground: The Spiritual Journal of a Secular Priest, will speak at SJA Sunday, Feb. 9 both in the Gym Masses and at a special afternoon event. He will be lifting up the new voice of Pope Francis, and inspiring our work as a “visible, progressive Catholic Community.”

Small Christian Communities: This time of year, most SCCs are gathering for their holiday celebration as a close-knit spiritual friendship circle. Congratulations to you for your commitment to growing and maintaining your SCC! The Small Christian Community Work Group supports the existing groups and is making plans for new SCCs to form. FFI about Small Christian Communities, contact Julie McConaha.

RCIA Open Study: Rites of Initiation. Have you ever wondered about the root of the meaning behind the Catholic Rites of Initiation? Join our RCIA candidates and learn from our pastor. All are invited! Tuesday, January 7, 7 – 8:30 pm in the Church. FFI Julie McConaha.