

CHRISTMAS 2020

LETTERS TO JESUS



May God richly bless you and your loved ones during this holy season!



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FROM THE MOUTHS OF CHILDREN



Dear Jesus,

With the coming of the holiday season, I am taking this chance to tell you all that I am grateful for. I am thankful for my siblings, parents, all of my extended family, and all of my brothers and sisters in Christ. Life would be meaningless without them. I am also thankful for my clothes and food that many others do not have. During the holidays, please protect all these people and bring them closer to you. I am continuously grateful for indoor plumbing and all of the things that we take for granted, that some less fortunate people do not have access to. Around these holidays, guide your

people in their Catholic faith to be more like your loving and caring self. Give hope and justice to all people around the world who are suffering and need your help. I hope you can eradicate all disease and pain through our prayers. Please make the world a more peaceful place for everyone to live in harmony. Most of all, I'm thankful for you and the guidance you provide to all of us. Your birthday is coming, and I cannot wait to celebrate all that you do this Advent season!

Yours truly,

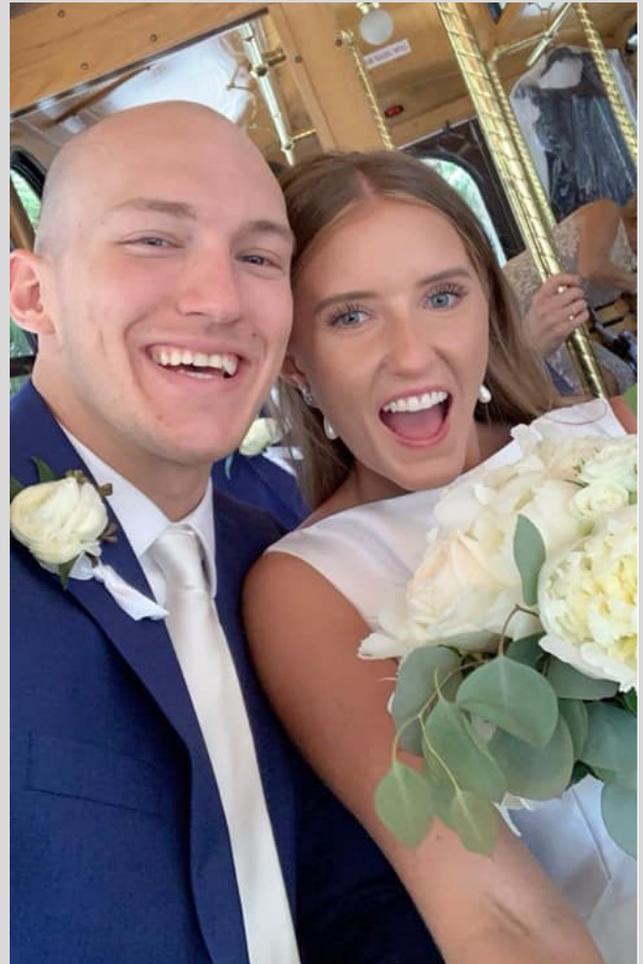
Elizabeth and Matthew Hoppenrath

YOUNG ADULTS REFLECTING CHRIST'S LOVE

Dear Jesus,

Since creation, You have deemed marriage to be of utmost importance. God created Adam and, seeing that he wasn't complete, created Eve to be his helper and his partner. God saw that Adam needed Eve, just as men need women and women need men, so that they may complement each other; each with different roles, beautifully distinct and important, but with the same goal. In Genesis 2:24, God said, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." And added onto that in Ephesians 5:32, "This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church." This clarifies that human marriage is a beautiful metaphor for Your relationship, Jesus, with the church. This makes marriage that much more significant to us. It's an honor to have been called to a vocation that represents something so important. So, we thank You for blessing us that way.

Because we are newly married, diving into the Bible has helped us grow immensely - in our relationship with You and in our relationships here on earth. When we first got married, neither of us had read the whole Bible. Last year, we made it a goal to read the Bible from beginning to end and have since pushed each other and challenged



each other to read God's word, learn from it, and build on our relationship with God. Even though we have always been religious, I can confidently say that reading the Bible has completely changed our lives and our marriage. There is so much joy in sharing your life with another and there is an immense joy in sharing that marriage with God. We look forward to growing with each other and with You for many years to come.

Carl and Jenny Evans

FINDING ROOM AT THE INN



allowed to gather as a whole church again. Our hearts are ready to put forth our time and talent to contribute to this thriving parish.

We are impressed with the importance of religious education for our children. The Faith Formation

Dear Jesus,

As we prepare to celebrate Your birth, we cannot help but to reflect on the joys and the difficulties that our family has faced this year. We believe that Your grace allowed us to find blessings in an unusual year.

One of the most needed blessings was to find our spiritual home in the St. Julie community. As new parishioners we have been blown away by the welcoming spirit and quick response by both parish staff and current parishioners to embrace us as one of their own. With this type of a reception during a pandemic, our family cannot wait to see all of the amazing things that this community has to offer once we are

staff has put forth a tremendous effort to offer the classes in a safe environment. We are so grateful for all the catechists who volunteer their time to teach Your words during a time that it is needed the most. Thank you for giving us the blessing of St. Julie this year. It is one that our family believes has allowed us to remain hopeful. We are excited to see what the future holds for our family at St. Julie.

Blessings,

**The Vieck Family
(Matt, Katie, Amelia and Ryan)**

BEING LIKE THE MAGI

Dear Jesus,

In 1984, you brought me to the St Julie Billiard Parish Community. As many parishioners do, I regularly attend Mass each Sunday to receive God's word through the liturgy and God's grace through the sacrament of the Eucharist. After getting married in 1988 and

introducing my wife to St. Julie, we continued our Catholic faith journey together and then as a family with the births of our three daughters. It was around that time I felt the need to start giving back to a community that meant so much to me. I learned from my father many years ago that when you give someone your time, you are giving them a portion of your life that you'll never get back. Your time is your life. That is why the greatest gift you can give someone is your time. Looking back over the years, I believe I have spent my time wisely. I have met so many amazing people and developed some lifelong friendships while volunteering at St Julie. These volunteer activities include cooking at the parish



picnics, selling raffle tickets at the Las Vegas night fundraisers, teaching religious education classes, being a Eucharist minister, organizing donut and pancake Sundays, organizing the parish bonfire and most recently being a member of the cleaning team for the Reopening Committee. Thank you Jesus for allowing me to give back to the St. Julie Billiard Parish Community.

Merry Christmas,

Darryl Mazuca

JESUS CALLED – I RESPONDED

Christmas is a time of giving and is also a good time for us to reflect on the living gift that Jesus Christ is in our lives. As individuals, each of our stories is different, but as Christians we share the common joy of becoming the people that God has created us to be.

I was named after my uncle John. When I was a small child, people often asked me if I would follow in his footsteps and become a Catholic priest. That attention made me feel special and gave me a sense of God's plan for me. I entered the high school seminary as a teen, not sure what I was being called to do, but aware that God was calling me to a life beyond myself. I loved my nieces and nephews and I prayed that someday I might be blessed to become a husband and father. I had begun to look at life not simply in terms of my own personal goals, but as a Christian vocation. As it turned out, I was called not to the priesthood but to the vocations of marriage and family. It is a great joy for Kathy and I and our kids to share our lives together. It is not always easy, but God gives us the strength to accept His grace in both good times and bad.

When others began to ask us to consider the possibility of the permanent diaconate, the discernment process



began for us again, and we found great support in the St. Julie Billiart Community. This past September, Kathy and I celebrated our 31st wedding anniversary as well as my ordination to the permanent diaconate.

As baptized Christians, God promises to give us spiritual gifts that will allow us to be happy and contribute to the life of the Church. As we celebrate together this Christmas, let us all remember our Christian vocations and trust in God's promise that brings the love of the child Jesus into our lives!

Deacon John & Kathy Benz