

The Roman Catholic Parishes of
St. Margaret Mary, Herscher
St. James the Apostle, Irwin
Sacred Heart, Goodrich

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FEBRUARY 10-11, 2024



*Whatever you do in life, do it for the
glory of God. Seek the good of the many
and imitate Christ in all things.*

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Weekend Masses:

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------|---------------|
| St. Margaret Mary | Sat. 5:00 pm | Sun. 10:30 am |
| Sacred Heart | Sun. 7:30 am | |
| St. James | Sun. 9:00 am | |

Confessions:

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| St. Margaret Mary | Sat. 4:15 pm |
| Sacred Heart | Sun. 7:05-7:20 am |
| St. James | Sun. 8:35-8:50 am |

Church Mailing Address:

207 E. 5th Street

Herscher, IL 60941

Phone: 815-426-2550

Quotes: "He will provide the way and the means, such as you could never have imagined. Leave it all to him, let go of yourself, lose yourself on the cross, and you will find yourself entirely."
—Saint Catherine of Siena

| February 17-18, 2024 | | First Sunday of Lent | | |
|----------------------|---|--|---|--|
| Liturgical Schedule | St. Margaret Mary Saturday, Feb. 17 5:00 pm | Sacred Heart Sunday, Feb, 18 7:30 am | St. James Sunday, Feb. 18 9:00 am | St. Margaret Mary Sunday, Feb. 18 10:30 am |
| Celebrant | Fr. Ron | Fr. Ron | Fr. Ron | Fr. Ron |
| Ushers | Dave Emling Bob Schultz Dan Hoffman Roger Jensen | Kyle Ferris Daryl Ferris | Jeff Martin Dave Ladehoff Arlen Hansen Dallas Ferris | Erik Wheeler Corinn Wheeler Darren Lovell Jeremy Wolles |
| Lector | Bobbi Buza | Mike Hertz | Carrie Abrassart | Diane Long |
| Servers | | | | Sydney Weldon |
| Greeters | | | Greeter—C. Forsythe R. Leader—Peerboltes | The Wheelers |

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, February 12 (SMM)

8:00 am +Aldine O'Brien (John/Loretta Fulton)

Tuesday, February 13 (SH)

8:00 am +Walter Pieszka (Angie Kmetz) (SH)

Wednesday, February 14 Ash Wednesday

8:00 am SJ +Dick Fitch (Bruce/Cathy Jensen)

12:00 pm SH +Dorine Schafer (Gale/Lori Jensen)

7:00 pm SMM +Donna Ruder (Dawn/John Deany)

Friday, February 16 SMM

8:00 am +Cindy Frerichs (Cletus/Gayle Plate)

Saturday, February 17 (SMM)

5:00 pm +Tom Lane (Marianne Lane)

+Esther Regnier (Pat Gray)

Sunday, February 18

7:30 am +Zeb Pfeiffer, Cecelia Monk, Jerry Monk
(Dale/Marilyn Pfeiffer)

9:00 am (SJ) +Gerald Bernicky (Mark/Sue Richie)

10:30am (SMM) For All the Parish Family

Question of the week:

What specific actions will I take this Lent and how will they lead me to break open my heart?

A Look Ahead

Sun., Feb 11—RE classes at - SJ and SH

Mon., Feb. 12—SMM CCW meeting 7 pm

Tuesday, Feb. 13—SH CCW meeting 6:30 pm

Ash Wednesday—Feb. 14

St. James - 8:00 AM

Sacred Heart—Noon

St Margaret Mary—7:00 PM

Friday, February 16—Stations of the Cross 3:00 SH

Mon., Feb. 19—Combined Parish Council meeting 7pm
SMM

Pastor— Fr. Ron Neitzke- 815-426-2550

Deacon - Ron Gagnon— rjgckg@aol.com

Home—815-933-4077

Parish Email ~ smm_sja_sh@yahoo.com

TriParish web page - www.triparishcatholics.org

Like us on Facebook triparishcatholic communities

Tri Parish Church office -Barb Riker 426-2550

Julie Bisailon 426-2550

Bulletin - Debbie Jensen - 426-2550

debjen04@gmail.com

Religious Education -

St. MM - Jill Fulton jfulton.stmm@gmail.com

Sacred Heart - Rhonda Berns - 426-5015

Parish Nurse - Jackie Eberle - 815-421-4048

Prayer Line- SMM— Pat Wagner 815-592-0773

SMM -Janice 815-426-2574 jdstreefarms@aol.com

St. James— Mary Offerman-602-670-8888 (call or text)

Collections Week of Feb. 3-4, 2024

St. Margaret Mary—\$4,497

St. James—\$2,516

Sacred Heart—\$782

Thank you for your generosity!

Gospel Shorts Do We Want to be Healed?

In this wonderful story of the leper who comes to Jesus asking for healing, we have a great teaching about wanting to be healed. Far too often in life, it may seem as though we do not. We muddle through things; we botch things up; we just hope and pray that all will somehow "magically" turn out all right. The important question is: "Do we want to be healed, healed of the various afflictions that can hold us back from healing a relationship or rebuilding a family, healed of afflictions that draw us away from God?"

This question remains an important and harrowing one because, as the leper who desires healing discovers, it does not always come easily. We must take risks for healing to occur; and we must make some sort of effort. Indeed, there is rarely a "magical" moment when healing just happens: we must be proactive and put forth the effort as Christians to revitalize our lives and our churches through the power of the Holy Spirit.

St James Religious Education Request

Spring Cleaning??

We are looking for some larger baskets for our 2024 Christmas raffle.

Drop any baskets off in the St James Hall outside of office door. Thank you!



Reflections A Contrite Heart

It is tragic to see how the religious sentiment of the West has become so individualized that concepts such as "a contrite heart," have come to refer only to personal experiences of guilt and the willingness to do penance for it. The awareness of our impurity in thoughts, words and deeds can indeed put us in a remorseful mood and create in us the hope for a forgiving gesture. But if the catastrophic events of our days, the wars, mass murders, unbridled violence, crowded prisons, torture chambers, the hunger and illness of millions of people and the unnamable misery of a major part of the human race is safely kept outside the solitude of our hearts, our contrition remains no more than a pious emotion.

Parish News:

St. Margaret Mary—

- ◆ CCW meeting Feb. 12 7 pm

Sacred Heart—

- ◆ The week of Feb. 11 the Blessed Virgin Mary candle and the St. Joseph candle burn in prayer for the recovery of Therese Phillips.
- ◆ Correction: Last week the Blessed Virgin Mary Candle burned in prayer for Aaron Mills.
- ◆ CCW Meeting Feb. 13 6:30 pm in the hall. Denise Wenzelman is hostess

St. James—

- ◆ See pg. 6 for the illustration of the new landscaping project for the front of the church. We appreciate your help with this project.

All Parishes—

- ◆ Don't forget to pick up your offertory envelopes in each parish. If you don't find yours, please call the office.
- ◆ Apologies for the smudges. Waiting on supplies to clean it up.

BISHOP BLANCHETTE SCHOLARSHIP

Bishop Blanchette Scholarship applications are available for our parishioners who attend Catholic high school.

At Sacred Heart Call Terri Weakley at 815-514-8171

St James —Jennifer Hansen

St. Margaret Mary—Julie Splear

St. Margaret Mary CCW Meeting—Monday February 12. We will be having our (postponed) non holiday gift exchange, gift up to \$20 and discussing the upcoming Night In Italy.

BISHOP MCNAMARA ASSEMBLY 202—

VOCATIONS DINNER/AUCTION

MARCH 9, 2024 AT THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HALL

COCKTAILS/ APPETIZERS—6:00 PM DINNER: 6:30 PM

PLEASE PLAN ON ATTENDING THIS EVENT THAT SUPPORTS OUR FUTURE PRIESTS—THIS EVENT IS OPEN TO ALL.

PLEASE COMPLETE A DINNER RESERVATION FORM AND RETURN IT TO DEACON PAT SKELLY PRIOR TO MARCH 2, 2024.

FORMS CAN BE FOUND AT THE BACK OF EACH CHURCH OR IN THE PARISH OFFICE.



Obscure saint of the week: St. Gobnata (Feb. 11) was a sixth century abbess of a convent in Ballyvourney, Ireland. A holy well there that is named for her still exists. Legend says that she found the site of the convent by chasing a white deer; an angel told her to follow it until she found a herd of nine white deer and found her house there.

Obscure saint of the week: St. Theodora the Empress (Feb. 11) was an empress, married to the brutal and thuggish Emperor Theophilus. She was the mother of Emperor Michael III. When widowed, she immediately put an end to the iconoclast persecutions. She governed the empire for 12 years but was banished when her drunken son took the throne. She spent the last eight years of her life in a monastery.



Diocese of Joliet



Blanchette Catholic Center
16555 Weber Rd.
Crest Hill, Illinois 60403
www.dioceseofjoliet.org

February 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Throughout his pontificate, our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has often spoken of the need for Christians to evangelize others through accompaniment. Through listening patiently, building trust, and being mindful of others' dignity, we can help one another encounter Christ's merciful love, especially those who suffer from emotional wounds, loneliness, and doubt. For Central and Eastern Europeans living in countries that experienced 70 years of communist oppression, the Church especially needs to accompany people to an encounter with Christ that is patient, understanding, and filled with hope instead of fear, anger, and anxiety.

In Slovakia, the Alexis Counseling Center has accompanied nearly 2,500 women and their loved ones with devotion. Since 2010, the center has provided counseling to women experiencing the anxieties of an unplanned pregnancy or the grief of pregnancy loss, as well as to their partners, family members, and friends. In addition to promoting psychological healing, the center also helps vulnerable women who have experienced miscarriages and abortions to find housing, material and financial assistance, and support groups.

In Albania, lay people are preparing for lay ministries as catechists and extraordinary ministers of Communion through a three-year study program that provides in-depth knowledge of the Gospel, the Church, and sacraments, liturgy, and spirituality. This formation program equips participants to be active, faith-filled agents of evangelization and accompaniment to those who desire to know Christ and the Church.

Ministries of accompaniment such as these are made possible with grant monies raised through the Ash Wednesday Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe. When you participate in the collection, you help the Church in Slovakia, Albania, Ukraine and more than 24 other countries accompany people who still experience the hardships and wounds caused by communism. Your support for and promotion of the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe is crucial to the success of ministries that affirm the dignity of children, youth, and other vulnerable people and show them the love and mercy of Jesus.

For more information about the collection and who it supports, visit www.usccb.org/ccc. Thank you for your help to restore the Church and build the future in Central and Eastern Europe.

Paz y bien,

Most Reverend Ronald A. Hicks
Bishop of Joliet



Help Socially Isolated Seniors

Catholic Charities' Senior Companion Program (SCP) is looking for people 55 years and older interested in visiting with another homebound senior living in Kankakee County. This is strictly a friendly visit; no homecare duties are involved. Volunteers who meet income eligibility guidelines will receive a tax-free hourly stipend and a mileage reimbursement for time spent with clients. Senior Companion volunteers provide assistance and friendship to older adults with difficulty with daily tasks. This program helps seniors stay independent longer and provides respite to family caregivers. Senior Companion volunteers report better health and longevity, having served the community. Are you ready to forge new relationships and make a significant difference in the lives of others? Call Bry Williams at 815-933-7791 ext. 9928 or online at americorpsseniors@cc-doj.org For more information about the programs and services provided by Catholic Charities visit catholiccharitiesjoliet.org

Questions Catholics Ask?

Why Do Catholics Wear Ashes on Ash Wednesday?

Second in a series about Lent

The first time you hear it, it's disconcerting: "Ma'am (or Sir), there's some dirt on your face." No one wants to be thought careless in matters of hygiene! But after a few years, wearing ashes in public on Ash Wednesday seems almost natural. It invites opportunities to witness to what you believe as you explain it's no accidental smudge on your forehead but a deliberate decision: to be marked with the knowledge of what your mortality really means.

Ashes are an ancient sign of mortification. Often associated with the wearing of sackcloth—a harsh woven-hair fabric used for grain bags—any occasion that warranted the expression of grief, penitence, or supplication might involve scattering ashes, rolling in them, or smearing them on one's person. Such reverse adornment defined the humble spirit of the wearer, and both men and women might employ this sign in times of self-denial. In addition, the shaving of the head or beard might accompany such gestures, and fasting as well. Anyone reluctant to be signed with ashes annually might consider the alternatives!



The prophets recommended such signs when the evil of the times required it. Daniel himself adopted prayer, fasting, sackcloth, and ashes during the period of Israel's exile. In the gospels Jesus reprimands unrepentant Jewish cities by comparing them to pagan cities that would have long ago donned sackcloth and ashes in shame for similar crimes. The message is clear: A definite outward sign of penitence is a bold first step in the actual conversion of the human heart.

So Catholics begin the annual season of their repentance by adopting the mark of ashes. I say "begin": 40 days of fasting, prayer, and charity is expected to proceed from there. Many have noted that Jesus accuses the Pharisees of hypocrisy when they stand on street corners bearing the signs of fasting for all to see. Instead Jesus advises his disciples to wash their faces and anoint their heads while fasting. That is to avoid the temptation to be seen as doing good—and to be rewarded on the spot by the good opinion of others.

In a social climate impressed by the appearance of piety, it would be best to hide such signs. Modern culture, however, is more dazzled by bling, than by the rosary dangling from your rearview mirror. The effect of ashes serves more to remind oneself "that we are dust, and to dust we shall return." With the urgency of mortality clinging to us in every hour, it's wisdom to heed the call each Ash Wednesday not to waste any time but to "repent, and receive the Good News."

Scripture

• [Isaiah 58:5-6](#); [Jeremiah 6:26](#); [Ezekiel 27:30-31](#); [Daniel 9:3](#); [Matthew 11:21](#); [6:5-7, 16-18](#); [23:5](#); [Luke 10:13](#); also [Genesis 3:19](#)

The Sunday Gospel in Everyday English

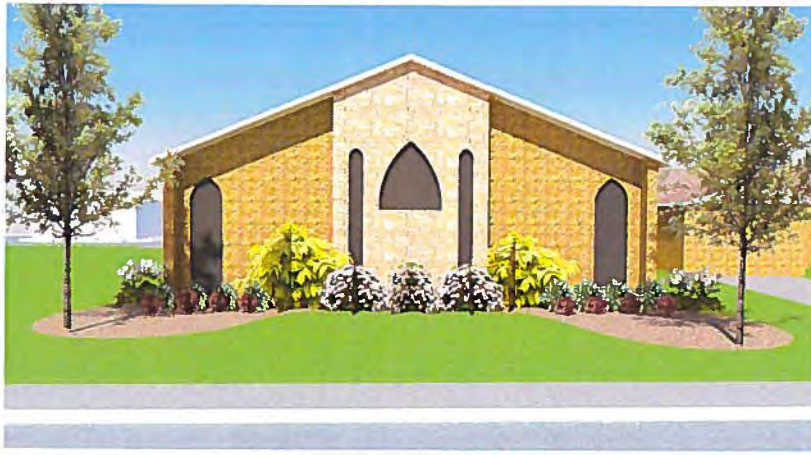
A leper came to him, begging on his knees, "If you want to, you can cleanse me."

Deeply moved, Jesus put out his hand, touched him, and said, "I want to. Be clean." Then and there the leprosy was gone, his skin smooth and healthy. Jesus dismissed him with strict orders: "Say nothing to anyone. Take the offering for cleansing that Moses prescribed and present yourself to the priest. This will validate your healing to the people." But as soon as the man was out of earshot, he told everyone he met what had happened, spreading the news all over town. So, Jesus kept to out-of-the-way places, no longer able to move freely in and out of the city. But people found him and came from all over (from Mark 1).



**But whatever you pray, go into your room
and pray to your Father who is in secret.**

MATTHEW 6:6



St. James Landscaping Project

There will be a second collection on the following Sundays:

February 11

March 3

April 7

to help cover costs for the landscaping project. We would appreciate your generosity!

A Stewardship Moment

Weekend of February 10-11, 2024

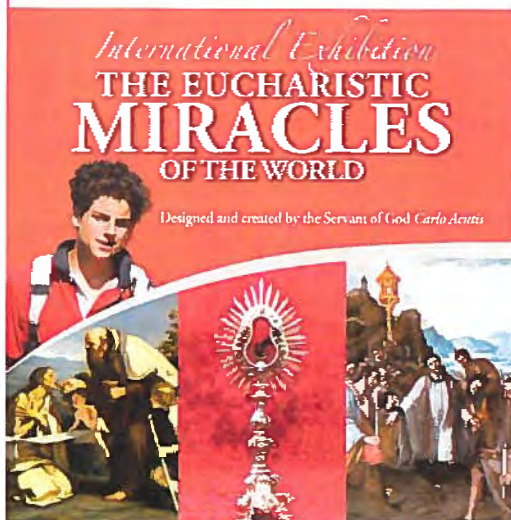
Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

The fate of a leper is a great tragedy at any time and place. In Jesus' time, lepers were considered condemned, part of the plagues God sent as punishment. They were cast out of society and abandoned. Saint Mark's Gospel reveals the unthinkable. Jesus reaches out and touches a leper. He risks catching the contagious disease and heals the man. As the Gospel story teaches, no one is abandoned by Christ. Are there those in our society or in our personal lives for whom we ascribe no hope, who we have abandoned, treated like lepers? Or as Christ's stewards of our sisters and brothers, do we risk reaching out and touching those who may seem to us to be "unclean" or not worthy of our time or attention?



I DO WILL IT. BE MADE CLEAN
MK. 1:41

St. John Paul II Catholic Parish hosting
The Vatican International Exhibition of The Eucharistic Miracles of the World



In the entire history of the Catholic Church, there have been numerous Eucharistic miracles approved by the Catholic Church as truly worthy of belief. The Vatican Eucharistic Miracles Photographic Exhibition faithfully recounts for us many well documented miraculous occurrences. Knowledge of these miracles strengthens our faith in Christ and His Church. They are visible proof of Jesus Christ's Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist. The Exhibit was created by Blessed Carlo Acutis, a 13 year old from Milan, Italy who was just Beatified on October 10, 2020.

The Exhibit will be available for viewing at St John Paul II from February 17th-21st, and will be open:

Saturday, February 17th 5-8pm;
 Monday, February 19th 12-5pm;
 Wednesday, February 21st 12:30-8pm

Sunday, February 18th 9am-6:30pm;
 Tuesday, February 20th 5-8pm;

We highly encourage you to schedule time to view the exhibit during this Year of the Eucharist.



February 11, 2024

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lv 13:1-2, 44-46 | 1 Cor 10:31—11:1 | Mk 1:40-45

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

The leper in today's Gospel was not only severely ill, but he was also barred from practicing his faith. Because he was considered unclean, he could not enter the temple to worship. It is no wonder he did everything in his power to find Jesus and beg him for healing. And heal him Jesus did, both body and soul. According to commentary on this passage from the USCCB, "In curing the leper, Jesus assumes that the priests will reinstate the cured man into the religious community." It seems to me that this Gospel is about faith, and about love. The leper had great faith that Jesus could heal him, and the great love of Jesus for this man moved Jesus to go against mosaic law by touching and healing him. When we read the Scriptures we are reminded over and over again how much God loves us. Let us allow this knowledge to sink into our hearts and change us. When we begin to reflect God's love to those around us, we will find that our lives are filled with his peace. Give it a try: Love as Jesus loves.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

The Gospel is about Jesus' love, and it's also about great faith. Faith is a theological virtue that involves believing in God and everything he has said and revealed. It is a free gift from God, and with the help of his grace, faith is the foundation of our personal and communal relationship with our Triune God. As God's children baptized into the Body of Christ, we can root everything we do in faith so that all of our actions point to God and to building his kingdom. How do we do this? It's hard to say it much better than Paul does in his letter to the Corinthians today: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God."

ACCOMPANY How do we love as Jesus loves? Accompany another. Perhaps there is someone in our lives with whom we can walk alongside on their journey of faith. It need not be intimidating; as Christian disciples we already possess the tools we need to accompany: listen, love, share and pray.

6th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Sunday, February 11

Lv 13:1-2,44-46
Ps 32:1-2,5,7,11
1 Cor 10:31 – 11:1
Mk 1:40-45

Monday, February 12

Jas 1:1-11
Ps 119:67-68,71-72,75-76
Mk 8:11-13

Tuesday, February 13

Jas 1:12-18
Ps 94:12-13a,14-15,18-19
Mk 8:14-21

Wednesday, February 14

Ash Wednesday

Jl 2:12-18
Ps 51:3-6b,12-14,17
2 Cor 5:20 – 6:2
Mt 6:1-6,16-18

Thursday, February 15

Dt 30:15-20
Ps 1:1-4,6
Lk 9:22-25

Friday, February 16

Is 58:1-9a
Ps 51:3-6b,18-19
Mt 9:14-15

Saturday, February 17

Is 58:9b-14
Ps 86:1-6
Lk 5:27-32

This Sunday's second reading gives us a great motto that we should post on our bedroom mirrors so that it's the first thing we see as our sleepy eyes awaken each morning: "Whatever you do, do it for the glory of God."

Everything! Brush your teeth for the glory of God. Kiss your family "Good morning!" for the glory of God. Go to Mass for the glory of God (in other words, we don't go to church just for what we can get out of it). Do your work for the glory of God. Drive politely for the glory of God. Shop and eat and greet others for the glory of God. Say yes to the needs of the Church for the glory of God.

And receive all that he wants to give you (the compliments, the money you earn, the unanswered prayers, the good times and rewards) all for the glory of God.

This should be part of our daily prayers every morning: "Holy Spirit, help me to do everything today for the glory of God. Amen!"

By making it a daily habit to start the day this way, the glory of God

becomes integrated into our character. When we remember to see our activities through the lens of "whatever you do, do it for the glory of God", we become stronger in avoiding all kinds of sins. It sanctifies each moment of every day.

Often, we see religious activities as separate from our normal activities. We take "time out" from our schedules to go to church. We stop what we're doing when we want to pray. We



think that only Clergy and Religious can be religious all of the time and that a layperson who is like that is a "fanatic". But why?

Why should we limit "for the glory of God" to only what is "holy" – Mass attendance, religious rituals, prayers, the works of ministry, etc.? We can sanctify every moment by remembering that whatever we do, we want to please God with it.

Reflect & Discuss:

- † What have you done already today that glorifies God? What is planned for later today and how can that be offered to God?
- † What will you do to remind yourself daily to do everything for the glory of God?
- † Describe ways that we can glorify God in normal, everyday activities. How do you turn mundane tasks into a gift for God?
- † When is it most difficult to glorify him? How can even our lapses into sin become blessings that glorify God?