

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

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

JANUARY 4-5, 2025



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

Quotable: "Ignorant men raise questions that wise men answered a thousand years ago."

—Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The Baptism of the Lord

January 11-12, 2025

Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, Jan. 11 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, Jan. 12 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, Jan. 12 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, Jan. 12 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron
Ushers	Dave Emling Roger Jensen Gery Wright Bob Schultz	Kyle Ferris Daryl Ferris	Cathy Jensen Bob Buente Jeff Martin Dan Forsythe	Sean Riordan Joe Smolkovich Darren Lovell Larry Wolles
Lector	Hillary Webb	Darlene Cipic h	Jeff O'Connor	Diane Long
Eucharistic Minister			Mary Peerbolte	Stacey Powers
Servers				Sydney Weldon
Greeters			Greeter—Karen Miller R. Leader—Reatta Gohlke	Kim Smicker

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, Jan. 6 (SMM)

8:00 am No Mass

Tuesday, Jan. 7 (SH)

8:00 am No Mass

Wednesday, Jan. 8

10:00 am SJ No Mass

Friday, Jan.10

8:00 am SMM No Mass

Saturday, Jan. 11 (SMM)

5:00 pm +Madonna Hoffman (The Family)
+Leo Giacometti (Debbie Jensen Family)

Sunday, Jan.12

7:30 am (SH) +Duane Ferris (Rita Thiesen)
9:00am (SJ) +Susanna Bugni (Bruce/Cathy Jensen)
10:30 am SMM For All the Parish Family

A Look Ahead

Sunday, Jan. 5—Religious Ed Classes

Friday, Jan. 17—Herscher Legion Fish Fry 5-7 pm

Monday, Jan.27—Knights of Columbus meeting 7pm SJ

Jan/ 25/26 Weekend—2nd Collection for Church in Latin America

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

St. James—Tanhya Osenga tosenga81@gmail.com

Parish Nurse – Jackie Eberle – 815-421-4048

Prayer Line—

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

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

Sacred Heart-Marilyn Pfeiffer 815-955-8246 (call or text)

Terri Weakley— 815-514-8171

Question of the Week

How do I use both reason and faith to find my way to Jesus?

Collections Weekend of Dec. 28-29, 2024

St. Margaret Mary—\$

St. James—\$

Sacred Heart—\$

Totals not available at
time of printing.

Thank you for your generosity!

Beginning January 6, there will be no weekday masses at any of the Tripuris churches until further notice. Below is the weekday mass schedules for parishes surrounding us.

St. Patrick Dwight-

Tuesday: 6:00 pm

Thursday: 8:00 am (Coffee Shop follows)

.St. Peter, Clifton-

Tuesday and Wednesday 8:00 am

Assumption BVM, Ashkum

Thursday and Friday 8:00 am

St. John Paul II

Monday-Friday 7:30 am

Gospel Shorts A Light For All

We human beings have always been intrigued by the wonders of space — especially the light of the stars above us. It is no wonder, then, that God, in his infinite goodness and wisdom, used this elemental symbol as his instrument to reveal his Son as light of the world — a light meant to be shared by all peoples — both Jew and Gentile.

This is the story of Epiphany — the story of the Magi following a star to find Jesus, the light of the world, born in a Jewish town, but meant to be the Savior to all people. This feast, in many ways more significant than the feast of Christmas itself, proclaims the universal salvation and love of God for all that became incarnate in the Word made flesh. It is the challenge and reminder to all of us to accept this truth and, in our own way, share in the manifestation of the love and light of Christ to all in our world.



Please pray for the repose of the soul of

+Leo Giacometti

Father of Julie (Wayne) Bisaillion

Grandfather of Jacob (Brook), Blake, Johan, & Alaina Bisaillion

May Leo and all the faithful departed rest in eternal peace.

Our sincere sympathy to Julie, family, and friends.

A New Year, A New Way

Whatever you have right now in your life is the result of what you thought, felt and did up until this time. If you want things to be different, to be better, you will have to change what you think, feel and do.

Parish News:

St. Margaret Mary—

St. James—

- ◆ We are collecting winter wear accessories (mittens, hats, etc) in the hallway of St. James for the Salvation Army. Thanks to all who participate!

Sacred Heart—

- ◆ The week of December 29th, the Blessed Virgin Mary candle burns in prayer for Barb St. Germaine and the St. Joseph candle burns in prayer for JoEllen Riley.

All Parishes—

- ◆ The next Adult Religious Ed Class will be announced.
- ◆ Tri-Parish Office Hours— Our office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 9am—12 pm.
- ◆ There will be no Knights of Columbus meeting on December 23, 2024. The next meeting will be January 27, 2025 .
- ◆ Call the parish office to request your statement of donations to the parish for 2024.

Reflections Mary, Mother of the Church

Mary figured profoundly in the history of salvation and in a certain way unites and mirrors within herself the central truths of the faith. Hence when she is being preached and venerated, she summons the faithful to her son and his sacrifice, and to love for the Father. Seeking after the glory of Christ, the church becomes more like her exalted model, and continually progresses in faith, hope, and charity, searching out and doing the will of God in all things. Hence the church in her apostolic work also rightly looks to her who brought forth Christ, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin, so that through the church, Christ may be born and grow in the hearts of the faithful also. The Virgin Mary in her own life lived an example of that maternal love by which all should be fittingly animated who cooperate in the apostolic

1st Friday Adoration



“Every consecrated host is made to burn itself up with love in a human heart.”

-St. John Vianney

First Friday Mass and Adoration will be held on Friday, January 3rd at St. James .Adoration will conclude with Benediction at 3:00.



Obscure saint of the week: St. Andrew Corsini (Jan. 6) became a Carmelite at Florence, Italy. In 1318 after a wild and misspent youth. He studied at Paris and Avignon, France. Andrew became the prior of his community and later the provincial of Tuscany, Italy in 1348. Andrew was named the bishop of Fiesole, Italy on October 13, 1349. He had the gifts of prophecy and miracles. Andrew was also a noted peacemaker between quarreling Italian houses.

Obscure saint of the week : St. Charles of Sezze (Jan. 6) was born to a poor but pious rural family. As a child, he worked as a shepherd . His family encouraged his vocation to the priesthood, but Charles was a terrible student, barely able to read or write, and had no hope of success in seminary. Charles became a Franciscan lay brother at age 22 at [Naziano](#), Italy. He had poor health which prevented his going on foreign missions, and he served in assorted menial positions, such as cook, porter, and gardener at friaries near Rome, Italy.



Once a friary superior ordered Charles, as porter, to give food only to traveling friars. When Charles strictly adhered to the rule, alms to the friary decreased. He convinced the superior the two things were related, and Charles was allowed to be more open-handed to travelers; alms to the friars increased.

He worked among plague victims in 1656. Charles wrote several mystical works, and at the direction of his confessor, his autobiography, [The Grandeurs of the Mercies of God](#). He had a strong devotion to the Eucharist and the Passion. The simple lay brother was sought out for spiritual advice, and the dying Pope Clement IX called Charles to his bedside for a blessing.

As a stigmatist, with a visibly open wound in his side; he was said to have been opened by a piercing ray of light that came from an elevated host during Mass at the Church of Saint Joseph a Capo le Case. The area of the wound was marked with a cross after his death.

The Sunday gospel in everyday English

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem village, Judah territory—this was during Herod's kingship—a band of scholars arrived in Jerusalem from the East. They asked around, "Where can we find and pay homage to the newborn King of the Jews? We observed a star in the eastern sky that signaled his birth. We're on pilgrimage to worship him."

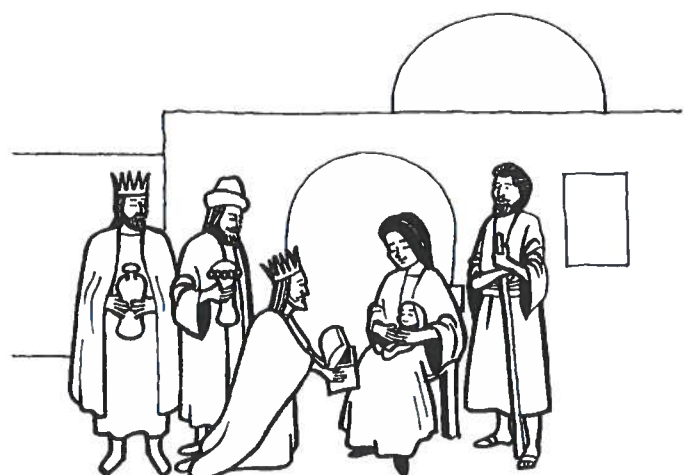
When word of their inquiry got to Herod, he was terrified—and not Herod alone, but most of Jerusalem as well. Herod lost no time. He gathered all the high priests and religion scholars in the city together and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?"

They told him, "Bethlehem, Judah territory. The prophet Micah wrote it plainly:

It's you, Bethlehem, in Judah's land,
no longer bringing up the rear.
From you will come the leader
who will shepherd-rule my people, my Israel."

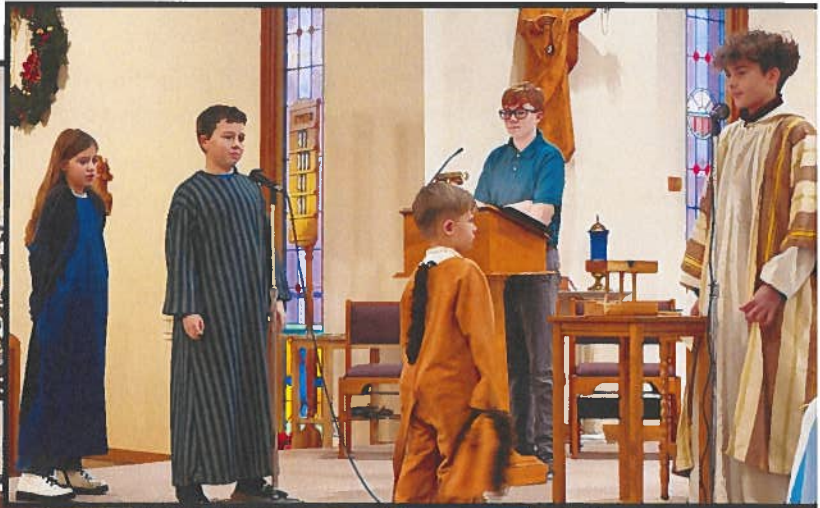
Herod then arranged a secret meeting with the scholars.

(from Matthew 2).



They opened their treasures... MATTHEW 2:11

2024 St. James Christmas Pageant



Catholic Snacks, Get Fed

What is the "Epiphany blessing" and how is it given?
This special blessing asks for God's protection over our homes.



You may have seen it before over the doorway of a Catholic friend: **20+C+M+B+25** chalked on the lintel.

This means that your friend's house has been blessed with a very special, very old custom. The custom echoes the Passover, wherein the Jewish people would sprinkle lamb's blood over their doorways as an invocation of God's blessing for their household.

The Epiphany Blessing is performed near the feast of the Epiphany, which commemorates the visit of the Three Wise Men. Blessed chalk is now used to mark the doorways for this Catholic blessing.

It's a tradition that began in Eastern Europe. After Epiphany, the village priest went to every home in his parish with specially-blessed Epiphany water and chalk. Upon entering the home, he prayed special prayers and blessed every room in the house.

*From the east came the Magi to Bethlehem to adore the Lord; and opening their treasures they offered precious gifts...
Bless, O Lord God almighty, this home, that in it there may be health, purity, the strength of victory, humility, goodness and mercy, the fulfillment of Thy law...*

After this the numbers of the year, enclosing the initials of the Magi (Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar) are written with the blessed chalk over the door. The Magi's initials also stand for a Latin house blessing: *Christus mansionem benedicat* (May Christ bless this house).

Now that parishes have increased in size and priests are no longer able to visit every home, the head of the household is permitted to perform a basic Epiphany house blessing himself.

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**LOOKING FOR A FUN, NEW WAY
TO BE MORE ACTIVE?**



Bingo + Exercise = Bingocize®

BINGOCIZE® is a 20 week health promotion program that combines the game of bingo with fall prevention exercise. Play bingo with us and meet new people while learning about techniques to reduce falls.

**Dates: Monday afternoons,
January 6th through June 9th, 2025**

Time: 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

(No class on 1/20, 2/17, or 5/26)

**Location: St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church, 207 E. 5th
St., Herscher IL, 60941**

**TO REGISTER,
CALL NATALIA
(815) 933-7791 EXT 9954**



Attendance at these events indicates consent for Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet, Inc., to use my photo to promote and increase awareness of programs and services offered by the Agency. Photos may be used in Catholic Charities' printed materials, online, media, or by grantors.

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet is a faith-based organization providing service to people in need and calling others of good will to do the same.

Pope Francis has asked that the Jubilee of 2025 be a "great symphony of prayer" throughout the world. Just as we prayed our beautiful 75th anniversary prayer for the Diocese of Joliet throughout 2024, let us now join the Holy Father in praying the Jubilee year of Hope prayer:

**Father in heaven,
may the faith you have gifted us in
your son Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of charity
kindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us, the blessed hope
for the coming of your Kingdom.**

**May your grace transform us
into diligent cultivators of the evangelical seeds
that make humanity and the cosmos rise
unto the confident expectation
of the new heavens and the new earth,
when with the powers of Evil overcome,
your glory shall be manifested eternally.**

**May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,
the yearning for heavenly treasures
and pour over all the earth
the joy and peace
of our Redeemer.**

**To you God blessed in eternity,
be praise and glory for ever and ever.
Amen.**



January 5, 2025

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Epiphany of the Lord

Is 60:1-6 | Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6 | Mt 2:1-12

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

Deeply fatigued from their perilous journey, the three wise men must have been filled with doubt and hope in equal measure, wondering if the star would truly lead them to the promised King. "Is this really worth it?" they may have questioned. "Will we *ever* meet this child?" And then, in a single gaze, Christ broke into the world of humanity. In this perfect encounter with the Son of God, the wise men "prostrated themselves" and "opened their treasures" before him – in all his glory and all his innocence. We, on our earthly pilgrimage, may relate to feeling exhausted, full of both hope and heartache, as we wait and wonder where we will meet Jesus. Today, remember, he is here, among us. Waiting for our presence, waiting for our heart. Like today's Scripture from Isaiah, the Magi must have experienced their hearts *throbbing* and *overflowing* with wonder and awe at the sight of their long-awaited King.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

"Your light has come!" What thrilling words these must have been, proclaimed to a world that had been shrouded in darkness, eagerly – *desperately* – waiting for their God to save them. And not only has their light come; with it came a promise that this light would guide all nations. Yet this invitation to light, to *freedom*, also comes with a great responsibility. This light that came into the world isn't just for us to follow; it is also for us to reflect to others. In today's world, this may not involve leading flocks of sheep or strumming a 10-stringed lyre, but it does call us to live as radiant witnesses of Christ's love, always singing his praise! Perhaps this means living joyfully despite our suffering. Maybe it looks like practicing generosity, when we feel like we have little left to give or remaining hopeful in a bleak situation. We are called to praise at all times, but it takes different forms in the different seasons of our life. Whatever season we find ourselves in, let us, like the Magi, seek the King, trusting in his promise and following his light.

REFLECT

Consider areas in your life where the Child Jesus is waiting to break in. Where does he long to heal you, comfort you, and bring you peace? Like the wise men, we are on a pilgrimage filled with hope – and at times, fear and restlessness. On this great feast, let us offer Jesus our treasure – our hearts – and, in return, he will give us the greatest gift of all: himself.

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

SPIRITUALITY

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Matt 2:2

R. Alleluia, alleluia.
We saw his star at its rising
and have come to do him homage.
R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Matt 2:1-12; L20ABC

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea,
in the days of King Herod,
behold, magi from the east
arrived in Jerusalem,
saying,
"Where is the newborn king
of the Jews?"

We saw his star at its rising
and have come to do him
homage."

When King Herod heard this,
he was greatly troubled,
and all Jerusalem with him.

Assembling all the chief priests and
the scribes of the people,
he inquired of them where the Christ
was to be born.

They said to him, "In Bethlehem of
Judea,

for thus it has been written through
the prophet:

*And you, Bethlehem, land of
Judah,*

*are by no means least among
the rulers of Judah;*

*since from you shall come a ruler,
who is to shepherd my people
Israel."*

Continued in Appendix A, p. 266.

Reflecting on the Gospel

A favorite game of children of all ages is hide-and-seek. There is a certain thrill in thinking that one can become momentarily invisible to the seeker. Then come the peals of delight and surprise when the hiding place is discovered and once again one's whereabouts are clearly known. Today's feast centers on the hiddenness of God's plan having been revealed to all, without discrimination. For Jew

and Gentile alike, God's love bursts forth like a light that pierces the darkness, like a child's squeals of delight when found. There is no hiding from this wondrous gift as it reaches to the ends of the earth.

There is a tradition in Latin America and in Hispanic communities in the United States that on *El Día de los Reyes*, "the Day of the Kings," a small plastic baby Jesus is hidden in a cake baked specially for the feast day. The figurine is nestled within the dough, signifying the efforts to hide the child Jesus from the evil intentions of King Herod. As the cake is cut, the slicing knife represents the danger posed to the infant Jesus by the cruel king.

In some places the tradition is that whoever gets the piece of cake with the figurine is obliged to host the next family gathering on February 2, the feast of the

Presentation. In other places, the one who finds the baby Jesus in his or her portion receives an array of gifts from those present. These traditions make tangible both the danger inherent in the revelation of the Christ and the excitement of the hidden designs of God become manifest.

In the gospel, the danger is most palpable as the exotic visitors from the East wisely discern the true king who has been revealed, in contrast to Rome's puppet king, who wants to engage in a sinister version of hide-and-seek. Herod tries to get the magi to "search diligently for the child" and then bring Herod word when they find him. But the plan is foiled when a divine warning in a dream directs the magi to return to their country by another way.

These visitors from an unknown land also cause us to reflect on the gifts that come to us in hidden ways from those we regard as strangers. Their odd dress, different colored skin, and unintelligible tongue immediately put us on guard. Those who are different are often a source of fear for us, but in today's gospel, they are friends, coheirs to the promise, and the first to recognize the hidden plans of God. In the gospel narrative, these extraordinary visitors appear only briefly. Would we welcome such strangers who reveal the hidden Holy One in our midst if they were to stay?

