

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

THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

FEBRUARY 1-2, 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: "Hope is like the sun, which, as we journey toward it, casts the shadow of our burden behind us."

—Samuel Smiles

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 8-9, 2025

Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, Feb. 8 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, Feb. 9 7:30 am	St. James Sunday Feb. 9 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, Feb. 9 10:30 am
Celebrant		Deacon Ron		
Ushers	Dave Emling Bob Schultz Dan Hoffman Todd Datweiler	David Kirkpatrick James Mallaney	Cathy Jensen Dan Forsythe Bob Buente Arlen Hansen	Sean Riordan Kim Smicker, Joe Smolkovich Wayne Bisailon
Lector	Bobbi Buza	Alicia Kirkpatrick	Kelly Buente	Dana Masching
Eucharistic Minister				Corinn Wheeler
Servers				Caroline Fulton
Greeters			Greeter—Christine Forsythe R. Leader—Peerboltes	Brent Fulton

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, Feb. 3 (SMM)

8:00 am No Mass

Tuesday, Feb. 4 (SH)

8:00 am No Mass

Wednesday, Feb. 5 (SJ)

8:00 am No Mass

Friday, Feb. 7 (SMM)

8:00 am No Mass

Saturday, Feb. 8 (SMM)

5:00 pm +Marie Duval (Martha Schnieder)

+Jim Jepsen (Martha Schneider)

Sunday, Feb. 9

7:30 am +Dorine Schafer (Terri/Jerry Weakley)

9:00am (SJ) +Paul Muhlstadt (Maryanne Cooley)

+Emily Forsythe (Dale/Marilyn Pfeiffer)

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

A Look Ahead

Friday, February 7—Tentative First Friday at SMM

Wednesday, February 19—SH CCW meeting 6:30 pm

Friday, February 21—American Legion Fish Fry 5-7pm

March 5—Ash Wednesday

Friday, March 7—SMM Men's Club Fish Fry

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 see myself as Simeon or Anna, encountering Christ in my place of worship?

Collections Weekend of Jan 25-26, 2025

St. Margaret Mary—\$ 1,470 Latin America—\$347
St. James—\$ 1,305 Latin America—\$259
Sacred Heart—\$1,253 Latin America—\$305

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 Jesus—Authorized by God

It is seldom, if ever, that we consider that Jesus Christ carried no credentials for his mission as the Messiah. Nor was there an identification he could produce that would instantly identify him as the Son of God. Neither was there anything obvious about his physical countenance that marked him or set him apart as sent from God to save. It was at his baptism, which he willingly submitted to, that Jesus was authorized by God to be the Savior of the World and given his Divine credentials.

Winter Prayer

*Holy Father, in the quiet embrace of winter's stillness,
we seek Your peace.*

*As the world slows and the snow blankets the earth, may
our hearts find solace in Your presence.*

*Help us to reflect, renew, and reconnect with You during
this season.*

*Grant us the serenity to embrace the silence and the
strength to carry Your peace into the days ahead.*

Amen



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 next Sacred Heart C.C.W. meeting will be Wed., Feb. 19 at 6:30 p.m. in the church hall. Denise Wenzelman will be hostess.
- ◆ Sacred Heart C.C.W. will be sponsoring a BAKE SALE, today, Sunday, Feb. 2 from 8 a.m.- 11:30 a.m. in conjunction with the Salina Fire Dept. Breakfast in Bonfield. Come and enjoy a delicious breakfast and some sweets, while at the same time helping our community.

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.
- ◆ Call the parish office to request your statement of donations to the parish for 2024.

FISH FRY



FRIDAY

Mark your calendar:

Knights of Columbus will be hosting a fish fry on

Friday, March 7 at the Herscher American Legion.

Start the first Friday of Lent of right with a delicious fish or shrimp dinner.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY—FRIENDLY VISITING PROGRAM

Are you ready to brighten someone's day? The Friendly Visiting Program (FVP) is looking for compassionate volunteers to connect with older adults in our community. Through weekly visits and heartfelt telephone conversations, you'll help reduce social isolation and bring joy to those who need it most.

As a volunteer, you'll build meaningful, supportive relationships with older adults, combat loneliness, and foster a sense of belonging. We proudly serve adults aged 60 and better in Grundy, Kankakee, and Will counties.

Be the reason someone smiles today! For more information, please call Ann at 815-221-6020 ext. 6740

Obscure saint of the week: St. Burchard of Wurzburg (Feb. 2) was born wealthy. He felt an early call to the Church and worked with the poor. Inspired by Saint Boniface, he became a missionary in the area of modern Germany. Burchard would become the first bishop of Würzburg, Franconia, consecrated by Saint Boniface in 741 and confirmed by Pope Saint Zachary in 743. Under his ministry all of Franconia converted, and several monasteries were founded by and for his people. He promoted devotion to Saint Killian who had previously worked in the region. Burchard was a favorite of King Pepin the Short. Burchard led the party that sought Pope Zachary's decision on who should be the king of the Franks. He resigned his bishopric in 752, and spent the rest of his days in solitude and prayer.



Obscure saint of the week : St. Catherine del Ricci (Feb. 2) was born to the patrician class. Her mother died when Catherine was an infant; she was raised by her godmother, but considered the Blessed Virgin Mary to be her true mother and developed a great devotion to her. As a child, Catherine could speak to her guardian angel, and the angel taught her prayers for the rosary. At age 6 she moved to the convent school of Montecelli; her aunt was the abbess. Catherine developed a devotion to Passion. Her father, Peter, objected to her plans to join a convent, then relented, and then changed his mind again. Catherine continued her prayers at home, but when he changed his mind she fell ill. It was only when he at last agreed on her vocation that she recovered. Catherine became a Dominican tertiary.

She received visions and had ecstasies, but these caused some problems and doubts among her sisters – outwardly she seemed asleep or dully stupid when the visions were upon her. Catherine thought everyone received these visions as part of their lives with God. She was stricken with a series of painful ailments that permanently damaged her health. Catherine met Philip Neri in a vision while he was alive in Rome; they corresponded. Catherine could bilocate, she said to have received a ring from the Lord as a sign of her espousal to him; to her it appeared as gold set with a diamond; everyone else saw a red lozenge and a circlet around her finger.

She was a permanent stigmatist. At age 20 she began a 12-year cycle of weekly ecstasies of the Passion from noon Thursday until 4:00pm Friday, often accompanied by serious wounds. Her sisters could follow the course of the Passion, as the wounds appeared in order from the scourging and crowning with thorns. At the end she was covered with wounds and her shoulder was indented from the Cross. The first time, during Lent 1542, she meditated so completely on the crucifixion of Jesus that she became ill and was healed by a vision of the Risen Lord talking with Mary Magdalene. Crowds came to see her, skeptics and sinners being converted by the sight. The crowds became so numerous and constant that the sisters prayed that the wounds become less visible; He made them so in 1554. Three future popes (Cardinals Cervini, Pope Marcellus II; Alexander de Medici, Pope Leo XI; Aldobrandini, Pope Clement VIII) were among the thousands who sought her prayers.

Catherine served as the novice-mistress, sub-prioress, and then as prioress at age 30. She was a noted reformer of her house. She corresponded with Saint Charles Borromeo and Pope Saint Pius V.

Reflection

On Prayer

Thoughts continue to jostle in your head like mosquitoes. To stop this jostling, you must bind the mind with one thought, or the thought of One only. An aid to this is a short prayer, which helps the mind to become simple and united. Together with the short prayer, you must keep your thought and attention turned towards God. But if you limit your prayer to words only, you are as "sounding brass."

Reflection

Seeking Shelter in the Storms of Life

I know from experience: Standing deep within a linden tree in a pouring summer rain shower, one will not get wet.

I know from experience: Sitting very close under scrub oak in a mountain downpour, one will not get wet.

I know from experience: When we draw very near to God's heart, when we stand deep within God's shelter, we will not be overcome with the drenching pain of life.

Questions Catholics Ask

Why is Jesus called the Lamb of God?

Lamb of God, or *Agnus Dei*, has come to be a familiar liturgical formula referring to Jesus. This is interesting, as the term only occurs twice in the New Testament, and not at all in the Old.

Of course, sheep and lambs are pervasive images in both Testaments, as you would expect in an agrarian culture. Lambs were essential to the religious sacrifices of Israel, including the centrally significant Passover lamb whose blood marked the doorposts and lintels of Hebrew houses in Egypt on the night when the angel of death passed over the land. Yearling lambs were also sacrificed at Israel's priestly ordination rites, and lambs served as peace offerings and sin offerings as well. It's clear from the earliest usages that the blood of lambs had special authority as a sign of God's protection, guidance, and forgiveness.

In the prophecies of Isaiah, the theology is advanced. Isaiah sees the lamb as an innocent and vulnerable animal, gentle and peace-loving. Contrast it with the lion, wolf, or bear, always in search of prey. In the songs of the faithful servant, Isaiah envisions the servant as a lamb led to slaughter, bearing the guilt of many without protest

These early Hebrew understandings of the lamb's role in purifying the community of sin, and in making peace between the people and God, certainly contributed to John the Baptist's meaning when he identifies Jesus to the crowds: "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" In John's gospel, this phrase is in the Baptist's mouth twice. From that same Johannine community emerges the image of the victorious Lamb of Revelation, who sits at God's throne and illuminates the New Jerusalem as its sole source of light.

It's no wonder that, when Philip the deacon encounters the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts, the man is puzzling over Isaiah's references to the lamb led to slaughter and trying to pierce the mystery. Why would God send a lamb to do the work of communal restoration? Why indeed? The Paschal mystery remains the focal point of salvation: that the innocent one bears away the world's guilt.

So we sing of this mystery in the Gloria at Mass, and in the three-fold "Lamb of God" before communion. "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world," the priest intones. "Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb."



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Scripture: Exodus 12:3-9; Leviticus 3:6-11; 4:32-35; Isaiah 11:6; 53:7; Luke 10:3; John 1:29, 36; 21:21:15; Acts 8:32; 1 Peter 1:19; Revelation 5:6-13; 7:9-17



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



Bingo + Exercise = BINGOsize®

BINGOsize® 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.

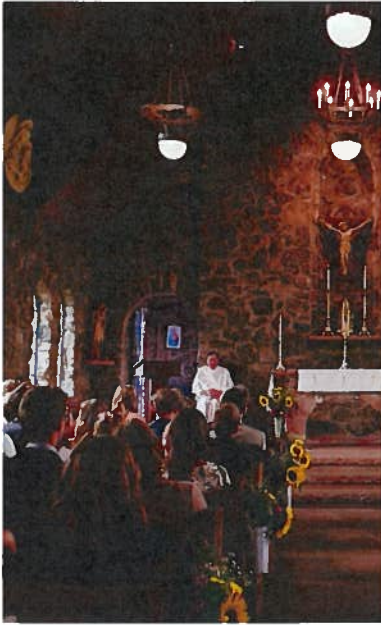
Help Socially Isolated Seniors

Catholic Charities' Senior Companion Program (SCP) is looking for people 55 years and older interested in visiting with another homebound senior living in Kankakee or Iroquois 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 living 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?

In Kankakee and Iroquois Counties, call Bry Williams at 815-933-7791 ext. 9928 or mail americorpsseniors@cc-doj.org in Kankakee and Iroquois Counties. For more information about Catholic Charities' programs and services, visit catholiccharitiesjoliet.org

Catholic Snacks, Get Fed
 How to keep Sundays holy besides going to Mass.
 Are your Sundays being taken over by the rest of the week?



The modern, technology-driven life is so busy. The week is barely long enough for all the mundane activities that must be done.

Sometimes, the work week even encroaches upon Sunday's rights: a morning slot is set aside for Mass while the rest of Sunday whirls past like the other days in the week.

How can we stop the busyness and truly focus on Sunday—the Lord's Day? How can we extend our God-oriented frame of mind beyond Sunday Mass? How can we "keep holy the Sabbath"?

Well, there are many ways of observing the Lord's Day in a fitting manner. We know what we *shouldn't* do; let's look at what we *should*.

The Catechism says:

On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are to refrain from engaging in work or activities that hinder the worship owed to God, the joy proper to the Lord's day, the performance of the works of mercy, and the appropriate relaxation of mind and body. —Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2185

Now, this looks like a "don't"—but look closer. You'll see that this passage tells us what we *can* (and ought to) do on Sundays: worship God, be joyful, perform works of mercy, and rest both

mind and body.

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**They took him up to Jerusalem
 to present him to The Lord LK.2:22**

A Benefit of Old Age

Father Sullivan's Sunday sermon was "Forgive Your Enemies." He asked how many of the congregation have forgiven their enemies? About half held up their hands. He then repeated his question. Now about 80 % held up their hands. He then repeated his question once more. All responded, except one elderly lady. "Mrs. O'Malley, are you not willing to forgive your enemies?" "I don't have any." "Mrs. O'Malley, that is very unusual. Please tell the congregation how a person cannot have a single enemy in the world?" Mrs. O'Malley replied, "I'm ninety-three-years-old and I outlived every one of those witches."

During this Jubilee year, we are invited to make a pilgrimage to Rome to visit holy sites, perform pious works, and seek opportunities for reconciliation, indulgences, and other ways to strengthen and revive our faith. If you plan to travel to Rome during this Jubilee year, please consult the *U.S. Visitors to the Vatican* website at www.pnac.org/visitorsoffice/about-the-visitors-office/, which provides information to help you plan your pilgrimage for a truly prayerful experience.

While the Pope is excited about visitors to Rome during this special year, he also understands that, realistically, most people are not able to travel to the city of the Apostles Peter and Paul. Therefore, he encourages us all to celebrate in our local churches and communities.

In solidarity with the universal Jubilee year, we will be offering the following Masses here in the Diocese of Joliet:

- **Jubilee Mass for Deacons:** February 22, 2025, 11:00 a.m., Cathedral
- **Jubilee Mass for Persons with Disabilities:** June 1, 2025, 12:30 p.m., Cathedral
- **Jubilee Mass for Priests:** September 16, 2025 (for priests only during Convocation)
- **Jubilee Mass for Grandparents:** October 4, 2025, 11:00 a.m., Cathedral
- **Jubilee Mass for Consecrated Life:** October 5, 2025, 10:00 a.m., Blanchette Catholic Center (Invitation Only)
- **Jubilee Mass for Catechists:** October 19, 2025, 2:00 p.m., Cathedral

**who is this
 king of glory?
 it is the LORD!**



February 2, 2025

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

Mal 3:1-4 | Heb 2:14-18 | Lk 2:22-40

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

Mary and Joseph bring their 40-day-old infant Jesus to the temple in order to fulfill the Mosaic law. There, they are met by Simeon and Anna, the faithful prophets who have spent their lives waiting for the coming of the King of Glory. These many years of waiting were like the “refiner’s fire” which the prophet Malachi describes in the first reading. Refined like gold by prayer and fasting, Simeon and Anna are prepared to meet their Lord. And in this moment, the Old and New Testaments meet and the fulfillment of the Old is foreseen. Imagine the splendor of the moment when they finally laid their eyes on this king of light and glory – the culmination of a lifetime of hope, prayer, and preparation. Overcome with peace and joy at seeing his Lord, Simeon declares, “Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace,” for he had seen the glory of God.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Have you ever marveled at the beauty of a shiny, gold ring? Gold has long been regarded as one of earth’s greatest treasures, yet the gold we admire today doesn’t emerge in its pure, radiant form. To produce such beauty, gold must first undergo a process of intense refinement. A crude material is exposed to extreme heat to be melted and purified – until something of profound value emerges. Like gold, we, too, must be forged in fire to be made pure and holy. This is one way we can understand the prophet Malachi’s words. The “fires” we experience in our lives are not without purpose – God is purifying us so that one day we may live with him in eternity. He isn’t afraid of our “crude material”; rather, he gazes upon us with such intense love that our own beauty is revealed. As we undergo personal purification, let us stand in holy confidence like Simeon and Anna, witnessing to the truth that it is through the refiner’s fire that we are brought to glory.

REFLECT

We can become discouraged, feeling that our prayers are unanswered or that a life devoted to Christ is too difficult. When these moments arise, consider the prophets Simeon and Anna, who gave their lives in quiet devotion, trusting in God’s promises. Pray Simeon’s canticle, meditating on the glorious gift we have been given in our salvation, and the promise that even in the darkest of days a bright and shining light awaits us.

SPIRITUALITY

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Luke 2:32

℟. Alleluia, alleluia.

A light of revelation to the Gentiles,
and glory for your people Israel.

℟. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Luke 2:22-40; L524

When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, Mary and Joseph took Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, *Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord, and to offer the sacrifice of a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons,* in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon.

This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit

that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord.

He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus

to perform the custom of the law in regard to him,

he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying:

“Now, Master, you may let your servant go

in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples,

a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.”

*Continued in Appendix A, p. 268,
or Luke 2:22-32 in Appendix A, p. 269.*

Reflecting on the Gospel

The prophet Malachi promises that someday the Lord will return to the temple, with a messenger before him. In the gospel reading today, the Lord does return to the temple. Simeon the temple priest grasps the importance of this visit, first by recognizing that it is indeed the Lord whom he sees. Simeon has been waiting for the arrival of a savior, promised by God that he would be alive to witness. God appears not in might or majesty, but in the innocence of an infant. Coming



out of Advent, we might take this radical presence for granted—perhaps we have been admiring the nativity scene at our parish or in our home. Alternatively, we might expect God to appear in glory as “the Lord, mighty in battle,” as today’s psalm describes, picturing a God who appears decisively to solve all of our problems. When Christ reveals himself to us, whether in word, in sacrament, or in the face of another human being, will we recognize him? Or will we miss him because we are expecting something else?

Upon recognizing Jesus, Simeon prophesies that “this

child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel,” and that Mary herself will be pierced. Malachi warns, “Who will endure the day of his coming?” Clearly the appearance of God is not all fun and games. A prominent theme throughout the remainder of Luke’s Gospel is that the revelation of God prompts a choice. If we recognize the presence of God in Jesus Christ, do we choose to follow, or do we walk away? Will we “rise” with Christ, or will we “fall” into sin and despair? As Malachi describes with the images of fire and lye, God desires to purify us, to cleanse us of all defect or blemish, so that we can “stand when he appears.” God is wholly love, and ultimately nothing that is not love can stand in God’s presence for very long—this truth is grounds for Catholic teaching on purgatory after death. Refinement can be painful. Who among us wants to give up his attachments or vices, her worldly possessions? And who can do it without much struggle and anguish? As Simeon prophesies, Mary will be pierced for standing by Jesus to the end. Will we, too, persevere in faith?

Importantly, standing with God is not something that God asks us to do by ourselves. In fact, God’s very relationship with Israel, concretized in the temple and likewise with us today, is one of abiding presence. Mary and Joseph provide a model of what standing with God can look like. At the presentation, they humbly give what they have for the service of God, trusting that God will do the rest. As Luke notes, they provide two doves as an offering for the purification ritual, given that they could not afford a lamb (see Lev 12:6). In presenting Jesus in the temple, Mary and Joseph offer back to God the very extraordinary gift that they have been given, acknowledging in this gift that neither of them is Savior of the world—their son is. If we trust in God’s Providence for each of us, then God will provide the grace to mold our hearts in his image.