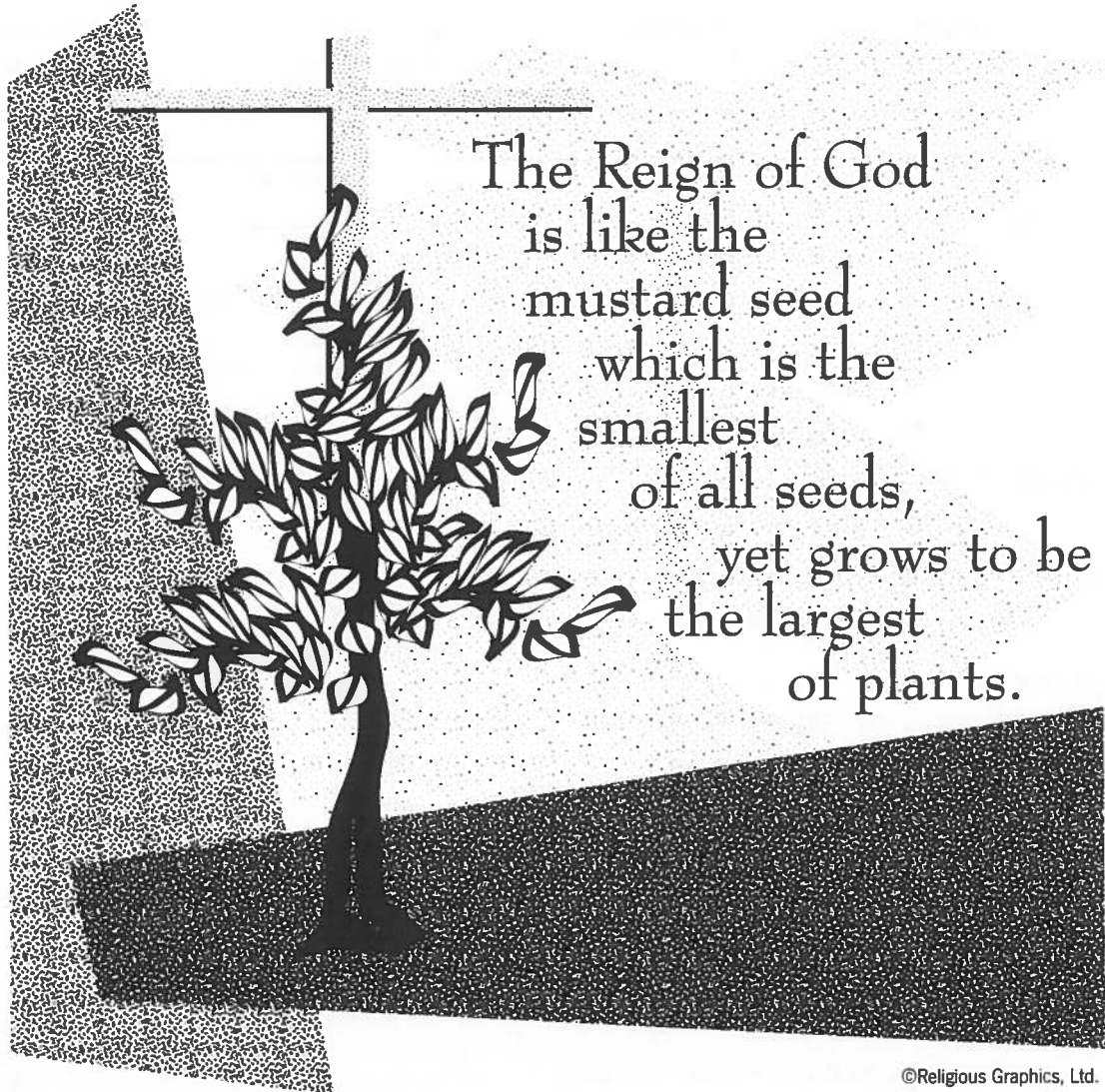


The Roman Catholic Parishes of  
St. Margaret Mary, Herscher  
St. James the Apostle, Irwin  
Sacred Heart, Goodrich

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JULY 22-23, 2023



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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

Quotable: "Celebrating the Eucharist as a remembrance of Christ means practicing God's justice towards neighbors, strangers, and enemies alike."

—Patrick T. McCormick

July 29-30, 2023			17th Sunday in Ordinary Time	
Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, July 29 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, July 30 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, July 30 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, July 30 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron
Ushers	Dave Emling Todd Datweiler Gary Nelson Dan Hoffman	James Mallaney David Kirkpatrick	Dennis O'Connor Jeff Martin Jeff Steinke Dallas Ferris	Kim Smicker Brent Fulton Marko Smolkovich Wayne Bisailon
Lector	Bobbi Buza	Darlene Cipcich	Carrie Abrassart	Dana Masching
Servers	Xander Buza			Charlotte Fulton
Greeters			Greeter— Karen Miller Leader—Peerboltes	Julie Splear

### Mass Intentions for the Week

#### Monday, July 24 (SMM)

8:00 am +John Andrzejewski (Jackie Eberle)

#### Tuesday, July 25 (SJ) Feast of St. James

8:00 am +Noreen Saathoff (Rita Thiesen)

#### Wednesday, July 26 (SH)

8:00 am +Duane Ferris (Shirley St. Germaine)

#### Friday, July 28

8:00 am +Harold Fournier (Judy Harling)

#### Saturday, July 29 (SMM)

5:00 pm +Joseph & Mary Heimburger (MaryAnn Wagner)

#### Sunday, July 30

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

9:00 am (SJ) +Tom & Nina Smolkovich (Lisa/Steve Burton)

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

### A Look Ahead

**Sunday, July 23**—Religious Ed Registration at SJ after Mass

**Tuesday, July 25**—Parish Council at SH 7 pm

**Friday, August 4**—First Friday Adoration at St. James

**August 5/6**—K of C Food for Family food drive

*Note the changes to Tuesday and Wednesday's morning masses this week.*

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](http://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](mailto:jfulton.stmm@gmail.com)

St. James – Carolyn Levyclevystjames@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](mailto:Jdstreefarms@aol.com)

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

### Questions of the week:

How has faith been planted in your life? How long did it take for that seed to be planted "on good soil"? What do you do to maintain that seed so it continues to flourish?

## Collections Week of July 15-16, 2023

St. Margaret Mary—\$1,610

St. James—\$2,025

Sacred Heart—\$759

Thank you for your generosity!



COME ONE, COME ALL!

**SAINT JAMES REGISTRATION 2023-2024**

**PRESCHOOL 4 – EIGHTH GRADE**

**JULY 23<sup>RD</sup> AFTER 9AM MASS – CHURCH HALL**

Preschool for 4-year old's is returning to St. James Religious Education Program. Register early, class size has a limit

### PETITION FOR CATECHIST

Plant Seeds of Faith and the Church in God's precious 4-year olds. Petition for Catechist to teach 4-year preschool. See Carolyn Levy, DRE during registration July 16<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> after the 9am Mass in Church Hall.

### **Gospel Shorts The Good, the Bad, and the Kingdom**

A farmer sowed good seeds in his wheat field. An enemy came at night and sowed the seeds of weeds on that same field. What was the farmer to do?

Jesus, who told the story, suggested that the farmer allowed both the wheat and the weeds to grow together until the harvest. At that time the weeds were pulled and burned. The wheat was harvested and put in the farmer's barn.

Jesus hinted that the outcome of the Kingdom of God can be discerned in that story. The good seed represented God at work in good people. The bad seed represented evil in all of its forms. As much as we would like to eradicate evil, it seems to persist. Even so, one day the Master Reaper will conduct his harvest. Evil will be eliminated then once and forever. Goodness will prevail and the Kingdom of God will be fulfilled.



Lord, you are good and forgiving,  
abounding in kindness to all who call upon you

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### **Reflection Listening to the Word of God**

*"Scripture does not lie in the past but has always a present-day voice; it does not become the property of an elite, but is always the property of the 'poor in Spirit.'"*

This affirmation, as I said, in no way denies the importance of interpretative comments. Just as personal, unfiltered reading is necessary, so too for a preacher it is indispensable to read the best comments; only in this way can one see the historical richness of the texts, God's incarnation of himself in the history of salvation; the profound humanity of the word of God, who precisely by uniting himself with human conditions demonstrates the true face of God. Only in this way can one see too the polychromy of the word of God and its symphonic character, the symphony that is created in its full beauty in the diversity and sometimes also in the contrast of multiple voices. It seems to me that a certain rhythm of reading is important. From personal reading we pass on to the study of the comments; enriched and illuminated by the comments, let us return to personal listening.

### Parish News:

St. Margaret Mary—

St. James—

Sacred Heart—

- ◆ Parish Council meeting Tuesday, July 25 at 7 pm

All Parishes—

- ◆ We are in need of a family to host our Triparish float for the Labor Day parade. What would this entail? We have a family supplying the decorations and some of the work for the float but we need a family who will help assemble it and have an adequate place to store it before the parade. Can you help? If so, please call Hollie Lovell at 815-823-7177. Thank you.
- ◆ Adult Education—I have been asked to move our adult ed program to Wednesday nights so this fall, we will offer the classes on Wednesdays. They will begin in September. If you plan on attending our adult Ed classes, please call the office (426-2550) by August 21 so we can order supplies.

### **A Stewardship Moment 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of July 22/23, 2023**

- ◆ In today's second reading, Saint Paul bids us to take comfort in knowing that when God invites us to pray to him, he knows our true needs, even if we do not. The Holy Spirit intercedes and prays for us even if we can't come up with appropriate words; even when we don't have a clue what to ask for. We are not left alone. Good stewards know that prayer is an important part of living a life in Christ. The important thing is to make space for God. Do we let God into our hearts? Do we make room for the Holy Spirit to pray within us?



Eucharistic Adoration

Friday, August 4 at Saint James

8:30am—3:00 pm It will conclude with  
Benediction at 3:00 pm

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

-St. John Vianney



**Saint of the week:** St. Bridget of Sweden (July 23) was the daughter of Birger Persson, the governor and provincial judge of Uppland, and of Ingeborg Bengtsdotter. Her father was one of the greatest landowners in the country, her mother was known widely for her piety, and the family were descendants of the Swedish royal house. She was related to Saint Ingrid of Sweden.

Bridget began receiving visions, most of the Crucifixion, at age seven. Her mother died c.1315 when the girl was about twelve years old, and she was raised and educated by an equally pious aunt. In 1316, at age thirteen, Bridget wed prince Ulfo of Nercia in an arranged marriage. She was the mother of eight children, including Saint Catherine of Sweden; some of the other children ignored the Church.

Bridget was a friend and counselor to many priests and theologians of her day. In addition she was the chief lady-in-waiting to Queen Blanche of Namur in 1335, from which position she counseled and guided the Queen and King Magnus II. After Ulfo's death in 1344, Bridget made a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, Spain. She pursued a religious life, for which she was harassed by others at the court. She eventually renounced her title of princess. Bridget was a Franciscan tertiary and a Cistercian. She was known as a mystic, visionary, and mystical writer. She recorded the revelations given her in her visions, and these became hugely popular in the Middle Ages.

Bridget founded the *Order of the Most Holy Savior (Brigettines)* at Vadstena, Sweden in 1346. It received confirmation by Pope Blessed Urban V in 1370, and survives today, though few houses remain. She also made a pilgrimage to Rome, and to assorted Italian holy sites, and to the Holy Lands. She chastened and counseled kings and Popes Clement VI, Gregory XI, and Urban VI, urging each to return to Rome from Avignon. Bridget encouraged all who would listen to meditate on the Passion and of Jesus Crucified.



**Obscure saints of the week:** **St. John Cassian (July 23)** made a pilgrimage to the Holy Lands with his friend and relative Saint Germanus. He was a monk in Egypt and Marseilles, France. John studied under Saint John Chrysostom, who ordained him a deacon. He defended Chrysostom in Rome. Later he founded the abbey of Saint Victor and a convent at Marseilles. His writings were recommended by Saint Benedict as treatises on the training of monks.

### Catholic Snacks Get Fed "Catholics put Mary in Jesus' place as mediator" What do we mean when we call Mary the "Mediatrice of All Graces"?

It's coffee time with your Protestant friend. Holding his warm mug in both hands, he leans on the table and clears his throat. You brace for another tough question.

"So, Mediatrice of All Graces," he says. There is no need for him to say more—and it is a tough question. Still, you relax, because once again, Get Fed has your back.

1 Timothy 2:5-6 tells us that Christ is the sole mediator between God and Man. The Marian title of "Mediatrice of All Graces" seems to flatly deny 1 Timothy, making it a sticking point for both Protestants and converts to the Catholic faith.

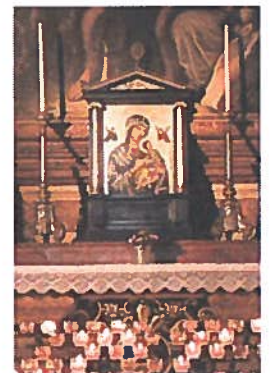
We do not, however, replace Christ with His Mother. We recognize that while He is the origin of all graces, she is the channel through which He has chosen to dispense graces.

He allowed His entrance into the world to depend on her human will. In consenting to be the mother of Christ, Mary made our redemption possible. So, in a secondary way, we have gained redemption through Mary.

In the same way, we receive all our graces from her—because she gave us Christ, Who is the Origin of All Grace.

Our Lord gave His Mother an essential role in our salvation, and she is always eager to dispense His graces to us. Remember their love for you and their divine teamwork in your salvation with this Two-Tone Gold/Sterling Miraculous Medal & Crucifix Necklace. This lovely depiction of Mary with extended hands will inspire you to pray for grace throughout the day, and the crucifix will help you remember Christ's great Sacrifice.

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## Questions Catholics Ask What does the "Word of God" mean?

Often people use the "Word" and the "Bible" interchangeably, but that is inaccurate because it's too narrow a definition. While believers accept scripture as the inspired word of God, it's not the only way God speaks. God spoke originally at Creation and these words became the world, Genesis tells us. John's gospel also says that this divine word present at the beginning of the world was spoken into time in a new way in the person of Jesus: "And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory" (1:14).

So how can we better understand the Word? By way of human language, which has communication as its purpose. The divine Word is God's self-revelation; it's the means by which God communicates with us. God reveals the divine nature and intention in Creation as "good"—a word repeated after each act of creating. God also reveals the divine will in what we call the Ten Commandments: The Book of Deuteronomy calls them simply the Ten Words.

In this law of words we come to appreciate that the word of God has a binding force to it. It is a promise, a covenant. Unlike us, God never talks only to hear himself speak. Divine words are the seal that holds us and God in vital relationship. As in creation, these words are "efficacious": They take effect as soon as they're uttered.

The word of God continues to be expressed in prophecy and wise teaching. Such divine self-revelation can lead to miraculous doings, as in the time of Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and Jesus. Or it can be heard through powerful oracles that begin, "Thus says the Lord," told by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and most of the "minor" prophets. It's heard more softly but no less empathically in the teachings and parables of Jesus. Because God's word contains divine intent, it's meant to evoke change in those who hear it—just as divine words divide day from night, create a path through the Red Sea, or heal a blind man.

With oracles, however, the effect of the Word depends on the freedom of the human will to accept or deny it. When God's word acts upon matter, it moves. When God's word encounters the human person, he or she is free to remain unmoved and unchanged. As the psalmist says: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts! (Psalm 95:7-8).

### Scripture

• [Genesis ch. 1](#); [Deuteronomy 5:5, 22; 10:4](#); [1 Samuel 3:7-18](#); [Psalm 33:6-9; 95:7b-8](#); [Sirach 42:15-43:33](#); [Isaiah 28:13-14, 23-29](#); [John 1:1-5, 14](#); [Hebrews 4:12-13](#); [1 John 1:1-4](#)

## Sr. Wilhelmina Lancaster, her final days.

Sr. Wilhelmina had a great devotion to the Blessed Mother. She would encourage others to not forget to pray the rosary. She added that we should love the Blessed Mother, she loves us. According to the abbess Sr. Wilhelmina's death was beautiful and God arranged everything. She had been in a coma for a couple of days. The nuns were singing Jesus, my God, my all. The nuns believed that Sr Wilhelmina could hear them but was unable to respond. As the song continued Sr Wilhelmina opened her eyes and looked up, her face was full of love. It was as if she was already in heaven. She passed from this world on May 29, 2019.

In April her body was exhumed with the thought of moving her to their shrine in honor of St. Joseph. In 2019 she was buried in a simple wooden, monastic coffin. She was not embalmed. When her body was exhumed the nuns were expecting to see a box of bones. What they found was a body that appeared to be intact still in a preserved religious habit. The coffin had rotted and its lining, made of the same material as their habit had fallen apart but Sr. Wilhelmina looked much the way she looked four years earlier when she was buried. Thousands of visitors came from all over North America to get a glimpse of the incorrupt body of Sr. Wilhelmina.

Does this mean she is a saint? Some saint's bodies were found to be intact (incorrupt). It's not an official sign of sainthood but it can be considered miraculous. As time unfolds we will hear more about this remarkable woman and any miracles attributed to her name.



will be here before we know it. The TriParish community needs help with our float entry. Please consider helping out this year. This is not just a St. Margaret Mary float, but one that represents all three of our parishes. Your help is certainly appreciated!

## The Sunday Gospel in Everyday English

He told another story. "God's kingdom is like a farmer who planted good seed in his field. That night, while his hired men were asleep, his enemy sowed thistles all through the wheat and slipped away before dawn. When the first green shoots appeared and the grain began to form, the thistles showed up, too.

"The farmhands came to the farmer and said, 'Master, that was clean seed you planted, wasn't it? Where did these thistles come from?'

"He answered, 'Some enemy did this.'

"The farmhands asked, 'Should we weed out the thistles?'

"He said, 'No, if you weed the thistles, you'll pull up the wheat, too. Let them grow together until harvest time. Then I'll instruct the harvesters to pull up the thistles and tie them in bundles for the fire, then gather the wheat and put it in the barn.' "

Another story. "God's kingdom is like a pine nut that a farmer plants. It is quite small as seeds go, but in the course of years it grows into a huge pine tree, and eagles build nests in it."

Another story. "God's kingdom is like yeast that a woman works into the dough for dozens of loaves of barley bread—and waits while the dough rises."

All Jesus did that day was tell stories—a long storytelling afternoon. His storytelling fulfilled the prophecy:

I will open my mouth and tell stories;

I will bring out into the open

things hidden since the world's first day.

Jesus dismissed the congregation and went into the house. His disciples came in and said, "Explain to us that story of the thistles in the field."

So he explained. "The farmer who sows the pure seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the pure seeds are subjects of the Kingdom, the thistles are subjects of the Devil, and the enemy who sows them is the Devil. The harvest is the end of the age, the curtain of history. The harvest hands are angels.

"The picture of thistles pulled up and burned is a scene from the final act. The Son of Man will send his angels, weed out the thistles from his Kingdom, pitch them in the trash, and be done with them. They are going to complain to high heaven, but nobody is going to listen. At the same time, ripe, holy lives will mature and adorn the Kingdom of their Father.

"Are you listening to this? Really listening?" *(from Matthew 13).*



Current Status for 2023 CMAA

Parish	Goal	Pledged	Paid
St. MM	\$9,900	\$8,215	\$7,785
St. James	\$8,000	\$7,555	\$7,410
Sacred Heart	\$6,100	\$7,592	\$5,792



The next Knights of Columbus next Food for Families collection is August 5-6 at all three parishes. This is a great way to give to help those in need.

"For I was hungry and you gave me food..."  
"Matthew 25:35"

## Bishop McNamara News.....

Join us for the Jackie Keller Memorial Golf Outing

Sponsorships are still available!



Date: Friday, August 4th

New Location: Aspen Ridge Golf Course, Bourbonnais, IL - which is owned and operated by Bishop McNamara supporters, Brian & Peggy Rogers.

Tee Time Registration

Fee: \$75 Per Person (Includes golf, cart, access to driving range, food, beer & pop, contests, and prizes. Contest winners do not need to be present to win.)

<https://www.bishopmac.com/support/jkellermemorialgolfouting>





July 23, 2023

## Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Wis 12:13, 16-19 | Rom 8:26-27 | Mt 13:24-43

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

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

The parables were always my favorite Gospel readings when I was growing up. One we just heard, regarding the wheat and the weeds, was particularly comforting to me as a child. It was simple to understand, I thought: Those of us in God's Church were obviously the wheat and, of course, destined for salvation. We just needed to endure living among "the weeds" while we are in this world. As an adult, however, I realize that Jesus' message is much more challenging – much more convicting regarding my own failures and sins: I could be a weed! And while I certainly don't like that thought, I also don't like considering that anyone would be thrown into the "fiery furnace." After all, we are supposed to love one another and desire that they become part of the body of Christ and have eternal life. The reality of this world, however, is that temptation and sin surround us. Fortunately, Jesus gives us himself as the Bread of Life in the Eucharist, and we have the gift of mercy in the sacrament of reconciliation. These sacraments, as well as prayer, give us the "nutrients" we need to ensure that we remain the wheat God has sown in his field, and that we can help others be that too.

### **GO** EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

While the sacraments can fortify our faith, what about our neighbors, friends or family who are not Catholic or who have fallen away from the Church? This is where evangelization comes in – inviting someone to join you at Mass or suggesting a religious book they might enjoy reading. If you don't think such a simple act could make much difference in the life of another, take heart in the parables contained in the long form of today's Gospel. In those, Jesus reminds us that it doesn't take much to spread the Good News of the kingdom of heaven. The smallest of seeds can turn into the largest of plants and a small amount of yeast can leaven much flour. And if we have moments where we lack courage or feel in need of assistance, St. Paul reminds us that "the Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness." Never underestimate the power of the Advocate: he can help us pray, can intercede for us, and provide what we need to be good seed in the world.

**PRAY** Let us pray this week for the strength to live out our baptismal promise to reject evil, and to gain courage so as to be a witness to God, and to work toward building his kingdom on earth wherever and whenever we can.

**Sunday, Jul 23, 2023**

**God's kind of justice**

Our exercise of justice can be remarkably heartless. Too often we confuse justice with judgment, imagining justice is only served by lowering the boom on the offending party. The writer of the book of Wisdom describes God's justice as both mighty and clement: that is, powerful and merciful at the same time. Among the loveliest recommendations in the Old Testament is this: "Those who are just must be kind." Written 50 years before the time of Jesus, Wisdom demonstrates why Jesus came to heal, forgive, and rescue—not destroy, condemn, and disown. Make kindness your partner in justice.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

TODAY'S READINGS: Wisdom 12:13, 16-19; Romans 8:26-27; Matthew 13:24-43 (106). "And you taught your people, by these deeds, that those who are just must be kind."

**Monday, Jul 24, 2023**

**Unburden yourself**

With so many things to do, places to go, and people to see, how could the average busy person these days possibly relate to contemplative hermits? Maybe the holy example of hermits, like Sharbel Makhlūf, is exactly what our hectic times need to help us detach from all that consumes us. This 19th-century Lebanese saint was a shepherd-turned-priest who later became a monk and then a hermit. After his death, miracles were attributed to his intercession. At his beatification in 1965, Pope Paul VI said: "May he make us understand, in a world largely fascinated by wealth and comfort, the paramount value of poverty, penance and asceticism, to liberate the soul in its ascent to God."

MEMORIAL OF SHARBEL MAKHLŪF, PRIEST

TODAY'S READINGS: Exodus 14:5-18; Matthew 12:38-42 (395). "She came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon."

**Tuesday, Jul 25, 2023**

**Walk this way**

Annually an estimated 350,000 pilgrims walk the Camino de Santiago—the Way of Saint James. The Camino has a series of medieval routes, but the French Way is most popular. On foot it takes 30 days, crossing foothills of the Pyrenees and many fields, towns, and villages before traversing Galicia. Each route leads to the city of Santiago de Compostela with its magnificent cathedral, believed to be the final resting place of Saint James the Greater, who brought Christianity to Spain. Pope Callixtus II declared in 1122: "The city of Compostela, through the support of Blessed James, has been made sacred for the faithful and a help for those coming to it." Visit the American Pilgrims website to be inspired.

FEAST OF JAMES, APOSTLE

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Corinthians 4:7-15; Matthew 20:20-28 (605). "The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve."

**Wednesday, Jul 26, 2023**

**Honor your ancestors**

Though we only know of Joachim and Anne from early Christian writings, not biblical texts, it is logical to give a place of prominence to those who, after all, were Jesus' grandparents. It is said they struggled greatly to give birth until God, seeing their holiness, granted them the supreme privilege of parenting Mary, the mother

of God. In the Orthodox Church of America, they carry a title of great respect: Holy Ancestors of God. Think of the sacrifices your own grandparents likely made in raising your parents. Let your life honor them.

MEMORIAL OF JOACHIM AND ANNE, PARENTS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

TODAY'S READINGS: Exodus 16:1-5, 9-15; Matthew 13:1-9 (397). "And he spoke to them at length in parables."

**Thursday, Jul 27, 2023**

**Help build a church with a conscience**

Many Catholics take for granted the existence of a robust Catholic social service network. But back in the early 20th century, that was not the case. Poverty was common and social work was emerging as a profession. The social-concerns encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and Father William J. Kerby, co-founder of what became Catholic Charities USA, were two important influences that helped develop social consciousness among U.S. Catholics. Thanks to Kerby, who died on this date in 1936, and other activists and thinkers, the American church now includes many anti-poverty efforts. What can you do to further this critical social legacy?

TODAY'S READINGS: Exodus 19:1-2, 9-11, 16-20b; Matthew 13:10-17 (398). "Prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it."

**Friday, Jul 28, 2023**

**Blessed are those who hear the word**

Blessed Charlie Stanley Rother is on the path to sainthood, a surprise for many who knew him as a rather shy and grumpy lad. Stanley grew up in Oklahoma. He was skilled at farming and could fix practically anything. He also felt called to the priesthood. After ordination, another calling came, this time, to go to Guatemala. There, Stanley used his gifts as he lived and worked among the people. With them, he too faced the terror of the raging Guatemalan civil war. He was martyred on July 28, 1981. Befriend Blessed Stanley and ask him to accompany you as you listen for God's calling.

TODAY'S READINGS: Exodus 20:1-17; Matthew 13:18-23 (399). "The seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold."

**Saturday, Jul 29, 2023**

**Even the savior of the world needs friends**

Martha, Mary, and Lazarus held a privileged place in Jesus' heart. As a wandering preacher who had "no place to lay his head," Jesus knew he always had a place to call home in visiting his three dear friends. Each gifted him in a special way, as the 2021 decree combining their veneration from the Congregation for Divine Worship and Sacraments points out: "Martha generously offered him hospitality, Mary listened attentively to his words, and Lazarus promptly emerged from the tomb at the command of the one who humiliated death." Cherish and nurture your dearest friendships; they are a treasure through thick and thin.

MEMORIAL OF MARTHA, MARY, AND LAZARUS, FRIENDS OF JESUS

TODAY'S READINGS: Exodus 24:3-8 (400); John 11:19-27 or Luke 10:38-42 (607). "Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother [Lazarus, who had died]."

*Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time*



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