

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

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

OCTOBER 14-15, 2023

THE LORD OF HOSTS  
WILL PREPARE  
A RICH FEAST  
FOR ALL PEOPLE



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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: "We call on the faithful, and all people of goodwill, to not grow weary and to continue to pray for peace in the land Our Lord, the Prince of Peace, called home."  
 ~Bishop Malloy

**October 21-22, 2023**

**29th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

<b>Liturgical Schedule</b>	<b>St. Margaret Mary Saturday, October 21 5:00 pm</b>	<b>Sacred Heart Sunday, October 22 7:30 am</b>	<b>St. James Sunday, October 22 9:00 am</b>	<b>St. Margaret Mary Sunday, October 22 10:30 am</b>
<b>Celebrant</b>	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron
<b>Ushers</b>	Dave Emling Dan Hoffman Roger Jensen Todd Datweiler	Daryl Ferris Dennis Pankey	Dave Ladehoff Dan Forsythe Cathy Jensen Bob Buente	Youth Mass
<b>Lector</b>	Rob Landeck	Mike Hertz	Jeff O'Connor	Youth Mass
<b>Servers</b>				Youth Mass
<b>Greeters</b>			<b>Greeter— Dallas Ferris R. Leader—Karen Miller</b>	Youth Mass

**Mass Intentions for the Week**

**Monday, October 16 (SMM)**

8:00 am +Ann Gerhke (Jackie Eberle)

**Tuesday, October 17 (SH)**

8:00 am (SH) +Dick Fitch (Barb/Maynard Denault)

**Wednesday, October 18 (SJ)**

8:00 am +Fred Gohlke (Scott Frerichs)

**Friday, October 20 (SMM)**

8:00 am +Carol Hassett (Sheila Koerner)

**Saturday, October 21 (SMM)**

5:00 pm For All the Parish Family

**Sunday, October 22**

7:30 am +Donna Ruder (Jackie Cross Family)

9:00 am (SJ) +Carl Coy (Steve/Dena Coy)

+William O'Connor (Dale/Jodie Prairie)

10:30am (SMM) +Marlow & Sheryl Zehr (Wayne/Julie Bisailon)

**A Look Ahead**

**Sunday, October 22—St. James Donut Sunday after Mass**

**Sunday, October 22— 2nd Collection World Mission**

**Wednesday, November 1—All Saints' Day 7 pm at SMM**

**Thursday, November 2—All Souls' Day Mass 7 pm at SJ**

**November 5-7—Parish Mission**

The first Adult Education Class for this session will be Wednesday, October 18 at 7 pm at 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](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 can God's generosity give me peace of mind through difficult times?

## Collections Week of Oct. 14-15, 2023

St. Margaret Mary—\$1,995  
St. James—\$1,539  
Sacred Heart—\$823

Thank you for your generosity!

### The Sunday Gospel in Everyday

Jesus responded by telling still more stories. "God's kingdom," he said, "is like a king who threw a wedding banquet for his son. He sent out servants to call in all the invited guests. And they wouldn't come!

"He sent out another round of servants, instructing them to tell the guests, 'Look, everything is on the table, the prime rib is ready for carving. Come to the feast!'

"They only shrugged their shoulders and went off, one to weed his garden, another to work in his shop. The rest, with nothing better to do, beat up on the messengers and then killed them. The king was outraged and sent his soldiers to destroy those thugs and level their city.

"Then he told his servants, 'We have a wedding banquet all prepared but no guests. The ones I invited weren't up to it. Go out into the busiest intersections in town and invite anyone you find to the banquet.' The servants went out on the streets and rounded up everyone they laid eyes on, good and bad, regardless. And so the banquet was on—every place filled.

"When the king entered and looked over the scene, he spotted a man who wasn't properly dressed. He said to him, 'Friend, how dare you come in here looking like that!' The man was speechless. Then the king told his servants, 'Get him out of here—fast. Tie him up and ship him to hell. And make sure he doesn't get back in.'

"That's what I mean when I say, 'Many get invited; only a few make it' " (from Matthew 22).

### Gospel Shorts Divided Loyalties

Have you said "yes" to more invitations than you have time to meet? Do you ever feel like you'd just like to say "no" to all of them and spend a week getting back in touch with what's really important in your life? Others of us won't say "yes" to any invitation to get involved because we have been burnt in the past.

But inside our hearts, there is a longing, a desire, to settle our relationship once and for all with the King of Kings who has been waiting at the door of our heart. He will not demand our response. He merely invites us to come to his "banquet," to plant both our feet in his direction and away from sin and the world. He may return to earth while you're still trying to decide if he is worthy of your response. Your name is on the guest list and He has requested a RSVP. What is your answer?

### Parish News:

#### St. Margaret Mary—

- Oct 22 is the deadline for the Theresa Fritz Catholic Education Scholarship for the 2023-2024 school year. Applicants must be a parishioner of St. Margaret Mary and attend a Catholic school. Please submit a letter to Fr. Ron at the Tri-Parish office explaining which school you are attending and your reason(s) for choosing a Catholic school.

#### St. James—

- Start gathering your winter wear! Our fall/winter service project is for the Kankakee Salvation Army and we'll be collecting warm weather gear as well as blankets for those in need.

#### Sacred Heart—

- Thanks to all who contributed to our very successful bake sale. Our donation to the Pregnancy Resource Center will be sent next week so any additional monetary donations or baby items can be placed at the entrance of the church.
- Thank you to those who donated dishes for the Blessing of the Squads. They were very much appreciated.
- The Fall Cash Bash tickets are available before and after Mass and from any of the members of the Church Council. Please remember to return Cash Bash sales proceeds & unsold tickets to Terri Weakley.
- The week of October 15th, the St. Joseph candle burns in prayer for the St. Germaine family.
- A special thanks to Cheryl and Dino Helopoulos for their donation of two new wooden high chairs for the hall.

#### All Parishes—

- Boxes of Joy are available for pick up in the entrance to all three parishes. The \$9 shipping fee should be put on top of the box in either cash or a check made out to your CCW. There are lists of items that are suggested for the boxes. St. James needs the boxes returned by Oct. 22. SMM and SH need to be returned by Oct. 29.



Please pray for the repose of the soul of

**+Mary Margaret Kelch**

mother of Julie (Rudy) Splear  
grandmother of Ashley & Megan Splear  
sister-in-law of Bill (Betty) Kelch

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

Our sincere sympathy to her family and friends.





**Saint of the week: St. Paul of the Cross (Oct. 20)** was the son of Luca Daniel and Anna Maria Daneo; he was the second of



sixteen children born to the couple, ten of whom died in infancy. Paolo was baptized at the age of 3 days and was raised in a pious family; his father, a merchant, was known for his deep faith, and a brother and close uncle were both priests. Paolo was known as a pious child who attended daily Mass, but he wasn't confirmed until he was 25 years old, a common practice of the time. In 1701 the family moved from Ovada to Castellazo Bormida, and Paolo received his early education at a boy's school run by a priest in Cremolino, Italy. In 1713 he had what became known as a "conversion" experience, which convinced Paolo that he was called to religious life. He declined an arranged marriage, and when he received an inheritance from a rich uncle, a priest, he kept only the man's breviary and refused the wealth.

In 1715 he volunteered for the military service in the crusade against the Turks, but his call to religious life led him to return home in 1716. In 1720 he received a series of visions that confirmed his call, including one where he saw himself in what would become the habit of the Passionists. With his bishop's support, he went on a 40-day retreat and wrote the rule of a potential community, which he called The Poor of Jesus. His brother, Giovanni-Battista, became the second member of the community, and the two moved to Rome, Italy to help found a hospital and seek other members to help them care for the patients and staff.

While there, the Daneo brothers studied theology, and on June 7, 1727, were ordained to the priesthood by Pope Benedict XIII in Saint Peter's Basilica. The brothers became travelling preachers, leading parish missions around Italy. Father Paul was a preacher of such power that hardened soldiers and bandits were seen to weep at his words. He was known as a great spiritual teacher; over 2,000 of his letters survive, most devoted to spiritual direction.

Due to the ascetic lifestyle of a Passionist, the group attracted few members to begin with, but they were a dedicated lot, spending at least three hours in prayer each day. They established their first Retreat, as Passionist monasteries are known, in 1737 on Monte Argentario on the west coast of Italy. Pope Benedict XIV approved the Passionist Rule on 15 May 1741; Pope Clement XIV approved the congregation in 1769. Father Paul reluctantly served as the congregation's first superior-general, and by the time of his death there were 12 Retreats and 180 members. The Passionist fathers, brothers and sisters continue their good work around the world today.

**Obscure saints of the week: St. Cornelius, the Centurion (Oct. 20)** was a centurion of the Roman cohort stationed at Caesarea, Palestine in the early 1st century. A Roman pagan, he received the Holy Spirit while listening to the preaching of Saint Peter the Apostle; he sent for Peter who baptized the entire family. He was the first known Gentile convert to Christianity, and the baptism of his whole household points to the first century use of infant baptism. He was the first bishop of Caesarea.



**Tri-Parish Community Invites You to:**

**Return! Renew Rejoice!**

**Tri-Parish Community Parish Mission**

**Sunday, November 5—Tuesday, November 7**

**Led by Fr. Tom Donalson,**

Mission Prayer

O, Lord, we ask your blessings upon Tri-Parish Community as we prepare for our parish mission.

Teach us to be open to the gifts of your Holy Spirit. Help us to use these gifts for the building of your kingdom here in our community.

Bless every person of our faith community. May this time of preparation bless all of us as we ready ourselves for this time of renewal.

Let us love you, Lord our God, and see ourselves as we really are; pilgrims in this world, Christians called to respect and love all our people.

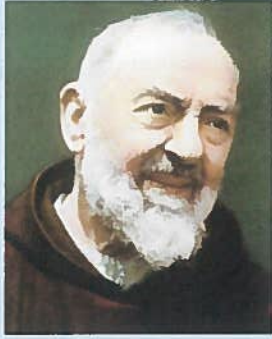
Help us to cherish your love and give witness to your saving grace among us.

May the Tri-Parish Community be protected from all harm and grow in the service of your name. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen

## Catholic Snacks, Get Fed

The strange miracle of Padre Pio and the blind girl.

Thanks to Padre Pio, Gemma di Giorgi could now see—but she shouldn't have.



The Christmas of 1939 brought a beautiful gift to the di Giorgi family: a little daughter, whom they christened Gemma. The family delighted in this newest member, although there was something unusual about her eyes...well, no matter.

By the time Gemma was three months old, however, her mother knew that something was definitely wrong with her daughter's sight. She took the child to a doctor, who performed an examination and gave the di Giorgis grave news: Gemma's eyes had no pupils. She would never see.

The family was devastated.

A nun urged the di Giorgis to seek the intercession of a holy friar who was famous for the miracles granted through his prayers. The friar was part of the Capuchin community in San Giovanni Rotondo. His name was Pio.

A letter was accordingly sent to Padre Pio, telling him sorrowfully of Gemma's condition and begging for his prayers.

Then one night, the nun dreamt she saw Padre Pio approach her. He said, "Where is Gemma, for whom so many prayers are being offered that it is almost deafening?"

The next day, the sister received a letter from him assuring her of his prayers for Gemma. After this, she urged the di Giorgis to visit Padre Pio in person, with Gemma. The family was unable to make the long journey for years until, at last, Gemma's grandmother took the seven-year-old child to the Rotondo monastery.

On the way, Gemma confided that she seemed to see some things. Her grandmother thought that perhaps she was imagining it, but they began to pray together for the miracle.

When they at last reached the monastery, the two received the sacrament of confession from the holy friar. In the confessional, Gemma's grandmother explained about her granddaughter's eyes. She asked Padre Pio for a miracle.

Gently, he replied, "Do you have faith, my daughter? The child must not weep and neither must you for the child sees, and you know she sees."

Gemma then received Holy Communion from Padre Pio, who blessed both her eyes with the Sign of the Cross, saying, "Be good and saintly."

Gemma and her grandmother returned home. And now Gemma was seeing things clearly.

Immediately, Gemma's mother took her to an eye specialist. Gemma's beautiful eyes still lacked pupils, but there was no denying that she could see.

The doctor examining her stamped his foot.

"Without pupils, one cannot see!" he said. "The child sees. It is a miracle!"

Many other doctors came to examine Gemma, and all had to conclude the same thing: inexplicably, her eyes had received the gift of vision as well as any fully-formed eyes. She had obtained an outpouring of grace from God through Padre Pio's intercession.

Gemma's life is just one of thousands which have been touched by Padre Pio's holiness and powerful prayer. Today he is one of the most popular saints world-wide, and his intercession continues to work miracles. Grow closer to this beloved saint by learning more about his life and the miracles he gained for his spiritual children by reading the fascinating book *Padre Pio: The True Story*.

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## WREATHS *across* AMERICA

Wreaths Across America is a yearly campaign to have a wreath placed on every gravesite at the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood. The cost is \$17 to sponsor a wreath. For more information, call Debbie at 815-953-6492. There are forms in the entrance of all three parishes.



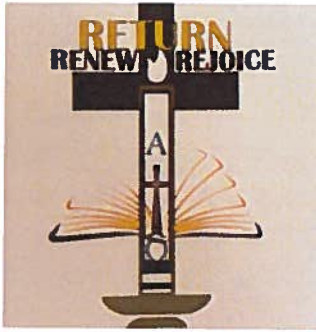
# PRAY ALWAYS

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## Return, Renew, Rejoice

Join us for one, or all of the evening services where we'll examine various topics that will rejuvenate your faith and membership in our Catholic Community.



**Sunday, November 5 7:00 at St. Margaret Mary**  
**Theme: God's plan of salvation and our response to God's Work of Love**

**Monday, November 6 7:00 pm at Sacred Heart**  
**Theme: Who is Jesus for us?**

**Tuesday, November 7 7:00 pm at St. James**  
**Theme: Sin, Reconciliation, and Healing**

### Questions Catholics Ask

#### Is there a "right time" to be called by God?

There is a right time to be called by God, and that time is *right now!* It can seem as if all the planets have to align or there has to be a choir of angels in the background, but in fact there's no better time than the present. Regardless of who you are, where you've been, or where you are going, God calls you in this very moment. There are great stories in scripture of people being called at ordinary and extraordinary moments—an absurd proposal (Genesis 18:1-15, 21:1-7), a party (John 2:1-11), a road trip (Acts 9:3-6), and many others.

What does it mean to be called by God? It means that God desires to connect personally with each and every one of us and that our whole life is a response to God. We commit ourselves to a life relationship with person, family, or community. We seek education in order to prepare ourselves for a certain form of service in the world. We build a career using the gifts and talents we have been given. In these and other ways we give our lives to God.

There are also smaller but no less significant choices we make day-to-day in response to God's call: a kind word to a stressed-out colleague, an opportunity to enjoy the rain, an extra effort to make a good project great.

The key is to be open to God's invitation to connect with God here and now. In this way we open ourselves to think, feel, and act from a graced place. It can be helpful to have a spiritual friend or mentor with whom you can talk about calling (click here for more on having a spiritual director) and also to read the stories of how others have been called—be sure to check out the stories in scripture and stories about the saints.

### Save the Date— Saturday, November 18th



#### Sacred Heart Parishes Fall Cash Bash 4 pm—8 pm

The cash bash will include: Euchre and Texas Hold'em Tournaments, basket and silent auctions, 50/50, Black Jack and more.

Tickets are available this weekend at the entrance to the church. This fundraiser will be replacing the stag donation. Plan on coming and enjoying an evening of fun.

### Catholic Charities' Telephone Reassurance Program

Catholic Charities' Telephone Reassurance Program (TRP) is a friendly caller program that matches volunteer callers to older adults in our community. The Program connects older adults and volunteers through weekly telephone conversations that foster connection, increase socialization, and help reduce feelings of loneliness. Telephone Reassurance Participants and Volunteers develop person-to-person relationships that provide support and a friendly person to talk to.

We are actively seeking individuals who are interested in participating in the Program. To receive calls, you must be 60+, live in Grundy, Will, or Kankakee counties, and want to make a social connection over the phone.

To volunteer for the Telephone Reassurance Program, we ask volunteers to serve 3-6 hours a week. As a volunteer, you will receive pre-service orientation and training. All volunteers must pass federal and state background checks. You can volunteer from the comfort of your own home.

To learn more about this social and rewarding opportunity, please contact Crystal Del Rio at 815-221-6020 / [trp@cc-doj.org](mailto:trp@cc-doj.org). For more information about the programs and services provided by Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet, visit [catholiccharitiesjoliet.org](http://catholiccharitiesjoliet.org).

## Pray for Peace

October 15, 2023

## Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 25:6-10a | Phil 4:12-14, 19-20 | Mt 22:1-14

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

I have about 75 first cousins (yes, really!), so I grew up accustomed to large gatherings. “Feasts” in our family were almost an everyday kind of thing. So you can imagine my initial reaction to today’s parable: Why would anyone refuse such a grand invitation? Who doesn’t love a feast? As we know, however, with parables, Jesus is giving us a message that is deeper than it first appears. Today he uses the image of a wedding feast to explain God’s abundant generosity, and the indifference or outright refusal this loving generosity is often met with. Yes, we enjoy sharing food with family and friends, but are we always gracious recipients of *God’s* love and bounty? Are we prepared, and properly disposed, to receive it? (Think of the graces we receive in the sacraments, especially confession.) The kingdom of heaven is the banquet to which we are all invited, and too often we can become busy with our material lives and not notice this ongoing invitation. Or we push it out of our minds, or grieve about in the wrong garments (of sin, and not grace). Let us open our ears and our hearts to God’s loving invitation, strive to be holy people, and share this gift with those around us.

### **GO EVANGELIZE**

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

We learn from today’s readings that the kingdom of heaven can be likened to a sumptuous banquet. Isaiah, in the first reading, says it well, proclaiming, “The Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples a feast of rich food and choice wines.” Isaiah then moves from imagery of food to talk about how God will destroy death forever and wipe away all tears. In other words, God has saved his people, and offers us his constant presence and the gift of eternal life. But we must respond to God’s generosity in the proper manner so we are prepared to enter the kingdom when the time comes. Making our relationship with Jesus our number one priority will prepare us well to receive and respond to this invitation. From this we will see how our other priorities naturally change and how God always provides. As St. Paul says in his Letter to the Philippians: “My God will fully supply whatever you need, in accord with his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”

**ACTION** When you get dressed each morning this week, take a look at what you are wearing spiritually, as well as physically. What does the (spiritual) garment look like? Is it appropriate for a wedding feast? Pray the Act of Contrition (and go to confession if necessary), and then make a conscious effort to repair any faults in your spiritual garment: forgive someone or apologize to someone; pray specifically for someone you do not especially care for; spend time in Eucharistic Adoration.





**Sunday, Oct 15, 2023**

**Stretch your spirituality**

Your doctor says that even a little exercise is important to keep the body flexible. Joints that move regularly are body parts that can function well a while longer. Walking 20 minutes a day or taking a water aerobics class are easy ways to lubricate the joints we need to perform our daily tasks. Saint Paul reminds us that flexibility is also a significant aspect of the spiritual life. Can we accept good times and bad, seasons of plenty or want, with the same light grip? Moving through circumstances fluidly makes for a freer life, and a gentler death.

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 25:6-10a; Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20; Matthew 22:1-14 (142). *"I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of living in abundance and of being in need."*

**Monday, Oct 16, 2023**

**A heart as wide as the world**

Depicted as a flaming, shining, bleeding heart, pierced by a lance, encircled by a crown of thorns, and topped with a cross, the Sacred Heart of Jesus symbolizes Christ's boundless, suffering love for humanity. The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is one of the best known and most practiced of all Catholic devotions, but the 17th-century French Visitation nun who received the revelation of this devotion, Margaret Mary Alacoque, was doubted in her lifetime, and the practice wasn't officially recognized until 75 years after her death. Incorporate an aspiration, or short prayer, to the Sacred Heart each day to remind you that you are unconditionally loved. Examples are "Sacred Heart of Jesus, make my heart like yours," "Sacred Heart of Jesus, I believe in your love for me," or "Sacred Heart of Jesus, may you be known, loved, and imitated!"

MEMORIAL OF MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE, RELIGIOUS

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 1:1-7; Luke 11:29-32 (467). *"At the preaching of Jonah they repented, and there is something greater than Jonah here."*

**Tuesday, Oct 17, 2023**

**Bread of Life, bread for the poor**

Saint Ignatius Theophorus wrote seven epistles while trudging from Antioch to Rome. As Roman soldiers pushed him toward martyrdom in a coliseum, Ignatius decried a different enemy of Christian faith: docetism, whose Christian adherents claimed Jesus never existed physically on Earth—that he only appeared to. In denying the Incarnation, Ignatius says, such heretics also fail to see the Lord's presence in the Eucharist and in the poor. "They have no concern for love, none for the widow, none for the orphan, none for the oppressed, none for the prisoner or the one released, none for the hungry or thirsty." And "they abstain from Eucharist" because "they refuse to acknowledge the Eucharist." Ignatius, help us to see Jesus—in all the places he said he'd be.

MEMORIAL OF IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH, BISHOP, MARTYR

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 1:16-25; Luke 11:37-41 (468). *"As to what is within, give alms, and behold, everything will be clean for you."*

**Wednesday, Oct 18, 2023**

**Pack lightly for the journey of faith**

Today we celebrate the feast of the evangelist Luke. Best known for his gospel, Luke was a dedicated disciple of Paul who goes so far as to join Paul in prison—twice. You can read Luke's account

of the early Christians in the Acts of the Apostles. But first, read what Luke says in today's gospel, which gives Jesus' directives to the disciples who are serving as his advance team. These directives are simple but not easy: "Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals"—and they remain amazingly relevant to living a simple life of faith. How can you enact them in your own life?

FEAST OF LUKE, EVANGELIST

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Timothy 4:10-17b; Luke 10:1-9 (661). *"Luke is the only one with me."*

**Thursday, Oct 19, 2023**

**Reconciling our past**

Today is the memorial of several men who were killed for evangelizing native people in Quebec. The documentation of these encounters is almost entirely from the perspective of European American Christians, with missionaries as heroic martyrs and natives as murderous heathens. The truth is much more complicated. Pope Francis' 2022 apology to indigenous people in Canada and the U.S. Catholic Indigenous Boarding School Accountability and Healing Project are two efforts to look at the bigger picture of Christian-Indigenous relationships with accountability and reconciliation as goals. Join these efforts by exploring Native American culture and history.

MEMORIAL OF JOHN DE BRÈBEUF AND ISAAC JOGUES, PRIESTS, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 3:21-30; Luke 11:47-54 (470). *"Woe to you, scholars of the law! You have taken away the key of knowledge."*

**Friday, Oct 20, 2023**

**GPS for the soul**

Spiritual direction is a great tool for navigating with God the ups and downs of everyday life. The practice involves a one-on-one relationship with a spiritual director who helps us to see how God is moving in our lives. A director listens and offers wisdom such as that of Paul of the Cross: "Let everything in creation draw you to God. Refresh your mind with some innocent recreation and needful rest, if it were only to saunter through the garden or the fields, listening to the sermon preached by the flowers, the trees, the meadows, the sun, the sky, and the whole universe." In honor of Saint Paul cultivate the art of listening wisely.

MEMORIAL OF PAUL OF THE CROSS, PRIEST

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 4:1-8; Luke 12:1-7 (471). *"Are not five sparrows sold for two small coins? Yet not one of them has escaped the notice of God."*

**Saturday, Oct 21, 2023**

**A higher law**

All of us run afoul of the law at some point or another, even if it's as minor as a parking ticket. Laws, religious or secular, are there to set standards and impose order. They have their purpose, but if we hope to be released from all that afflicts us in this life, we'll need a different kind of law—the law of love, mercy, compassion, and forgiveness. As 20th-century monk and mystic Thomas Merton explains, "The first obligation of the Christian is to maintain their freedom from all empty forms of legalism" and "live by a higher law—the law of grace and love." Let faith lead you there.

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 4:13, 16-18; Luke 12:8-12 (472).

*"Brothers and sisters: It was not through the law that the promise was made to Abraham and his descendants . . . it depends on faith."*

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



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