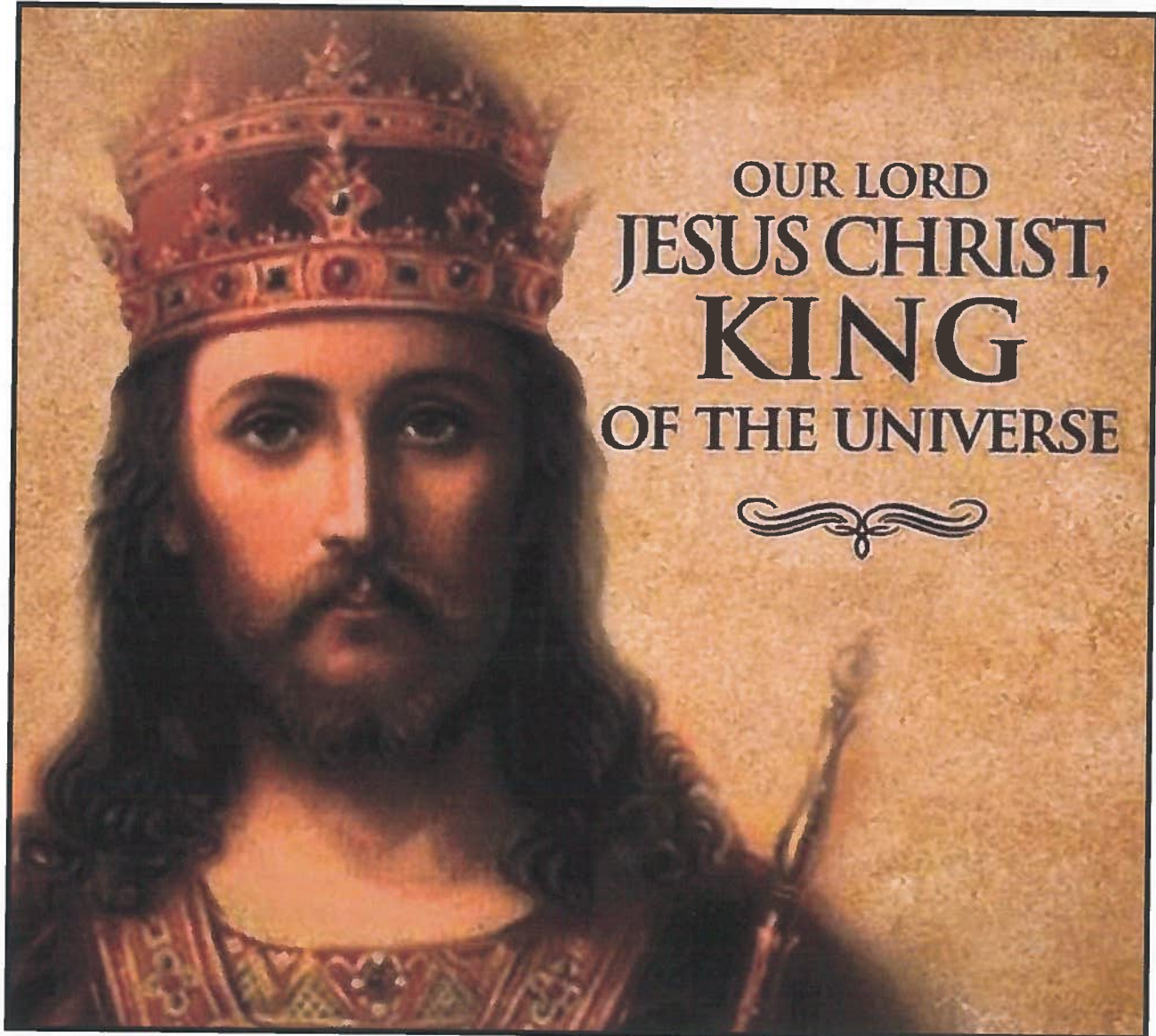


The Roman Catholic Parishes of
St. Margaret Mary, Herscher
St. James the Apostle, Irwin
Sacred Heart, Goodrich

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST KING OF THE UNIVERSE

NOVEMBER 25-26, 2023



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: "Jesus, help me to simplify my life by learning what you want me to be – and becoming that person."
St. Thérèse of Lisieux

December 2-3, 2023

First Sunday of Advent

Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, Dec. 2 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, Dec. 3 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, Dec. 3 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, Dec. 3 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron
Ushers	Dave Emling Roger Jensen Dan Hoffman Gery Wright	James Mallaney David Kirkpatrick	Dallas Ferris Dave Ladehoff Dan Forsythe Cathy Jensen	Erik Wheeler Corinn Wheeler Wayne Bisailon Darren Lovell
Lector	Bobbi Buza	Terri Weakley	Jeff O'Connor	Diane Long
Servers				Sydney Weldon
Greeters			Greeter— Karen Miller R. Leader—Reatta Gohlke	Julie Splear

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, November 27 (SMM)

8:00 am +Connie Dionne (Her Family)

Tuesday, November 28 (SH)

8:00 am (SH) +Don St. Germaine, Sr. (St. James, Arlington Heights)

Wednesday, November 29 (SJ)

8:00 am +Jeffrey Cooley (Richard/Cathy Dumas)

Friday, December 1 First Friday (SMM)

8:00 am +Lloyd Billadeau & Heidi McDaniel
(Mariann Lane)

Saturday, December 2 (SMM)

5:00 pm For All the Parish Family

Sunday, December 3

7:30 am +Lisa Timm (Jerry/Terri Weakley)

9:00 am (SJ) +Dorene O'Connor (Rita Thiesen)
+ Jared Devine (Terri/Leonard Devine)

10:30am (SMM) +Sterling Bouchard (Mr/Mrs Jay Richie)
+Monica Behrends (Chad/Julie Schoolman)

A Look Ahead

Sun., November 26—No Religious Ed at SMM, SH, or SJ

Fri., December 1—First Friday Adoration at SMM 8:30—3:00 pm

Thurs., Dec. 7—Vigil Immaculate Conception 7 pm SJ

Fri., Dec. 8—Immaculate Conception Mass 7 pm SMM

December 9-10—2nd Collection for Retired Religious

Sunday, Dec. 17—RE Pageant at St. James

Sat., January 6—CCW Deanery Joy in January

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

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 Jdstreefarm@aol.com

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

Questions of the week

Whom do I overlook and in whom do I fail to see Christ? How can I force myself to look past surface impressions?

Collections Week of Nov 18-19, 2023

St. Margaret Mary—\$1,805 Second Collection—\$ 385
 St. James—\$1,401 Second Collection—\$ 336
 Sacred Heart—\$954 Second Collection—\$319

Thank you for your generosity!

Gospel Shorts God's Standard of Judgement

Consciously or unconsciously, we are continually building our legacy, our epitaph, our monument, as we progress through life. Whatever motivates us becomes evident through our actions. In many instances, this becomes visible to others in history by the monuments we build. They are tell-tale signs of what we make important.

Matthew 25: 31-46 is a real challenge to examine our motivations in life. Jesus put it in a very simplistic, direct fashion. Without any fanfare, he described the measuring rod by which we are judged. And if we are truly His followers, then we have no choice but to follow his lead, and concern ourselves with the poor, the hungry, and the oppressed

A Stewardship Moment Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe Weekend of November 25/26, 2023

In today's Gospel, Saint Matthew offers a compelling vision of the end-time, when the people of all nations are brought before the Lord to give an account of their lives and actions. Interestingly, the sheep, the righteous ones, are rewarded for having acted with love and compassion without having recognized the face of Christ in others. Good stewards recognize those in need of their care as gifts from God. They know that they are instruments of Christ's active, loving presence in the world. How will we treat others this week: our family members, neighbors, customers, strangers? What accounting will we make to the Lord for their care?

Reflection

When I Quit

When I quit this mortal shore and mosey 'round this earth no more,

Don't weep, don't sigh, don't grieve, don't sob;
 I may have struck a better job.

Don't go and buy a large bouquet for which you'll find it hard to pay.

Don't stand around me looking blue;
 I may be better off than you!

Don't tell the folks I was a saint or anything you know I ain't.

If you have stuff like that to spread,
 Please hand it out before I'm dead.

If you have roses, bless your soul, just pin one on my buttonhole.

But do it while I'm at my best,
 Instead of when I'm safe at rest.

Parish News:

St. Margaret Mary—

St. James—

◆ St. James CCW Christmas party will be at the Herscher Restaurant after Mass on Sunday, Dec. 3rd. Please sign up by 11/26 so we can make a reservation.

◆ Joy in January is on Saturday, January 6 at the Kankakee Country Club. Cost is \$35 and will be split between the CCW and the attendee. Please sign up by 12/4 if interested on the back bulletin board

◆ St. James Church Christmas cleaning and decoration will be on Monday, December 11 at 6 pm. All are invited to help!

Sacred Heart—

◆ We wish to thank all who contributed in so many ways to the Sacred Heart Fall Cash Bash; those who attended, sold and purchased tickets, solicited donations of supplies and sponsors, helped with setup and cleanup, donated food and auction items, and staffed the event. A special thank you to Dan Lowe for his emcee services and to all of our community sponsors. ~ Fall Cash Bash Committee

◆ The week of November 26th, the Blessed Virgin Mary candle burns in memory of Dolores Fitch

All Parishes—

◆ Joy in January will be held at the Kankakee Country Club on January 6, 2024. Reservation deadline is December 14, 2023. If you wish to attend, please contact your CCW president to RSVP.

◆ All Ministries—as we are making the Christmas/New Year's ministry assignments, if you know a mass that you would be at and available to serve in a ministry position, please drop that information in the collection basket or call the office. We would like to accommodate your schedule and still have all of our needs met. Thank you!

◆ The Offering envelopes for 2024 are available in each of the parishes. If you do not find a box with your name, please contact the church office and we will make sure you get them.



Eucharistic Adoration

Friday, December 1 at St. Margaret Mary
 8:30am—3:00 pm. It will conclude with
 Benediction at 3:00 pm

"There is no other food for the soul than the Eucharist."

—Blessed Jean Baptiste Fouque (1851-1926)

Saint of the week: St. Leonard of Port Maurice (Nov. 26) was the son of Domenico Casanova, a sea captain, and Anna Maria Benza. He was placed at age thirteen with his uncle Agostino to study for a career as a physician, but the youth decided against medicine, and his uncle disowned him. He studied at the Jesuit College in Rome, Italy. Leonard joined the *Riformella*, a branch of the *Franciscans of the Strict Observance* on October 2, 1697, taking the name Brother Leonard. He was ordained in Rome in 1703. Leonard taught for a while and expected to become a missionary to China, but a bleeding ulcer kept him in his native lands for the several years it took to recover and regain his strength. Sent to Florence, Italy in 1709, he became a noted preacher in the city and nearby region. He was often invited to other areas, and worked for devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, Sacred Heart, Immaculate Conception, and the Stations of the Cross. Leonard established the Way of the Cross in over 500 places, including the Colosseum in Rome. He was sent as a missionary by Pope Benedict XIV to the island of Corsica in 1744. There he restored discipline to the holy orders there, but local politics greatly limited his success in preaching. He returned exhausted to Rome where he spent the rest of his days.



Obscure saint of the week: St. James Intercisus (Nov. 27) was a military officer and courtier to King Jezdigerd I. During Jezdigerd's persecution of Christians, James apostacized. Following Jezdigerd's death, he was contacted by family members who had never renounced their faith. James experienced a crisis of faith and conscience, and openly expressed his faith to the new king Bahram. He was condemned, tortured and martyred.

The Sunday Gospel in Everyday

"When he finally arrives, blazing in beauty and all his angels with him, the Son of Man will take his place on his glorious throne. Then all the nations will be arranged before him and he will sort the people out, much as a shepherd sorts out sheep and goats, putting sheep to his right and goats to his left.

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Enter, you who are blessed by my Father! Take what's coming to you in this Kingdom. It's been ready for you since the world's foundation. And here's why:

I was hungry and you fed me,
I was thirsty and you gave me a drink,
I was homeless and you gave me a room,
I was shivering and you gave me clothes,
I was sick and you stopped to visit,
I was in prison and you came to me.'

"Then those 'sheep' are going to say, 'Master, what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and give you a drink? And when did we ever see you sick or in prison and come to you?' Then the King will say, 'I'm telling the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me.'

"Then he will turn to the 'goats,' the ones on his left, and say, 'Get out, worthless goats! You're good for nothing but the fires of hell. And why? Because—

I was hungry and you gave me no meal,
I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,
I was homeless and you gave me no bed,
I was shivering and you gave me no clothes,
Sick and in prison, and you never visited.'

"Then those 'goats' are going to say, 'Master, what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or homeless or shivering or sick or in prison and didn't help?'

"He will answer them, 'I'm telling the solemn truth: Whenever you failed to do one of these things to someone who was being overlooked or ignored, that was me—you failed to do it to me.'

"Then those 'goats' will be herded to their eternal doom, but the 'sheep' to their eternal reward" (from Matthew 25).



Retirement Fund for Religious

Please give to
those who have
given a lifetime.



December 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Our diocese will soon take up the national collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious. Your support for this collection December 9/10 provides financial assistance for retirement needs for 297 U.S. religious communities.

Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests—collectively known as women and men religious—have selflessly served for decades without significant financial compensation. However, due to escalating health-care costs, numerous U.S. religious communities face a substantial gap between their elderly members' needs and the financial resources available for their care. Many religious orders currently experience insufficient retirement savings.

The 2022 appeal demonstrated Catholics' tremendous generosity by raising \$27.6 million. Diocese of Joliet parishioners contributed \$286,788.25 to the collection.

The senior religious in our diocese never retire from their vows, and they play a crucial role in conveying the faith from one generation to the next. In their younger years, they laid the foundation for Catholic schools, hospitals, and works of mercy. Today, many serve in volunteer ministry as ongoing witnesses to the Gospel. Others are frail and need assistance, yet all remain wholly committed to their vocations by embracing the opportunity to spend more time praying for our Church and world.

Please support the retirement needs of our senior religious. And please join me in praying for God's continued blessing on our nation's elderly sisters, brothers, and religious order priests.

As I remain –
Sincerely yours in Christ,

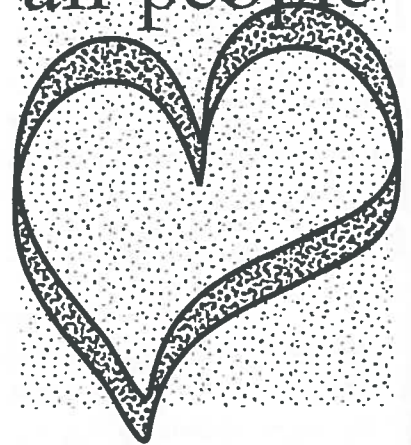
+ Ronald A. Hicks

Most Reverend Ronald A. Hicks
Bishop of Joliet

The Need is Great

- Religious communities are financially responsible for the support and care of all members.
- There are 24,005 religious past age 70 living in the United States. In 2022, the average annual cost for their care was roughly \$55,500 per person; skilled nursing care averaged \$82,700 per person.
- Since 2009, the annual cost to support senior women and men religious has exceeded \$1 billion.
- In 2022, 71 percent of the religious communities providing data to the National Religious Retirement Office had a median age of 70 or higher.
- The average annual Social Security benefit for a religious is \$7,679, whereas the average lay US beneficiary receives \$21,902.

His
Kingdom
is the
hearts of
all people



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Office of the Bishop

815.221.6100 | 815.722.6632 (T) | officeofthebishop@dioceseofjoliet.org

Catholic Snacks, Get Fed

Why does the Church use candles?

They are so familiar we don't give them much thought but what do they really symbolize?

Every time we attend Mass, there are candles on the altar.

Sometimes two. Sometimes four. Sometimes six or more. At some Masses, there are dozens and dozens of them.

In nearly every church, votive candles burn before statues and sacred images.

For us Catholics, they are omnipresent, automatically turning our thoughts and minds to prayer, to worship, to God.

But why *does* the Church use candles? What do they actually symbolize?

Primarily, the candles—with their burning, light-giving flame—represent Christ, the Light of the World.

Candles are traditionally made of 100% beeswax, which symbolizes the pure flesh of Our Lord, received from His immaculate Virgin Mother. (Although candles are not required to be pure beeswax, they must at least contain some percentage of that wax.)

The wick, enrobed in the wax, represents His soul, and the flame His divinity.

Since we offer Christ Himself on the altar in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, it is only fitting that such a powerful symbol of Christ should be a required element in the Mass.

The layers of meaning in candles run deep. They symbolize our prayers rising up to God. They also contain the idea of sacrifice, since they are an offering made by human hands that we burn—often on an altar—and which is consumed as it is used. During the Mass, candles are a vivid representation of Christ offering Himself to the Father through the hands of the priest.

Candles represent the burning light of faith that compels us to adore God and bring our petitions to Him. And, of course, flame reminds us of the Holy Spirit, the very Love of God dwelling within the hearts of the faithful and sanctifying our prayers and sacrifices.

Our use of candles need not be confined to those times that we are physically in church—many people light candles at home, too, as part of their personal prayer. This practice becomes more common during the seasons of Advent and Christmas where the flicker of candlelight becomes a reminder of the coming light of our Savior. This Advent and Christmas season, fill your home with a gentle reminder of Christ's coming with this festive [Cranberry Soy Candle by Peace & All Good!](#)

In addition to making your home a prayerful and festive place, this candle helps support an incredible cause! Hand poured in small batches, packed, marketed, and sold by survivors of human trafficking, drug addiction, and poverty in the USA who are members of a special community committed to their healing and recovery in a supportive environment, Peace and all good natural soy candles are a reminder of the dignity inherent in every human life, and the work required to end human trafficking and restore safety and dignity to exploited women.

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Questions Catholics

Is Purgatory still “on the books”?

Yes. Church teaching about Purgatory was made official as early as the 15th-century Council of Florence and endorsed again at the Council of Trent (1545-1563). Here's the gist of it: “Purgation” is not a punishment. It's an option granted by God's mercy for which we should be very grateful. Occurring after death and before heaven (not between heaven and hell—purgation's only available to those guaranteed salvation), it's a “condition” more than a “place” in which the soul is prepared for the perfection of God's presence.

This teaching emerges from long tradition based on several scriptural ideas. First, Jesus named blasphemy against the Holy Spirit an unpardonable sin “both in this age and in the age to come.” That presupposes there *is* an age to come in which other sins might be forgiven. Second, the biblical practice of praying for the dead indicates that the fate of “those who go before us” can be influenced to their advantage. Other passages speak to the possibility of making reparation for the sins of others through good works. Taken together these ideas framed the church's understanding of a time of purgation for those who need it due to their own lack of readiness for the total experience of perfect divine love.

The Council of Florence noted that the church is composed of three kinds of citizens: “wayfaring pilgrims” (the living); those who have died and are being purified; and those who are “in glory” with the Triune God. The glorified ones or saints intercede for the good of the pilgrim church on earth. In the same way we pilgrims can intercede for those in Purgatory for their good. It's a sort of economy of grace that flows from one member to another.

Members of the pilgrim church are in a position to make choices about their fate; citizens of Purgatory, having passed beyond volition and not yet one with the will of God, can do nothing for themselves. Their passivity makes them vulnerable in their need, which is why God offers the remarkable gift of purgation to remove whatever obstacle remains to receiving the vision of eternal beauty ahead. The mystic Saint Catherine of Genoa (1447-1510), sensing herself united to the experience of souls in Purgatory for a time, wrote movingly of how the “joyful souls” would choose purgation 1,000 times over, knowing it will deliver them to God's embrace. That our prayers might speed them to this joyful union is a tremendous idea.

Scripture

• 2 Maccabees 12:46; Job 1:5; Matthew 12:31; 1 Corinthians 3:15; 1 Peter 1:7



November 26, 2023

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

Ez 34:11-12, 15-17 | 1 Cor 15:20-26, 28 | Mt 25:31-46

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

The paradoxical ways we have come to understand Jesus can give us spiritual whiplash. He is both a tender and caring shepherd of sheep and one who sends strong rams and goats to the eternal fire; the executed human and divine man who came into full resurrected glory. He is God incarnate into human history and born in a manger; the servant-leader; the one who is both God and man. This is the beauty of what we call the Paschal Mystery – that the Son of God came into the world and by his life, death, and resurrection he has reconciled us to the Father, and has redeemed us. He saves us from the death of sin. As Catholics we are comfortable with paradox: We are inhabitants of a kingdom of God that is already (here) but not yet (fully realized); we are both an Easter people and we live in a world of Good Fridays. So when Jesus says in today's Gospel that whatever we do to the least of people, we do to Christ himself and we will reap our actions in the fullness of that kingdom, we understand that he is a king unlike any other king. He cares not for pomp and circumstance, but wants to ensure that all – even the least among us – are given his gifts to share. The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe celebrates that we have a king who cares more for us than anyone on earth could ever care for us, and we are blessed to be able to love and serve him in return.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

In the midst of our busy lives, it is no secret that our thoughts can easily be preoccupied with things other than prayer or our relationship with God. Perhaps we struggle with maintaining a daily prayer practice. So when we pause to take stock of our lives – where our attention is focused during the day-to-day – it's easy to see that God is sometimes "off to the side." Perhaps we take everything we have been given for granted, or maybe we are just not sure how to make him the most important aspect of our lives. Just like cultivating a friendship takes active effort, so does our relationship with God. Just as watering a plant near its center allows the water to spread throughout the surrounding area, to its roots and the soil – thus making it fruitful and full – putting Jesus Christ, our king, at the center of our lives means that his goodness flows into everything else we say and do. Our lives and our hearts will grow in goodness and bear rich fruit.

INVITATION Challenge yourself this week to subvert expectations and keep God first. Show Christ is Lord over your life by prioritizing your faith and building up your priorities around him. Make a daily appointment in your calendar for prayer and look for opportunities to put Christ at the center, or heart, of your daily life.

Sunday, Nov 26, 2023

Save the best for last

The film industry has always had a love affair with the afterlife. From *It's a Wonderful Life* to *Heaven Can Wait* to *Ghost* to *Flatliners*, stories remind us that our choices in this world have ramifications in the next. More recent shows—*Dead Like Me*, *The Good Life*, *After Life*, and *Hotel del Luna* among many others—are less traditionally religious but no less curious about what comes next. Every culture and generation seems to sense the need for spirit guides and guardians, as well as justice and an hour of reckoning. As the church year closes, contemplate the ledger of your years. Does it add up to a heavenly ending?

SOLEMNITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17; 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28; Matthew 25:31-46 (160). "He will answer them, 'Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.'"

Monday, Nov 27, 2023

Conversion can be revolutionary

British poet Alice Meynell, who died on this day in 1922, converted to Catholicism while recovering from chronic illness, and her writing thereafter turned to religious subjects. She married a Catholic newspaper publisher and founded a Catholic suffragist organization. When a British priest preached against giving women the right to vote because it would risk "bringing a revolution of the first magnitude," Meynell replied, "...the vaster the magnitude of the revolution, the better." One hundred years after her death, the struggle for equality continues. How do the teachings of Jesus inform your work for justice?

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 1:1-6, 8-20; Luke 21:1-4 (503). "She, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood."

Tuesday, Nov 28, 2023

Little lamb, who made thee?

Happy birthday to the English poet William Blake, born this day in 1757. Though not Catholic, he's inspired great Catholic poets and many of his poems—like "Jerusalem"—became hymns. Trappist monk Thomas Merton wrote his master's thesis on Blake, emphasizing his spiritual significance in *Seven Storey Mountain*: "His rebellion ... was fundamentally the rebellion of the saints. It was the rebellion of the lover of the living God, the rebellion of the one whose desire of God was so intense and irresistible that it condemned, with all its might, all the hypocrisy and petty sensuality and skepticism and materialism" of organized religion. Pray for all who search for God but find obstacles in religious institutions—and enjoy Blake's "The Lamb."

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 2:31-45; Luke 21:5-11 (504). "Jesus said, 'All that you see here—the days will come when there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down.'"

Wednesday, Nov 29, 2023

Gracious encounters of the digital kind

Did you buy anything on Cyber Monday? Did you make a charitable donation yesterday, on Giving Tuesday? Whether you did or not, this week's digital focus continues today, which is recognized as Electronic Greetings Day. Pope Francis' 2020

encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* considers how the internet is a powerful tool and how it's our job to use it in a way that makes the world better. "We need constantly to ensure that present-day forms of communication are in fact guiding us to generous encounter with others," he writes. Make time today to send an encouraging email or ecard to someone who needs to hear from you.

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 5:1-6, 13-14, 16-17, 23-28; Luke 21:12-19 (505). "The writing I will read for you, O king, and tell you what it means."

Thursday, Nov 30, 2023

Be a first responder

Is there an Andy, Andre, or Andrea in your life? Whether they know it or not, they bear the name of the Apostle Andrew, one of the fishermen Jesus famously called to be "fishers of men." The Eastern church recognizes Andrew as the first to be called by Jesus. Tradition has it that Andrew was crucified on an X-shaped cross because he felt unworthy to die on a cross identical to Christ's. Andrew led the way in accepting Jesus' invitation to follow him. How will your life today respond to that invitation?

FEAST OF ANDREW, APOSTLE

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 10:9-18; Matthew 4:18-22 (684). "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Friday, Dec 01, 2023

Compassionate in the face of controversy

St. Vincent Medical Center in Manhattan, now closed, was in the eye of the AIDS epidemic storm of the 1980s and 1990s. A Catholic hospital run by the Sisters of Charity, St. Vincent opened its doors to care for those who were sick and dying from AIDS. Some staff disagreed with this stance and left. But not the sisters. They stayed true to Jesus' command to care for the suffering, especially those cast aside by society. They entered into dialogue with the gay community, activists, and hospital administrators to better understand their patients and how best to serve them. May we remember their unwavering commitment and compassion—and do likewise.

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 7:2-14; Luke 21:29-33 (507). "Know that the Kingdom of God is near."

Saturday, Dec 02, 2023

Be a freedom fighter

The term *modern slavery* covers practices such as forced labor, debt bondage, forced marriage, and human trafficking ... situations of exploitation enforced by violence, coercion, or deception. Here's the shocking news: Modern slavery has increased significantly in the past five years. Ten million more people, largely women and children, were trapped in modern slavery in 2021 compared to 2016, bringing the total estimate to 50 million worldwide. Our God is a God of freedom, who releases us from bondage of all kinds. On this U.N. International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, raise your voice in a phone call, email, or letter to elected officials. Let's put an end to this!

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 7:15-27; Luke 21:34-36 (508). "Be vigilant at all times."

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



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