

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

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

FEBRUARY 17-18, 2024



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

Quotes: "This is the reason for our hope: that God never tires of waiting for us. When we turn away, he comes looking for us; when we fall, he lifts us to our feet; when we return to him after losing our way, he waits for us with open arms." —Pope Francis

February 24-25, 2024		Second Sunday of Lent		
Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, Feb. 24 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, Feb. 25 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, Feb. 25 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, Feb. 25 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron
Ushers	Gery Wright Todd Datweiler Bob Schultz Dave Emling	Kyle Ferris Dennis Pankey	Jeff Steinke Dan Forsythe Bob Buente Rick White	Larry Wolles Darren Lovell Jeremy Wolles Kim Smicker
Lector	Rob Landeck	Rhonda Berns	Kelly Buente	Steve Jacob
Servers				Caroline Fulton
Greeters			Greeter—Jerry Ogrentz R. Leader—Rita Thiesen	Stacey Powers

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, February 19 (SMM)

8:00 am +Denise Blake & Jim Jepsen (Kathy Jepsen)

Tuesday, February 20 (SH)

8:00 am +Dorine Schafer (Raymond/LaRue Gulquist)

Wednesday, February 21 (SJ)

8:00 am +Dorene O'Connor (Larry/Judy Brave)

Friday, February 23 SMM

8:00 am +Bob & Rita Deany (Don/Gail Duval)

Saturday, February 24 (SMM)

5:00 pm +Jim Feller (Jackie Eberle)

+John Koerner (Sheila Koerner)

Sunday, February 25

7:30 am +Ryan Gagnon, Renee Gagnon, Curtis
Riley, Jr., Arvelle DalCanton (The Family)

9:00 am (SJ) +Virginia Fritz (Jerry/Jolynn Ogrentz)

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

Question of the week:

How will I minister to others during these forty days of Lent?
Who is in need of my help?

A Look Ahead

Monday, Feb. 19—Combined Parish Council meeting 7pm
SMM

Wednesday, Feb. 21—Adult Ed at SMM 7pm

Friday, Feb. 23—Stations of the Cross 3pm at St. James

Friday, March 1—First Friday at SMM

Friday, March 1—Stations of the Cross SMM 3pm

March 2-3—K of C Food Drive

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

Parish Nurse – Jackie Eberle – 815-421-4048

Prayer Line— SMM—Pat Wagner 815-592-0773

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

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

Collections Week of Feb. 10-11, 2024

St. Margaret Mary—\$1,690

St. James—\$1,460

Sacred Heart—\$940

Thank you for your generosity!

Gospel Shorts Good Job, Son

During a spelling exam, Mark was stumped by many difficult words. Softly the tempter whispered, "Look at Jane's paper; she's an honor student and always gets them right!" Mark heeded the suggestion and copied several answers.

When it came time to collect the exams, Mark's teacher observed his inner struggle. After bowing his head for a moment, he suddenly tore up his paper. Although at first he had yielded to temptation, he finally decided to take a zero rather than be dishonest. Calling the boy to her desk, the teacher said, "I was watching you, Mark, I'm really proud of you right now. Today you really passed a much greater examination than your spelling test!" Jesus faced similar temptations in the wilderness. He had the power to change his situation, but instead decided to focus on his Father. There is a joy that comes from passing God's test even if it means flunking one here on earth.



Please pray for the repose of the soul of

+Paul Muhlstadt

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

Our sincere sympathy to Paul's family and friends.



Old eyeglasses sitting around?

This agency collects old eyeglasses, makes the necessary repairs, then

sends them overseas to people in need. The Knights of Columbus will be placing collection boxes in the back of each church. Please consider helping with this project by donating your unused glasses. Prescription and reading glasses are needed. Please do not include glass cases.



Reflections Be Willing, Even if You are Not Able

It was a chilly, overcast day when the horseman spied the little sparrow lying on its back in the middle of the road. Reining in his mount, he looked down and inquired of the fragile creature: "Why are you lying upside down like that?"

The sparrow replied: "Oh, early this morning I heard that the sky is going to fall later today."

Upon hearing this, the horseman laughed derisively and said: "And I suppose your spindly legs can hold up the heavens?"

Parish News:

St. Margaret Mary—

Sacred Heart—

St. James—

◆ Please join us for our Spring Forward event on Sunday, March 10th. We'll be doing a soup/chili lunch in the St. James hall at 11:30 am. Free will donations will be accepted. If you would like to bring a dish the sign-up is on the bulletin board in the foyer. We'll see you there!

◆ See pg. 6 for the illustration of the new landscaping project for the front of the church. We appreciate your help with this project.

All Parishes—

◆ Adult Ed resumes on Wednesday, February 21 at 7:00 at St. Margaret Mary.

◆ Don't forget to pick up your offertory envelopes in each parish. If you don't find yours, please call the office.

BISHOP BLANCHETTE SCHOLARSHIP

Bishop Blanchette Scholarship applications are available for our parishioners who attend Catholic high school.

At Sacred Heart Call Terri Weakley at 815-514-8171

St. James —Jennifer Hansen

St. Margaret Mary—Julie Splear



The next Knights of Columbus next Food for Families collection is March 2-3 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"

A Stewardship Moment

Weekend of February 17-18, 2024

First Sunday of Lent

In today's Gospel, Jesus urges his listeners to do two things: to believe in the Good News and to repent. Stewards are called to repent, to be humble enough to open their hearts so they may begin anew, to change existing attitudes and habits, and to act with faith in the Gospel. In this season of Lent, now is the time to ask ourselves whether or not we truly believe in the Gospel; and if we do, to what extent are we willing to change our prevailing habits and be more faithful to the Gospel?

A stained glass window depicting St. Peter, the Apostle. He is shown from the waist up, wearing a red robe with a blue sash and a yellow collar. He has a beard and is holding a large, dark key in his right hand. The background is a simple grid pattern.

Obscure saint of the week: St. Coleman of Lindisfarne was a spiritual student and disciple of Saint Columba. He was a monk at Iona. He later became the bishop of Lindisfarne, England, in 661. He was a friend of king Oswy of Northumbria. He defended Celtic church practices against Saint Eilfrid and Saint Agilbert at the Synod of Whitby, and when King Oswy insisted on the use of Latin rites, Colman refused, resigned his see. In 664 led a group of dissident Irish and English monks first to Scotland, then to the Isle of Innishboffin, and then to Mayo, Ireland. He founded the abbey and diocese of Mayo. Coleman is one of the great heroes of the faith about whom the Venerable Bede wrote.

Why isn't the "Gloria" sung during Lent?

Along with prayer, fasting, and almsgiving to get ready for Easter, the church also fasts from saying or singing the word *Alleluia* (some traditions have even buried the *Alleluia* with great pageantry on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday and “resurrected” it again at Easter) as well as singing the *Gloria*. As one perceptive music minister put it: The church doesn’t sing these great words during Lent for the same reason the church doesn’t sing *Jesus Christ*

The *Gloria* is an exalted hymn which is not to be replaced by any other at that time in the Mass, so say the norms of the Roman Missal. It adds a “celebratory character” to the Introductory Rites that is better expressed sung than in recitation and increased in collaboration with a full choir—reminding us of its debut performance. “To sing belongs to lovers,” as Saint Augustine once said. To yearn also belongs to lovers—which is why sometimes the church saves the song until its proper hour.

- Luke 2:14; Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19; Acts of the Apostles 2:46-47

Catholic Snacks, Get Fed

5 ideas for Lenten penances

It's time to move beyond just giving up chocolate.
"What are you giving up for Lent?"

It's the question we are all asking each other right about now. And yes, giving up something we enjoy such as sweets, coffee, or our favorite TV show is a great start. These external penances are a necessary part of the season—and should be a part of our lives in some way throughout the year.



But what else can we do to actively cultivate virtue and really target our faults this Lent? How can we take our penances to the next level?

Here are 5 ideas that might prove a bit challenging—but try 'em out and you'll be enjoying some sweet spiritual fruit soon!

1. Mortify your will through the practice of obedience. Obedience takes different forms depending on our state in life. Those in religious life must obey their religious superiors, and children their parents. As lay adults, we can do it by cheerfully serving our spouse and children, fulfilling our assigned tasks at work, or simply allowing others to go first in the buffet line!

2. Attend especially to the tasks you don't like doing. Padre Pio was once visited by the soul of a young friar who had worked in the sacristy. The soul revealed that he suffered in purgatory because he'd been careless and negligent with his work. Complete every task meticulously, no matter how small and insignificant.

3. Embrace annoyances. Annoyances abound in this life. Little flaws in other people especially provoke us to fixate on our aggravation. Very often the flaws are faults that we also are guilty of, but which we tolerate in ourselves. Over the next few weeks, when something in another person annoys you, examine yourself and discern how you, too, act or feel or think in that way.

4. Impose a strict watch on your tongue. Innumerable, mundane complaints escape our mouths daily, fostering ingratitude—so guard your tongue and inspect what you want to say before speaking.

5. Check impulsive actions. Be intentional in all that you do, asking yourself, "Do I really need to shoot off this text? Will this comment help anyone? Will I benefit from thoughtlessly popping snacks in my mouth?"

Lent is a long season and it's easy to grow weary—why not go through it as a family and help each other along?

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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 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 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?

Call Bry Williams at 815-933-7791 ext. 9928 or online at americorpsseniors@cc-doj.org For more information about the programs and services provided by Catholic Charities visit catholiccharitiesjoliet.org

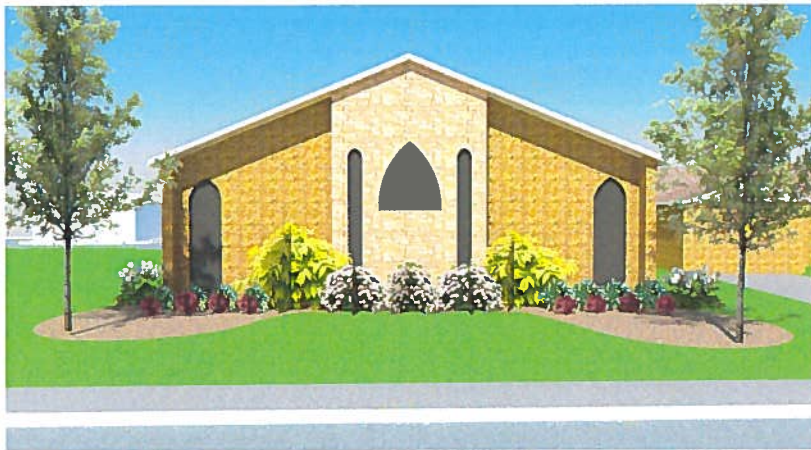
The Sunday Gospel in Everyday English

At once, this same Spirit pushed Jesus out into the wild. For 40 wilderness days and nights he was tested by Satan. Wild animals were his companions, and angels took care of him. After John was arrested, Jesus went to Galilee preaching the Message of God: "Time's up! God's kingdom is here. Change your life and believe the Message."
from Mark 1).



Remember you are dust
and unto dust
you shall return

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St. James Landscaping Project

There will be a second collection on the following Sundays:

February 11

March 3

April 7

to help cover costs for the landscaping project. We would appreciate your generosity!

St. Patrick's
and the Dwight Knights of Columbus
host Lenten Fish Fries



Mark your calendars! St. Patrick's and the Knights of Columbus will again be having their Annual Lenten Fish Fries at St. Patrick's Hall in Dwight. This year they have scheduled 6 Fish Fries, all the Fridays during Lent except Good Friday, March 29th. Fish Fries will held on Fridays February 16th, 23rd, March 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd from 5 to 7 PM. The price includes your choice of baked cod, fried pollock, breaded shrimp or grilled cheese sandwich, baked potato or french fries, cole slaw or apple sauce, rolls, beverage and a dessert, while they last.

Adults/High School—\$13.00 Grade School—\$6.00
Preschool—free

BISHOP MCNAMARA ASSEMBLY 202—

VOCATIONS DINNER/AUCTION

MARCH 9, 2024 AT THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HALL

COCKTAILS/ APPETIZERS—6:00 PM DINNER: 6:30 PM

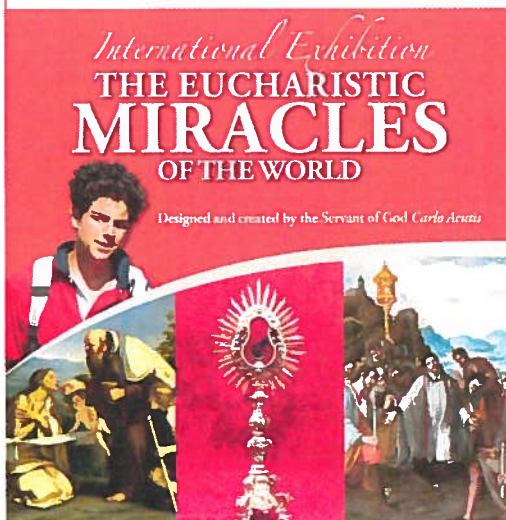
PLEASE PLAN ON ATTENDING THIS EVENT THAT SUPPORTS OUR FUTURE PRIESTS—THIS EVENT IS OPEN TO ALL.

PLEASE COMPLETE A DINNER RESERVATION FORM AND RETURN IT TO DEACON PAT SKELLY PRIOR TO MARCH 2, 2024.

FORMS CAN BE FOUND A THE BACK OF EACH CHURCH OR IN THE PARISH OFFICE.



St. John Paul II Catholic Parish hosting The Vatican International Exhibition of The Eucharistic Miracles of the World



In the entire history of the Catholic Church, there have been numerous Eucharistic miracles approved by the Catholic Church as truly worthy of belief. The Vatican Eucharistic Miracles Photographic Exhibition faithfully recounts for us many well documented miraculous occurrences. Knowledge of these miracles strengthens our faith in Christ and His Church. They are visible proof of Jesus Christ's Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist. The Exhibit was created by Blessed Carlo Acutis, a 15 year old from Milan, Italy who was just Beatified on October 10, 2020.

The Exhibit will be available for viewing at St John Paul II from February 17th-21st, and will be open:

Saturday, February 17th 5-8pm;
Monday, February 19th 12-5pm;
Wednesday, February 21st 12:30-8pm

Sunday, February 18th 9am-6:30pm;
Tuesday, February 20th 5-8pm;

We highly encourage you to schedule time to view the exhibit during this Year of the Eucharist.



February 18, 2024

First Sunday of Lent

Gn 9:8-15 | 1 Pt 3:18-22 | Mk 1:12-15

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

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

Today is the first day of Lent! It is the beginning of a new liturgical season in the Church, a season of prayer, service and self-sacrifice. It is a time of preparation, culminating in the holiest day of the year: Easter. As we embark on our Lenten journey, we hear a reading from Genesis in which God makes a covenant with Noah where he promises, "the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all mortal beings." The Lord has said that no matter our disobedience, sin and rebellion, he will never destroy us! Saint Peter explains how the story of Noah, "in which a few persons ... were saved through water," prefigures baptism, and baptism, as we know, marks us as the Lord's own forever. We are sealed with a sign that can never be relinquished. So, just as the great flood signaled a rebirth for the world, our baptism is a rebirth of our soul in Christ. We are washed clean of our original sin, and the door to salvation is opened for us. It is fitting that at the beginning of our Lenten journey we hear the story of the beginning of our eternal covenant with the Lord. Both the covenant, and Lent, will be fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

As a child, Lent meant lentils for dinner, Stations of the Cross on Fridays, and no TV ever. For a 10-year-old, it was a time to be endured. Now, as an adult, Lent can still be hard, but I recognize it as a time of opportunity as well. It is a chance to strip away all the excess in my life and focus on what matters most. While I am not exactly jumping for joy at the thought of fasting, I can't deny that it is easier for me to spend time in prayer when I'm not mindlessly grazing on chips and chocolate all day long. I may grumble at times, but with God's grace I have grown in understanding of the Church's wisdom in encouraging us to fast, pray and give alms during Lent. All three practices invite us to reflect on the great sacrifice of the Lord and prepare our hearts to receive him each Sunday in the Eucharist, as well as on our final judgment day.

PRAY Lent is the perfect time to take stock of your current spiritual practices and add new ones to your daily routine. Remember the words we heard from Jesus today: "The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." Start off your Lenten season right by taking time to receive the sacrament of reconciliation and designating a time each day to pray. If you aren't sure what to say to God during this time, choose a verse or two of Psalm 6 and let your heart take it from there.

1st Sunday of Lent

Sunday, February 18

Gn 9:8-15

Ps 25:4-9

1 Pt 3:18-22

Mk 1:12-15

Monday, February 19

Lv 19:1-2,11-18

Ps 19:8-10,15

Mt 25:31-48

Tuesday, February 20

Is 55:10-11

Ps 34:4-7,16-19

Mt 6:7-15

Wednesday, February 21

Jon 3:1-10

Ps 51:3-4,12-13,18-19

Lk 11:29-32

Thursday, February 22

Chair of Peter, Apostle

1 Pt 5:1-4

Ps 23:1-3a,4-6

Mt 16:13-19

Friday, February 23

Ez 18:21-28

Ps 130:1-8

Mt 5:20-26

Saturday, February 24

Dt 28:18-19

Ps 119:1-2,4-5,7-8

Mt 5:43-48

Today's Gospel reading shows us the first thing that Jesus did after his baptismal anointing in the Jordan River: He wrestled with temptation.

His baptism had marked the moment of his complete surrender to the Father's will. As he arose from the water, he began a new life of ministry.

The Father responded by telling him that he was very pleased, and the Holy Spirit filled his humanness. Jesus as God already had the Holy Spirit (he and the Spirit were the same God), but Jesus the fully human Son now came fully alive in the Spirit. We can imagine how this experience in the Jordan River gave him the feeling of an elated spiritual high. And the next thing that happens is an attack of the devil.

The same pattern repeats itself in our lives. As soon as we experience new growth in our faith, or a new calling to do the Father's will, we run smack into a situation that tests the strength

and sincerity of our faith. However, if this didn't happen, how would we find out that we've spiritually matured? How would we know that we are ready to make a significant difference for the kingdom of God?

Sometimes without consciously thinking it, we decide that if we're going to be tested and we might lose, wouldn't it be better not to start something new? Well, that's another temptation!

Lent is the perfect time to examine the temptations that we



face every day and turn them into new growth that will strengthen our faith.

Every time we face a sin and seek God's forgiveness, we become stronger. And if we take

it a step farther by walking into the confessional with it, we also receive powerful graces directly from Jesus, through the priest, that will render temptations much more powerless.

And this makes us more useful to God in the mission of conquering evil in the world and helping his kingdom spread into the lives of the people around us.

Think of temptations as blessings in disguise: Use them as opportunities to become more like Jesus and grow powerful in the faith.

Reflect & Discuss:

- † How well do you recognize temptation?
- † How quickly do you rely on the faith that God has given you to say no to the devil's tricks?
- † Describe a time when you experienced a spiritual high and then faced a strong temptation. How did you handle it?
- † What role did (or will) Jesus play in overcoming this temptation?