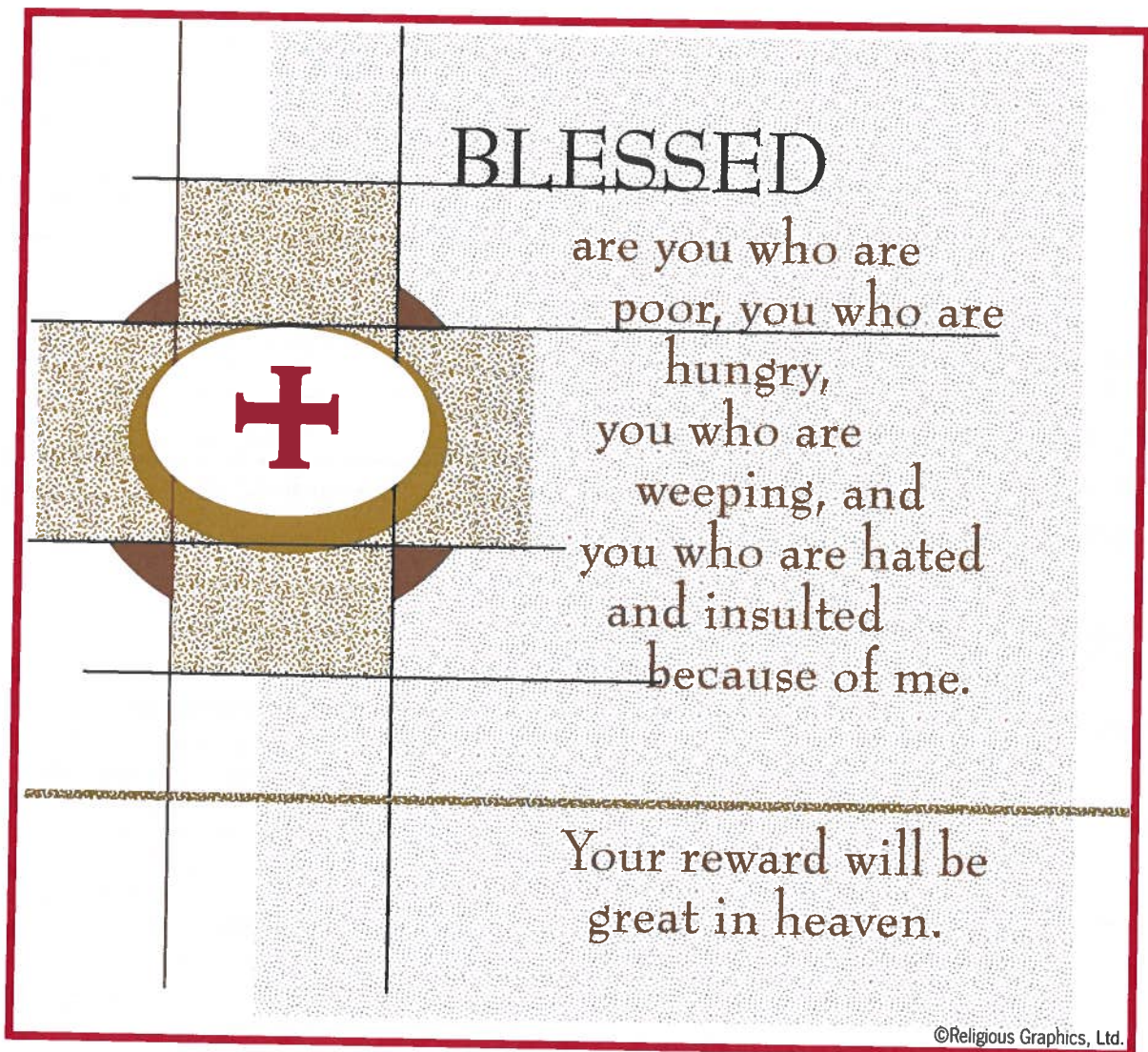


The Roman Catholic Parishes of  
St. Margaret Mary, Herscher  
St. James the Apostle, Irwin  
Sacred Heart, Goodrich

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FEBRUARY 15-16, 2025



Weekend Masses:

St. Margaret Mary Sat. 5:00 pm Sun. 10:30 am  
Sacred Heart Sun. 7:30 am  
St. James Sun 9:00 am

Confessions:

St. Margaret Mary Sat. 4:15 pm  
Sacred Heart Sun. 7:05-7:20 am  
St. James Sun 8:35-8:50 am

Church Mailing Address: 207 E. 5th Street Herscher, IL 60941 Phone: 815-426-2550

Quotable: "When I started counting my blessings, my whole life turned around."

—Willie Nelson

**Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**February 22-23, 2025**

Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, Feb. 22 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, Feb. 23 7:30 am	St. James Sunday Feb. 23 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, Feb. 23 10:30 am
Celebrant	Father Matt	Fr. John	Fr. Roy Deacon Ron	Fr. Matt
Ushers	Todd Datweiler Dan Hoffman Bob Schultz Gery Wright	Dennis Pankey James Mallaney	Dave Ladehoff Dan Forsythe Jerry Ogrentz Jeff Martin	Larry Wolles Jeremy Wolles Kim Smicker Sean Riordan
Lector	Dave Emling	Terri Weakley	Jeff O'Connor	Corinn Wheeler
Eucharistic Minister				Dana Masching
Servers				Caroline Fulton
Greeters			Greeter—Mary Offerman R. Leader—Kathy Dumas	Julie Splear

**Mass Intentions for the Week**

**Monday, Feb. 17 (SMM)**

**8:00 am +Margaret Halpin (Halpin/Hoffman Families)**

**Tuesday, Feb. 18 (SH)**

**8:00 am No Mass**

**Wednesday, Feb. 19 (SJ)**

**8:00 am +Gerald Bernicky (Bruce/Cathy Jensen)**

**Friday, Feb. 21 (SMM)**

**8:00 am No Mass**

**Saturday, Feb. 22 (SMM)**

**5:00 pm For All the Parish Family**

**Sunday, Feb. 23**

**7:30 am +Donna Collette (Terri/Jerry Weakley)**

**+Aaron Mills (Ron & Cindy Gagnon)**

**9:00am (SJ) +Ivan Denault (Steven/Christel Denault)**

**10:30 am (SMM) +Bob & Rita Deany (Dewey/Marie Haag)**

**+Jim Feller (Jackie Eberle)**

**A Look Ahead**

**Monday, February 17—SMM CCW meeting 7:00 PM**

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

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](https://www.facebook.com/triparishcatholiccommunities)

**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)

Sacred Heart – Rhonda Berns – 426-5015

St. James—Tanhya Osenga [tosenga81@gmail.com](mailto:tosenga81@gmail.com)

**Parish Nurse** – Jackie Eberle – 815-421-4048

**Prayer Line**—

SMM -Janice 815-426-2574 [Jdstreefarms@aol.com](mailto:Jdstreefarms@aol.com)

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

Sacred Heart-Marilyn Pfeiffer 815-955-8246 (call or text)

Terri Weakley— 815-514-8171

**Question of the Week**

What part of my life am I complacent about? How do the Beatitudes call me to change?

### Collections Weekend of Feb. 8-9, 2025

St. Margaret Mary—\$ 1,793

St. James—\$1,854

Sacred Heart—\$586

Thank you for your generosity!

There will be Monday & Wednesday weekday mass this week, keep watching the bulletin for updates.

St. Patrick Dwight-

Tuesday: 6:00 pm

Thursday: 8:00 am (Coffee Shop follows)

St. Peter, Clifton-

Tuesday and Wednesday 8:00 am

Assumption BVM, Ashkum

Thursday and Friday 8:00 am

St. John Paul II

Monday-Friday 7:30 am

### Reflections The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand

The philosopher thinks that the spiritual lies very far beyond the material ... The mystic thinks that the spiritual is very close behind the material ... Science is always saying that the other world, if it exists, is too distant to be seen. ...Religion is always saying that it is too close to be seen.

The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.

### Gospel Shorts "Get the Valuables Out of the Vault"

Both in Matthew and in Luke, we find versions of the well-known Sermon on the Mount. In it, Jesus speaks to us about being his committed followers and of being people who, despite the obstacles we may face now, can overcome those obstacles. We may indeed be poor, feel downtrodden or be people whom others hate or revile or criticize because of our faith or our desire to proclaim the Gospel.

But both "sermons" give us valuable insight into ourselves: that God indeed values us as us. We are important to God and to Christ and out of that importance comes an obligation: to be responsible for proclaiming the Gospel and not "letting George do it"; to be people who will spread the Good News of forgiveness and wholeness that is found in Jesus Christ. We cannot stay "hidden," much as one might keep the family diamonds locked up in the vault. No one sees them; they really do not benefit anyone. We must be "on display" for Christ.

### Parish News:

St. Margaret Mary— CCW Meeting Mon. Feb. 17th 7PM

St. James—

- ◆ We are collecting winter wear accessories (mittens, hats, etc) in the hallway of St. James for the Salvation Army. Thanks to all who participate!

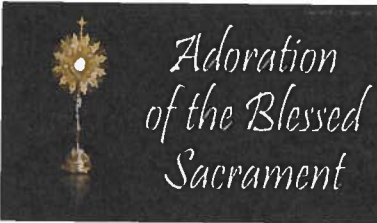
Sacred Heart—

- ◆ The next Sacred Heart C.C.W. meeting will be Wed., Feb. 19 at 6:30 p.m. in the church hall. Denise Wenzelman will be hostess.

All Parishes—

- ◆ The next Adult Religious Ed Class will be announced.
- ◆ Tri-Parish Office Hours— Our office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 9am—12 pm.
- ◆ Call the parish office to request your statement of donations to the parish for 2024.

◆



First Friday adoration will be held on Friday, March 7 at Sacred Heart .

Adoration will conclude with Benediction at 3:00 followed by Stations of the Cross.

Venerable Norbert McAuliffe on the Blessed Sacrament

When Brother Norbert was asked by someone on what someone should do during a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, he replied,

***"Just sit there and let God's love come to you from the tabernacle."***

# FISH FRY

Mark your calendar:



# FRIDAY

Knights of Columbus will be hosting a fish fry on

Friday, March 7 at the Herscher American Legion. Start the first Friday of Lent of right with a delicious fish or shrimp dinner.



## Grow in faith!



**Obscure saint of the week: St. Juliana of Nicomedia (Feb. 16)** was the daughter of a pagan named Africanus who promised the girl to a young noble named Evilase. Juliana put him off, first insisting that he become the prefect of Nicomedia. When he became prefect, she insisted he become a Christian before they could marry, a condition he would never meet. Her father, who hated Christians himself, abused Juliana fearfully to get her to change her mind, but she held fast; ancient manuscripts describing these horrors put them in terms of her fighting a dragon, and she is often depicted that way in art. Evilase called her before the tribunal during the persecutions of Maximianus, denounced her as a Christian, and she was martyred. Her's was a favorite story, for telling and creation of stained glass and other art objects, during the Middle Ages.



**Obscure saint of the week : St. Maruta (Feb.16)** was the bishop of Mayferkqat, Syria, part of the kingdom of Persia, in the late 4th and early 5th centuries. He presided over the *Council of Seleucia*, worked to build and repair churches that had been lost during the persecutions of King Sapor, and collected so many of the relics that had been scattered during that time that his see city became known as *Martyropolis*. He composed a number of hymns in honor of the martyrs, and wrote "Acts" of as many as he could research. Because of the wealth of his theological writings, he is honored as the chief Doctor of the Syrian Church.

Maruta once went to the court of King Yezdigerd to seek an end to persecution of Christians. While there, he was able to cure the king of a series of violently painful headaches. The Zoroastrian priests, afraid that

### The Sunday gospel in everyday English

Coming down off the mountain with them, he stood on a plain surrounded by disciples, and was soon joined by a huge congregation from all over Judea and Jerusalem, even from the seaside towns of Tyre and Sidon. Then he spoke:

You're blessed when you've lost it all.  
 God's kingdom is there for the finding.  
 You're blessed when you're ravenously hungry.  
 Then you're ready for the Messianic meal.  
 You're blessed when the tears flow freely.  
 Joy comes with the morning.

"Count yourself blessed every time someone cuts you down or throws you out, every time someone smears or blackens your name to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and that that person is uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens—skip like a lamb, if you like!—for even though they don't like it, I do . . . and all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company; my preachers and witnesses have always been treated like this.

But it's trouble ahead if you think you have it made.  
 What you have is all you'll ever get.  
 And it's trouble ahead if you're satisfied with yourself.  
 Your self will not satisfy you for long.  
 And it's trouble ahead if you think life's all fun and games.  
 There's suffering to be met, and you're going to meet it.

"There's trouble ahead when you live only for the approval of others, saying what flatters them, doing what indulges them. Popularity contests are not truth contests—look how many scoundrel preachers were approved by your ancestors! Your task is to be true, not popular" (from Luke 6).

### Reflection      Sharing

Until we give it away, it does not begin to grow.

For love is the type of thing that must nurture something before it can start to flow.

Our Lord takes what we are willing to share and multiplies it, as the loaves and fishes, for the benefit of others there.

Please plan on attending this event that supports our future priests—this event is open to all. Please complete the Dinner Reservation below and return to Deacon Pat Skelly prior to March 21, 2025. Please see Deacon Ron for additional reservation forms.

**VOCATIONAL DINNER & AUCTION**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2025**

**CMA HALL \*187 S. INDIANA AVE.\* KANKAKEE, IL**

**Cocktails: 6:00 p.m. Dinner: 7:00 p.m. RSVP Deadline—March 21, 2025**

**\$23 Per Person For Dinner, Auction will follow**

**Please enclose check, make payable to: McNamara Assembly 202**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **City** \_\_\_\_\_, **zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like the following dinners:**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Stuffed Chicken** \_\_\_\_ **Pork Chop** \_\_\_\_ **Beef** \_\_\_\_

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Stuffed Chicken** \_\_\_\_ **Pork Chop** \_\_\_\_ **Beef** \_\_\_\_

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Stuffed Chicken** \_\_\_\_ **Pork Chop** \_\_\_\_ **Beef** \_\_\_\_

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Stuffed Chicken** \_\_\_\_ **Pork Chop** \_\_\_\_ **Beef** \_\_\_\_

**Please send with payment to Deacon Pat Skelly, 1403 Guildford Drive, Bourbonnais, IL 60914**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I cannot attend but would like to make a donation.**

Catholic Snacks, Get Fed  
Have you ever heard of the Viking Bishop?  
He helped solve a theft with gentle words.

Among the rugged fjords and icy mountains of Norway, a very different kind of Viking emerged: St. Eystein Erlendsson.

St. Eystein served as Archbishop of Nidaros (modern-day Trondheim) during the 12th century, a turbulent period in Norwegian history. The Church was still finding its place in a land where old pagan traditions lingered, and political rivalries were common and dangerous.

One day, Eystein received news that a church in his diocese had been robbed. The thieves had taken valuable items, including a large bronze bell. In those days, church bells were more than tools for calling people to prayer; they were symbols of the community's faith and a reminder of God's presence in a place.

The loss of the bell was a disheartening blow.

Eystein suspected that the thieves had hidden it to melt down the bronze for profit—so he devised a plan.

Along with a small convoy, he made the treacherous journey to the region where the theft had occurred.

During a gathering of local leaders, he spoke about the importance of justice and the sanctity of church property. Eystein announced that he would consecrate the entire area, calling on God to reveal the location of the stolen bell.

The crowd, including the thieves, became uneasy.

The bell was returned that same night.

When the bell was found, Eystein addressed the thieves with mercy and a funny thing began to happen: the community's faith began to grow!

We don't hear much about the Church during the Viking era or think of Vikings as bishops, but Church history is extensive and surprising!

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



**Bingo + Exercise = BINGOsize®**

BINGOsize® is a 20 week health promotion program that combines the game of bingo with fall prevention exercise. Play bingo with us and meet new people while learning about techniques to reduce falls.

**Dates: Monday afternoons,  
January 6th through June 9th, 2025  
Time: 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm  
(No class on 1/20, 2/17, or 5/26)**

**Location: St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church, 207 E. 5th  
St., Herscher IL, 60941**

**TO REGISTER,  
CALL NATALIA  
(815) 933-7791 EXT 9954**



Attendance at these events indicates consent for Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet, Inc., to use my photo to promote and increase awareness of programs and services offered by the Agency. Photos may be used in Catholic Charities' printed materials, online, media, or by grantors.

**Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet is a faith-based organization providing service to people in need and calling others of good will to do the same.**

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

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

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

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

February 16, 2025

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

## Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jer 17:5-8 | 1 Cor 15:12, 16-20 | Lk 6:17, 20-26

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

"It is so good to be poor, to have nothing, to await all from God!" These sentiments of the humble French religious sister St. Jeanne Jugan sum up the spirit of Jesus' words in today's Gospel. Jesus praises poverty, hunger, sadness, and rejection, but certainly not as ends in themselves; God does not take pleasure in our suffering! He does use our suffering, however, to awaken us to our need for him. Poverty can spur us to pursue *heavenly* goods, and thus Jesus assures the poor, "the kingdom of God is yours." Hunger can cause us to seek God who alone can truly satiate our desires, and thus Jesus says to the hungry, "you will be satisfied." Those who weep will laugh, Jesus says - so long as their sadness inspires them to seek happiness in the service of God and the joys of eternal life. For all of us, no matter our means or our circumstances, today's Gospel is a reminder to allow everything - including our difficulties, disappointments, and unfulfilled desires - to turn our hearts to God and rely on his loving care.

### **GO** EVANGELIZE

#### PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

It can be difficult to practice the spirit of the Beatitudes (as the "blessings" in today's Gospel are called) in the moment. Suffering, distress, and confusion easily divert our attention from God as we attempt to "make the problem go away." Sometimes we are even tempted to give up, to turn aside from God, and to seek consolation in other things. This is exactly the opposite of what he wants for us, and for good reason! God knows that it is best for us to always rely on him. This is why, as today's first reading explains, the man who trusts in the Lord is secure - "like a tree planted beside the waters ... it fears not the heat when it comes" - and fruitful - "its leaves stay green." For those who trust in the Lord, help comes from the all-powerful, infinitely loving Creator of the universe. When we entrust ourselves to him, we have nothing to fear.

### ACCOMPANY

Is there someone in your life who is struggling with fear, loneliness, anxiety, or sadness? Take time to pray with that person and, together, try to discover God's invitation to a deeper reliance on him in the midst of the distress. These moments of suffering are never occasions for us to get "preachy." Instead, accompany your friend and be a reminder of the hope we have in God.



SPIRITUALITY

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Luke 6:23ab

℟. Alleluia, alleluia.  
Rejoice and be glad;  
your reward will be great in heaven.  
℟. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Luke 6:17, 20-26; L78C

Jesus came down with the  
Twelve  
and stood on a stretch of level  
ground  
with a great crowd of his  
disciples  
and a large number of the  
people  
from all Judea and Jerusalem  
and the coastal region of Tyre  
and Sidon.

And raising his eyes toward his  
disciples he said:

“Blessed are you who are  
poor,  
for the kingdom of God is yours.  
Blessed are you who are now hungry,  
for you will be satisfied.  
Blessed are you who are now weeping,  
for you will laugh.  
Blessed are you when people hate you,  
and when they exclude and insult  
you,  
and denounce your name as evil  
on account of the Son of Man.

Rejoice and leap for joy on that day!  
Behold, your reward will be great in  
heaven.

For their ancestors treated the prophets  
in the same way.

But woe to you who are rich,  
for you have received your  
consolation.

Woe to you who are filled now,  
for you will be hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now,  
for you will grieve and weep.

Woe to you when all speak well of you,  
for their ancestors treated the false  
prophets in this way.”

Reflecting on the Gospel

About 1.4 billion people in the world live on \$1.25 or less per day. The majority of poor people worldwide are women. Their opportunities for education are fewer, and their earnings still lag far behind those of their male counterparts. Care of home and children go uncompensated. How can it be that Jesus would pronounce blessed those who struggle against such poverty?

Biblical scholars point out that the Greek word *makarios*, like the Hebrew *‘ashrê*, meaning “blessed,” does not confer blessing but recognizes an existing state of happiness. This happiness is something inherent in God, and when humans experience blessedness, it flows from relationship with God. In biblical tradition, poverty is never an indicator of blessedness; it is always regarded as evil. What can Jesus mean by stating the opposite?

In the Gospel of Luke, references to the poor are very frequent. Scholars estimate that 25 percent of people in Roman Palestine were desperately poor. Two concrete individual characters put faces on this mass of struggling humanity: the ulcer-ridden beggar Lazarus, lying at the rich man’s gate (16:19-31), and the widow who put “her whole livelihood,” two small coins, into the temple treasury (21:1-4).



Whenever Jesus speaks about such people, however, he addresses his words to disciples who are not among the most destitute. They are the ones who have the means to be agents of divine blessing to those who are needy. His invitation to disciples is to embrace some form of being poor, but not destitution, as an essential aspect of their commitment to Jesus. Luke shows many options for how to respond to this call to embrace poverty. Some of the fishermen and a tax collector leave behind everything to follow Jesus (5:11, 28). Others, like Zacchaeus, give half their possessions to the poor (19:8). Many of the women put their monetary resources at the service of Jesus’s mission (8:1-3). Some, like Mary, the mother of John Mark, opened their homes for the gatherings of the community (Acts 12:12). There was also the practice of pooling everyone’s resources and then each taking according to their need (Acts 2:44; 4:32). The only thing that was not an option was to hoard for oneself, like the rich ruler (Luke 18:18-30), or to lie to the community about one’s possessions, as the tragic story of Ananias and Sapphira shows (Acts 5:1-11).

The blessedness that Jesus holds up is the happiness of those who are being liberated from their desperate poverty already in the here and now, a foretaste of the final elimination of all want in the fullness of the reign of God. It is not a wish for future reward for an abstract, unknown group of “the poor” who suffer in the present, but a concrete possibility when the needs of real people are known and the resources are shared in community.

This could be a good time to renew our efforts at becoming agents of blessedness through our prayer for those who are in need, fasting in solidarity with those who are hungry not by choice, and almsgiving to those who are destitute.