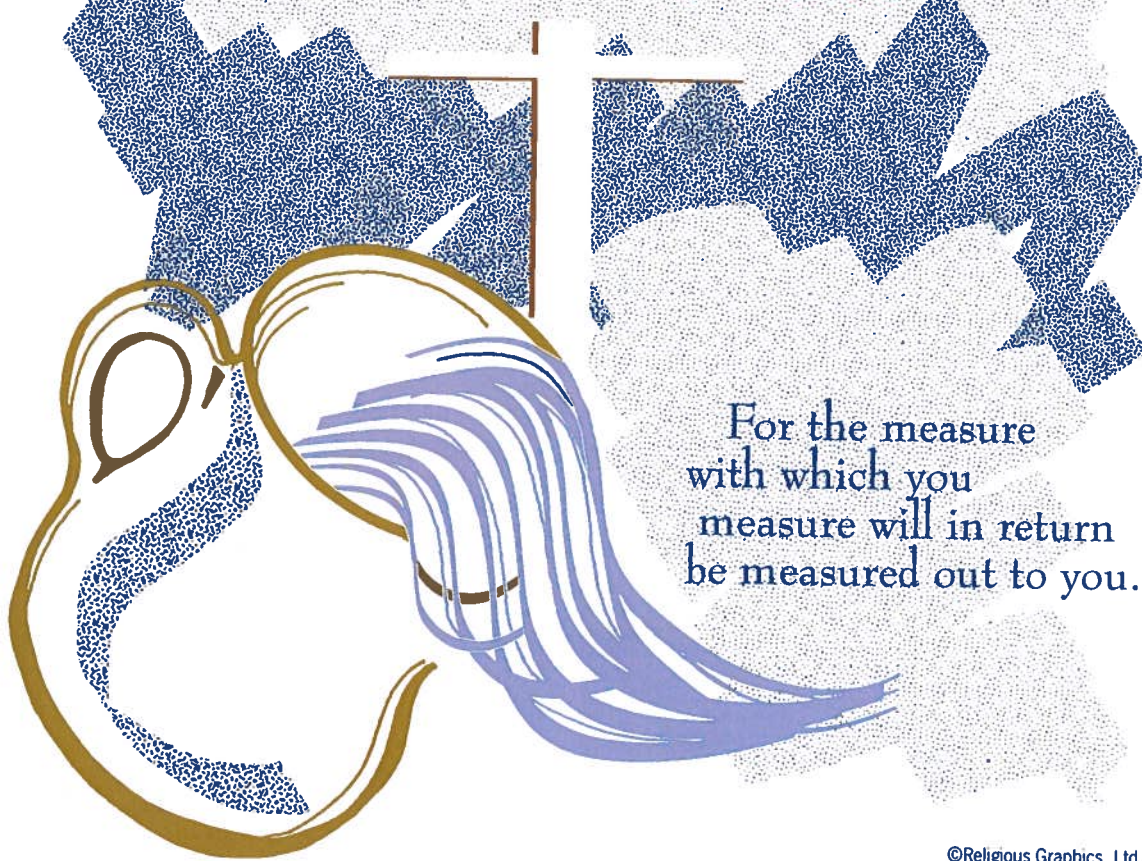


The Roman Catholic Parishes of
St. Margaret Mary, Herscher
St. James the Apostle, Irwin
Sacred Heart, Goodrich

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FEBRUARY 22-23, 2025

BE MERCIFUL
just as your FATHER in
heaven is merciful



For the measure
with which you
measure will in return
be measured out to you.

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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: "Just as love is a verb, so is faith."

—Nannie Helen Burroughs, social activist, black women's labor organizer

Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

March 1-2, 2025

| | | | | |
|----------------------|---|--|---|--|
| Liturgical Schedule | St. Margaret Mary Saturday, March 1 5:00 pm | Sacred Heart Sunday, March 2 7:30 am | St. James Sunday March 2 9:00 am | St. Margaret Mary Sunday, March 2 10:30 am |
| Celebrant | Fr. Ron | Fr. Ron Deacon Ron | Fr. Ron | Fr. Ron |
| Ushers | Dave Emling Gery Wright Dan Hoffman Roger Jensen | Kyle Ferris James Mallaney | Dallas Ferris Dan Forsythe Dave Ladehoff Jerry Ogrentz | Wayne Bisailon Brent Fulton Erik Wheeler Corinn Wheeler |
| Lector | Hillary Webb | Rhonda Berns | Andy Hansen | Diane Long |
| Eucharistic Minister | | | Dena Coy | Hollie Lovell |
| Servers | | | | Caroline Fulton |
| Greeters | | | Greeter—Donna Bernicky R. Leader—Karen Miller | Julie Splear |

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, Feb. 24 (SMM)

8:00 am Ann Wheeler (MaryAnn Wagner)

Tuesday, Feb. 25 (SH)

8:00 am Sondra Hertz (Malone Chemical)

Wednesday, Feb. 26 (SJ)

8:00 am No Mass

Friday, Feb. 28 (SMM)

8:00 am Thomas Smolkovich (John & Diane Smolkovich)

Saturday, March 1 (SMM)

5:00 pm For All the Parish Family)

Sunday, March 2

7:30 am (SH) +Raumond Berns, Bessie Riley, Roberta Gagnon, Mario DalCanton (The Family)

(T9:00am (SJ) +Pat Perreault (Bruce/Cathy Jensen)

**10:30 am (SMM) +Vicki Webber (Wayne/Julie Bisailon)
+Jim Webber (Bruce/Cathy Jensen)**

Question of the Week

Who has hurt me to whom I can give mercy? How can I go about giving mercy, giving life, to them?

A Look Ahead

Spring Forward Donut Breakfast—Sunday, March 9th immediately following mass at St. James

Sacred Heart CCW Meeting—March 11th, 6:30PM Hostesses are Shirley St. Germaine and Denise Wenzelman

Sacred Heart Spring Luncheon - April 24th

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

St. James—Tanhya Osenga tosenga81@gmail.com

Parish Nurse – Jackie Eberle – 815-421-4048

Prayer Line—

SMM -Janice 815-426-2574 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

Collections Weekend of Feb. 15-16, 2025

St. Margaret Mary—\$ 1,409

St. James—\$ 1,219

Sacred Heart—\$ 1,407

Thank you for your generosity!

All Parishes—Ash Wednesday Schedule: March 5th

8:00AM St. James

12:00PM Sacred Heart

7:00PM St. Margaret Mary

March 7th First Friday—Sacred Heart

March 7th Stations of the Cross—3:00 Sacred Heart

Wed. March 12th, 7PM Scriptural Stations of the Cross SJ

Friday, March 14th Stations of the Cross 3PM SJ

Wed. March 19th, Scriptural Stations of the Cross 7PM SMM

Friday, March 21st Stations of the Cross 3:00 SMM

*Please note, when Stations are held at SMM plan on being here 10-15 minutes early to avoid school traffic.

Wed. April 2nd 7PM Scriptural Stations of the Cross SJ

Friday, April 4th Stations of the Cross 3:00 SJ

Wed. April 9th, 7PM Scriptural Stations of the Cross SMM

Friday, April 11th Stations of the Cross 3:00 SMM

Reflections A Little Push

I was sitting in my car the other day when an old clunker stalled nearby. The driver was unable to start the old car and traffic quickly started backing up behind him. Horns sounded and angry drivers shouted their unpleasant words at the embarrassed man. After a while, cars began to pull around the old car. Finally, one person drove up behind the stalled vehicle and gave it a push. Soon it began moving under its own power and traffic got underway again.

How like life that is! Someone is halted by circumstances. Most people shout their disgust at the unfortunate person and leave him to his fate. All he really needs is a little push to get started

Gospel Shorts The Wit to Win

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How like life that is! Someone is halted by circumstances. Most people shout their disgust at the unfortunate person and leave him to his fate. All he really needs is a little push to get started again.

Just as in any church, we have a few "stalled vehicles" who need a little push to get on the move again. If you know of someone who is losing interest in the church, or someone who is mired up to their axles in personal problems, offer them a little encouragement.

Parish News:

St. Margaret Mary—

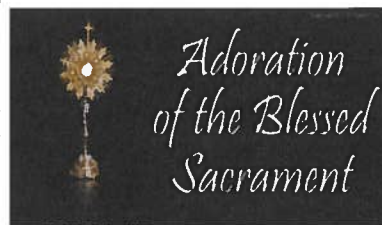
St. James—Spring Forward Breakfast—Following 9:00 Mass all are welcome— March 9th

Food pantry—Lenten project, Items will be collected starting March 5, more details to follow.

Sacred Heart—

- ◆ The next Sacred Heart C.C.W. meeting will be Tues. March 11th at 6:30 p.m. in the church hall. Denise Wenzelman will be hostess.
- ◆ Save the date: Sacred Heart CCW Spring Luncheon will be Thursday, April 24th in Parish Hall
- ◆ 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.

Sacred Heart—Blessed Virgin Mary candle burns in prayer for Kathy Meli.



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."

Obscure saint of the week: St. Giovanni Theristi (Feb. 23) When his mother was pregnant with "Giovanni" (we don't know his birth name), she was enslaved and taken to Palermo, Sicily by Saracen raiders; his father, Arconte di Cursano, a farmer, was killed in the same attack. His mother raised Giovanni as a Christian as best she could, though there were no churches or clergy in the Saracen controlled area. At age 14, Giovanni escaped from Sicily in a small boat, a hand-held cross as his only possession. His boat grounded at the small town of Stilo, Italy. He told the people who found him that he wanted to be baptized, so they handed him over to their bishop. The bishop first suspected that the boy, who was dressed as a Moor, might be involved with Saracen raiding parties, but eventually realized that he was truthful, and baptized him into the faith at one of the old monasteries around the town; the bishop's name was *Giovanni*, and the boy took that as his new name.



Living among Christians, Giovanni began feeling a call to religious life. This led him to study with the monks who lived in the caves around Stilo. He particularly learned from two ascetic Basilian monks, Ambrose and Nicola, and joined the [Basilians](#) while still a young man. He became abbot of the community. Abbot Giovanni founded the monastery at Bivongi, Italy; the house was later re-named in his honor.

There are a number of stories about Giovanni that have survived, some miraculous, others mundane and simply show the man's concern for the poor and dedication to Christian life and the Basilian Rule –

- The boat young Giovanni used to escape from Palermo had no oars or sails but carried the boy safely to Stilo without them.
- While at sea, the boat was spotted by Turkish raiders. When the raiders approached the boat, it hid from them by sinking beneath the water; it re-surfaced after the raiders had sailed on. Giovanni, of course, was fine.
- Brother Giovanni would help reapers in the field and then give all he had earned to the poor.
- Abbot Giovanni once prayed for help to save a harvest that was about to be destroyed by a storm; an angel appeared and instantly harvested the crop, saving the peasants from starving.
- In another instance, he prayed for help to save a harvest from a storm. The storm stopped moving and waited until the crop was harvested by the locals; Giovanni then stopped praying, and the storm moved on over the field.
- When he learned of treasure that belonged to his family from before the Saracen raid that killed his father, he distributed the new-found wealth to the poor.
- In one of the caves near the Basilian monastery is a spring of water; in winter, Giovanni would stand in the icy waters to pray.
- Ruggero il Guiscardo, suffering from an incurable sore on his face, was healed upon contact with Giovanni's tunic.



Obscure saint of the week : St. Giuditta Adelaide Agata Vannini (Feb. 23) was orphaned as a small child. She was raised in the Torlonia Conservatory on Via Sant' Onofrio, under the guidance of the *Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul*. She entered the *Daughters'* novitiate in Siena, Italy, but was forced to leave due to poor health.

On retreat in 1891 she met Blessed Louis Tezza, procurator general of the *Camillians*. He had been thinking of founding a women's community for the care of the sick. He invited Josephine to help establish the new community, she prayed over it and decided "yes." In 1892 she and two companions received the scapular of *Camillian* tertiaries, and a year later professed private vows, adding the vow of service to the sick, even at risk of their lives. They took their perpetual vows in 1895, and Josephine was elected Superior General. Blessed Louis was sent to Lima, Peru in 1900, responsibility for the new congregation rested with Mother Vannini, and under her leadership the congregation spread to France, Belgium and Argentina.

Questions Catholics Ask

What's the purpose of a wake service?

Officially known as the Vigil for the Deceased, the wake service is part of a sequence of funeral rites conducted according to local custom and clergy accessibility—and nowadays, with Covid protocols in place. In the revised Rites of the Catholic Church, these rites all share a dual purpose: to commend the dead to God and to support Christian hope among the living.

The stations of the funeral rite in their fullest expression recognize significant times and places surrounding the death of a loved one. They include a vigil in the home at the time of death, the laying out of the body, the gathering of relatives and friends for a consoling Liturgy of the Word, the life-affirming sharing of the Eucharist at the church, and the final commendation and burial at the cemetery. These rites presume that spiritual preparation of the sick and dying, and their families, was pastorally administered. In this way, the deceased and the mourners are accompanied through the process of loss and consolation comprehensively.

These three stations of the funeral rite—in the home, in church, and at the cemetery—aren't always geographically possible or culturally appropriate. A second option with two stations is therefore recommended: at the chapel and the gravesite. A third plan has one station: at the home of the deceased. In the United States, the wake service is typically held at a funeral home rather than an individual's home, followed by a funeral Mass and cemetery committal service.

The rites are uncommonly delicate in their recommendations, especially regarding the wake. Family traditions, local customs, and "anything that is good may be used freely" ("Funerals," 2). Some families may want to pray the rosary together or sit in silence; others may include singing and telling stories. Only that which is "alien to the gospel" is discouraged. The central concern is that those gathered have sufficient opportunity to pray and profess their faith.

Whether the vigil takes place in the home or at church, the body of the deceased may be available for viewing or in a closed casket. Remains may also be placed in a position of respect. Typically a greeting, psalm, Scripture reading, brief homily, general intercessions, and the Lord's Prayer comprise the formal parts of a wake. While a priest or deacon may lead the service, it's also permissible that a lay person do this—and the other funeral rites, too, save the Eucharist itself, when no priest is available.

Scripture: Genesis 23:1-20; 47:28-31; 49:28-50:14; Deuteronomy 34:5-8; 1 Samuel 31:8-13; 2 Samuel 1:11-12, 17-27; Tobit 1:16-20; 2:1-8; 4:4; Sirach 38:9-23; Mark 15:42—16:1; Matthew 26:6-13; Luke 7:11-17; John 11:17-44; 19:38-42



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



Bingo + Exercise = Bingocize®

BINGOCIZE® 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**



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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.

Reflection The Most Important Thing

When General William Dean was captured by the North Koreans, he was permitted to write one letter home. That letter, addressed to his son, said "Bill, remember that integrity

Listening

Nature gave humans two ears but only one tongue, which is a gentle hint that they should listen more than they talk.

Everyone Welcome!!! It is not too late to join BINGOCIZE!! Join us in the Parish Hall at St. Margaret Mary—Monday's at 1:00 Free to all! Give Natalia a call at (815)933-7791 EXT 9954

Catholic Snacks, Get Fed

Did the saints ever lose their tempers?

When we struggle with anger, we tend to think that we'll never be saints.



Would you have me lose in a quarter of an hour the small stock of gentleness which I have been painfully amassing for the last twenty years?"

Thus spoke St. Francis de Sales, the spiritual director of St. Jane Frances de Chantal, when she urged him to be more stern with some folk who were interfering with the construction of the convent of the Visitation Order.

St. Francis de Sales was so gentle in his disposition that no one would ever have known that he had a naturally quick temper. He had identified his proclivity to anger, worked on it, and gradually mastered it. He was not perfect, but he pursued perfection, and it showed. His spiritual approach—illustrated in such classics as *Introduction to the Devout Life*—has assisted countless souls in their journey to sanctity.

St. Jerome, too, had a fiery temper—a natural result of an intense personality. He even got into some arguments with St. Augustine (they later patched things up). But Jerome knew his fault and strove to conquer it—and did severe penance for it. It is said he carried around a stone and beat his breast in reparation for his sins.

St. Thérèse is honest in her writings about the temptations against charity which she experienced at Carmel. In *The Story of a Soul*, she tells of the manifold irritations and contradictions she met in community life. She transformed them into stepping stones to holiness by viewing them as opportunities for grace.

Being a saint isn't about being flawless. It's about working on flaws—and using them as opportunities for perfection. If you're honest about your faults and take concrete steps to correct them, you've already taken a giant leap toward sanctity.

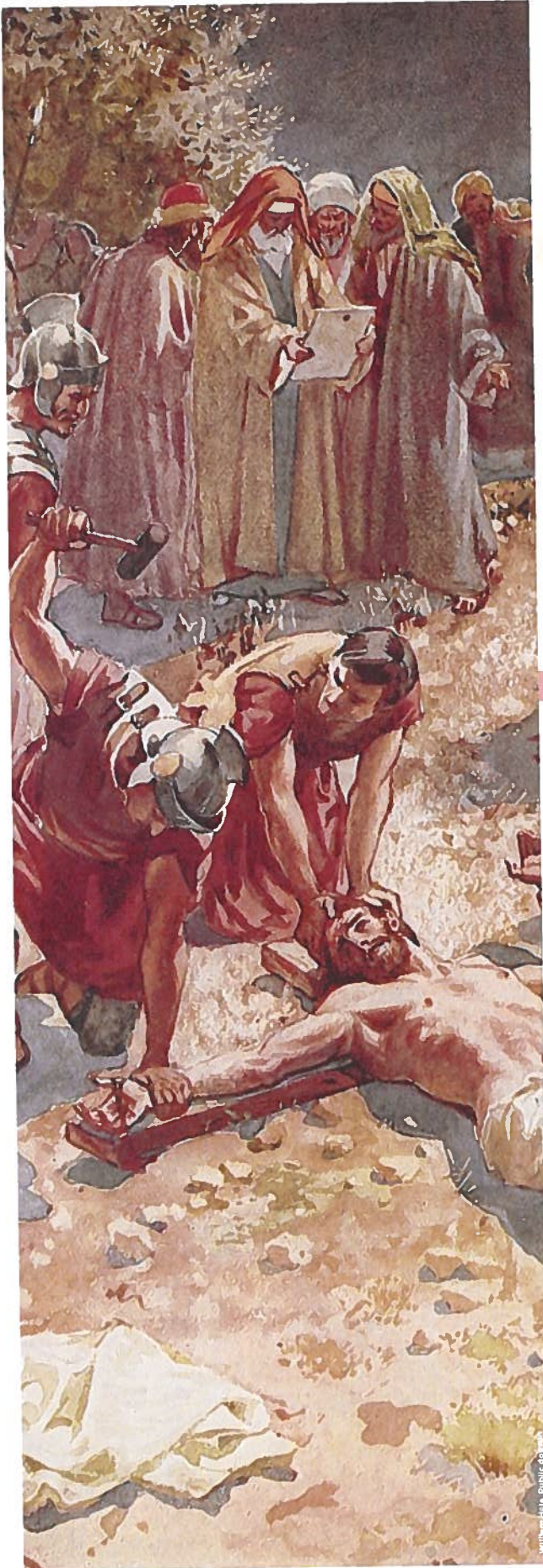
The Sunday gospel in everyday English

Jesus said to his disciples: "To you who are ready for the truth, I say this: Love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer for that person. If someone slaps you in the face, stand there and take it. If someone grabs your shirt, giftwrap your best coat and make a present of it. If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. No more tit-for-tat stuff. Live generously.

"Here is a simple rule of thumb for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for them! If you only love the lovable, do you expect a pat on the back? Run-of-the-mill sinners do that. If you only help those who help you, do you expect a medal? Garden-variety sinners do that. If you only give for what you hope to get out of it, do you think that's charity? The stingiest of pawnbrokers does that.

"I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. You'll never—I promise—regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we're at our worst. Our Father is kind; you be kind.

"Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults—unless, of course, you want the same treatment. Don't condemn those who are down; that hardness can boomerang. Be easy on people; you'll find life a lot easier. Give away your life; you'll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity". (from Luke 6).



February 23, 2025

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Sam 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23 | 1 Cor 15:45-49 | Lk 6:27-38

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

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

“Love your enemies” may be one of the most oft-quoted verses of Scripture. We tend to think of it as a moral principle to guide us in our dealings with people who rub us the wrong way. But do we ever consider what it tells us about God? After all, Jesus, who is God himself, speaks it. God tells us to love our enemies because *God loves his “enemies”* – that is, those who freely choose to oppose his plan of life and love. On the cross, Jesus forgave and prayed for the people who sought to kill him *while they were crucifying him*. But his mercy was not confined to that time and place alone; he died for each of us who, whenever we sin, refuse to love him. If we get this into our heads and our hearts – “God loves and forgives *me*” – we can begin to rest in his embrace like children confident in the unconditional love of their father’s heart.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

If, as a child, you learned a musical instrument for which regular recitals were the norm, you know how many hours of practice are required for a few short minutes of performance. You know, too, that if you are well prepared, a musical composition which appeared impossible months before comes easily and naturally on the day of the recital. For most of us, loving our enemies as Jesus commands us to do appears far beyond our reach – impossible, in fact. But this kind of heroic love is nevertheless God’s call for us, and he will never deny us the grace we need to respond to his call. What’s required on our part is a willingness to practice. If we practice loving in small things even when it’s difficult – listening patiently to someone whose conversation bores us, for example, or taking on an extra chore without seeking recognition or thanks – we will be prepared for the day when God asks us to make an even greater act of love for his sake.

PRACTICE

This week, go out of your way to find opportunities to love even when it’s difficult. Do your best to be conscious of your intentions, even in the moment, by asking God for the grace to love generously and by offering your act of love to him.

SPIRITUALITY

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

John 13:34

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

I gave you a new commandment, says the Lord:

love one another as I have loved you.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Luke 6:27-38; L81C

Jesus said to his disciples:

"To you who hear I say,
love your enemies, do good
to those who hate you,
bless those who curse you,
pray for those who mis-
treat you.

To the person who strikes you
on one cheek,
offer the other one as well,
and from the person who
takes your cloak,
do not withhold even your
tunic.

Give to everyone who asks of you,
and from the one who takes what is
yours do not demand it back.

Do to others as you would have them do
to you.

For if you love those who love you,
what credit is that to you?

Even sinners love those who love them.

And if you do good to those who do
good to you,

what credit is that to you?

Even sinners do the same.

If you lend money to those from whom
you expect repayment,

what credit is that to you?

Even sinners lend to sinners,

and get back the same amount.

Continued in Appendix A, p. 270.

Reflecting on the Gospel

The expression "you have to learn to give as good as you get" in American idiom refers to the ability to hold your own in a group of strong-willed people. Sometimes parents say it to their children to encourage them to stand up to bullies. What "you get" is thought to be something challenging or difficult. In today's gospel, the meaning is just the opposite. What we get from the Divine

Giver is overflowing abundance of compassion, pardon, and love. Among a people who have struggled to have enough food, to be given an overflowing measure of grain is an image of the Creator's care and providence. How is one to respond to the unearned gift of God's gracious mercy? The gospel gives the answer: by emulating the One whose child we are.

Jesus spells out some of the ways that God's children do as God does: loving enemies, doing good to those who do hateful things, blessing those who speak abusively, and praying for such people. This manner of acting is not unique to Jesus. The first reading also gives an example of how not to return evil for evil. David chooses not to harm Saul, even though King Saul had been trying to kill David.

Beyond individual actions of nonretaliation, Jesus invites his followers into a fundamental stance in life that must be chosen so that we reflect the image of the One who made us. By continually opening ourselves to the immeasurable goodness, compassion, and love of the Most High, our puny capacities are stretched and expanded. The more we become conscious of how much we graciously receive, the more our measure for giving to others increases.

Such a life stance demands relinquishing what is our more natural reaction: to want to return in kind what we get. If someone strikes us, our instinct is to hit back. If someone speaks unkindly of us, our urge is to match the ugly words with even more hurtful ones toward the other. If something is taken from us, we want repayment with interest. Measure for measure, and then some—that is what we instinctively seek. But Jesus points out that when evil is returned for evil, all it does is increase the measure of evil in the world. Meting out goodness, compassion, pardon—especially when that is contrary to what is directed toward us—subdues and transforms evil. It ruptures the power of evil and redirects energies toward filling the world with gracious mercy.

The final verses in the gospel may at first seem to say that we will be treated by God the way we treat others. But the two previous verses (vv. 35 and 36) give us as the starting point God's unearned goodness and mercy toward us. What enables us to be compassionate, nonjudgmental, forgiving, and giving is that God has first been that way with us. Such divine action in us then shapes our ability to measure the way God does.

