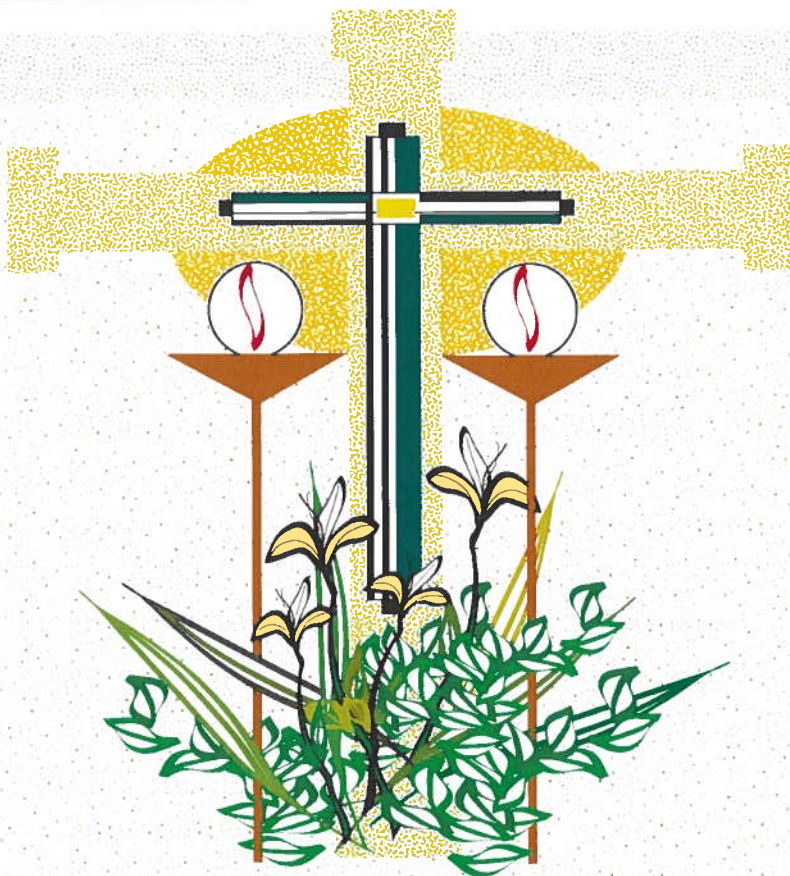


**The Roman Catholic Parishes of**  
**St. Margaret Mary, Herscher**  
**St. James the Apostle, Irwin**  
**Sacred Heart, Goodrich**

**20TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**AUGUST 16-17, 2025**



For the sake of the joy that lay before him  
he endured the cross and he has taken  
his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

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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: "Without justice, courage is weak."

—Benjamin Franklin

**21st Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**August 23-24, 2025**

Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, August 23 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, August 24 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, August 24 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, August 24 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron
Ushers	Dan Hoffman Roger Jensen Todd Datweiler Gery Wright	Kyle Ferris Dennis Pankey	Dan Forsythe Cathy Jensen Jerry Ogrentz Arlen Hansen	Brent Fulton Erik Wheeler Corinn Wheeler Larry Wolles
Lector	Dave Emling	Mike Hertz	Dave Ladehoff	Julie Splear
Eucharistic Minister				Susan Feller
Servers				
Greeters			Greeter—Mary Offerman R. Leader—Peerboltes	Brent Fulton

**Mass Intentions for the Week**

**Monday, August 18 (SMM)**

**8:00 am** +Madonna Hoffman (Mark Gerberding)

**Tuesday, August 19 (SH)**

**8:00 am** +Elsie Dumas (Legris/Renville Families)

**Wednesday, August 20 (SJ)**

**8:00 am** +Ivan Denault (Maureen O'Connor)

**Friday, August 22 (SMM)**

**8:00 am SMM** +Nina Smolkovich (Diane Smolkovich)

**Saturday, August 23 (SMM)**

**5:00 pm** +Mary Polvere (Gayle/Rob Landeck)  
+Bob & Annamae Landeck (Jackie Eberle)

**Sunday, August 24**

**7:30 am (SH)** +Emile Denault (Jackie Cross)

**9:00 am (SJ)** +Paul Muhlstadt (Maryanne Cooley)  
+Rita O'Connor (Dave/Martha O'Connor)

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

**A Look Ahead**

**Monday, August 18**—Parish Council meeting at SJ 7pm  
**Wed., August 27**—Float building at O'Connor's 6 pm  
**Mon., Sept. 1**—Herscher Labor Day Celebration  
**Tuesday, Sept. 2**—Parish Council meeting at SMM 7pm

Pastor— Fr. Ron Neitzke- 815-426-2550  
Deacon – Ron Gagnon— rjgckg@aol.com  
Home—815-933-4077

Parish Email – smm\_sja\_sh@yahoo.com  
TriParish web page – [www.triparishcatholics.org](http://www.triparishcatholics.org)  
Like us on Facebook triparishcatholic communities  
**Tri Parish Church office** –Barb Riker 426-2550  
Julie Bisailon 426-2550

**Bulletin** – Debbie Jensen - 426-2550  
debjen04@gmail.com

**Religious Education** –  
St. MM – Jill Fulton [jfulton.stmm@gmail.com](mailto:jfulton.stmm@gmail.com)  
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:**

When has something I've said or done in accordance with my faith divided family or friends? How have I handled this? Could I have handled it better?



### Collections Weekend of August 9-10

St. Margaret Mary—\$2,155

Sacred Heart—\$1,192

St. James—\$1,421

Thank you for your generosity!

### The Sunday Gospel in Everyday English

"I've come to start a fire on this earth—how I wish it were blazing right now! I've come to change everything, turn everything rightside up—how I long for it to be finished! Do you think I came to smooth things over and make everything nice? Not so. I've come to disrupt and confront! From now on, when you find five in a house, it will be—

Three against two,  
and two against three;  
Father against son,  
and son against father;  
Mother against daughter,  
and daughter against mother;  
Mother-in-law against bride,  
and bride against mother-in-law" (from Luke 12).

### A Stewardship Moment

#### Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

#### Weekend of August 16/17, 2025

In today's second reading, we hear the author of the letter to the Hebrews liken the daily life of the Christian steward to a race, a long-distance race perhaps, certainly not a sprint; requiring endurance and a single-minded focus on Jesus at the finish line. Good stewards are firmly committed to running the race, to live the Christian life to the fullest, to keep their eyes focused on Jesus. They don't grow weary. They don't lose heart. They know there is immense joy waiting for them at the finish line. Are you fully committed to living each day for Christ? Are you running the race, or are you simply jogging? Just walking? Sitting? Going backwards? Going nowhere? Some of us may want to reflect on what we can do to run the race with even more conviction. Others may want to reflect on how to simply enter the race and start running

**WE ASK  
IN THE NAME  
OF JESUS**

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### Parish News:

#### All Parishes—

⇒ **Our Adult Ed class will resume in the fall. If you are interested in attending, please call the office to register. As in the past it will be on Wednesday nights.**

⇒ **It's time for a new Pictorial Directory! Our dates are Oct. 16-18. Just for participating you will receive a complimentary 8 x 10 portrait and a church directory. Be watching for more upcoming information.**

⇒ **Tri-Parish Office Hours—** Our office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 9am—12 pm.

**St. Margaret Mary—**

**St. James—**

**Sacred Heart—**



Our Tri Parish Labor Day float will be built on Wednesday, August 27 at Dennis & SueAnn O'Connor's at 6:00 pm. We are hoping to see parishioners from all three parishes there as the float represents all of us. We especially are looking for some younger people/families to get involved! (But will definitely appreciate the old veteran float builders!)



**Religious Education classes will be starting up again soon at all three parishes.**

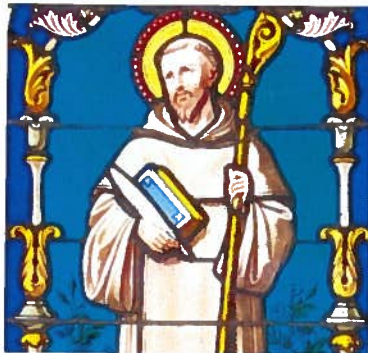
**St. James—**Registration for classes at St. James will be held on September 7th after the 9:00 am Mass.

Our Kick-off is September 14, the first Sunday of classes.

We are in need of three teachers this year—kindergarten, 1st grade, and 6th grade. What a great opportunity to share our faith with the students! Please contact Tahnya at 815.530.4406 If you are interested or have questions.

### Reflection Give Yourself to God

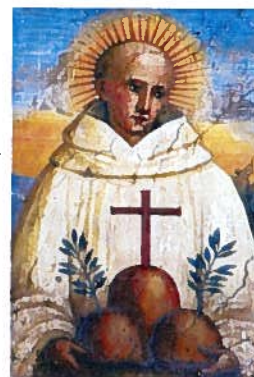
Give up yourself to God without reserve; in singleness of heart, meeting everything that every day brings forth, as something that comes from God, and is to be received and gone through by you, in such a heavenly use of it, as you would suppose the holy Jesus would have done, is such occurrences. This is an attainable degree of perfection.



**Saint of the week: St. Bernard of Clairvaux (August 20)** was born to the French nobility; he was the brother of Saint Humbeline. At age 22, fearing the ways of the world, he, four of his brothers, and 25 friends joined the abbey of Citeaux; his father and another brother joined soon after. Bernard founded and led the monastery of Clairvaux which soon had over 700 monks and eventually 160 daughter houses. He revised and reformed the Cistercians. Bernard was an advisor to, and admonisher of, King Louis the Fat and King Louis the Young. Bernard attended the *Second Lateran Council* and fought Albigensianism. He helped end the schism of anti-Pope Anacletus II. Bernard preached in France, Italy, and Germany. In addition, he helped organize the Second Crusade. Bernard was a friend and biographer of Saint Malachy O'More, spiritual advisor to Pope Eugene III, who had originally been one of his monks. Bernard was the first Cistercian monk placed on the calendar of saints. He was proclaimed a Doctor of the Church by Pope Pius VIII.

Every morning Bernard would ask himself, "Why have I come here?", and then remind himself of his main duty – to lead a holy life.

**Obscure saint of the week: St. Bernardo Tolomei (August 20)** Giovanni changed his name to *Bernard* early in his life because of his admiration for Bernard of Clairvaux. He was educated by his Dominican uncle. His father prevented Bernard from entering religious life. Bernard was a lawyer, theologian, soldier, politician and government official. Struck blind, Bernardo recovered his sight through the intervention of the Blessed Virgin Mary, after which he gave up worldly life to become a hermit. Accused of heresy, Bernard soon cleared his name. He became a priest and the founder of the Benedictine *Congregation of the Blessed Virgin of Monte Oliveto (Olivetans)*. During a bout of the plague, Bernard and his monks cared for any who needed it; none of the brothers became sick.



### Gospel Shorts - Fire Upon the Earth

Why would Jesus say that he had come "to cast fire upon the earth?" Surely it was to express His burning passion to spread the Good News of the light and love of God that he had come to proclaim.

Fire in the Bible symbolizes the presence of God. Jesus wanted all of earth's people to come to know the loving warmth and healing that comes from the presence of God. God's "fire" is a fire that purifies, cleanses, and results in glorious new growth. Would that everyone experienced that holy fire!



I have come to set the earth on fire ...  
LK.12:49



## MOBILE FOOD PANTRY

Monday, August 18, 2025

St. Lawrence Church

135 E. Rice Road in South Wilmington

4-5:30pm

(Or until food runs out)

**RAIN OR SHINE!**

**Have a great  
SCHOOL year!!!**





## Catholic Snacks, Get Fed

There's a novena for that!

From career challenges to family crises, from thanksgiving to spiritual renewal, there really is a novena for that.

There's a novena for that?!

If you've been Catholic for more than a minute, you've probably heard someone say, "Pray a novena!" But what is a novena—and why are there so many?

- A novena is a nine-day prayer (from the Latin novem, meaning "nine"), modeled after the nine days the Apostles and Our Lady spent in prayer before Pentecost. The Church treasures novenas as a way to persistently seek God's help, honor Our Lady and the saints, and prepare for great feasts.

Here are a few beloved examples:

St. Jude Novena – Patron of impossible causes. Pray when a situation seems hopeless, trusting God's power to open doors.

Our Lady Undoer of Knots Novena – Brings tangled problems, relationships, or worries to Mary for her gentle untangling.

Sacred Heart Novena – Focuses on growing in trust, reparation, and deep love for Christ's heart.

St. Joseph Novena – For provision, protection, and guidance, especially in work or family matters.

- From career challenges to family crises, from thanksgiving to spiritual renewal—there really is a novena for that. And best of all, each one draws us closer to Jesus through steady, faithful prayer.

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## Reflection What Prayer Is Not

Pray till prayer makes you forget your own wish and leave it or merge it in God's will. God has given us prayer, not as a means to obtain the good things of the earth, but as a means to learn to do without them; not as a means to escape evil, but as a means to become strong to meet it.



First Friday adoration will be held on Friday, Sept. 5 at Sacred Heart..

Adoration will conclude with Benediction at 3:00.

Venerable Norbert McAuliffe on the Blessed Sacrament

When Brother Norbert was asked by someone on what one 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."*



Let's workout...your brain!

## Welcome to Wits Workout!

The ultimate brain-boosting, laugh-inducing, connection-making experience for aging adults!

### Why join?

- **Boost Your Brain:** Fun puzzles, trivia, and games developed by the University of Illinois to keep your mind sharp!
- **Laugh Out Loud:** Enjoy a lively, stress-free atmosphere filled with joy and energy.
- **Meet Amazing People:** Build friendships while you exercise your mind.

Free program  
for adults  
60+!

Monday Afternoons  
June 16th thru  
December 15th  
(no class 8/04, 9/01, or 10/13)

Location change—This  
will be held at St.  
James.

Don't miss out!  
Register today;  
call Natalia at  
815-933-7791  
ext. 9954

We are a faith-based organization providing service to those in need and calling others of good will to do the same.



## Tri-Parish Prayer Group

We are starting a weekly prayer group for the three parishes of St. Margaret Mary, St. James the Apostle, and Sacred Heart. Do you ever feel burdened by life's problems and worries? Do you yearn for a better prayer life? Perhaps you want to be more faithful to pray for your family and friends, our parish, the church and the world. Maybe you simply desire some quiet time to praise and thank God, to listen for his voice in the busyness of life, to grow in friendship with Christ and your fellow parishioners. Jesus knows our needs, and He invites us to come to him. "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest." Mt 11:28



What are the benefits of a weekly prayer group?

There is strength in numbers. Jesus says, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Mt 18: 20

We grow, not in isolation, but as a member of the Body of Christ. We support each other; we learn from each other. We pray for and with each other.

Our prayer time would last about an hour. We will tentatively try Monday evenings at 7 pm at St. James. The format would be flexible. It could include various prayer forms: the Divine Office Evening Prayer, Scripture sharing, preview of the Sunday Gospel, the Chaplet of Mercy, Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, quiet time, faith sharing, singing, prayers of praise and intercession.

When Jesus first called the disciple Philip, Philip in turn brought Nathanael to Jesus with the words "Come and see." We invite you to **come and see**: Mondays at 7 pm at St. James in the church or the sacristy.

Questions? Call Darwin & Mary Peerbolte at 815-981-5481

### Questions Catholics Ask

#### You always hear about Vatican II. What happened at Vatican I?

The numbering makes it sound like popes have convened only two councils in the church's history. Actually, Vatican I was the 20th. Councils are named according to their location. In December of 1869, Vatican I was the first council at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. It was interrupted by war in September 1870 and never completed.

Pope Pius IX viewed the Council originally as "a remedy for present evils in Church and society" (Aeterni Patris). A few years earlier, he had published a *Syllabus of Errors* condemning pantheism, rationalism, indifferentism (the belief that any religion can lead to God), socialism, communism, secret societies, liberalism; as well as errors concerning the nature of the church, society, ethics, marriage, and papal authority. The pope hoped a council would offer solemn endorsement of his condemnations.

Over 50 draft documents were made, but only six were debated, and two adopted. The first adopted article is rarely mentioned, a theological treatise on faith and reason. The second is more familiar: the formal defining of papal infallibility.

Papal infallibility was presumed by many Catholics and wouldn't have been debated by most. The Ultramontane ("beyond the mountains") movement described those who held that a strong papacy was the only defense against liberal ideas launched by politics, science, and philosophy. Most bishops supported strong papal authority but disagreed on its reach. Some theologians, among them British convert William George Ward, felt every pronouncement of the pope ought to be infallible. Many bishops insisted infallibility belonged to the church, not just to the pope; or that the pope enjoyed infallibility in certain situations but not all; or that infallibility was contingent on the pope speaking in harmony with past church teaching and his fellow bishops. Some leaders—including John Henry Newman of England, Archbishop Martin Spalding of Baltimore, and Archbishop Peter Richard Kenrick of St. Louis—believed defining infallibility was a mistake, obviously undone by examples from history.

Oppositional factions grew among German, English, and French bishops. Dozens left the Council in protest before the final vote. Of the original 774 participants, only 433 were present to vote in favor of infallibility. Two bishops voted against the teaching, including an Italian and Bishop Edward Fitzgerald of Little Rock, Arkansas. Only two German church leaders refused to accept the teaching once it was passed. Both were excommunicated.







August 17, 2025

## Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jer 38:4-6, 8-10 | Heb 12:1-4 | Lk 12:49-53

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

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

Today's readings acknowledge the real challenges of living our faith. Following Christ will sometimes put us at odds with others – an uncomfortable reality that many will face in our broken and divided world. Yet we can find strength knowing that Jesus understands the constant opposition (both inward and outward) that we face. The second reading says, “Consider how he endured such opposition from sinners.” Jesus knows what it’s like to face opposition, but he endured it “for the sake of the joy that lay before him.” That is our calling too. We are made to know the joy that awaits us beyond our crosses. We find the strength to persevere through our trials by “keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus.” Keeping Christ as our focus, we will be able to overcome any obstacle we may face and run toward the goal of heaven.

### GO EVANGELIZE

#### PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

In today's Gospel, Jesus said, “I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing.” Jesus’ desire is that the whole world be set aflame with his love, and yet, he knows that this will not come easily. The good news is that Jesus is with us in the midst of the struggle. He too knows the deep longing and even anguish (the Gospel today uses that word!) that we experience as we work so that others may come to know God's love. We can take comfort in the fact that as much as we want to see others come to faith, God desires it even more than we do, and he is also pouring out his grace continually upon us. In the midst of any discouragement we may feel about those who seem opposed to God and to faith, may we remember the burning love that Christ has and his immense desire to draw all people to himself.

### PRAY

Pray for those whom you may know who seem closed to the Gospel, or who are away from the Church. Invite the Holy Spirit to touch your heart with a particular love and zeal to pray for them, that those who may seem the most opposed to faith might come, one day, to embrace it.

**SPIRITUALITY**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

John 10:27

*R/* Alleluia, alleluia.  
My sheep hear my voice, says the  
Lord;  
I know them, and they follow me.  
*R/* Alleluia, alleluia.

**Gospel**

Luke 12:49-53; L120C

**Jesus said to his disciples:**

**"I have come to set the  
earth on fire,  
and how I wish it were al-  
ready blazing!**

**There is a baptism with which  
I must be baptized,  
and how great is my anguish  
until it is accomplished!**

**Do you think that I have come  
to establish peace on the  
earth?**

**No, I tell you, but rather division.**

**From now on a household of five will  
be divided,**

**three against two and two against  
three;**

**a father will be divided against his  
son**

**and a son against his father,**

**a mother against her daughter**

**and a daughter against her mother,**

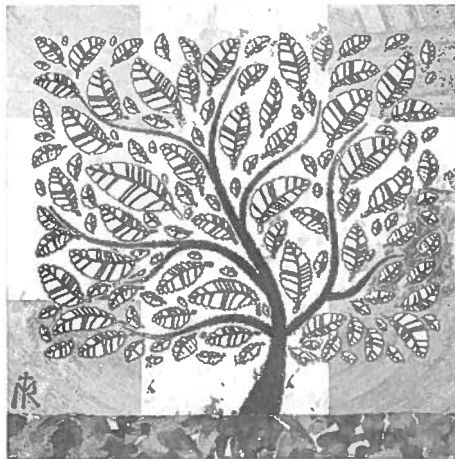
**a mother-in-law against her  
daughter-in-law**

**and a daughter-in-law against her  
mother-in-law."**

**Reflecting on the Gospel**

There's something in us that resists hearing messages of doom. There's no such thing as global warming, some say. The Holocaust is a hoax, some insist. If we accepted what those attuned to Earth are telling us, it would demand that we make difficult changes in our patterns of consumption of Earth's resources.

If we learn about how racism can lead to genocide, it would ask us to confront racist attitudes in ourselves and in our nation, and would demand that we embrace new patterns of relating. But nobody likes hearing prophets who speak the truth about dire consequences that will befall us unless we change.



One way to shut out the voice of an unwanted prophet is to try to do away with her or him. In the first reading, the officials are able to convince the king that Jeremiah is not seeking the good of the people but its harm. He is "demoralizing the soldiers" and needlessly worrying the people with his warnings about the impending fall of Jerusalem. The officials are able to persuade King Zedekiah to give Jeremiah into their hands. They throw him into a cistern, where they leave him to die, until a eunuch in the king's house persuades the king to order his rescue.

We see a kind of tug of war in the first reading. Some heed the prophet's words and welcome his warning, while others resist the threat to their power, privilege, and status that Jeremiah's message poses. Jesus speaks of the same kind of divided reaction that his ministry provokes. As he ignites in his followers a vision of justice, peace, and well-being for all that could blaze forth, some readily welcome it. Others resist it mightily. The resisters are not eager for the burning away of their comforts and privileges as Jesus's way of transformation demands. The divisions over Jesus's message reach even into the inner recesses of the home, pitting family members against one another, as they struggle with what the gospel demands of them and how to heed it. Like King Zedekiah, who listens first to one set of officials and then to a servant with a different perspective, Christians are confronted with differing interpretations of what the gospel demands. It is easy to reject the version of a prophet that insists on transformative change. Better to get rid of such an unwelcome messenger and continue on undisturbed.

Jesus warns his followers not to be taken by surprise if his message provokes conflict and division. The way toward genuine peace is not a gentle, easy road. It is a path that entails struggle. Injustice does not die without heavy resistance. Those who embark on Jesus's way, however, are empowered by their baptism. Baptism brings both refreshment and joy from being washed of sin, as well as an induction into a difficult, lifelong burning away of anything within that stands opposed to the gospel. Inflamed with the power of the Spirit, those bap-