

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

21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

AUGUST 23-24, 2025



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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: "I would rather have learning joined with virtue than all the treasures of kings."

—Saint Thomas More

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 30-31, 2025

Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, August 30 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, August 31 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, August 31 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, August 31 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron
Ushers	Dan Hoffman Dave Emling Gery Wright Bob Schultz	James Mallaney David Kirkpatrick	Bob Buente Vic Carlile Dennis O'Connor Dave Ladehoff	Sean Riordan Galen Fritz Jeremy Wolles Kim Smicker
Lector	Rob Landeck	Darlene Cipcish	Jeff O'Connor	Dana Masching
Eucharistic Minister				
Servers				
Greeters			Greeter—Rita Thiesen R. Leader—Kathy Dumas	Stacie Powers

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, August 25 (SH)

8:00 am No Mass

Tuesday, August 20 (SH)

8:00 am No Mass

Wednesday, August 27 (SJ)

8:00 am No Mass

Friday, August 29 (SJ)

8:00 am +JR Matern (Francis O'Brien Family)

Saturday, August 30 (SMM)

5:00 pm +Anne Gehrke (Charlotte Emling)

+Tom Lane (Mariann Lane)

Sunday, August 31

7:30 am (SH) +Leland & Patricia Denault (Daniel Denault)

9:00 am (SJ) Special Intention of Rita Thiesen (Pam Cuchiara)

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

A Look Ahead

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

Sunday, Sept. 7—Religious Ed Registration

Sunday, Sept. 14—Religious Ed begins at SJ

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 Bisaillon 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

Question of the week:

What must I do to grow in the discipline of being a good disciple of the Lord? What can strengthen my "drooping hands and weak knees" (Hebrews 12:12)?

Collections Weekend of August 16-17

St. Margaret Mary—\$1,270

Assumption—\$317

Sacred Heart—\$865

Assumption—\$370

St. James—\$1,606

Assumption—\$254

The Sunday Gospel in Everyday English

He went on teaching from town to village, village to town, but keeping on a steady course toward Jerusalem.

A bystander said, "Master, will only a few be saved?"

He said, "Whether few or many is none of your business. Put your mind on your life with God. The way to life—to God!—is vigorous and requires your total attention. A lot of you are going to assume that you'll sit down to God's salvation banquet just because you've been hanging around the neighborhood all your lives. Well, one day you're going to be banging on the door, wanting to get in, but you'll find the door locked and the Master saying, 'Sorry, you're not on my guest list.'

"You'll protest, 'But we've known you all our lives!' only to be interrupted with his abrupt, 'Your kind of knowing can hardly be called knowing. You don't know the first thing about me.'

"That's when you'll find yourselves out in the cold, strangers to grace. You'll watch Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets march into God's kingdom.

You'll watch outsiders stream in from east, west, north, and south and sit down at the table of God's kingdom. And all the time you'll be outside looking in—and wondering what happened. This is the Great Reversal: the last in line put at the head of the line, and the so-called first ending up last" (from Luke 13).



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 interest-



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!)

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. We will start our sessions on September 24 at St. James. Classes begin at 7:00 pm.**

⇒ **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.**

⇒ **Wits Workout will be moved to St. James hall from August 25 until further notice. Everyone is welcome; you can begin at any time. Wits Workout is on Monday from 1-2pm. If you would like to join us, please call Natalia at Catholic Charities at 815-933-7791 ext. 9954.**

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

St. Margaret Mary-

⇒ Weekday masses til futher notice are Mondays at Sacred Heart and Fridays at St. James.

St. James-

Sacred Heart-

⇒ Sacred Heart is looking for volunteers to paint the outside of the hall. There is a sign up sheet in the entrance of the church.

⇒ Sacred Heart Church will be selling tickets for their "Fall Cash Bash" which will take place Sat., November 22 from 4p.m. till 8 p.m. in the church hall. Tickets are \$50 a piece and will admit 2 adults with a chance of a 1st Prize of \$1,500 or \$500 2nd Prize. There will be games of Euchre (with a buy in by 5pm) & Black Jack. Basket Raffle, Silent & Live auctions, 50/50 's with plenty of food and drinks. For more info call Terri 815 514-8171



Current Status for 2025 CMAA

Parish	Goal	Pledged	Paid
Sacred Heart	\$6,600	\$7,950	\$6,650
St. James	\$9,700	\$7,250	\$7,090
St. MM	\$8,900	\$8,050	\$7,625

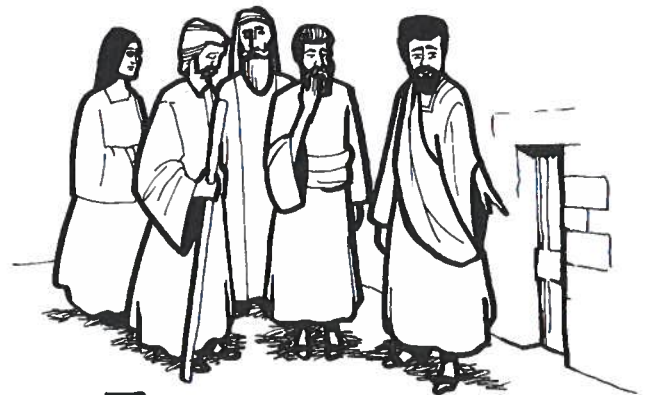
Obscure saint of the week: St. Gregory of Utrecht (August 24) was the son of Saint Wastrada, and the uncle of Saint Alberic of Utrecht. He was spiritual student and Benedictine monk under Saint Boniface whom he had met as a child, and who acted as a mentor. He became the abbot of Saint Martin's abbey, Utrecht, Netherlands, during which it became a center for missionaries and the home of many saints. He was the bishop of Utrecht for 22 years.



Obscure saint of the week: St. Menas of Constantinople (August 25) was the superior of the hospice of Saint Samson in Constantinople. He became the Patriarch of Constantinople, ordained and consecrated by Pope Saint Agapetus in 536 to replace Anthimus who had fallen into the monophysite heresy. He led the synod of Constantinople in 536 and consecrated the church of Hagia Sophia. Menas subscribed to the *Edict of the Emperor Justinian* condemning the documents known as the "Three Chapters" for which he was excommunicated by Pope Vigilius in 551; he immediately submitted to papal authority.

Gospel Shorts - God in the Worst Sense

Jesus healed a woman on the Sabbath day. He was thoroughly chastised by the ruler of the synagogue, who said that one should not do such a deed on the Sabbath. It was "working" on a holy day. But Jesus believed that the Sabbath was meant to be a blessing for people, a time for showing love to God and to others. A time of rest and renewal. Therefore, he was certain that love should always win over legalisms. We should take the same attitude. We should also see our Sabbaths as a blessing, never as a chastisement.



Try to come in through
the narrow door LK.13:24

REJOICE
in the LORD our GOD

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Reflection The Simple Life

An Amish man stopped his farming to watch a new neighbor move in. The delivery van unloaded a deluxe refrigerator with ice cube maker, a big-screen television with surround sound, a computer with multiple monitors, and whirlpool hot tub.

The following day, the Amish man and his wife brought a welcome gift of homemade muffins and jam. After cordial conversation, the Amish man concluded with "...And if anything should go wrong with your electronic equipment, don't hesitate to call me..."

"That's very generous of you," the new arrival interrupted. "Thank you!"

"No problem," the Amish man replied, "I'll just tell you how to live without them."

Catholic Snacks, Get Fed
4 Patron Saints for Restless Nights

These saintly friends will help you find peaceful rest.
We've all been there...

It's been a long day, you're tired, but you can't fall asleep. All you can seem to do is toss and turn. When you finally do fall asleep, the slightest noise wakes you up!

Next time this happens to you, don't despair! You're not alone—there are four saints you can turn to:

St. Joseph: St. Joseph, sometimes even invoked as Sleeping St. Joseph, is widely recognized as the patron of a good night's rest. In the Gospel of Matthew, God communicates with Joseph through dreams multiple times—guiding him to take Mary as his wife, flee to Egypt, and return safely to Nazareth. St. Joseph will help you find peace and remind you that God is always with you—even when you're sleeping!

St. Blaise: St. Blaise is best known as the patron saint of throat troubles, but he also has a lesser-known role as a helper for those who suffer from sleeplessness due to physical ailments. Blaise was a physician before he became a bishop, and his compassion and healing abilities were legendary. You can ask St. Blaise to intercede when physical discomfort—whether from a sore throat, nagging cough, or other illness—disrupts your sleep.

St. Dymphna: Often, our restlessness is caused by worry and anxiety. In these times, turn to St. Dymphna for her intercession and comfort. St. Dymphna, the patron saint of those suffering from anxiety, depression, and mental illness, will bring your worries directly to Christ and help calm your mind. Her story is one of courage: she fled her home after her father, suffering from severe mental illness, threatened her safety. When your worries or mental anguish keep you awake, ask St. Dymphna to bring you peace and a good night's sleep.

St. Michael the Archangel: The next time you are frightened by a nightmare or fearful imaginings, invoke the protection of St. Michael. As a powerful warrior, he is always ready to do battle for your peace. If you sense anything evil or disturbing in your dreams or thoughts, call on St. Michael! Praying the St. Michael Prayer will help you feel safe and ready to sleep again.

God our loving Father wants to be a part of every moment of your life—including your sleepless nights. Invoke these four saints the next time you are up late and transform a restless moment into a prayerful one!

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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."

A Stewardship Moment

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Weekend of August 23/24, 2025

The Gospel reading today starts with a question: "Lord, will only a few people be saved?" Jesus offers only a simple reply: Strive to enter through the narrow gate. Many will try to enter and will not be able. Good stewards know there is only one, narrow gate. Not everything will fit. This narrow gate has no room for our accomplishments. No room for our money. No room for our possessions. No room for anything else but those who've been good stewards of the Gospel. We can't custom build our own gates either. There is only one, narrow gate that happens to be open for a time, but for how long? What is our plan of action to get through that gate?

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

What is temperance and do we still need it?

The virtue temperance is often conflated with the Temperance Movement, a social phenomenon of the 19th-20th centuries. The movement decried consuming alcohol to the point of intoxication. Its adherents promoted moderation or, in some expressions, teetotalism: complete abstinence from liquor. The movement was fueled by some effects of drinking in the industrial age, including injury, crime, disease, death, and suicide. Churches took up the cause, as alcohol often had an adverse affect on families. Emerging religious groups, like the Seventh Day Adventists and Mormons, promoted teetotaling as a pillar of their teaching. Other groups sought to close saloons early, restrict sales, or increase taxes.

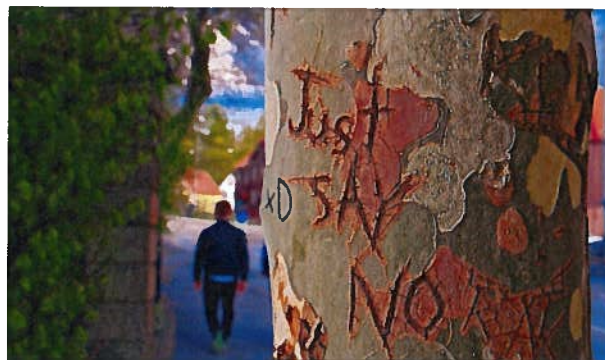
In 1920, the movement led to the legal measure of Prohibition in the United States. The Eighteenth Amendment banned the manufacture, sale, and distribution of alcohol across the nation. Other countries like Russia preceded the U.S. in prohibition, while Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Finland, Iceland, and Canada attempted selective restraints. By 1933, the U.S. was ready to repeal nationwide Prohibition with the Twenty-First Amendment. It was determined that making drinking essentially illegal had proved cumbersome to enforce, encouraged unhealthy drinking habits, fostered organized crime, and hurt the nation's economy.

This history clouds the issue of what the virtue of temperance offers to those who practice it. Temperance is one of four cardinal ("hinge") virtues, along with prudence, justice, and fortitude. It refers to the development of self-control, which is the hallmark of the mature person. Temperance is gained by educating one's passions to orient habitually toward the good. Resisting temptations to indulge in over-eating, excessive drinking, casual sex, fits of rage, money lust, monopolizing conversations, aggressive displays of ego, or other unbridled exercises of desire isn't enough to qualify one as a temperate person. Genuine temperance must lead a person to organize each choice toward a greater good.

So, while severe dieting may seem temperate, if it harms the health, it isn't. Sexual abstinence to prove one's personal righteousness would also not qualify. Withholding your anger and giving someone the silent treatment doesn't resolve the argument. When the good choice also becomes the natural one, the virtue of temperance is on display. And yes: we still need it.

Scripture: Genesis 3:6; 9:20-21; Leviticus 10:8-11; Deuteronomy 21:20; Psalm 68:31; Proverbs 20:1, 3, 13, 21; 23:2-8, 19-35; 31:1-7; Sirach 18:30-33; 19:2; 23:6; 31:12-31; 37:27-31; Isaiah 5:8-16; 28:1-3, 7-9; 56:9-13; Daniel ch. 13; Matthew 11:18-19; Luke 12:16-21; Galatians 5:16-23

The virtue temperance is often conflated with the Temper-



It refers to the development of self-control, which is the hallmark of the mature person.



August 24, 2025

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 66:18-21 | Heb 12:5-7, 11-13 | Lk 13:22-30

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

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

Have you ever felt as though God is punishing you? Throughout the course of our lives, we experience what might seem like a barrage of hardships. This battering down of our interior and exterior fortresses over time can test our faith and weaken our resolve. If you find yourself in this position, read today's passage from Hebrews again: "Do not disdain the discipline of the Lord," St. Paul reminds us, "for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines." In our human nature, we may find these "disciplines" painful (and rightfully so). But Paul urges us to shift our mindset, recognizing that just as a good father disciplines his children for their greater good, so our heavenly Father does the same for us. Paul goes on to explain that we may consider every trial we endure in this sense, as a loving "discipline" — a sign of the Lord's attention and desire for our sanctity.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Modern society loves the concept of a God who is soft, inviting, sweet, and tender. Of course, our Lord in his goodness and mercy can be described by those adjectives. But today's Gospel reminds us of an equally important characteristic of the Lord: He is the supreme and final judge, and at the final judgment we will be held accountable for our lives. In the end, we will stand before the Lord, and he will put all things in proper order. Will it be glorious, loving, and merciful? Yes. Painful and piercing? Perhaps. Our Lord's love knows no bounds, and he withholds his mercy from no one. It is precisely from this place of perfect love and profound mercy that rightful judgment emerges. May we live a life worthy of welcome when we meet him face to face.

REFLECT

In addition to accepting the discipline that the Lord sends our way, we can engage in voluntary practices to strengthen our spiritual lives. These practices are necessary, as Jesus tells us that many "will not be strong enough" to enter through the narrow gate that leads to life. Our second reading exhorts us to "strengthen [our] drooping hands and [our] weak knees." What spiritual disciplines have you found helpful to foster your growth in holiness? What areas are weak or need strengthening?

SPIRITUALITY

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

John 14:6

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the way, the truth and the life, says the Lord;

no one comes to the Father, except through me.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Luke 13:22-30; L123C

Jesus passed through towns and villages,

teaching as he went and making his way to Jerusalem.

Someone asked him,

"Lord, will only a few people be saved?"

He answered them,

"Strive to enter through the narrow gate,

for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter

but will not be strong enough.

After the master of the house

has arisen and locked the door, then will you stand outside knocking and saying,

'Lord, open the door for us.'

He will say to you in reply,

'I do not know where you are from.'

And you will say,

'We ate and drank in your company and you taught in our streets.'

Then he will say to you,

'I do not know where you are from.'

Depart from me, all you evildoers!

And there will be wailing and grinding of teeth

when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God

and you yourselves cast out.

And people will come from the east and the west

and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God.

For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."

Reflecting on the Gospel

Jesus often does not give straight answers to questions posed to him. Today's gospel story, for instance, starts with someone asking him, "Will only a few people be saved?" It seems like a straightforward question about numbers. But Jesus perceives that the questioner and the others whom he was teaching were not really as concerned about the final head count as they were about whether they themselves would be included among the redeemed.

The first part of Jesus's answer is about what you must do to position yourself for admission into the final gathering of the saved. The person who posed the question rightly recognized that salvation is God's work. The passive voice of the verb *be saved* implies that one does not save oneself, but the redeeming action is done by God. However, as Jesus's response makes clear, one must engage in rigorous training in order to be in condition to accept the gift of being saved.

Jesus advises that one must "strive to enter through the narrow gate." The verb *agōnizomai*, "strive," is used to describe athletic training (similarly, see 1 Cor 9:25). Just as an athlete must gradually build up strength through daily disciplined exercise, so spiritual fitness takes consistent ef-

fort and training. Jesus notes that many who attempt to enter will not be strong enough. The second reading from Hebrews also focuses on the discipline necessary to build up spiritual strength. Five times the author uses words derived from the Greek *paideuō* and *paideia*, which have to do with "discipline." The primary meaning is "instruction, training for responsible living."

The author makes an analogy between the training that a child receives from a parent and the guidance God provides us for deepening in the spiritual life. The Greek noun here means not so much punishment for wrongdoing as training for life. Some discipline consists in self-imposed, chosen actions that strengthen the spirit and enable one to follow the path of faithfulness. Other modes of life-shaping experiences are not purposely chosen, but how we deal with them forms us spiritually.

The author of Hebrews focuses on the latter kind of formation. He speaks of how God, like a loving parent, can help us to learn from the difficulties that befall us and can guide us in how to become stronger through them.

In the gospel Jesus speaks about what can happen to those who do not put any effort into "working out" spiritually. When the final moment comes, they will be on the outside pleading to get in, thinking that just having been present where Jesus was teaching would be enough. It is like someone who goes to the gym but only watches other people go through their paces. Such a one is not known in the company of athletes or prepared to make it to the finish line, "the narrow gate," and it will be too late then to start training. Jesus returns to the original question and, echoing the first reading from Isaiah, envisions masses of people from all directions who will be included among those saved. We may be surprised by who gets there first.

