

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

**1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**NOVEMBER 29-30, 2025**

# Hope



**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: "Never will God's coming be what you expect, and yet never will it disappoint."**

*—Venerable Fulton Sheen*

**Second Sunday of Advent**

**December 6-7, 2025**

Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, Dec. 6 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, Dec. 7 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, Dec. 7 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, Dec. 7 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron
Ushers	Gery Wright Todd Datweiler Dave Emling Bob Schultz	David Kirkpatrick James Mallaney	Jeff Martin Jeff Steinke Dallas Ferris Dave Ladehoff	Larry Wolles Kim Smicker Sean Riordan Wayne Bisaillon
Lector	Rob Landeck	Terri Weakley	Carrie Abrassart	Corinn Wheeler
Eucharistic			Donna Bernicky	Wayne Bisaillon
Servers				Sydney Weldon, Avery Adams
Greeters			Greeter—Rita Thiesen R. Leader—Reatta Gohlke	Greeter—The Wheelers

**Mass Intentions for the Week**

**Monday, Dec. 1 (SMM)**

8:00 am +John & Adam Andrzejewski (Jackie Eberle)

**Tuesday, Dec. 2 (SH)**

8:00 am +Susan Schoth (Don/Marie Feller)

**Wednesday, Dec. 3 (SJ)**

8:00 am +Diane Castongue (Larry/Judy Brave)

**Friday, Dec. 5 (SMM)**

8:00 am +Jim Feller (Jackie Eberle)

**Saturday, Dec. 6 (SMM)**

5:00 pm +Ronald Schneider (Roger/Margaret Jensen)  
+Jerome Ruder (Mariann Lane)

**Sunday, Dec. 7**

7:30 am (SH) +Lela Madison, Steven Riley, Dean Madison, &  
Dale Pool (The Family)

9:00 am (SJ) +Marian McKenna (Glen/Marcis O'Connor)  
+Lois Jensen (Judy Harling)

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

**A Look Ahead**

**Tues., Dec 2**—SH Cash Bash Follow Up Meeting 6:30 pm

**Wed., Dec. 3**—Adult Ed Class 7 pm

**Tues., Dec. 9**—SH CCW Christmas Party

**Sun., Dec. 14**—SJ Christmas Pageant and Basket Raffle

**Sun., Dec. 14**—Youth Mass at SMM

**Sat., January 3**—Joy in January

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 Bisaillon 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:**

How can I prepare my heart this Advent to receive Jesus whenever he comes?

## Collections Weekend of November 22-23, 2025

St. Margaret Mary—\$2,140

Sacred Heart—\$908

St. James—\$1,055

Thank you for your generosity!

### Gospel Shorts - Go Into the Reign

People have predicted the end of the world since Christ's time, and they continue those same types of predictions today. As the last century ended, we heard a great many more predictions of the end.

Jesus says, nobody knows when the end will come. The people who have predicted the end of the world, century after century, have all been proven wrong. But for some reason that doesn't prevent people from continuing to try to set the date in their own lifetime. They try to read the signs, and work the biblical numbers, to come up with the date and hour when the world will end.

But the truth of Jesus' words have been demonstrated over and over — nobody knows when the end will come.

**Joy in January** will be held at the Kankakee Country Club on January 3, 2026. .

St.. Margaret Mary—Sign up by Dec. 7. Please make checks payable to SMM CCW for \$19.

St. James— Please sign up by Dec. 8. on the bulletin board. Cost is \$19 for lunch.

Sacred Heart—Please sign up by Dec. 7. Check the bulletin board for details.



Sacred Heart Religious Ed "Kids Helping Kids" Fundraisers (benefitting Ronald McDonald House)

The Religious Ed students will be selling Christmas R M H C crafts after mass December 7th, 14th, and 21st.

Please help our kids raise money for such a good cause. Thank you!



### 1<sup>st</sup> Friday Adoration

"Every consecrated host is made to burn itself up with love in a human heart."

-St. John Vianney

First Friday Mass and Adoration will be held on Friday, December 5 at Sacred Heart. Adoration will conclude with Benediction at 3:00.

### Parish News:

#### All Parishes—

⇒ Envelopes are in the back of the church, if you don't see yours please call the office and we will get them to you.

⇒ **Prayer meeting on December 1 7 pm at SJ**

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



⇒ **We are still looking for a couple more sittings to be scheduled before they will come back.** It's not too late to be included in our parish directory. If we get 6 more sittings scheduled, the company will return to take pictures for those of you who were unable to attend the earlier picture days. Don't miss out on the new 2025 directory!

#### St. Margaret Mary-

#### St. James-

⇒ The CCW ladies would like to donate a basket for the Christmas pageant. We will be collecting gift cards to place on a Christmas tree. Give any cards to Reatta Gohlke or Mary Peerbolte before December 14. Thank you.

⇒ *Don't forget to drop off any new gloves, hats, winter gear in the church vestibule. We will be collecting for the area needy through November 30th*

⇒ *Mark your calendars! We will be cleaning and decorating the church for Christmas on December 9th starting at 5 pm (cleaning) and 6 pm (decorating). Whatever time you could give is greatly appreciated .*

⇒ *The CCW Christmas party will be at the Herscher Restaurant on December 7th after mass. Please sign up by November 30th so a reservation can be made .*

#### Sacred Heart-

⇒ Thank you to all who supported our Cash Bash by purchasing tickets, donating items for raffles, auctions, or baskets. Also thank you to all the workers. It wouldn't be a success without all of you!



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**Obscure saint of the week: St. Castulus of Rome (Nov. 30)** was married to Saint Irene of Rome. A military officer in the imperial palace in Rome during the reign of Emperor Diocletian, he was a quiet Christian, he was denounced to authorities for sheltering fellow Christians; arrested, tortured and martyred.



**Obscure saint of the week: St. Cuthbert Mayne (Nov. 30)** was raised a Protestant by his uncle, a schismatic priest, he was ordained as an Anglican minister at age 19. A friend of Saint Edmund Campion, he converted to Catholicism in 1570 while a student at Saint John's College, Oxford. He studied and was ordained at Douai, France, the first Englishman trained there. Once ordained Cuthbert returned to England in 1575 with Saint John Payne to minister to converted Catholics in Cornwall. He was arrest-

### Reflection— The Person Down the Road

In thirty, forty, or fifty years, you'll meet a person down the road. Whether that someone is kind and gentle or selfish and demanding depends on what you do today. If you live only in terms of what you can get out of life, this person will be crabby, self-centered, and spiteful. But if you open your life to others and live as a giver, this person will be kind, open, and generous.

This somebody whom you'll meet down the road some day is you. The person you will be tomorrow depends on the life you live today. Every day, in every way, you are becoming more and more like yourself. Make sure the person you are becoming is someone whom you'll enjoy being around.

### The Sunday Gospel in Everyday English

"The Arrival of the Son of Man will take place in times like Noah's. Before the great flood everyone was carrying on as usual, having a good time right up to the day Noah boarded the ark. They knew nothing—until the flood hit and swept everything away.

"The Son of Man's Arrival will be like that: Two men will be working in the field—one will be taken, one left behind; two women will be grinding at the mill—one will be taken, one left behind. So stay awake, alert. You have no idea what day your Master will show up. But you do know this: You know that if the homeowner had known what time of night the burglar would arrive, he would have been there with his dogs to prevent the break-in. Be vigilant just like that. You have no idea when the Son of Man is going to show up" (from Matthew 24).

### 1st Sunday of Advent

The theme for the First Sunday of Advent is **HOPE**. The first candle is sometimes called the prophecy candle. The prophets spoke God's word. As God's living Word draws near, we share the Good News. The Prayer after Communion helps the assembly to focus on what has just been accomplished in the Eucharist. This particular prayer was newly composed for the first edition of the *Roman Missal* after the Second Vatican Council. However, it has its roots in two prayers found in the *Verona Sacramentary* dating around the sixth century.

The word "mysteries" is often understood as something beyond comprehension. In the context of this prayer, it is drawn from the biblical Greek word *mysterion*, which was later translated into Latin as *sacramentum* or sacrament. Thus, the phrase, "may these mysteries", refers to the celebration of the Eucharist in which we have just participated. Another word worthy of explanation is the unfamiliar use of the word "profit". It is translated literally from the Latin and means to have an effect on us.

Consequently, we pray that the celebration of the Eucharist affect us so that, while on this earth, we may grow in faith through our participation in the sacred mysteries. We also pray to learn to love as Christ who loves perfectly in this world with his eyes fixed on heaven.

Scripture reflection Matt. 1:23- "Behold the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means "God is with us."



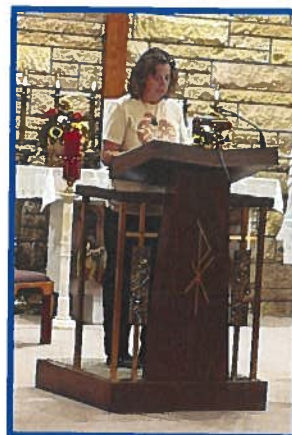
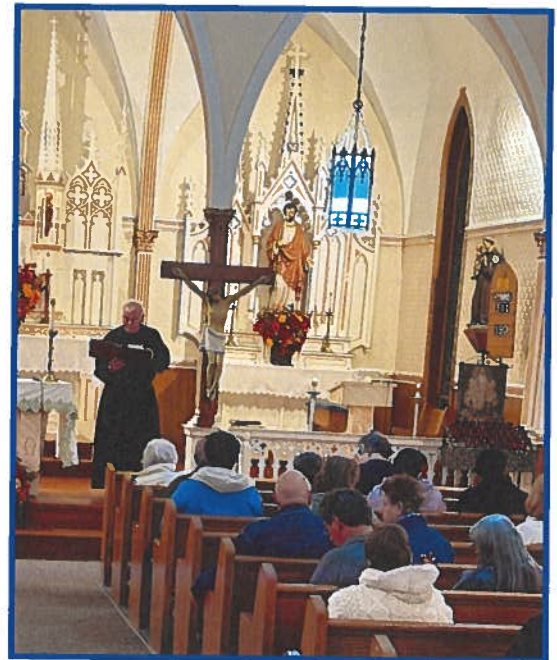
Catholic Snacks, Get Fed  
Have you heard of the Navy Chaplain who became a hero at Pearl Harbor?

When Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Navy chaplain Fr. Aloysius Schmitt chose to save others instead of himself. Discover his powerful witness of faith and sacrifice in Incredible Catholic America.

Heroism often reveals itself in quiet moments—like the dawn of December 7, 1941, when a young Navy chaplain aboard the USS Oklahoma faced the unthinkable. When Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, at 7:48 on December 7, 1941, the day of heroic grace, US Navy Chaplain Father Aloysius H. Schmitt had just finished saying Sunday Mass aboard the USS Oklahoma when torpedoes capsize the battleship. Instead of saving himself, the thirty-two-year-old Iowa native began pushing trapped men through a small porthole to safety. The chaplain and 428 shipmates perished that day. Schmitt became the first American chaplain of any faith to die in World War II.

In 2016, seventy-five years after Pearl Harbor, Schmitt's remains were identified with DNA technology and reinterred at Christ the King Chapel at Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa, his alma mater. It was a fitting tribute; the school's motto is Pro Deo et Patria (For God and Country). Dedicated in Schmitt's honor in 1947, the chapel holds his chalice and prayerbook was marked with a ribbon for the following day, December 8 - the sixth anniversary of his ordination as a priest.

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TRI-PARISH MISSION  
2025

Thank you to all who attended  
and to those who helped with  
the refreshments for our fellow-  
ship time.



## Questions Catholics Ask How can I find God in my life?

It's one of the most profound questions a person can ask. A friend recently noted that the only time he hears the name of God invoked is when someone sneezes or runs a red light. To seek God less prosaically requires a personal investment. Finding God is like falling in love or starting a family: it won't work unless you're all in.

A lot of folks these days seek spirituality without an anchor in religion. They'd like to have the benefits of the God Quest—things like meaning, depth, values, direction, simplicity, security—without the inconvenient truths that go along with it. These include a dedication to justice and peace, moral responsibilities, and a fundamental humility about one's role in the universe. The first step in the God Quest is to bow down, to incline our spirit in acknowledgment that there are things we don't know, can't see, can't do from where we sit. Science rightfully explores what human beings can observe from our cheap seats in the universe—or multiverse. Religion is the sacred journey that explores what's above, behind, around, and within that observable reality.

Bowing down, or cultivating the virtue of humility, is not merely the first task of the God Quest. Bernard of Clairvaux made it the all-permeating work when he taught his monks that there are four essential virtues: humility, humility, humility, and humility. The human ego is the source of all that ails our world, from greed, dominance, prejudice, and oppression to the everyday rotten fruit of envy, anger, gossip, and unforgiveness. If we practice removing ourselves from the center of existence and own that God alone belongs at the core of reality, we'll be well on our way to lifelong spiritual growth.

The rest, we might say, is methodology. The Judeo-Christian tradition is a story of a people who took the God Quest and wrote down what they learned in cultivating that relationship in the Bible. Catholicism—the name meaning universal, comprehensive, or whole—is really a spiritual multiverse of ways to take the God Quest. Anchored in the Judeo-Christian story, it contains optional paths for seekers: solitary (hermits), communal (monastic and religious life), coupled (marriage and family life), as well as the priest or dedicated single person. All of these ways involve service to God and others in unique ways, as well as different forms of prayer, obligations, and commitments. Choose one, and begin.



Finding God is like falling in love or starting a family: it won't work unless you're all in.



Your Tri-Parish Knights Of Columbus presented the proceeds from the Drive for Persons with Disabilities to the Kankakee County Training Center (KCTC) and to Herscher High School Best Buddies organization. Thanks to the success of the drive, each organization received a check for \$759.74. Many thanks to the volunteers and contributors who made this happen.

“It is the hour  
now for you  
to awake  
from sleep.”

(Rom 13:11)



Gaety Images/ iamy jhmasi

November 30, 2025

## First Sunday of Advent

Is 2:1-5 | Rom 13:11-14 | Mt 24:37-44

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

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

For many in the upper latitudes of the northern hemisphere, this is the darkest time of the year, the time when the duration of daylight is at its lowest. It's providential, then, that our first reading calls us to "walk in the light of the Lord!" Paul tells us that we do this by "throw[ing] off the works of darkness" and "put[ing] on the armor of light." While we might not struggle with the vices listed in Paul's Letter to the Romans, each of us has our own struggles against sin. As we begin this Advent season, let us take time to do a thorough examination of conscience to discern areas of weakness and sin – those "works of darkness" Paul talks about – in our own lives. Then, consider taking up practices that help you to foster the opposing virtues to arm yourself against these temptations. As you grow in these virtues, you'll certainly be on your way up the mountain of the Lord and walking in his light!

### **GO EVANGELIZE**

#### **PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT**

Today's Gospel calls us to vigilance. Jesus tells us, "Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come." While he is speaking about our need to be ready to meet the Lord when he comes at the end of our lives, it's also an invitation for us to always be ready to share our faith with others whenever the opportunity presents itself. As Scripture says, we should "always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you a reason for your hope." (1 Pet 3:15) We never know the moment when someone will come to us in need of prayer, a word of encouragement, or with questions related to their own spiritual hunger. We must always be ready to meet them where they are and offer a word of hope.

### **PRAY**

Take a moment to pray this week for those "divine appointments" – those individuals who might come your way – seeking encouragement or insight into the spiritual questions in their lives. Ask for the grace to be "awake" so that you're ready to meet them when they come. We can't always predict when these encounters will happen, but we can prepare ourselves to receive these persons as Christ and offer them our full attention and love.



## SPIRITUALITY

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Ps 85:8

*R.* Alleluia, alleluia.  
Show us, Lord, your love;  
and grant us your salvation.  
*R.* Alleluia, alleluia.

### Gospel

Matt 24:37-44; L1A

Jesus said to his disciples:

"As it was in the days of Noah,  
so it will be at the coming of  
the Son of Man.

In those days before the flood,  
they were eating and  
drinking,  
marrying and giving in  
marriage,  
up to the day that Noah en-  
tered the ark.

They did not know until the flood  
came and carried them all away.  
So will it be also at the coming of the  
Son of Man.

Two men will be out in the field;  
one will be taken, and one will be  
left.

Two women will be grinding at the mill;  
one will be taken, and one will be  
left.

Therefore, stay awake!

For you do not know on which day your  
Lord will come.

Be sure of this: if the master of the  
house  
had known the hour of night when  
the thief was coming,  
he would have stayed awake  
and not let his house be broken into.  
So too, you also must be prepared,  
for at an hour you do not expect, the  
Son of Man will come."

### Reflecting on the Gospel

In the years after the attacks of September 11, 2001, there were nonstop warn-ings to be alert to possible terrorist attacks. In US airports repeated public announcements from Homeland Security advised whether the level of alert was yellow, orange, or red. People were asked to be aware and wary.

Today's second and third readings want us to move to red alert. Paul says it is time to wake from sleep. The gospel warns us to stay awake and not be caught unaware. The images of what happens to those who are unprepared sound frightening: a thief in the night breaks in; one man in a field is taken and the other one left; one woman grinding at the mill is taken and the other one left. "Be prepared," Jesus warns.



As we enter into Advent once again, we are not preparing for the coming of the Christ Child; that already happened more than two thousand years ago. Rather, in Advent, we break our normal routine and move into heightened alert to perceive more intensely the ways in which Emmanuel, God-with-us, is moving us toward that vision of peace and unity that Isaiah so eloquently describes in the first reading. The prophet dreams of how all people stream toward the city of peace, all dwell in unity, swords are beaten into plowshares, spears into pruning hooks, and there is no more training for war again.

In the second reading Paul gives concrete advice about how we might do this intense preparation for the coming fullness of the peaceable kingdom. Paul exhorts Christians to "throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light." He recognizes that the peace of which Isaiah dreamed, and which the coming of Christ brought about in a new way, does not come without a struggle. It takes more than just wishing and longing to make it a reality. He imagines Christians going into battle, metaphorically speaking.

To prepare for the struggle, Paul would have us polish up our body armor of virtues. He speaks of the kind of training one must undergo to be able to be the bearer of light. He warns against excesses and indulgences that make one sated and sluggish. Instead, traditional practices of prayer and fasting can hollow out inner space to tend the light we are asked to bear.

The readings for this Sunday urge us to go beyond defensive preparations. Ready ourselves for the full expression of the peaceable kingdom also entails initiating nonviolent action to dismantle weapons of war and transform whatever there may be in our hearts that is not yet able to wage peace.

The gospel today impresses upon us the urgency of engaging in the struggles for peace. The images of the unprepared ones whose homes are broken into or who are left behind are not meant to frighten us, but they remind us that there will be an end-time when all our preparations, all our attempts to be alert, and all our efforts to disarm our hearts and wage peace will, in a critical moment, reach fruition. And we will be ready.