

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

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF OUR LORD

MARCH 28-29, 2026



Hosanna!

*Blessed is he who
comes in the name of
the Lord!*

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 -4:45pm
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Church Mailing Address: 207 E. 5th Street Herscher, IL 60941 Phone: 815-426-2550

Quotable: "We must be ready and eager for every opportunity to do good and put our whole heart into it.

—Pope Saint Clement I

Easter Sunday		April 4-5, 2026		
Liturgical Schedule	St. James Saturday, April 4 7:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, April 5 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, April 5 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, April 5 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron
Ushers	Bob Buente, Jeff Martin, Jeff Steinke, Dallas Ferris	James Mallaney Dennis Pankey	Todd Mesewicz, Rick White, Dan Forsythe, Jerry Ogrentz	Brent Fulton, Erik & Corinn Wheeler, Jow Smolkovich
Lector	Dave Ladenhoff, Jeff O'Connor, Kelly Buente	Rhonda Berns	Carrie Abrassart	Steve Jacob
Eucharistic Minister	Donna Bernicky			Marie Johnson
Servers				Sydney Weldon Caroline Fulton
Greeters	Donna Bernicky	Dennis Panksy, James Mallaney	Rita Thiesen	Erik & Corinn Wheeler

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, March 30 (SMM)

8:00 am +Mary McDonald (Jackie Eberle)

Tuesday, March 31 (SH)

8:00 am +Janet Denault Menke (Norman & Mary Denault)

Wednesday, April 1 (SJ)

8:00 am +Laurie Hansen (Keith & Ann Jensen)

Holy Thursday, April 2

7:00pm (SH) +Tom Buckley (Mary Alice Buckley)

Good Friday, April 3 7:00pm (SMM)

No Mass Intention

Easter Vigil, Saturday, April 4 (SJ)

7:00 pm +Darlene Peerbolte (Jim & Linda Booth)

Sunday, April 5

7:30 am (SH) +Harry Phillips (Jerome Schneider family)

9:00 am (SJ) +Joan Smith (Charlie & Mary Denault)

10:30 am (SMM) +Tom Lane (Mariann Lane)

Looking Ahead

Mondays—1:00 Matter of Balance 1pm at SMM
 Monday, March 30— 7 Last Words 7pm SH
 Tuesday, March 31—Confessions 7pm SJ
 Wed., April 1—Tennebrae 7pm SMM
 Thursday, April 3— Holy Thursday 7 pm SH
 Friday, April 4—Good Friday SJ 7pm SMM
 Saturday, April 5—Easter Vigil 7pm SJ
 Thursday, April 9—SH CCW Spring Luncheon
 Thursday, April 16—SMM Night in Italy

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 jdstreefarms1@gmail.com

Question of the week—

• Will I keep watch and pray during the Triduum? When have I accompanied someone during a difficult time, if only to ensure they are not facing it alone?

Collections Weekend of March 14-15, 2026

St. Margaret Mary—\$ 1,871

St. James—\$ 1,046

Sacred Heart— \$ 1,127

Thank you for your generosity!

Gospel Shorts Committing to a Life of Passion

As we enter into this Holy Week, we attempt to spiritually accompany the Lord in his passion and death. Hopefully, we will see the suffering Jesus went through for us and allow it to spring forth in the form of compassion on our brothers and sisters.

This Palm Sunday offers us hope that the celebration of Easter will find us transformed by the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus. Unfortunately, we know that often we fall short of Christ-likeness. Today, let us commit to remembering Christ's great sacrifice for us; it will spur us on to live out our gratefulness to him.

Sacred Heart's Kids Helping Kids

Thank you to all who support Our Kids helping Kids. We still have our jug at the entrance of the church. It will be there until the last Sunday in April for anyone who wishes to drop money in it.

Again, thank you for your support of our students and the Ronald McDonald House.

You Are Invited

Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026 at 7p.m.



Maternity BVM Parish will once again be presenting the Living Last Supper. Come and join us for this free event held inside our historic church depicting the Last Supper from each of the disciples'

points of view as they wonder, "Is it I?"

Reflection— When It Ain't

I cannot define the word love. I cannot say what it is. I can say only that I know when it ain't. I can feel its absence in the marrow of my bones: sometimes, as living hostility; at other times, as deathly cold indifference. In the same manner, I also know when soul ain't, and when justice ain't, and when compassion ain't and when brotherhood ain't.

The fact that I cannot positively define any of these does not stop me from performing the act which may turn ain't into is. The millennium will begin when all the "ain'ts" shall have become "ises," and all the "ises" shall be for all, and it has to start now, with me. Not an I for an I, but an I for an us. "We, the people ..."



Master, wash my hands and head as well!

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Parish News:

All Parishes—

⇒ We have tickets for the Chrism Mass in the office for each parish. The Chrism Mass will be held March 30 at the Cathedral of St. Raymond, Joliet at 2pm. Please call the office to reserve your space.

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

St. Margaret Mary-Night In Italy sign up sheet on bulletin board.

St. James-

⇒ Our St. James Lenten Project is Georgie's Closet. We will be collecting monetary donations to aid in scholarships for families to cover kids' sports, extracurricular activities, hair care and other random expenses. Donations can be dropped off in the hall or in the Sunday collection. Checks should be written out to Georgie's Closet.

Sacred Heart—

⇒ The week of March 29, the Blessed Virgin Mary candle burns for Lorraine Brennan (for her heavenly birthday) and the St. Joseph candle burns in memory of Don St. Germaine Sr.

⇒ "SPRING IS COMING" and that means so is Sacred Heart C.C.W.'s Spring Luncheon with Bunco on Thursday April 9th, 11:00 a.m. in Sacred Heart's parish hall. There will be a delicious lunch, bunco with prizes, cash & basket raffles, 50/50 and door prizes. Continue returning cash raffle money & stubs in the Sunday collection. If you have a basket that you wish to donate, be sure to list the items on a paper on the outside of the basket. All baskets and (door prizes of \$5 value and up) may be dropped off at the hall and placed on the bar. Hope to see you April 9th!

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Monday, March 30 - 7 Last Words 7:00 SH

Tuesday March 31- Confessions 7:00 SJ (3 priests available)

Confessions will be heard in the confessional, cry room, and the sacristy.

Wednesday April 1 - Tenebrae 7:00 MM

Thursday April 2- Mass of the Lord's Supper 7:00 SH

Friday April 3 - Station of the Cross 3:00 MM

Friday April 3 - Passion of the Lord 7:00 MM

Saturday April 4 - Blessing of Easter Baskets 12:00 SJ

Saturday April 4—Easter Vigil 7:00 SJ

Sunday, April 5 - Regular Sunday morning Easter Day Masses





Obscure saint of the week: St. Gwynllyw (March 29) was a chieftain and layman. Gwynllyw proposed marriage to Saint Gladys, the daughter of Brychan of Brecknock. When Brychan refused, he kidnapped her, and the two started a violent life on the run. The father of Saint Cadoc of Llancarvan who eventually convinced Gwynllyw and Gladys to give up their violent ways and follow a religious calling. Gwynllyw became a monk at Newport, Monmouthshire, Wales. Later in life he became a hermit in rural Wales. An Anglican cathedral is dedicated to him in Newport, Gwent, Wales.



Other obscure saint of the week: St. Mark of Arethusa (March 29) was bishop of Arethusa, Mount Lebanon. He attended the 351 synod at Sirmium where he produced a creed that got him falsely labelled an Arian. He was removed from the *Roman Martyrology* for years, but research by the Bollandists vindicated him and restored his name to the roles.

Questions Catholics Ask

Why is Easter Season so long?

The Easter Season is determined by the seven weeks it takes to get from the Resurrection to Pentecost (which means "50th day"). While many of us might do with a little more Advent and a little less Lent, at least we're clear what these seasons signify and what we're to be about. During Advent, we await and prepare for the coming of Jesus. In Lent, we embrace penitential practices as we anticipate the resurrection of Jesus. But after Easter, liturgical time feels frankly anticlimactic. Once the tomb is discovered to be empty, really, what else is there?



What happens next in the story is nothing less than the birth of the church. But let's not rush past the Easter event too quickly. The practice of the church certainly doesn't. The Easter Vigil is the longest and most elaborate ritual of the church year. It's the final segment of a three-part liturgical movement, known as the Triduum, which begins on Holy Thursday, continues on Good Friday, and culminates on Holy Saturday night. We keep vigil with Jesus through the commemoration of his Last Supper, the anguish of his crucifixion, and the dark void between the death of hope and the dawn of resurrection. We listen to a well-chosen train of Scripture readings that trace the story of our walk with God through time. It takes a while to process this much intense human experience, and it's wise to go slowly and thoughtfully through these days.

Easter itself is an Octave, or eight-day feast, just like Christmas. In terms of liturgical practice, the Octave is like a week of Sundays as we light the Paschal candle, sing the Gloria, and continue to contemplate the wonder that death has a door, Jesus has passed through it, and so will we. Is a week too long to ponder this idea?

After Easter, Jesus continues to appear to disciples in groups large and small. Luke says he teaches them more about God's kingdom for 40 days, a sacred number that symbolizes completeness. Then Jesus returns to his Father in the Ascension—which we celebrate 40 days after Easter (or on the nearest Sunday, in some dioceses). The disciples devote themselves to prayer from that hour until Pentecost morning, when the Spirit comes and the church is launched into prime time. What should we be doing from Easter through Pentecost? Imitate the disciples in celebrating, contemplating, learning, and praying to prepare for the mission ahead.

Scripture:

Mark 16:1-20; Matthew 28:1-20; Luke 24:1-53; John 20:1—21:25; Acts of the Apostles 1:1—2:47; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11



SPIRITUALITY

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Phil 2:8-9

Christ became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name.

Gospel at the procession with palms

Matt 21:1-11; L37A

When Jesus and the disciples drew near Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives,

Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them,

“Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tethered, and a colt with her.

Untie them and bring them here to me.

And if anyone should say anything to you, reply,

‘The master has need of them.’

Then he will send them at once.”

This happened so that what had been spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled:

Say to daughter Zion,

“Behold, your king comes to you, meek and riding on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.”

The disciples went and did as Jesus had ordered them.

They brought the ass and the colt and laid their cloaks over them, and he sat upon them.

The very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and strewed them on the road.

Continued in Appendix A, p. 281.

Gospel at Mass Matt 26:14-27:66; L38A or Matt 27:11-54 in Appendix A, pp. 281-283.

Reflecting on the Gospel

Ask any Christian why Jesus died, and most will respond, “to save us from our sins.” There are, in fact, a great many differing theological explanations for the death of Jesus in the New Testament. The Gospel of Matthew is the only one in which Jesus, with his words over the cup at the Last Supper, interprets his death in terms of forgiveness of sins (26:28).

There is a particular emphasis in Matthew’s Gospel on the shedding of blood and its consequences, which reaches a climax in the passion narrative. Previously, Jesus had

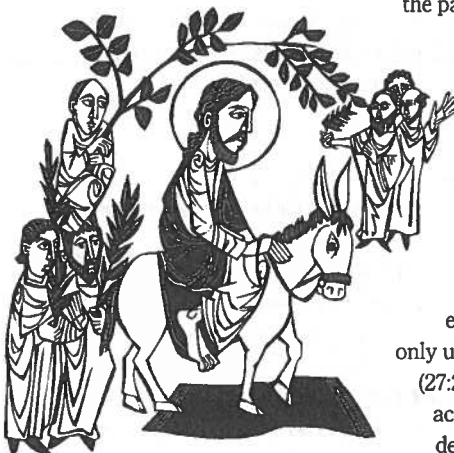
exposed the refusal of the religious leaders to recognize their complicity in the shedding of the blood of the prophets (23:30), just as Pilate tries to do when he washes his hands, declaring, “I am innocent of this man’s blood” (27:24).

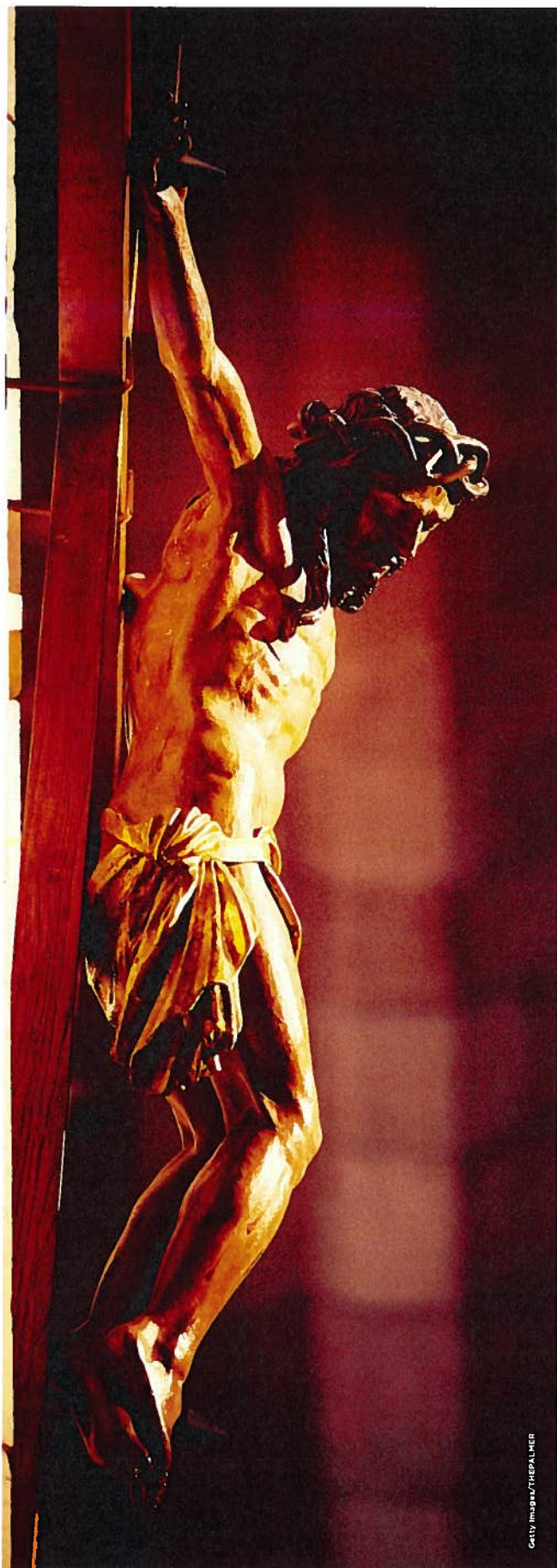
In contrast, the crowd responds with recognition that the effects of Jesus’s execution will continue to redound not only upon them but also upon their children (27:25). This verse is most often read as an acceptance of responsibility or guilt for the death of Jesus. However, there is no verb in the sentence, making it possible to read it as a statement: His death is upon us and upon

our children. It is a recognition that the effects of violence committed by leaders reverberate onto the people as a whole and continue to affect future generations. At the same time, with Jesus’s words over the cup, Matthew asserts that the forgiving effects of the shedding of Jesus’s blood also redound to them.

Jesus’s invitation to drink from the cup of his “blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins” (26:28), brings together two powerful symbols: blood and cup. Blood signifies the life force over which only God has power (Deut 12:23). The cup connotes suffering, as in Jesus’s plea in Gethsemane, “let this cup pass from me” (26:39). By accepting Jesus’s invitation to drink from the cup, disciples accept the suffering that befalls them as a consequence of living the gospel.

At the same time, partaking of the blood signifies acceptance of the life force of God, which empowers disciples to endure and overcome suffering and evil. In the Gospel of Matthew this power is explicitly linked with forgiveness. Jesus has lived and taught forgiveness as a means of breaking cycles of violence. He has accepted “the cup” of opposition that such a life has engendered, which will culminate in his death. His own blood seals again God’s covenant with God’s people, just as Moses did with blood sprinkled on the people (Exod 24:8). The pouring out of Jesus’s blood “for many” leaves no one out, as the Greek word *pollôn* reflects a Semitic expression where many is the opposite of one, thus the equivalent of “all.” When the angel announces to Joseph, “he will save his people from their sins” (Matt 1:21), it is not by a single sacrificial act but by an entire way of life into which his followers are invited.





March 29, 2026

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Mt 21:1-11 | Is 50:4-7 | Phil 2:6-11 | Mt 26:14—27:66

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

Pay attention to the prominence of Scripture in today's Mass. At Masses where there's a Procession or the Solemn Entrance, we'll hear the Gospel reading proclaiming Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. During our regular Liturgy of the Word, we'll also read through the lengthy account of Christ's passion (this year, from the Gospel of Matthew). Following the reading of the passion a brief homily may be given, but there may also be a period of silence rather than a homily. In so many ways, it seems that beginning with Palm Sunday (and all throughout Holy Week), the Church is inviting us to feast on God's Word in a deeper way than perhaps at any other time in the liturgical year. As disciples, our whole Christian life must be nourished not only by the sacraments, but by the Word of God. As Lent comes to a close, we can think back to our Gospel of the First Sunday of Lent, where Jesus tells us that "One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God." (Mt 4:4) The events we hear about during this time are the climactic moments in the unfolding plan of our salvation. By reading the Gospel accounts, we're invited to *participate* in them through this liturgy which makes them present to us, here and now.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Paul's Letter to the Philippians speaks of Jesus' self-emptying love. Although he was God, Jesus took on our humanity and offered his life in humble obedience to the Father, accepting, willfully, even death on a cross. When we consider our efforts to lead others to know the Lord, we're invited to adopt his own way of reaching out to humanity. Do we enter into the lived experience of those we seek to evangelize? In what ways do we empty (humble) ourselves in order to draw near to them? Are we willing to set aside our plans, our agenda, our way of doing things, and willingly accept God's way of doing things? Following the example of our Lord, our own efforts at evangelization should be marked by humility and self-emptying love.

STUDY

One of the best ways we can participate in the celebration of these sacred days is to spend time reading the Scriptures for each day of Holy Week. Read the text, then sit in silence, allowing the words to wash over you. What moments or lines stand out to you? As you re-read the Gospel of Christ's passion, read the words knowing that Jesus has done all of this *for you*.

Catholic Snacks, Get Fed

For this future saint, a crucifixion was just a part of the job. Meet St. Longinus, the soldier who pierced Christ's side.

The crucifixion was nothing special.

A few Roman soldiers, assigned to keep order, finish off the condemned, and make sure no one caused trouble. For Longinus, it was another grim duty in a long military career. He had seen men die before.

That Friday afternoon outside Jerusalem, the three men on the crosses were like any others—except for the one in the middle. He had been scourged nearly to death before he even got to Golgotha, and yet, unlike the others, he said nothing against his tormentors. Instead, he prayed for them.

Longinus was close enough to hear Him speak.

At about the ninth hour, the man—Jesus of Nazareth—gave a loud cry and breathed His last. Immediately, the sky, which had been dark for hours, seemed to shudder. The earth beneath them split open.

The crowd was terrified into silence. Even Longinus and the other Roman soldiers, for whom this day was supposed to be another day on the job, were shaking.

His orders were clear. To confirm the prisoner's death, he was to pierce the man's side with his lance. A routine action. A soldier's job. He thrust the spear under Jesus' ribs, and something astounding happened...

Blood and water flowed from the wound—an unnatural, distinct separation of fluids. But more than that, as the blood touched him, something changed.

Longinus had been going blind for years, a slow, creeping condition that no doctor or priest had been able to cure. He had accepted it, fought through it, learned to work around it. But now, in an instant, his sight was restored. He blinked hard, staggered back. His men saw the shock on his face, the way his entire posture changed.

And then he said it.

"Truly, this man was the Son of God."

After that day, Longinus left the army. The Gospels do not tell us what happened to him, but early Christian tradition does. He sought out the apostles and became a follower of Christ. Eventually, he went to Cappadocia, where he preached until the Roman authorities arrested him for abandoning the army and spreading the Gospel.

He was tortured, ordered to renounce Christ, and when he refused, he was executed. The same lance that had opened Christ's side would later be venerated as a relic, and Longinus himself would be named a saint.

The soldier who pierced the side of Jesus was the first to publicly proclaim Him the Son of God after His death.

Our Lord's Crucifixion changed everything for Longinus. From that day forward, the image of Christ dead on the cross, side pierced from his own spear, was always at the forefront of his mind.

Our own lives were entirely changed that day as well. Like Longinus, the blood that spilled from Christ's side was also caused by our own weapons, our sins piercing the side of the Lord. Like Longinus, we should always keep the image of Christ Crucified with us wherever we go.

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Night In Italy Volunteers Needed

Food donations

Set up

Servers

Clean up

Sign up sheet on bulletin board



Conflict is normal - Combat is optional!
Retrouvaille gives you the tools and training
to rebuild your marriage and make it better!
Join us for a weekend of rediscovery:

April 24 - 26 at the Carmelite Spiritual Center
in Darien, IL

815-246-2080

It is never too late to have the

MARRIAGE YOU WANT

HelpOurMarriage.org/Joliet



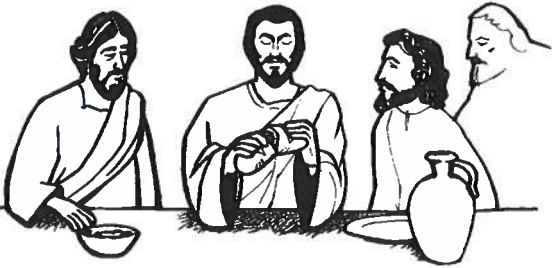
2,000 teens. One weekend.
Lives changed for Christ.

Izzy came to the Diocese of Joliet's first-ever Steubenville Youth Conference unsure of what to expect. She left with a renewed faith, a deeper desire to pray, and a changed heart. Your support through the CMAA makes transformative experiences like this possible for teens across our diocese.

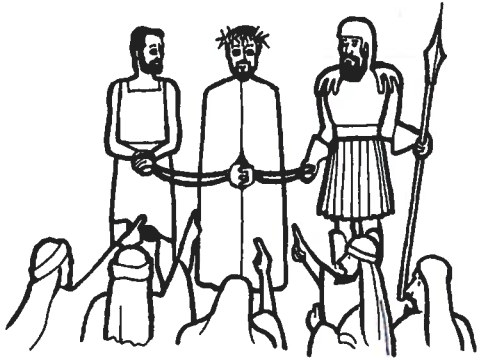
"Come here," Izzy said. "You'll want to continue in your faith and grow."



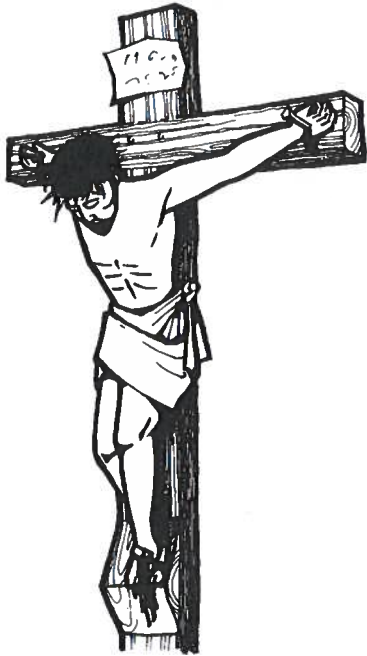
Watch the video and see the good your donation to the CMAA brings to our community



This is my body that is for you
1 COR. 11:24



But they only shouted
the louder. "Crucify him!" MT. 27:23



There they crucified him...
JN. 19:18

CONTINUE THAT GIVING SPIRIT HERE AT HOME

Tragedy has struck close to our homes. Our parishioners have always been so generous to help others in time of need. We need to keep that giving spirit moving forward as our own county community is in need. We are collecting donations for Catholic Charities to help our brothers and sisters affected by the terrible storm this month.

There will be a drop off at all three churches. Specific requests are for shelf stable foods, personal products, including toothpaste and toothbrushes, packaged underwear.

If it more convenient for you, simply make a donation to Catholic Charities and they will purchase needed items.

As this week's bulletin quote says:

"We must be ready and eager for every opportunity to do good and put our whole heart into it."
—Pope Saint Clement I

That opportunity is now and the place is here. Please be as generous as you are able. Thank you for your help.

SACRED HEART'S WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Pam Dumas of Bonfield has been named the 2026 Woman of the Year by the Sacred Heart CCW of Goodrich. Pam has been actively involved with her parish for many years by serving at funeral dinners, working the Spring Luncheons, bake sales, or church breakfasts. In the past, she has also been a Catechism teacher.

She will be honored at Mass celebrated by Fr. Michael Powell, Spiritual Advisor for the Joliet Diocese CCW at St. Raymond's Cathedral in Joliet, Saturday, April 25 a 1pm. The theme of the Mass is "Beloved Disciples of Jesus".

We wish to congratulate her for being such a blessing to our parish.



Sacred Heart's Kids Helping Kids Donut Sunday Fundraiser.



There will be no rosary said before the 7:30 am Mass at Sacred Heart on Sunday, April 5, Easter Sunday.