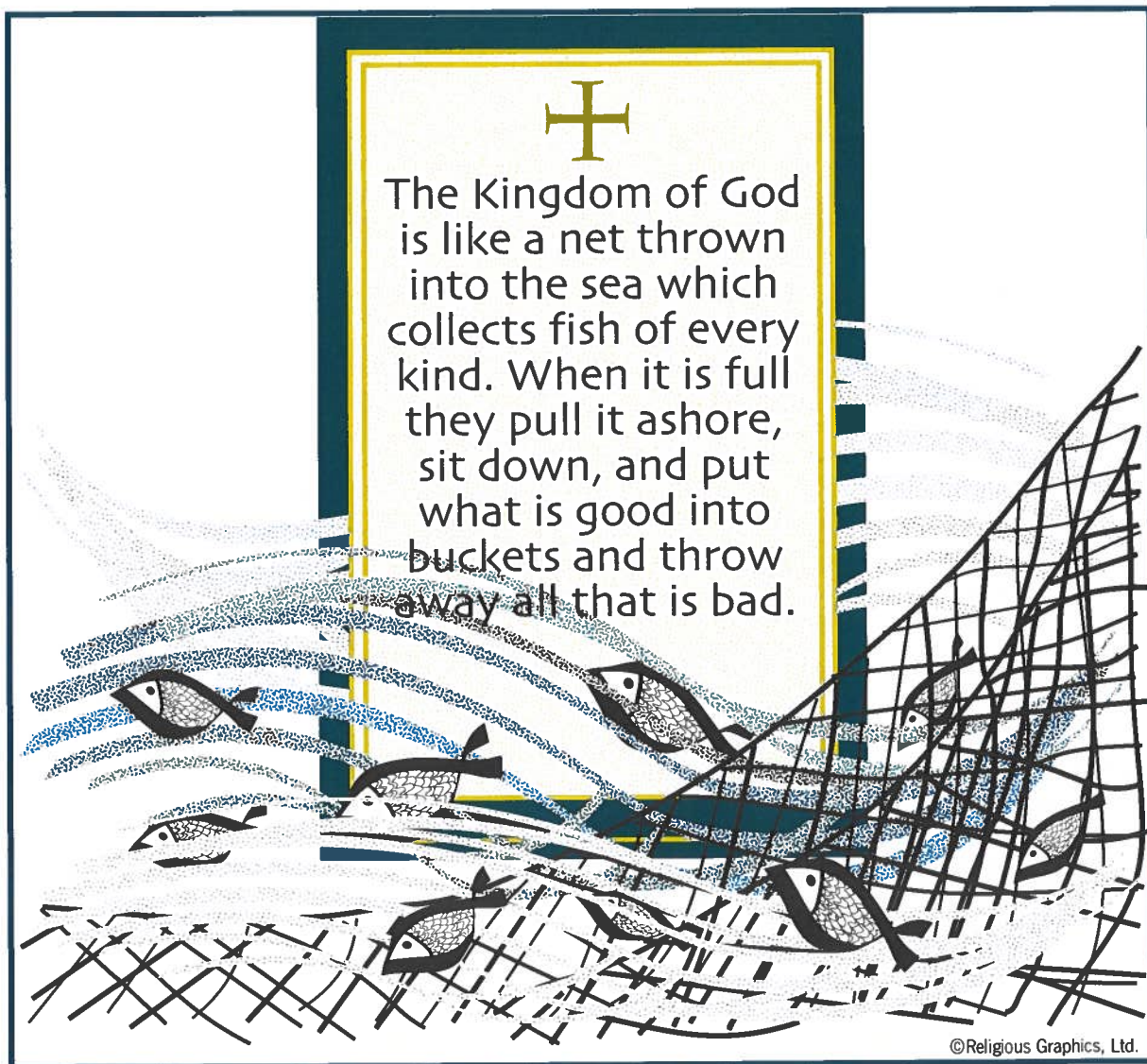


The Roman Catholic Parishes of
Sacred Heart, Goodrich
St. Margaret Mary, Herscher
St. James the Apostle, Irwin

17TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JULY 25-26, 2026



The Kingdom of God
is like a net thrown
into the sea which
collects fish of every
kind. When it is full
they pull it ashore,
sit down, and put
what is good into
buckets and throw
away all that is bad.

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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—4:45pm
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Church Mailing Address: 207 E. 5th Street Herscher, IL 60941

Phone: 815-426-2550

Quotable - "Whenever we encounter another person in love, we learn something new about God."

—Pope Francis, in Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel)

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 1-2, 2026

Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, August 1 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, August 2 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, August 2 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, August 2 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron
Ushers	Roger Jensen Brett Buza Todd Datweiler Gery Wright	Dennis Pankey Daryl Ferris	Arlen Hansen Bob Buente Dennis O'Connor Mary Offerman	Darren Lovell Erik Wheeler Dustin Truetner Sean Riordan
Lector	Dave Emling	Erica Parsons	Mary Peerbolte	Mary Hope Pleckham
Eucharistic Minister				
Servers				Avery Adams
Greeters			Greeter—Jerry Ogrentz R. Leader—Reatta Gohlke	Julie Splear

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, July 27 (SMM)

8:00 am +Mel Hebert (Dan/Debbie Marten)

Tuesday, July 28 (SJ)

8:00 am +Janet Denault Menke (Janet Denault)

Wednesday, July 29 (SJ)

8:00 am +Bill O'Connor (Craig/Pam Walker)

Friday, July 31 (SMM)

8:00am +Emma "Mikey" King (Scott Buckley family)

Saturday, August 1 (SMM)

5:00 pm For All the Parish Family

Sunday, August 2

7:30 am (SH) Special intention of Shirley St. Germaine

9:00 am (SJ) +Virginia Fritz (Jewrry/JoLynn Ogrentz)

+Marilyn Pfeiffer (David Lochner)

10:30 am (SMM) +Adam Andrzejewski (Janet Andrzejewski)

Looking Ahead

Monday, July 27—SH Parish Council meeting at 7pm

Sunday, August 2—K of C Ladies Aux. Ice Cream Social 2-4pm at St. James

Tuesday, August 11—SH CCW meeting 6:30 pm

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 –Tanhya Osenga 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— What sacrifices am I willing to make and what hardships am I willing to endure in order to gain the kingdom of heaven?

Collections Weekend of July 18-19, 2026

St. Margaret Mary—\$1,417

St. James—\$1,475

Sacred Heart— \$1,475

Thank you for your generosity!

Gospel Shorts

Choosing the Real Treasure

We all like to hear stories of how ordinary people strike it rich in a sweepstakes or lottery. We love treasure stories. Jesus told these types of stories, too. But what makes Matthew 13:44–52 a little frustrating is that he didn't tell us what kind of people found the treasure or what they did with the treasure once they found it. But a biography of some lucky people wasn't Jesus' point in telling his parable.

In the parables of the treasure in the field and the pearl of great price, Jesus wanted us to learn about a treasure of greater value than anything we could hope to obtain. But we must be willing to make sacrifices to obtain the treasure, making choices that determine how to use our God-given gifts. Christian stewardship requires prayer and, like Solomon, a wise and discerning heart.



Current Status for 2026 CMAA

Parish	Goal	Pledged	Paid
Sacred Heart	\$7,200	\$8,875	\$6,975
St. James	\$9,800	\$7,215	\$7,215
St. MM	\$10,200	\$8,025	\$7,755

Reflection— Solutions

How, then, do we weather turbulence in the church today? I would suggest Ten Commandments:

1. *Thou shalt revere the teachings of the church. Respect its 20 centuries of wisdom, scriptural revelation, and tradition.*
2. *Thou shalt pray.*
3. *Thou shalt be aware of the presence of God throughout the day. Our faith is not primarily a set of regulations, but a relationship with a Person, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the same yesterday, today, and forever.*
4. *Thou shalt concentrate on the essential truths of the church found in the Nicene and Apostles' Creed.*
5. *Thou shalt read the Bible regularly.*
6. *Thou shalt develop a habit of serious study.*
7. *Thou shalt receive the Sacraments faithfully.*
8. *Thou shalt live the original Ten Commandments. The tablets give to Moses on Mount Sinai were not the ten suggestions.*
9. *Thou shalt concentrate on the heart of our religion: "Love God, Love one another."*
10. *Thou shalt remember the Paschal Mystery.*

Parish News:

All Parishes—

- ⇒ Tuesday morning masses will be at St. James until further notice.
- ⇒ Tri Parish Prayer Group will meet each Monday at 7 pm at St James church
- ⇒ Tri-Parish Office Hours— Our office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 9am—12 pm.
- ⇒ K of C Ladies Auxiliary will be selling 50/50 raffle tickets after all masses the July 25-26 weekend

St. Margaret Mary-

St. James-

- ⇒ Would you like to help make rosaries to donate to missionaries in the United States? There are no deadlines or minimum commitments, and the CCW provides all of the materials. If you like crafting, or just need to keep your hands busy, this could be something you would like. If interested, please contact Beth Brosseau at 815.671.2286 or jeffandbeth1975@aol.com.
- ⇒ **Sacred Heart—**
- ⇒ **Important Notice— Beginning on Sunday, July 26 until further notice, Sunday Mass at Sacred Heart will be held in the church hall. Weekday masses on Tuesday will be held at St. James.**



A Stewardship Moment

Weekend of July 25/26, 2026

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

A profound stewardship prayer is offered by the young King Solomon in today's first reading. He asks the Lord to give him an understanding heart, compassion towards God's people and the insight to distinguish right from wrong. An understanding heart, or wisdom, is a gift from God. It is a gift that enables us to make good decisions and prudent choices. Cultivating and sharing this gift is essential, especially when poor decisions and lack of compassion have consequences that affect the lives of others. During these disquieting times, are we asking God for an understanding heart? Are we exercising good stewardship over the gift of wisdom? Are we sharing our compassionate hearts with others?

Adult Ed Classes

Our adult ed classes will resume in September, the topic will be The Gospel of St. Mark. If you would like to attend these classes, please call the office (815-426-2550) and register so we can order the books. The start date will be Wednesday September 9th.



Obscure saint of the week: St. Peter Chrysologus (July 30)

An adult convert to Christianity, Peter would be ordained a deacon, priest, and the bishop of Ravenna, Italy in 433. He fought paganism and the Monophysite heresy, enforced reforms, and built several churches and ornate altars in his see. He was a preacher with such language skills, he was given the name *Chrysologus*, referring to his *golden word*. 176 of his sermons have survived; it is the strength of these beautiful explanations of the Incarnation, the Creed, the place of Mary and John the Baptist in the great plan of salvation, that led to his being proclaimed a Doctor of the Church in 1729 by Pope Benedict XIII.

Other obscure saint of the week: St.

Godelieve (July 30) was born to the Flemish nobility, the daughter of Hemfried, Lord of Wierre-Effray. She was married to Bertulf of Ghistelles, a Flemish nobleman, who abandoned her before the wedding feast was over. Abused by her in-laws, especially her mother-in-law, Godelieve was locked in a cell, starved, and subjected to assorted physical and mental abuse.

Her father threatened to turn the husband and in-laws over to state and Church authorities; Bertulf appeared to repent, Godelieve returned to him, and soon after was murdered; she is generally considered a martyr. Always a friend of the poor and sick, post-mortem miracles ascribed to her include restoration of sight to her stepdaughter.



THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
IS LIKE A TREASURE BURIED
IN A FIELD MT. 13:44

The Sunday Gospel in Everyday English

He told another story. "God's kingdom is like a farmer who planted good seed in his field. That night, while his hired men were asleep, his enemy sowed thistles all through the wheat and slipped away before dawn. When the first green shoots appeared and the grain began to form, the thistles showed up, too.

"The farmhands came to the farmer and said, 'Master, that was clean seed you planted, wasn't it? Where did these thistles come from?'

"He answered, 'Some enemy did this.'

"The farmhands asked, 'Should we weed out the thistles?'

"He said, 'No, if you weed the thistles, you'll pull up the wheat, too. Let them grow together until harvest time. Then I'll instruct the harvesters to pull up the thistles and tie them in bundles for the fire, then gather the wheat and put it in the barn.' "

Another story. "God's kingdom is like a pine nut that a farmer plants. It is quite small as seeds go, but in the course of years it grows into a huge pine tree, and eagles build nests in it."

Another story. "God's kingdom is like yeast that a woman works into the dough for dozens of loaves of barley bread—and waits while the dough rises."

All Jesus did that day was tell stories—a long storytelling afternoon. His storytelling fulfilled the prophecy:

I will open my mouth and tell stories;
I will bring out into the open
things hidden since the world's first day.

Jesus dismissed the congregation and went into the house. His disciples came in and said, "Explain to us that story of the thistles in the field."

So he explained. "The farmer who sows the pure seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the pure seeds are subjects of the Kingdom, the thistles are subjects of the Devil, and the enemy who sows them is the Devil. The harvest is the end of the age, the curtain of history. The harvest hands are angels.

"The picture of thistles pulled up and burned is a scene from the final act. The Son of Man will send his angels, weed out the thistles from his Kingdom, pitch them in the trash, and be done with them. They are going to complain to high heaven, but nobody is going to listen. At the same time, ripe, holy lives will mature and adorn the Kingdom of their Father.

"Are you listening to this? Really listening?" (from Matthew 13).



What saint was the only one who believed St. Margaret Mary Alacoque?

In 1675, St. Margaret Mary was receiving the now famous revelations of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Yet instead of being believed, she was met with skepticism.

When we think about the devotion to the Sacred Heart, one name immediately comes to mind: **St. Margaret Mary Alacoque**.

But there is another saint without whom this beloved devotion might never have spread throughout the Church.

His name was **St. Claude de la Colombière**.

In 1675, St. Margaret Mary was receiving the now-famous revelations of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Yet instead of being believed, she was met with skepticism. Even some within her own religious community questioned her experiences, and one learned priest dismissed them as deception.

Imagine carrying such an extraordinary burden and having no one believe you.

Then God sent St. Claude.

A Jesuit priest and gifted preacher, Claude was assigned to Paray-le-Monial, where St. Margaret Mary lived. During a retreat he preached to her community, she heard Our Lord speak to her heart:

"He is the one I sent you."

When she finally confided in Fr. Claude, he carefully listened, discerned her experiences, and became convinced that the revelations were authentic. He encouraged her to write them down, urged her to persevere through misunderstanding and criticism, and pledged himself to spreading devotion to the Sacred Heart.

His support changed everything.

Because St. Claude recognized God's work in St. Margaret Mary, her superior also came to believe her. What had once seemed destined to remain hidden within the walls of a convent began to spread throughout the Church.

Sometimes we forget that God often accomplishes His work through ordinary acts of fidelity.

Even though St. Claude did not receive the visions or become the public face of the devotion, his simple listening allowed him to discern and support the mission that God had entrusted to someone else.

Later, St. Claude suffered greatly for the faith. While serving in England, he was falsely accused during the anti-Catholic hysteria known as the Popish Plot, imprisoned, and his already fragile health was permanently damaged. He eventually returned to Paray-le-Monial, where he spent his final days encouraging St. Margaret Mary and promoting devotion to the Sacred Heart until his death in 1682.

One of his most beautiful prayers reveals the trust that marked his entire life:

"In You, O loving God, have I hoped: let me never be confounded."

Perhaps that is why St. Claude remains such an important saint today.

In a world filled with noise, confusion, and skepticism, he reminds us that God might ask us to do something simple: recognize His work, trust Him completely, and faithfully encourage others to do the same.

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Beatification of Archbishop Fulton Sheen

Attend the Beatification
of Archbishop Fulton
Sheen on September 24,
2026 in St. Louis, MO.

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Questions Catholics Ask

Do all Christians basically agree on the purpose of baptism, Eucharist, and ministry?

The bishops see much that's mutual, but not enough for Christians to share Eucharist together. Such agreement is crucial to hope for Christian unity. Many find hope in the 1982 documents,



"Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry." BEM, for short, was produced in Lima by the World Council of Churches—a 348-member organization including most denominations you've heard of: Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Mennonite, and Quaker. The Roman Catholic Church doesn't belong to the WCC, the rationale being that the Church of Rome IS the Church. Joining an organization that renders us one "church" among equals sends the wrong message.

BEM was a work in progress since 1928. The resulting documents have been closely studied by the U.S. bishops. Here's a short summary of their assessment. BEM on Baptism has much to be admired. Its teaching on Baptism as a cleansing from sin, gift of the Spirit, incorporation into the Body of Christ, all in the name of the Trinity, is sound. BEM recognizes Baptism's "unrepeatable" nature. It describes it as the foundation of, but no substitution for, a life of faith—a nod to both infant and adult baptism.

The bishops' takeaway: BEM needs work in treating the Spirit's and the church's role in Baptism. The unity of all sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) should be clarified. The BEM distinction drawn between infant baptism and "believer's baptism" (for adults) is an "unfortunate" phrase. But a movement toward a formal mutual recognition of Christian baptisms is plausible.

Regarding Eucharist, BEM calls it a "thanksgiving, memorial, invocation, communion, and meal of the kingdom." BEM churches agree with Rome that frequent celebration of Eucharist is desirable. They concur that the entire Eucharistic celebration, not a single "moment of consecration," makes Christ really present. BEM rightly stresses the social and ethical dimensions that travel with us from the Table to the world.

The bishops would like to see more about how the nature of the church is a direct result of our Eucharist; clarification of how Christ is present as spiritual food; how Christ remains present even when the sacrament is reserved, as in the Tabernacle. The bishops see much that's mutual, but not enough for Christians to share Eucharist together.

BEM views Ministry as the vocation of all Christians, while holding a distinct place for the ordained kind. It acknowledges the apostolic origins of bishop, presbyter, and deacon. U.S. bishops agree on "interdependence and reciprocity" between the laity and the ordained. They await more clarity on the uniqueness of ordination, its relationship to sacramental ministry, particularly in the forgiveness of sins. Finally, the ordination of women remains a sticking point between BEM and Rome. Reason to hope for unity? Yes. But not for holding your breath.

Scripture: Mark 6:34-44; 14:22-25; Matthew 16:18-19; 28:19-20; John 6:22-58; Romans 6:3-11; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; 12:1-31; 1 Timothy 3:1-13

Knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary

Ice Cream Social

Sunday, August 2, 2026

2:00pm—4:00pm



Ice Cream Sundaes
Cookies
Raffle

Bingo
Basket

50/50 Raffle

Free Will Donation

St. James Church Hall (In Irwin)

4372 Main St, Kankakee, IL



"Wow Mom! If cleanliness is next to Godliness,

Reflection— The Struggle of Prayer

One day a boy was watching a holy man praying on the banks of a river in India. When the holy man completed his prayer the boy went over and asked him, "Will you teach me to pray?" The holy man studied the boy's face carefully. Then he gripped the boy's head in his hands and plunged it forcefully into the water!

The boy struggled frantically, trying to free himself in order to breathe. When the boy was able to get his breath, he gasped, "What did you do that for?" The holy man said: "I just gave you your first lesson."

"What do you mean?" asked the astonished boy. "Well", said the holy man, "when you long to pray as much as you longed to breathe when your head was underwater — only then will I be able to teach you to pray."

July 26, 2026

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Kgs 3:5, 7-12 | Rom 8:28-30 | Mt 13:44-52

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

Today we continue to hear parables about the kingdom of God and the reaction of those who find it. The merchant and the person in the field joyfully sell all they have to acquire their treasures. In a world in which we have so many responsibilities, following God may sometimes feel like an obligation. We abide by truths of the Church that are countercultural and challenging. We give our time and our money for the benefit of our community. We profess bold belief in a Gospel truth that is often questioned. These parables remind us that God desires that we move past seeking him out of a sense of obligation or duty – to a place of joy-filled abandonment to him. To experience the full joy that comes from living the Gospel, Jesus comes to us and remains with us in his sacraments. He invites us over and over again to experience his love and his joy until our hearts are changed and we joyfully put everything aside in pursuit of him.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

I was pulling weeds in the garden when my daughter asked how I knew which plants not to pull. I realized that I simply recognize a weed from a desired plant because I have spent time in my garden. As we journey with Christ, our eyes become fine-tuned to see the difference between what is characteristic of the kingdom of God and what is of this world. King Solomon had eyes fixed on the kingdom, and he knew the value of asking for an understanding heart to help him see more clearly. We must also ask for the wisdom to see clearly what is from God. As we encounter the beauty of God and the truth of his word, we are called to share those encounters with those who are still searching and whose eyes are untrained. Not unlike pulling weeds in the garden, we must train our eyes to find the longed-for pearl as we see and experience the truth of God's love as a community of believers.

PRAY

As you seek to grow in understanding, pray the prayer of St. Anselm of Canterbury this week: *O Lord, my God / teach my heart this day where and how to see you / where and how to find you / Let me find you by loving you / let me love you when I find you. Amen.*



SPIRITUALITY

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

cf. Matt 11:25

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth;
you have revealed to little ones the
mysteries of the kingdom.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Matt 13:44-52; L109A

Jesus said to his disciples:

"The kingdom of heaven is like a
treasure buried in a field,
which a person finds and hides
again,
and out of joy goes and sells all
that he has and buys that
field.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is
like a merchant
searching for fine pearls.

When he finds a pearl of great
price,

he goes and sells all that he has
and buys it.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like
a net thrown into the sea,
which collects fish of every kind.

When it is full they haul it ashore
and sit down to put what is good into
buckets.

What is bad they throw away.

Thus it will be at the end of the age.

The angels will go out and separate the
wicked from the righteous
and throw them into the fiery furnace,
where there will be wailing and
grinding of teeth.

"Do you understand all these things?"

They answered, "Yes."

And he replied,

"Then every scribe who has been
instructed in the kingdom of
heaven
is like the head of a household
who brings from his storeroom both the
new and the old."

or Matt 13:44-46 in *Appendix A*, p. 303.

Reflecting on the Gospel

What would make you most happy? Is happiness something to be sought or does it find you?

Today's gospel offers three short parables about how one attains not only happiness but the even deeper gift of lasting joy. In the first instance, a person unexpectedly finds buried treasure. Perhaps he is digging a well or a hole for a fence post, when suddenly he strikes a hoard of coins left behind by a previous owner who, for some reason, was unable to reclaim it. The digger is likely a poor peasant, a hired day laborer, at the bottom of the social scale. The parable emphasizes how overjoyed he is at this unexpected find that will change his life. With reckless abandon he sells all he has in order to acquire the field with its treasure.

The second parable takes us to the other end of the social spectrum. A merchant in search of fine pearls would have been a rich man, most likely making his money on the backs of the poor divers in his employ. Merchants are generally depicted negatively in the Scriptures (see, for example, Sir 26:29; Isa 23:8; Ezek 27), as avaricious and corrupt. The surprise is that even such persons as this could come upon the reign of God and be moved to sell all they have for this pearl of great price.

If there is discomfort among the hearers of Jesus's parables that both a poor peasant and a rich merchant could be found in the reign of God, a third parable—about a net that pulls in all kinds of fish—asks disciples to suspend judgment about who is wicked and who is righteous, leaving the sorting to God's angels at the end of the age. There are many verbal and thematic similarities here to the parable of the weeds and wheat (Matt 13:24-30, 36-43). The parable is also evocative of the call of the first disciples to be fishers of people, for which they abandon all else (Matt 4:18-20).

There is an element of surprise in each parable, whether concerning the manner of finding or who is to be found in God's reign. A further surprise is that the resultant joy leads to giving up all else. It is a paradoxical path to happiness. When it finds you, any instinct to hoard this treasure evaporates; what surfaces instead is the desire to divest oneself of everything.

The metaphors of the treasure and pearl break down, however, when they imply that the reign of God can be bought and owned. The startling message Jesus preaches is that happiness in God's reign cannot be purchased in any way—not by good deeds, nor with any other commodity. Rather, it is an astonishing free gift, attainable by all. While it cannot be bought, it costs everything. The price is not paid out of obligation or guilt but is a totally free self-surrender to irresistible joy. This is an old story, not to be kept locked in a storeroom, but meant to be told anew, by each who has been set free by joy.

