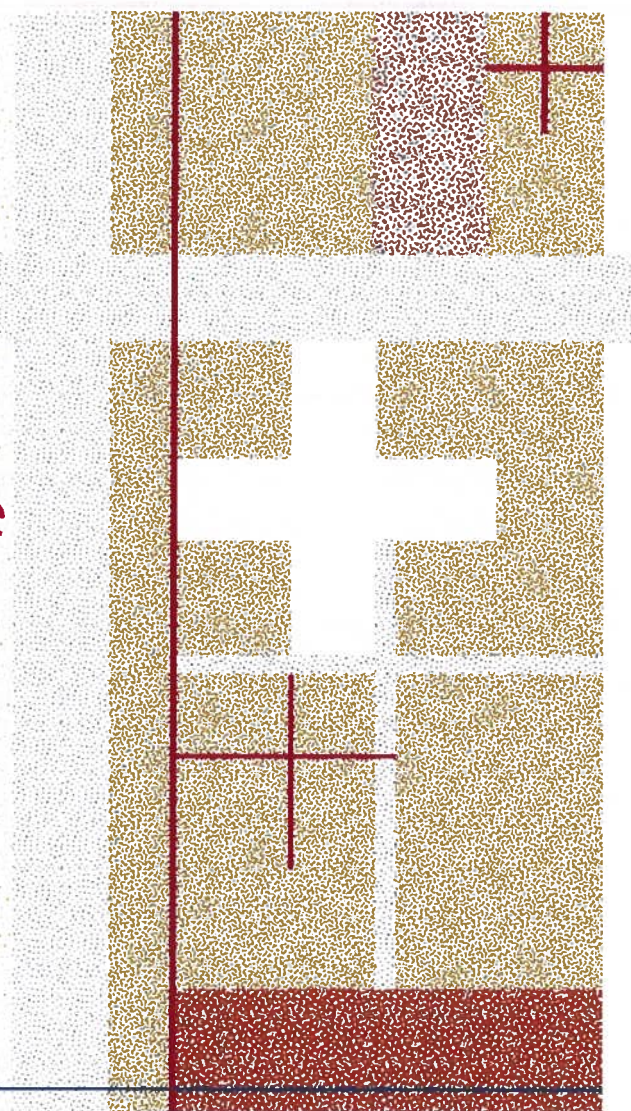


The Roman Catholic Parishes of
Sacred Heart, Goodrich
St. Margaret Mary, Herscher
St. James the Apostle, Irwin

22ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

AUGUST 29-30, 2026

Whoever wishes
to come after me
must deny himself
take up his
CROSS
and follow me
but whoever loses
his life for my sake
will find it
for the
SON of MAN
will come in his
FATHER's glory
and he will repay
everyone
according to
his conduct



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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 - " No sin, failure, humiliation or exclusion can diminish the profound value of a human life that God has willed and called into being. "

—Pope Leo XIV

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sept. 5-6, 2026

Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, Sept. 5 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, Sept. 6 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, Sept. 6 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, Sept 6 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron	Father Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron
Ushers	Dave Emling Roger Jensen Bob Schultz Gery Wright	Dennis Pankey Daryl Ferris	Dennis O'Connor Bob Buente Jeff Martin Jerry Ogrentz	Dustin Truetner Darren Lovell Kim Smicker Erik Wheeler
Lector	Rob Landeck	Erica Parsons	Kelly Buente	Mary Hope Pleckham
Eucharistic Minister				Wayne Bisailon
Servers				Gavin Down
Greeters			Greeter—D. Bernicky R. Leader—Rita Thiesen	Julie Splear

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, August 31 (SMM)

8:00 am +Francis Ahern (Growmark, Inc.)

Tuesday, Sept. 1 (SJ)

8:00 am + Sondra Hertz (Karen Diefenbach)

Wednesday, Sept. 2

+ Laurie Hansen (Patricia White))

Friday, Sept. 4 First Friday

8:00am +Harold Fournier (Dick/Sue Cotter)

Saturday, Sept. 5 (SMM)

5:00 pm +Kathryn Wagner (Mary Ann Wagner)
+Louis, Charlotte, & Madeline Hildebrand (Mariann Lane))

Sunday, Sept. 6

7:30 am (SH) +Leland Denault (Jackie Cross & family)
+Anthony Morrical (Jackie Cross & family)

9:00 am (SJ) +Pat Perreault (Tarry Knauer)
+Marie Costigan (Michael Costigan)

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

Looking Ahead

Monday, Sept. 7—Herscher Labor Day Celebration

Wednesday, Sept. 9—Adult Ed Class at 6pm at SMM

Sunday, September 13—Religious Ed Begins at all three parishes

Saturday, Sept. 19—Bus Trip to Mundelein Seminary

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 –

Prayer Line–

SMM -Janice 815-426-2574 jdstreefarms1@gmail.com

Question of the week—

• When have I been reluctant or unable to resist pressure to conform to society's expectations?

Collections Weekend of August 22-23, 2026

St. Margaret Mary—\$1,597

St. James—\$1,049

Sacred Heart— \$1,221

Thank you for your generosity!

Gospel Shorts Do You Have a Cross?

We sacrifice for the things that are important to us. As a nation, in one way or another, we sacrifice in order to make our country stronger. Parents plan ahead and make difficult sacrifices to send their kids to college. We make sacrifices for our spouses and our children and our close friends.

If we take our Faith seriously, we make sacrifices for God too. Sacrificing is an act of love. It shows how deeply we care. And usually, we get back far more than we have ever given.



We were given the gift of faith in Baptism, but if we don't nourish and help it grow, it may wither with life's busyness and distractions.

Isaiah 55:6 invites us to ongoing growth in the Lord, "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near."

Summer is almost over, the kids are back in school, and the football season is starting. Perhaps now is the time to try the 7 pm Monday Night Prayer Meeting each week at St. James.

The hour includes music, Scripture, a quiet time for personal reflection, and thanksgiving & intercessory prayer for the needs of family, friends, and our parishes.

Each week, we remind each other of God's promise in Jeremiah 29:12-14a: "When you call me, and come and pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me."



Religious Education Kickoff Sunday September 13

SJ—registration after Mass followed by class

SMM—Registration online for K-8

students via the link found on the private FB page. Class kickoff on Sunday, September 13 at 9:30 am New families, please email Jill jfulton.stmm@gmail.com and she will send you the link

SH—Turn in registration and class begins on Sunday, Sept. 13



1st Friday Adoration

Venerable Norbert McAuliffe on the Blessed Sacrament

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

First Friday Adoration will be at St. Margaret Mary on September 4th. Mass will be followed by adoration and benediction.

Parish News:

⇒ **All Parishes—**

⇒ Tuesday morning masses will be at St. James until further notice.

⇒ Please see the Join Us article on this page and consider joining the Tri Parish Prayer Group which meets 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.

St. Margaret Mary-

St. James-

⇒ **Sacred Heart—**

⇒ **Important Notice—** Weekday masses on Tuesday will be held at St. James.



Final Week to Sign Up for 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 9 at 6:00 pm at St. Margaret Mary .

University of Saint Mary of the Lake
Mundelein Seminary



Join us as we tour this beautiful campus!

A Tri-Parish outing is in the works! A bus trip to Mundelein Seminary is being planned for Saturday, September 19. It will be a day of touring the campus, the

chapels on the grounds, learning about the history of Mundelein Seminary and of course a delicious lunch.

The office needs to know by September 2 the exact number going, so if you haven't reserved your spot yet, please do so by Wednesday, September 2. The office number is 815-426-2550.



I would like to thank my church family for a of the thoughts and prayers sent on my behalf.

A special thank you to Darwin & Mary Peerbolte and Dena Coy for helping me move! Also thank you to Fr. Ron & Deacon Ron.

~Sylvia Lowe



Saint of the week: St. Adauctus of Rome (August 30) As Saint Felix of Rome was being dragged to his martyrdom, Adauctus, a bystander, was moved to proclaim his own faith.



Obscure saint of the week: St. Gaudentia of Rome (August 30)

was a young woman in Rome, who made personal vows, dedicating herself to God. She was martyred with three companions whose names have not come down to us.



Understanding the sacraments part two

The rite of Christian Funerals

As I mentioned last week, the rite of Christian Funerals is a three-part liturgy. We looked at the wake or vigil in the previous article, today I want to explain the funeral itself. Again, last week I mentioned that the funeral is not a sacrament but may be conducted with the sacrament of the Eucharist. We have two options when someone requests a funeral for their loved one. The first option is in the church within the context of the Mass. I recommend this option if the deceased practiced their faith and/or their family is practicing their faith. The ritual has the priest meet the deceased and his/her family at the entry of the church where he blesses the body with holy water. Doing this is a reminder of their loved one's Baptism. Then the casket or urn is covered in a white cloth called a "pall". It too is a reminder of our baptism when we were clothed in a white garment symbolizing our new life in Christ. Then all process into the church for the beginning of the Mass. Please note, the deceased did not have to be Catholic to have a funeral. At the family's request we can have a funeral for non-Catholics.

The other option we have is to conduct the Funeral outside of Mass. I recommend this option when the deceased were not practicing their faith and/or their family are not practicing their faith. A funeral outside of Mass may be done in the church, funeral home, or some other appropriate location. It is the same format as a Funeral conducted within a Mass apart from the distribution of the Eucharist.

At the funeral family members can participate by doing the reading and the petition prayers. There are restrictions on what can be done at the liturgy though. A eulogy is not allowed during the Mass and secular music cannot be played during the ritual. Most of the approved songs are in the hymnal, other religious songs that are not in the hymnal may be used with the musician's permission. If the family would like to choose readings, they need to meet with Father and arrange these selections. The same applies to hymns.

The church teaches us that the funeral is not about the deceased person, but rather what God has done for them. Paragraph 129 of the Rite of Funerals states: At the funeral liturgy the community gathers with the family and friends of the deceased to give praise and thanks to God for Christ's victory over sin and death, to commend the deceased to God's tender mercy and compassion, and to seek strength in the proclamation of the pastoral mystery. Through the Holy Spirit the community is joined together in faith as one Body in Christ to reaffirm in sign and symbol, word and gesture that each believer through baptism shares in Christ's death and resurrection and can look to the day when all the elect will be raised up and united in the kingdom of light and peace.

In most cases we move from the funeral rite to the rite of committal, but in some cases the funeral ends with the liturgy. An example of this would be when there isn't going to be a burial or the burial will take place at another time or a different location.

Reflection— With Christ Beside Me

If you are anxious, but love Christ, you can be assured that you will never be alone.

He lived the life of a refugee and knew what it meant to be lonely. He was imprisoned, faced pain, and peered into the darkness of an uncertain future. Because of this, He can be your companion as you face the uncertainties of life.

The Sunday gospel in everyday English

Then Jesus made it clear to his disciples that it was now necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, submit to an ordeal of suffering at the hands of the religious leaders, be killed, and then on the third day be raised up alive. Peter took him in hand, protesting, "Impossible, Master! That can never be!"

But Jesus didn't swerve. "Peter, get out of my way. Satan, get lost. You have no idea how God works."

Then Jesus went to work on his disciples. "Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat; I am. Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self. What kind of deal is it to get everything you want but lose yourself? What could you ever trade your soul for?"

"Don't be in such a hurry to go into business for yourself. Before you know it the Son of Man will arrive with all the splendor of his Father, accompanied by an army of angels. You'll get everything you have coming to you, a personal gift" (from Matthew 16).

Questions Catholics Ask

How can I understand and explain the Catholic position on contraception?

The right and duty of couples to responsibly limit the size of their families was accepted; a distinction was drawn between natural and artificial means of doing so.

Start with two basic teaching tools: That life is a sacred gift from God. And that the family is the primary social unit and what happens within it is of great social consequence. Hang onto these ideas as you reflect on the history below, which demonstrates the evolution of these principles in regard to contraception.

Until the 20th century, the church viewed procreation as the sole meaning of sexual activity. Sex designed to prevent a life, therefore, was an obvious contradiction of its meaning. Ethicist James Hanigan identifies six developments that made this perspective less obvious to many. First, 18th-century biology studied the human reproductive system well enough to prevent pregnancies artificially. Next, sociology pointed to a population explosion in a world with limited resources. Third, political valuing of the dignity of the person as a free chooser rose in the social consciousness. Fourth, as family farms gave way to factories, economic burdens increased with the number of children. Fifth, the contemporary recognition of women as full persons led to aspirations beyond traditional roles. Finally, a reappraisal of the significance of sexuality in human identity led to an acceptance of the unitive meaning of sexual activity.

Modern popes have shown a desire to acknowledge these factors while not abandoning fundamental teachings about life and family. In 1965, the unitive value of intercourse was embraced along with its procreative meaning in Catholic teaching. The right and duty of couples to responsibly limit the size of their families was accepted; a distinction was drawn between natural and artificial means of doing so. Pope Francis reiterated this teaching in 2015, noting Catholics weren't compelled "to breed like rabbits." Exceptions regarding the use of artificial contraception have been introduced three times: in the 1960s, Pope Paul VI approved birth control for religious sisters exposed to the risk of rape in the Belgian Congo. In 2010, Benedict XVI noted that condoms used by prostitutes to prevent the spread of AIDS could be seen as a moral choice. In 2016, Pope Francis cited Benedict's teaching in declaring that women endangered by the Zika virus might use birth control as a responsible choice.

Church teaching in 2016 illustrates how popes are still listening and nuancing: "The just way for family planning is that of a consensual dialogue between the spouses, respect for the times of fertility and consideration of the dignity of the partner." (*Amoris Laetitia* #63)

Scriptures: Genesis 1:27-28; 2:18-24; Ruth; Song of Songs; Ephesians 5:25-32

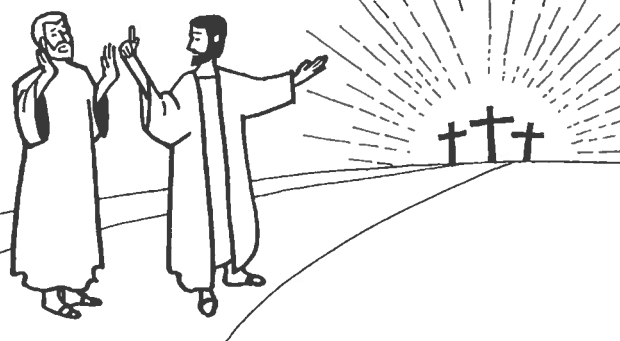
A Stewardship Moment

Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Weekend of August 29/30, 2026

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus brings up the topic of the cross to his followers. They would not realize the cross was part of God's plan and was to be their legacy until after the Resurrection. Today's followers of Christ recognize they are stewards of his entire legacy, including his cross; that through their mutual sacrifices God's glory is revealed. They don't live their lives in Christ only when it is convenient for them. They make a decision to take up their cross and carry it, no matter what the cost. In the midst of the uncertain times we live in, what crosses do we bear in order to reveal God's glory?

**GOD FORBID, LORD! NO SUCH THING
WILL EVER HAPPEN TO YOU** MT.16:22



Catholic Snacks, Get Fed

Why do Catholics call Mary Queen? Here are five reasons.

Mary's glory in heaven is a picture or foreshadowing for all Christians of the similar heavenly glory meant for those who share in her Son's passion, death, and resurrection.

We celebrate the Queenship of Mary on August 22, just eight days after we celebrate the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven. Two beautiful feasts of our Blessed Mother.

Mary is assumed into heaven, body and soul, and there she is crowned Queen.

But if Jesus Christ is King, why do Catholics also call His Mother Queen? Does giving Mary this title somehow take honor away from her Son?

Not at all. In fact, Mary only and always brings us to Jesus. Her queenship only makes sense *because Jesus is King*.

Here are five things to know about this beautiful feast.

1. In the Davidic kingdom, the king's mother was queen

We tend to think of a queen as the wife of a king. But in the kingdom of ancient Israel, the queen mother held a special position of honor. We see this clearly when Solomon becomes king. His mother Bathsheba approaches him, and Scripture tells us:

"The king rose to meet her, and bowed down to her; then he sat on his throne, and had a seat brought for the king's mother; and she sat on his right."
—1 Kings 2:19

Jesus is the fulfillment of the Davidic kingship. If He is the eternal King, it makes perfect sense that His Mother occupies a unique place in His kingdom.

2. Revelation gives us an extraordinary image of a Queen

In Revelation 12, St. John describes:

"And a great sign appeared in heaven: A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars: And being with child, she cried travailing in birth, and was in pain to be delivered. And there was seen another sign in heaven: and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads, and ten horns: and on his head seven diadems: And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to be delivered; that, when she should be delivered, he might devour her son. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with an iron rod: and her son was taken up to God, and to his throne."—Revelation 12:1-5

The woman has several layers of meaning, including Israel and the Church, but Catholic tradition has also recognized Mary in this image...the Mother who gives birth to the One who will "rule all the nations." And she is wearing a crown.

3. Mary's Queenship depends entirely upon Christ

Mary is Queen because Jesus is King.

Everything Mary possesses comes from God. Her Immaculate Conception, her divine motherhood, her Assumption, and her Queenship are all gifts of His grace.

Pope Pius XII, who established the Feast of the Queenship of Mary in 1954, explained that Mary's royal dignity is rooted above all in the fact that she is the Mother of God.

Honoring the Mother doesn't diminish her Son. It points us toward Him.



4. A queen mother intercedes

There's another interesting detail in the story of Bathsheba. She doesn't simply sit beside Solomon. She brings a petition to the king on behalf of another. That gives us a profound Old Testament image for Mary's intercession.

We see something similar at Cana. Mary notices that the wedding party has run out of wine and brings the need to Jesus. Then she turns to the servants and gives what may be the best summary of Marian devotion ever spoken:

"Do whatever he tells you."

—John 2:5

Those words tell us exactly where Mary directs our attention.

To Jesus. Always.

5. The Queen of Heaven is still our Mother

The woman we honor as Queen of Heaven is the same Mother Jesus gave to us from the Cross. *He gave her to us*.

Her crown doesn't make her distant from us. It reminds us of where she is, and of the powerful intercessor we have before the throne of her Son.

Mary's glory in heaven is a picture or foreshadowing for all Christians of the similar heavenly glory meant for those who share in her Son's passion, death, and resurrection. She received first, and in the most perfect way, that which is destined for all of us.

So days after celebrating Mary's Assumption, the Church invites us to look toward heaven once again. Mary has arrived where we hope to go!

And from there, our Queen continues to do what she has always done: lead us to Jesus.

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August 23, 2026

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 22:19-23 | Rom 11:33-36 | Mt 16:13-20

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

In today's second reading, St. Paul reflects in awe over the "depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God." God's judgments are inscrutable, his ways unsearchable, he goes on to say. While on our own, we cannot know the depth of who God is and the beauty of his plan for us, we have been given access to this knowledge by the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel, Peter is able to grasp that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God," not by "flesh and blood," but by a revelation from our heavenly Father. The Church that is still led by Peter's successor continues to be guided by the Spirit into the fullness of truth. (Jn 16:13) As individual believers, we, too, have received the Spirit in our hearts. By living in communion with our Holy Father and by seeking to listen to the Spirit who also speaks into the depths of our hearts, we can rest assured that we are in a "sure spot" where we can receive all that the Lord wishes to reveal to us about what it means to live in him.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Today's Gospel demonstrates that Christ desired to place Peter – and his successors – as the visible head of his Church. Yes, God willed from the beginning to leave his Church with a leader who could safeguard the quintessential confession of Christ as the "Son of the living God," but there's more to it than this. Peter is given *keys to the kingdom of heaven*. And what are keys for if not to open doors? In a very real way, the mission of our Holy Father is to open up access to God's kingdom, and there are many examples of this. On World Mission Sunday in 2011, Pope Benedict said, "The proclamation of the Gospel is intended for all peoples." And Pope Francis, speaking at World Youth Day in 2023, emphasized that the Gospel is for todos, todos, todos – everyone, everyone, everyone, without exception. As we pray for our Holy Father and the immense task with which he has been entrusted, let us work in our own way to ensure that the doors of our churches, the way to the kingdom of heaven, remain open for all.

PRAY

As we reflect on the gift that Jesus left us by making Peter and his successors the visible head of his Church on earth, take some time to pray for our Holy Father and his intentions. You can pray along with the Pope at the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (a site which contains a short video of the Pope's monthly prayer intention and other prayer resources) at www.popesprayer.va.

SPIRITUALITY

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Matt 16:18

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church
and the gates of the netherworld shall
not prevail against it.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Matt 16:13-20; L121A

Jesus went into the region of
Caesarea Philippi and
he asked his disciples,
"Who do people say that the Son
of Man is?"

They replied, "Some say John the
Baptist, others Elijah,
still others Jeremiah or one of
the prophets."

He said to them, "But who do
you say that I am?"

Simon Peter said in reply,
"You are the Christ, the Son of the
living God."

Jesus said to him in reply,
"Blessed are you, Simon son of
Jonah.

For flesh and blood has not revealed
this to you, but my heavenly
Father.

And so I say to you, you are Peter,
and upon this rock I will build my
church,
and the gates of the netherworld
shall not prevail against it.

I will give you the keys to the kingdom
of heaven.

Whatever you bind on earth shall be
bound in heaven;

and whatever you loose on earth
shall be loosed in heaven."

Then he strictly ordered his disciples
to tell no one that he was the Christ.

Reflecting on the Gospel

The question Jesus poses in today's gospel is not a pop quiz for the disciples. Since it comes halfway through Matthew's Gospel, at a critical turning point, we might be tempted to think Jesus is giving a kind of midterm exam to see how well the disciples are understanding him and to test whether they have what it takes to go the rest of the journey with him. But the scene may also reflect Jesus's own development in understanding his identity and mission.

In contrast to modern Western cultures in which an individual expends energy trying to find a unique identity as a person distinct from other persons, in Jesus's culture, characterized by dyadic personality, a person understood himself or herself only in relationship to the groups in which she or he was embedded: family, clan, nation, and religion. Paul, for example, identifies himself to be "of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrew parentage, in observance of the law a Pharisee" (Phil 3:5).

In today's gospel, Jesus seeks out others' perceptions as he solidifies his understanding of himself. The disciples first report that people align Jesus with revered prophetic figures: John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah. While there are many parallels between Jesus and these prophets, Matthew clearly distinguishes Jesus from them. He is the "mightier" one "coming after" John (Matt 3:11). And it is John who embodies the re-

turned Elijah (see Matt 11:14; 17:12).

As Jesus presses the disciples for their own response, Peter, the spokesperson for the group, rightly declares, "You are the Christ [*christos*]" (Matt 16:16). The Greek *christos* means "Messiah" or "anointed," a term used in the Old Testament for one who is set apart by God for particular service, such as kings (Ps 2:2; 89:20), priests (Lev 4:3, 5), and prophets (1 Kgs 19:16). That Jesus is *christos* is not a new revelation in Matthew's Gospel (see 1:1, 17, 18; 11:2). But the nature of Jesus's messiahship as entailing suffering and death is articulated for the first time in the ensuing verses (16:21-27), the gospel for next Sunday.

As Jesus's identity emerges and solidifies, so too does that of Peter. Verses 17 to 19 are unique to Matthew, with a wordplay on the name *Petros*, "rock," in Greek. Jesus exalts the emerging rocklike faith of Peter and of the whole community of disciples whose identity is tied up in that of Jesus. Yet in the very next verses, the "rock" will falter when confronted with the stumbling block (*scandalon*, 18:6, 7) of Jesus's passion. Nonetheless, as the gospel progresses, Jesus continues to call him "Peter," enabling him to become what he is named. Just as the disciples' naming of Jesus as "Messiah" and partnering with him in his messianic mission enabled him to embrace all that being the "anointed" one entailed, so too Jesus's identification of the believing community as "rock solid" brought forth that quality in them. Likewise, we are invited to let Jesus and our faith community call forth our deepest identity as followers of the anointed, whose solidity is sure.

