

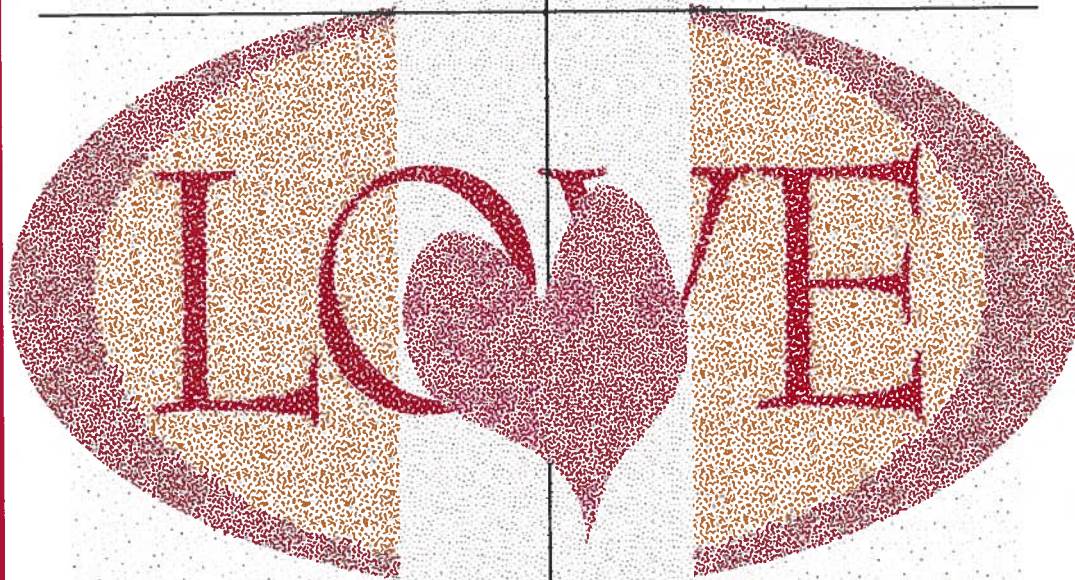
The Roman Catholic Parishes of
Sacred Heart, Goodrich
St. Margaret Mary, Herscher
St. James the Apostle, Irwin

24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

SEPT. 12-13, 2026

As far as the east

is from the west



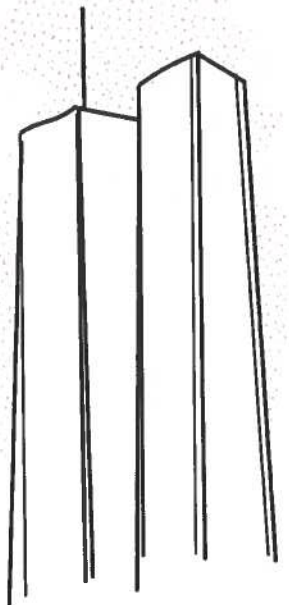
so far has the Lord
put our transgressions from us

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We will
remember

September 11, 2001

Pray for them
and their families



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 - " If you find it very hard to forgive injuries, look at a Crucifix, and think that Christ shed all His Blood for [you], and not only forgave His enemies, but even prayed His Heavenly Father to forgive them also."

—Saint Philip Neri

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time				Sept. 19-20, 2026
Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, Sept. 19 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, Sept. 20 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, Sept. 20 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, Sept 20 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Peeters	Father Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron
Ushers	Dave Emling Roger Jensen Gery Wright Galen Fritz	Daryl Ferris Kyle Ferris	Dave Ladehoff Jeff Martin Todd Mesewicz Dan Forsythe	Wayne Bisaillon Dustin Truetner Darren Lovell Kim Smcker
Lector	Corinn Wheeler	Mike Hertz	Dave Ladehoff	Diane Long
Eucharistic Minister			Dena Coy	Marie Johnson
Servers				Gavin Down
Greeters			Greeter—Donna Bernicky R. Leader—Rita Thiesen	Wayne Bisaillon

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, Sept. 14 (SMM) 8:00 am

+Madeline Bouchard (Pat Gray)

Tuesday, Sept. 15 (SJ)

8:00 am + James R. Perry (Don/Marie Feller)

Wednesday, Sept. 16

+ Joe & Darlene Peerbolte (Ron/Vicki Peerbolte)

Friday, Sept. 18

8:00am +Jackie Eberle (Dolores Landeck Pepperd)

Saturday, Sept. 19 (SMM)

5:00 pm +Cindy Frerichs, Bob Landeck, & Joel Eberle
(Jackie Eberle)

Sunday, Sept. 20

7:30 am (SH) +Marilyn Pfeiffer (Jackie Cross)

+Walter & Mary Pieszka (Angie Kmetz)

9:00 am (SJ) +Rita & Babe O'Connor (Tom Scanlon/Dawn Soucie)

+Marilyn Pfeiffer (Dan/Chris Forsythe)

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

Looking Ahead

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

Saturday, Sept. 19—Bus Trip to Mundelein Seminary

Sunday, Sept. 20—CCW meeting at SJ after mass

Monday, Sept. 21—SMM CCW meeting 7pm

Sunday, Sept. 27— St. Peter's Clifton Chicken Dinner 11am-3

Monday, Sept. 28—Combined Parish Council meeting 7:00 SMM

Wednesday, Sept. 30—Adult Ed Class at 6pm at SJ

Saturday, Oct. 10—Rosary Rally at noon at SMM

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 Bisaillon 426-2550

Bulletin – Debbie Jensen - 426-2550 debjen04@gmail.com

Religious Education –

St. MM – Jill Fulton jfulton.stmm@gmail.com

Sacred Heart – Rhonda Berns – 426-5015

St. James—Tanhya Osenga tosenga81@gmail.com

Parish Nurse –

Prayer Line–

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

Question of the week—

- Reconciliation means making a relationship whole again. Whom do I need to forgive to make our relationship whole once more?

Collections Weekend of Sept. 5-6, 2026

St. Margaret Mary—\$2,662

St. James—\$ 2,815

Sacred Heart— \$1,310

Thank you for your generosity!



Religious Education Kickoff Today

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

When: October 10, 2026 – ROSARY WILL BEGIN AT 12:00 NOON



Please join us in praying for our nation

Please bring a lawn chair.

For more information, please contact:

Cindy Gagnon – (815) 933-4077; Rhonda Berns – (815) 426-5015; Kathy Meli – (815) 928-8988

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-

⇒ CCW meeting Sept. 21 at 7pm.

St. James-

⇒ **Date change**—All are invited to attend our first CCW meeting of 2026-2027 on Sunday, September 20 after mass in the hall

Sacred Heart—

⇒ Our CCW Bake Sale is only a month away— Sunday, October 4 at the Salina Fire Dept. Breakfast in Bonfield from 8am till 11am. We will be packaging baked items Sat. Oct. 3 in the hall at 1 pm.



Change of start date for Adult Education Class! Classes will now be starting on Wednesday, September 30 at 6pm at St. James. The classes will be rotating locations.

Gospel Shorts

**The Trouble is Not in the Calories,
It's in the Criticism**

How many of us spend every day counting the calories that go into our mouths, watching our cholesterol, our sodium intake. We are obsessed with physical health and we will live longer in this body because we are more cautious. But are we as equally as concerned about what comes out of our mouths in the form of lies, anger, impatience, profanity, judgments and all the other sins which Jesus would identify as corrupting our spiritual health. Our Gospel today is the story of a confrontation between the Pharisees who were taking issue with washing your hands before you eat, and Jesus, who called them to account on where their priorities were. Let's spend some time looking at our spiritual diet together.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of

+Jerome Schneider

father of Jason (Katie) Schneider

brother of Dennis (Janice) Schneider

May he and all the faithful departed rest in eternal peace.
Our sincere sympathy to Jerome's family and friends.



September 19 Trip to Mundelein

We will be leaving promptly at 8:00am on Saturday, September 19 and returning between 5 and 6 pm that evening.



Saint of the week: St. Robert Bellarmine (Sept. 17) was the third of ten children of Vincenzo Bellarmine and Cinzia Cervini, a family of impoverished nobles. His mother, a niece of Pope Marcellus II, was dedicated to almsgiving, prayer, meditation, fasting, and mortification. Robert suffered assorted health problems all his life. Educated by Jesuits as a boy, he joined the Jesuits on September 16, 1560, over the opposition of his father who wanted Robert to enter politics. He studied at the *Collegio Romano* from 1560 to 1563, and Jesuit centers in Florence, Italy in 1563, then in Mondovi, Piedmont, the University of Padua in 1567 and 1568, and the University of Louvain, Flanders in 1569. Robert was ordained on Palm Sunday, 1570 in Ghent, Belgium.

Robert became a professor of theology at the University of Louvain from 1570 to 1576. At the request of Pope Gregory XIII, he taught polemical theology at the *Collegio Romano* from 1576 to 1587. While there he wrote, the most complete work of the day to defend Catholicism against Protestant attack. He was the spiritual director of the Roman College from 1588. Robert taught Jesuit students and other children; he wrote a children's catechism and wrote a catechism for teachers. Robert was the confessor of Saint Aloysius Gonzaga until his death and then worked for the boy's canonization. In 1590 he worked in France to defend the interests of the Church during a period of turmoil and conflict. A member of the commission for the 1592 revision of the Vulgate Bible. Later Robert became the rector of the *Collegio Romano* from 1592 to 1594 and then the Jesuit provincial in Naples, Italy from 1594 to 1597. In addition, he was a theologian to Pope Clement VIII from 1597 to 1599. He was also the examiner of bishops and consultor of the *Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Roman and Universal Inquisition* in 1597. He was strongly concerned with discipline among the bishops. He was created Cardinal-priest on March 3, 1598, by Pope Clement VIII; he lived an austere life in Rome, giving most of his money to the poor. At one point he used the tapestries in his living quarters to clothe the poor, saying that "the walls won't catch cold."

Robert defended the Apostolic See against anti-clericals in Venice, Italy, and the political tenets of King James I of England. He wrote exhaustive works against heresies of the day. He took a fundamentally democratic position – authority originates with God, is vested in the people, who entrust it to fit rulers, a concept which brought him trouble with the kings of both England and France. He helped Saint Francis de Sales obtain formal approval of the *Visitation Order*. A noted preacher, Robert was named the archbishop of Capua, Italy on March 18, 1602. Part of the two conclaves of 1605, Robert was involved in disputes between the Republic of Venice and the Vatican in 1606 and 1607 concerning clerical discipline and Vatican authority. He was involved in the controversy between King James I and the Vatican in 1607 and 1609 concerning control of the Church in England. He wrote in opposition to Gallicanism, opposed action against Galileo Galilei in 1615, and established a friendly correspondence with him, but was forced to deliver the order for the scientist to submit to the Church. Robert was part of the conclave of 1621 and was considered for Pope. He was a theological advisor to Pope Paul V, and the head of the Vatican library. Robert was proclaimed a Doctor of the Church on September 17, 1931.

Other obscure saint of the week: St. Agathoclia (Sept. 17) was a Christian slave of non-Christian masters, Nicholas and Paulina. The couple regularly tortured and abused her, ordering her to renounce Christianity. She was finally handed over to the authorities who tried, mutilated and executed her for her faith.



Reflection— The Homeless

When I think of the homeless in the land of plenty, where some have it all yet some don't get any. The homeless are people just like you and me, they just don't have a home, that's how cruel life can be.

I once heard a sermon on the flip side of life, one can be up today and be down overnight. We all should remember life has no guarantees; you or I could be homeless that's the truth if you please.

Those that have should help those that have not, I'm sure we all know this though it seems we've forgotten. We must help the homeless, they are people you see, we should never forget it could be you or me.

The Sunday gospel in everyday English

At that point Peter got up the nerve to ask, "Master, how many times do I forgive a brother or sister who hurts me? Seven?"

Jesus replied, "Seven! Hardly. Try seventy times seven.

"The kingdom of God is like a king who decided to square accounts with his servants. As he got under way, one servant was brought before him who had run up a debt of a hundred thousand dollars. He couldn't pay up, so the king ordered the man, along with his wife, children, and goods, to be auctioned off at the slave market.

"The poor wretch threw himself at the king's feet and begged, 'Give me a chance and I'll pay it all back.' Touched by his plea, the king let him off, erasing the debt.

"The servant was no sooner out of the room when he came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him ten dollars. He seized him by the throat and demanded, 'Pay up. Now!'

"The poor wretch threw himself down and begged, 'Give me a chance and I'll pay it all back.' But he wouldn't do it. He had him arrested and put in jail until the debt was paid. When the other servants saw this going on, they were outraged and brought a detailed report to the king.

"The king summoned the man and said, 'You evil servant! I forgave your entire debt when you begged me for mercy. Shouldn't you be compelled to be merciful to your fellow servant who asked for mercy?' The king was furious and put the screws to the man until he paid back his entire debt. And that's exactly what my Father in heaven is going to do to each one of you who doesn't forgive unconditionally anyone who asks for mercy" (from Matthew 18).



Sacred Heart C.C.W. Baby Shower Drive Benefiting the Pregnancy Resource Center of Kankakee

Sacred Heart's Council of Catholic Women invites you to participate in our annual Baby Shower Drive! The drive begins today and runs

through Sept. 28

How You Can Help:

- **Donate Items:** Drop off needed items in the basket located at the entrance of the church.
- **Baby Bottle Campaign:** Pick up a baby bottle at the church entrance to fill with cash or a check, and return it by September 28th.
- **Make a Donation:** Checks can be made payable to **Sacred Heart C.C.W.** If you prefer, place your check in an envelope labeled "Baby Shower" and drop it in the Mass offering basket.

The C.C.W. remains committed to advocating for the dignity, health, and well-being of unborn children and their mothers.

Understanding the Sacraments

Part 4: Baptism

What is baptism? Why do we baptize? Baptism is the first of the three sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist). In infants the sacraments are separated, in those above the age of reason they are given at the same time. The Church defines baptism with the following: Baptism is the door to life and to the kingdom of God. Christ offered this first sacrament of the new law to all people that they might have eternal life. He entrusted this sacrament and the Gospel to his Church when he told his apostle: "Go, make disciples of all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Therefore, baptism is above all, the sacrament of that faith by which men and women, enlightened by the Spirit's grace, respond to the Gospel of Christ. That is why the Church believes it is her most basic and necessary duty to inspire all, catechumens, parents of children still to be baptized, and godparents, to that true and living faith by which they adhere to Christ and enter into or confirm their commitment to the new covenant. To accomplish this, the Church prescribes the pastoral instruction of catechumens, the preparation of children's parents, the celebration of God's Word, and the profession of baptismal faith.

Further, baptism is the sacrament by which men and women are incorporated into the Church, built into a house where God lives, in the Spirit, into a holy nation and a royal priesthood. It is a sacramental bond of unity linking all who have been signed by it. Because of that unchangeable effect, the rite of baptism is held in highest honor by all Christians. It may never lawfully be repeated once it has been validly celebrated, even if by fellow Christians from whom we are separated.

The question is often asked about who can be the godparents. In the description of the rite the Church says the following: Pastors of souls should therefore see to it that the godparent, chosen by the catechumen or by the family, is qualified to carry out his proper liturgical functions as specified. The godparent should:

- ♦ Be mature enough to undertake this responsibility.
- ♦ Have received the three sacraments of initiation.
- ♦ Be a member of the Catholic Church, canonically free to carry out this office. A baptized and believing Christian from a separated church or community may act as a godparent or Christian witness along with a Catholic godparent, at the request of the parents and in accordance with the norms for various ecumenical cases.



Current Status for 2026 CMAA

Parish	Goal	Pledged	Paid
Sacred Heart	\$7,200	\$8,925	\$7,975
St. James	\$9,800	\$7,225	\$7,225
St. MM	\$10,200	\$8,625	\$8,485

Questions Catholics Ask

Is the Bible infallible?

ways a matter of revelation.

Biblical truth is sometimes a matter of historical record, but al-

The reliability of Scripture is an important issue. Let's start with a basic Catholic position: The Bible is true. And some of it really happened. In other words, our understanding of Scripture has to address not only whether it's true but *how* it's true. Biblical truth is sometimes a matter of historical record, but always a matter of revelation. These texts were produced to impart the lived tradition of believers. If you trust in the God of Israel and commit to the way of Jesus, the Bible is a primary means of exploring the truths of your faith.

Does this imply that the Bible contains no mistakes? Obviously, ahistorical sections won't necessarily square with "the facts" as we appreciate them archaeologically. Plus the Bible's pre-scientific origins frequently betray a sense of the world we moderns flatly reject. The ancients' lack of concern with historical method and complete innocence of scientific principles place sacred texts like Scripture in the category of *mythos*, or "higher truth." This creates a dilemma for modern folk, who rely on science to "tell us the truth" about reality. Our ancestors used storytelling to convey what's genuine and reliable.

Should we expect discrepancies between the cultural and scientific sophistication of writers who lived 2,500 years ago and today? Absolutely! Nonetheless, antique perceptions of the world don't jeopardize the sacred writers' transformative revelation: that God is creator, redeemer, and sanctifier of us all.

Vatican II explained the Bible's validity in this way: "The books of Scripture, firmly, faithfully, and without error teach that truth which God, for the sake of our salvation, wished to see confided to the sacred Scriptures" (Dei Verbum, 11). This careful statement underscores that the truth we need for our ultimate rescue from sin and death is entirely and safely transmitted by these sacred stories.

Catholics view Scripture as a collaboration between inspired authors and the Holy Spirit. Wherever human beings are involved, naturally, human limitation can't be far behind. Early church fathers such as Origen and Augustine accepted biblical inaccuracies and literary exaggerations as a natural feature of God's full partnership with the sacred authors. Thomas Aquinas accepted "something imperfect" in any prophetic work for the same reason. Acknowledging pre-scientific miscalls and literary license is a far cry from insisting the Bible must either be inerrant or bogus. For believers, truth is bigger than history or science.

Scripture: Baruch 3:36-37; John 1:1-3, 14; 14:6; 20:30-31; Romans 1:19-20; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Ephesians 1:9-10; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 3:15-16

Reflection

The Cycles of Life

The life cycle is all backwards. You should die first and get it out of the way. Then you live for 20 years in an old age home and get kicked out when you're too young. You get a gold watch and then you go to work. You work 40 years until you're young enough to enjoy your retirement. You go to college and you party until you're ready for high school. Then you go to grade school, you become a little kid, you play, you have no responsibilities, you become a little baby, you go back into the womb, you spend your last nine months floating, and you finish off as a gleam in somebody's eye.

ST. MARGARET MARY SERVICE PROJECT!

While underwear is traditionally a big part of Undy Sunday, **our current needs in Kankakee are a little different this year.** We have a good supply of underwear for our clients, but we have a significant need for adult incontinence products and bed pads. By focusing your collection on these items, you'll be helping us provide exactly what our clients need right now.

We have two ways to participate—bringing items in person to church or shopping through the Amazon Wish List.

Items to Collect:

Pull-on adult diapers/incontinence underwear, sizes L-3XL *Please choose pull-on styles rather than tabbed briefs.*

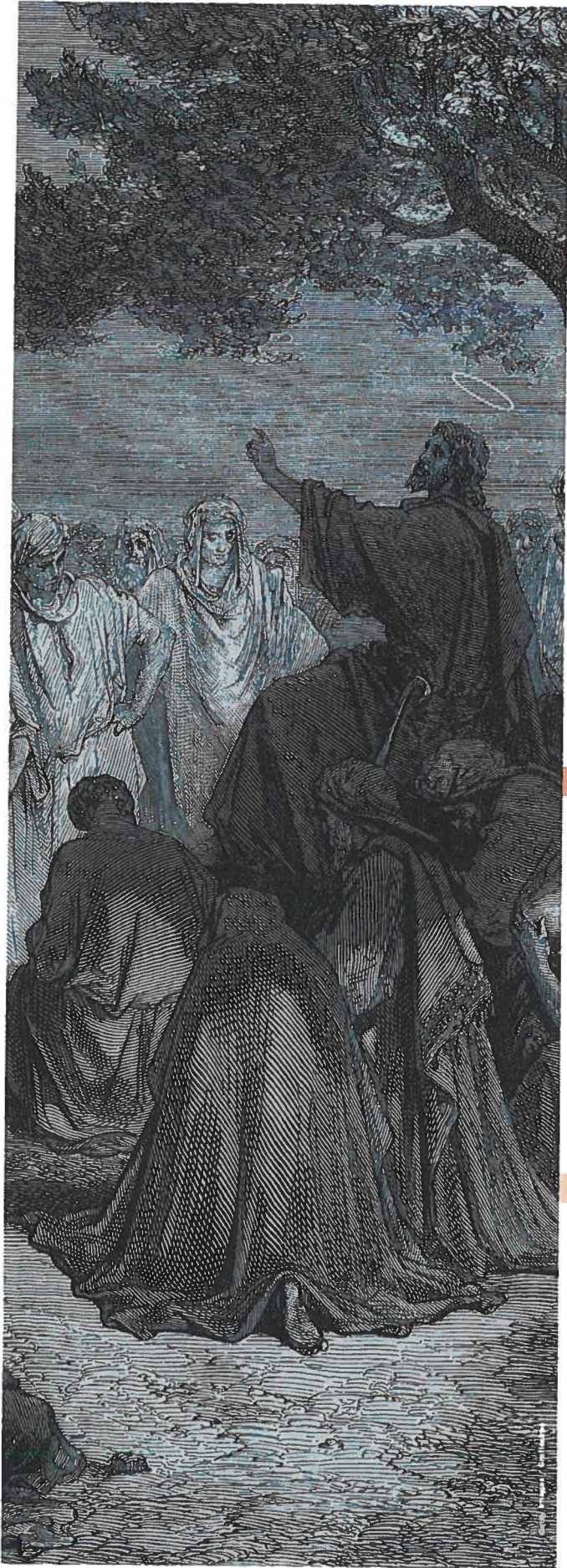
Disposable bed pads (chux/chuck pads)

Please bring in only new, unopened packages. Thank you for your help and support.



UNDY SUNDAY AMAZON WISH LIST





September 13, 2026

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Sir 27:30—28:7 | Rom 14:7-9 | Mt 18:21-35

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

It strikes me that the real issue in the Gospel is that the first man whose debt the king forgives fails to see that his fellow servant who owes him a smaller debt is just like himself. “Could anyone refuse mercy to another like himself, can he seek pardon for his own sins?” Sirach asks. I think we sometimes languish in unforgiveness because we think of others’ wrongful actions as being somehow worse than ours. As a result, we hold others to a higher standard, while expecting people to easily excuse our failings. Perhaps the first step toward the radical forgiveness that Jesus calls us to in today’s Gospel is to foster compassion for our fellow human beings. When we are wronged, it may be helpful to remind ourselves of the classic phrase, “There but for the grace of God, go I.” When we recognize that those who wrong us have the same struggles as our own, we are more likely to extend the same mercy we wish to be offered to us.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

After the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II by Mehmet Ali Ağca in 1981, the future saint forgave his would-be assassin from his hospital bed, only four days after the shooting that nearly took his life. Later, the pope went to visit Ağca in prison, and the two spoke for more than 20 minutes. Since that time, John Paul’s example has stood as a witness to the power of God at work in us; the strength to forgive, it is clear, comes not from ourselves, but from the Lord. Our willingness to receive God’s grace and to extend forgiveness to others offers a powerful witness to the goodness of God, who is “kind and merciful, slow to anger and rich in compassion.”

PRAY

Radical forgiveness is a challenging spiritual practice; it is not easy! To forgive as Christ calls us to requires that we cultivate an interior disposition of humility and compassion. This ancient prayer from St. Ephrem can help to open our hearts to overcome anger or judgment toward those who have wronged us: *Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair, lust for power, and idle chatter. Instead, bestow on me, your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience and love. Yes, O Lord and King, let me see my own sins, and not judge my brothers and sisters for you are blessed for ever and ever. Amen.*

SPIRITUALITY

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

John 13:34

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

I give you a new commandment, says the Lord;

love one another as I have loved you.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Matt 18:21-35; L130A

Peter approached Jesus and asked him,

"Lord, if my brother sins against me,

how often must I forgive?

As many as seven times?"

Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times.

That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king

who decided to settle accounts with his servants.

When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount.

Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, his children, and all his property, in payment of the debt.

At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said,

'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.'

Moved with compassion the master of that servant

let him go and forgave him the loan.

When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount.

Continued in Appendix A, p. 304.

Reflecting on the Gospel

People who are familiar with domestic violence will tell us that there is a dangerous side to Jesus's teaching to forgive endless numbers of times. What happens when we are not yet able to forgive? What happens when the offer of forgiveness is not met with repentance and restitution on the part of the

offender? There are times, as in cases of domestic violence, when endless forgiveness fuels the cycle of abuse and does not bring peace and reconciliation. Processes of forgiveness and reconciliation are complex and cannot be reduced to simple formulas.

Today's gospel is a continuation of last week's, where Jesus outlines a process for initiating reconciliation when there are ruptures within the Christian community. He speaks about moving from one-on-one confrontation to mediation to involvement of the whole community. It is in response to this that Peter asks how often one must forgive. He rightly recognizes the difficulties and complications that accompany such processes. Jesus's response is that there is no limit to the number of times one must try to forgive. There are endless hurts that require endless offers of forgiveness and endless acts of repentance. One must always be ready to do the difficult work of repairing and reconciling.

In the ensuing parable about the servant who is forgiven a great debt, Jesus shifts the emphasis away from the burden and the difficulty of the work of reconciliation, as he calls attention to the utter gratuity of the gift of forgiveness. The only way to respond adequately to such a gift is to pay it forward. The servant can never repay the king, but he can act in the same forgiving manner to those indebted to him. But, as the second act of the parable unfolds, we find him doing the exact opposite. Then, in a disturbing turn of events, the king retracts his forgiveness. Most troubling is that this is likened to God's reneging on forgiveness if we do not forgive from the heart. This verse recalls the ending of the prayer that Jesus teaches his disciples: "[F]orgive us our debts, / as we forgive our debtors" (Matt 6:12), with the added admonition that our ability to offer forgiveness is intimately related to our ability to receive it (6:14-15).

The point is not that God is fickle about forgiveness, taking it back if we do not do likewise, nor that God is vindictive if we fail to follow the divine lead. Rather, the parable is a stark warning of the consequences of letting our hearts become solidified in unforgiveness. A heart hardened in revenge sets in motion endless cycles of violence. The parable exposes the way that our choice to forgive (or not) redounds upon us. If we try to forgive and pray for the ability to forgive even when we are not yet able to, we open ourselves all the more to the experience of God's tender mercy toward us, enabling us to extend that mercy and compassion toward others. Nothing we can do can take divine forgiveness away from us, but we can do things that hinder its powerful effect on us.

