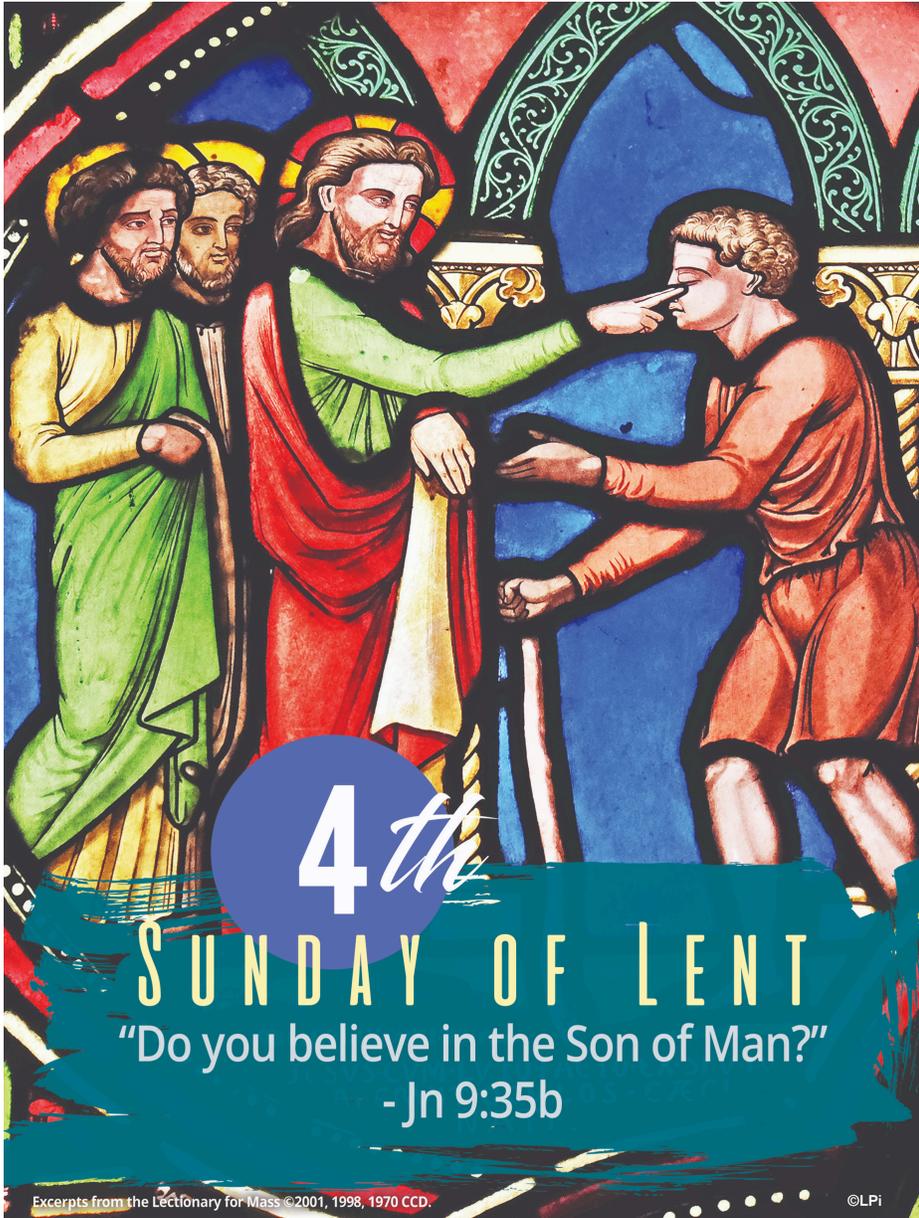


OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL PARISH



8404 S. CASS AVE. DARIEN. IL 60561



4th
SUNDAY OF LENT

"Do you believe in the Son of Man?"
- Jn 9:35b

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

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OUR MISSION

We are the Church, alive with Christ, a diverse community rooted in faith, celebrating a liturgy of life. We are prayerfully responsive to the Spirit of the living Gospel, freely and fully ministering to all.

OFFICE PHONE: 630-852-3303 - RELIGIOUS ED: 630-963-3053

MARCH 15, 2026
FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT



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parishesonline.com

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MASS SCHEDULE

WEEKEND MASS

Saturday Vigil | 4:30pm

Sunday | 8:15am, 10am & 12pm

WEEKDAY MASS

Monday-Saturday | 9am

RECONCILIATION

Saturday | 3:15pm - 4pm

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday | 8am-4:30pm

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02 PASTOR'S LETTER

March 15, 2026/Fourth Sunday of Lent

PASTOR'S LETTER

I was really blessed as a child that despite growing up in inner city Chicago there was a pretty sizeable vacant lot right across the street from my house. This of course became the hang out spot for many of the neighborhood children because we could play there relatively safe, there was the occasional falling out of a tree that occurred, but our parents knew where we were, trust the neighbors and we could run around and have fun in a safe environment. Just be home when the streetlights came on! Of course, when I was really little, it was great to just literally roll around in the mud. The stupid things little kids did, we would somehow pretend we were baking cakes and heap up mounds of mud and try to shape and sculpt them into something. We were making mud pies. It really is something that all kids should do; it is part of growing up. Well, mom was not too pleased when I could come home for dinner after a long summer day of playing and be totally filthy and muddy. She acted mad and gave a stern lecture, but deep down I don't think she was too upset. After all it is just what kids do. Kids play in dirt and get muddy. As we get older, I think we still like to play in dirt. It is just that our "dirt" changes when we get exposed to sex, alcohol, drugs and any other type of "dirt" you can name.

We are fortunate and blessed however to have a God that is not afraid of our mud pies. Just as mom did not get too upset when I played in the mud, God knows that we play in mud from time to time. We are on the fourth Sunday of Lent, halfway through our Lenten pilgrimage. The gospel talks about several people that played in the mud. The first was the man born blind. What did Jesus use to heal him? Mud! That is one of the beauties of our god. We have a god that is not afraid to get dirty with us. Starting from his birth in a stable up to his death, God is willing to make mud pies with us. Further in the Gospel Jesus begins to wrestle with the skepticism of the Pharisees and chief priests. They doubted Jesus was big enough to take their doubt and criticism and engage them in dialogue and conversation, trying to bring them to faith. I don't think the Pharisees gave in, but Jesus tried. Why did Jesus try? The answer lies in the first reading from 1 Samuel. The Lord does not judge by human appearance. The Lord can judge by the heart and soul of a person.

We journey through Lent and we doubt. There is not a person in the church tonight, me included, who can honestly say that they never for a second had a doubt. We have all have crap happen in our life, when the illness or death of a loved happens or when a natural disaster strikes. We all question and wonder where God is in this situation? Doubt is normal. We journey through lent, the Israelites journey through the desert and doubted too. The wonderful thing is that God is willing to engage our doubt. God will take on the messiness of life if we allow him to. We have to not hide our doubt from God or pretend that we have it all together. Jesus was willing to play in the mud and saved the man born blind. What can a mud pie do in our life?

The best way to wash off mud is the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We will be having our parish Reconciliation on Tuesday, March 24 at 7pm. There will be multiple priests for individual confession.



**REV. JEFF SMIALEK,
O.CARM., PASTOR**

*Our Lady of
Mount Carmel
... Pray for us!
Fr. Jeff*



Readings for the week of March 15, 2026

Sunday: 1 Sm 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a/Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6/Eph 5:8-14/Jn 9:1-41 or 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

Monday: Is 65:17-21/Ps 30:2 and 4, 5-6, 11-12a and 13b/Jn 4:43-54

Tuesday: Ez 47:1-9, 12/Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9/Jn 5:1-16

Wednesday: Is 49:8-15/Ps 145:8-9, 13cd-14, 17-18/Jn 5:17-30

Thursday: 2 Sm 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29/Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22/Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24a or Lk 2:41-51a

Friday: Wis 2:1a, 12-22/Ps 34:17-18, 19-20, 21 and 23/Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

Saturday: Jer 11:18-20/Ps 7:2-3, 9bc-10, 11-12/Jn 7:40-53

03 INTENTIONS & EVENTS

March 15, 2026/Fourth Sunday of Lent

MASS INTENTIONS

SATURDAY, MARCH 14

4:30pm Arlene Brescia (Donatello Family)
Josephine Rycyzyn (Family)
Victoria Knafl (Family)

SUNDAY, MARCH 15

8:15am Dick Langella (Nick Rocco)
Nate Barrows (Family)
Thomas Raslowski (Family)
Stan Stewart (Family)
Frank Massi-living (Family)
Phyllis Zimmerman (Family)
John Schultz (Family)
10:00am Fortunato Ravina (Pax & Rose Ravina)
Paul Arnold-14th Anniv. (Family)
Noon Adela Sabuquia (Family)
Ronald & Josephine Lucatorto (Linda)
Charles (Family)
Marina Tamer (Family)

MONDAY, MARCH 16

9:00am Erlinda Casaclang-living (Maribeth Seecheung)
Scott Corwin (Family)

TUESDAY, MARCH 17

9:00am In thanksgiving (Aurora Miranda)
Bogusia Szperlak-living (Family)
Caroline Szperlak-living (Family)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18

9:00am Evelyn Walega (Frank & Fran Modelski)
Margaret Mary Munin (Eugene Munin)

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

9:00am Ralph Moore (Germaine)
Nick Orlando-6th Anniv. (Family)
Joselito Reyes (Family)

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

9:00am Gene & Jeanette Lang (Daughter)

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

9:00am Edward Stariszewski (Frank & Fran Modelski)

Congratulations to Wyatt DeFors!!!



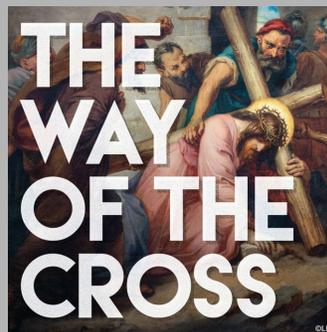
Wyatt is one of our religious education students. He placed in regionals of the National History Day competition and will be moving on to exhibit his project in the Chicago Metro History Fair. His project, titled "**Revolution, Reaction, Reform: How Jesus' Teachings Transformed the World,**" argues that Jesus ignited a social revolution by specifically empowering the marginalized. He researched how the local and Roman authorities provided a violent reaction (his crucifixion) to stop this movement, and how those revolutionary ideas eventually survived and flourished into the long-lasting legal reforms that shaped modern concepts of human rights and secularism. In "The Legacy of Liberty" section where Wyatt argued, *"The **revolution** Jesus ignited didn't stop with Rome. It created a 'domino effect' that shifted how the world views human value. His message proved that a movement built on love could withstand a violent government **reaction** and outlast an empire's power. By introducing the idea of helping the marginalized, his legacy continues to drive global **reform** and modern human rights."*

Well done Wyatt, we are so proud of you!

Midweek Lenten Vespers



Join us on **Tuesday evenings** during Lent at **7:00 PM** for a time of quiet reflection, scripture and prayer. Please join us and experience a peaceful conclusion to your day in the presence of the Lord.



The Way of the Cross
Fridays at 7 p.m.
Throughout Lent

04 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

March 15, 2026/Fourth Sunday of Lent

Cleaning Supply Drive

We will once again be collecting cleaning supplies for the visitors of our Food Pantry during Lent. Items needed include: buckets, mops, paper towels, wipes, window cleaner, all-purpose cleaners, disinfectants, furniture polish, or any item that can be used for general house cleaning. The food pantry can always use any kind of paper goods as well. We will be putting together the buckets during our Service Day on Saturday, April 11 from 10:00- Noon. Contact the RE office for more info. Please bring any cleaning supplies to the RE office. Thank -You!

Activity of the Week

Have a family discussion about seeing the needs of each other in the family. Have family members share what they need and whether anyone sees those needs. Discuss how seeing each other with “eyes of faith” can help build family unity.

As a family, “see” the needs of your community. Select one of those needs and do a family project to help out with that need.

Catechist Workshops

“Catechesis with Persons with Disabilities”

Wednesday, March 18 from 6:00-9:30

Please contact the RE office for more info.

RE Save the Dates:

First Communion Retreat:

March 21 from 10:30-12:15-this is an interactive retreat for Parents and Children.

Breaking Bread Celebration:

March 26 from 6:45-8:30

This is a special celebration for families of all our

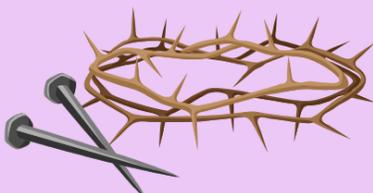
First Communicants. Don't miss this one!

Call the RE office for info.



A Walk through Holy Week: A Family Retreat

Saturday, March 28 2:00-4:15 Mass following.



**Summer VBS
July 20-24
Registration
now open!**

**Join us for our first
Planning Session**

Thursday, March 19 @ 7 PM

Bring a friend and your Ideas!

Call the RE office for more info.

Questions of the Week

Question for Children: What are the things that Jesus wants you to do as his friend?

Question for Youth: Jesus helped a blind man see—and he helps each of us see the world differently. How do you see differently because you believe?

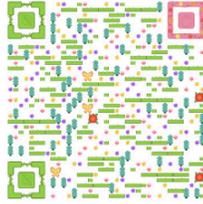
Question for Adults: Share how you, as a child of the light, in the power of Christ, produce goodness, justice, and truth for the world. What specific actions do you take to do this?

YOUTH MINISTRY

March Newsletter

High School Service Hour Opportunity!

We need of helpers in filling the Easter Eggs for our fantastic Egg Hunt. Join us on Wednesday, March 18th from 6:30 - 7:30. We will have snacks for the volunteers! We will meet in the 6th grade classrooms. RSVP here!



Easter Egg Hunt 3/29

Interested in helping with our annual Easter Egg Hunt? Join us on March 29th to help set up the festivities at 1:00. Egg hunt will start at 2:00.



Youth Group Meeting: 3/22 - Lenten Painting

Looking for a creative way to pray this Lent? Join us on March 22nd. We will have a guided painting session with a Lenten theme. Please RSVP so we have enough materials.



Living Stations of the Cross

All 7th grade - High School teens looking for a **service opportunity**, come help our Living Stations of the Cross come to life! There are **speaking** and **non-speaking** parts.

If you have a child aged 7- 11 who would like to participate, we will have a children's choir!

We will have 2 practices:
3/28 & 4/1: 11:00 - 1:00 pm



06 SPECIAL EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

March 15, 2026/Fourth Sunday of Lent



47th Boy Scout Troop 101 Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, March 15, 2026 | 8AM to 1PM
It's all you can eat! Includes pancakes, eggs, sausage, orange juice, and coffee!
Eisenhower Junior High - 1410 75th St.
Tickets at the Door - \$9.00 per person
Under 6 & Cub Scouts in uniform - Free

Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital

Volunteers Needed

Catholic Communion Ministry
Good Samaritan Hospital - Downers Grove
Contact Gail Miskowicz-Retz
Gail.Miskowicz-Retz@aah.org | 630-852-5347

Faithful Hands- Family Caregivers Ministry

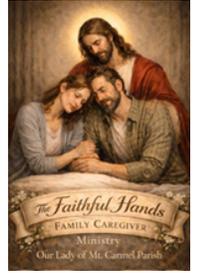
Thursday, March 26 | 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | Lower Level
(Meets on the fourth Thursday of each month)

This is a ministry for **Family Caregivers**, those who play a crucial role in providing care for, **a family member or loved one with a disability or mental health condition.**

Rooted in Christ's Passion, our gatherings provide a gentle space to breathe and be renewed. Here, caregivers can find comfort for the soul and strength for the journey ahead. Take this hour for spiritual self-care and remember:

"You are not alone on this sacred path of caregiving." "Do not fear, for I am with you..."
— Isaiah 41:10

lori.prado@ourladyofmtcarmel.org



TEOGENA SNELL TO THE OLMC FAMILY!

Darien Historical Society & Darien Woman's Club Annual Plant Sale

Getting ready to plant this spring? Support two local organizations that benefit the community by ordering plants through their annual fundraiser. Order deadline is **Monday, April 7**. Plant pickup is Saturday, May 3 at Old Lace School. Details and order form can be found on <https://www.darienwomansclub.org/fundraising>



Lent Campaign
February 18th - March 29th

Put your faith in action by joining your fellow parishioners for the Lent 2026 *40 Days for Life* prayer vigil to end abortion.

Please consider committing to a specific hour of prayer at the Access Health abortion clinic in Downers Grove during the hours of 8AM to 6PM beginning Ash Wednesday and ending on March 29th, and bring a friend.

For more information and to sign up, go to www.40daysforlife.com/downersgrove. Access Health Clinic is located at 1700 W. 75th Street, Downers Grove.

PRAY TO END ABORTION

Together in Loss is a grief support ministry

for anyone who has experienced the loss of a loved one. Our next gathering will be **Saturday, March 21st 10-11:30am**

For information, contact Lori Prado | lori.prado@ourladyofmtcarmel.org



jolietdioceseappeal.org



The 2026 Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal has begun! The Diocese of Joliet invites all parishioners to support the 2026 Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal (CMAA). **Together, we can make a profound difference.**

This year's theme is **Beyond all Expectations: Faith that Elevates!** Through the CMAA, we ensure Christ's mission and ministries reach everyone. We provide **shelter for the homeless, feed the hungry, support vocations, and educate the next generation of Catholics.** Our parish cannot accomplish this alone. As a diocese, we can do so much more. We receive 70% of any amount raised over goal to use within our parish. Please review your mailing from the Diocese of Joliet and prayerfully reflect on your gift to this year's appeal.

If you do not receive a CMAA mailing, please contact the parish office. **Thank you!**



We will be holding our **Holiday Food Drive for Easter on Saturday March 28th.** We will only be accepting monetary donations that we then will pass on to people in need to supplement their food needs. Please take an envelope home with you, put in any donation you want, write your name & address on it then place it in the collection basket next week. You could give **gift cards, checks or cash.** When giving a gift card, make sure the amount is clearly on it. If you are giving a large amount in gift cards, please get them in \$25's instead of one large amount. If you pay by check please put "Holiday Food Drive" in the memo. You will get credit for any donation you make. Please return your envelopes by **Sunday, March 22nd.** at the latest.

Thank You, Paul Gangi - Holiday Food Drive Chairperson