



I recently learned why zebras have stripes. Scientists used to think it was for camouflage, but new research suggests something more interesting: the stripes help zebras blend in with one another. When a predator looks at a herd, the overlapping stripes make it hard to single out one animal. But if a researcher spray-paints a dot on just one zebra, predators lock on it and eventually attack. The lesson? In the wild, blending in is protection.

Standing out can be dangerous.

Human beings are not so different. Most of us would rather blend in than stand out, especially when it comes to our faith. We know that giving bold witness to Jesus --through our words, values, or public choices—can make us targets for criticism, isolation, or judgment. That’s why Jesus’ words in today’s Gospel are so challenging: “You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden” (Matthew 5:14).

A city on a hill draws attention. It also draws fire. But that’s part of the cost of discipleship. Jesus doesn’t call us to be tribal or boastful. He calls us to stand in the open with humble confidence, so that people might see our good deeds and glorify our Father in heaven. Today, let’s ask for the courage not just to believe in Christ, but to be seen believing in Him. —Father John Muir

**LITURGICAL MINISTERS FOR FEBRUARY 14 & 15, 2026**

**Sat. Feb. 14 @ 4:30PM @ St. Nicholas**

Reader: Don Cureton  
Music: Sally Rehberger, Barb Zaloga, & Colleen Lozier  
Euch. Min.: Brenda & Marce Tebbe  
Server: Pat Kalous

**Sun. Feb. 15 @ 8:00AM @ St. Gertrude**

Reader: Jacob Lewis  
Music: Nick Worman & Randy Eckstein  
Sacristan: Rich May  
Euch.Min.: Sue Messerli, Jane Deiters & Karen Knackstedt  
Ushers: Randy & Dianne Leitschuh  
Servers: Oliver Lewis & Makayla Korsmeyer

**Sun. Feb. 15 @10:00AM @ IC**

Reader: Mary Bergman  
Music: Joy Winkeler  
Servers: Rebecca Dea & Paige Knebel  
Euch. Min.: Cindy Knebel, Evelyn Knebel & John Dea



Members of our parish families who are recovering in the hospital & at home, for their strength and patience each day, and for all those who ask for our prayers for health or other issues.  
John Alberternst, Pat Beard, Ana Cantrell, Steve Crawford, Don Dapkus, Teresa Dickman, Garland Edwards, Jean Fields, Gabriel Frey, Jerry Fyke, Ed Gagen, Karen Grabowski, John Grubb, P.J. Hereford, James Hodge, Gene Jolliff, Pat Kalous, Val King, Janice Korsmeyer, Barrett Korte, Denny Korte, Randy Korte, Ruth Korte, Steve Korte, David Kuehn, Sue Lubber, Christopher Marti, Taylor Marti, Barry May, Alex McCall, Eleanor Munie, Cody Neal, Jeannie Oestringer, Robin Pollmann, Suzanne Steinbring, Marcia Rowe, Gunner Sadler, Abby Schrage, Bill Schroeder, Marie Weis, Ginny Werner, Dean Wernle.

**FOR OUR PARISHIONERS IN NURSING HOMES:**

Delmar Knebel, Barbara Weiss, Margie Zurliene and special people in our families.

**FOR THOSE CURRENTLY SERVING IN THE MILITARY:**

Adam Canfield, Tim Doll, Ensign Eli Jones, Chad Knebel, Michael Knebel, Dustin Korte, Solon McGill, Lt. Abigail Mesaros, Jerrett Mettler, Jimmy O’Boyle, Sgt. Joseph Patterson, Rickie Schuster, Joseph Schatte, Greg Spina, T.J. Waddington, Sgt. Tyler Wegman, Sgt. Zach Weiss.

**If you would like to have someone added or removed from the prayer list please call the parish office.**



Thank you for all the thoughts and prayers as I celebrated my 100th birthday.

As I reflect on my life, I am reminded that the love and support from family and friends have helped to make this journey so fulfilling.

All the kind words, visits and cards meant so much to me. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for making my day so special!

Eleanor Munie

**Several churches in diocese available for Special Year of St. Francis pilgrimage so you can receive indulgence –**

Pope Leo XIV declared a Special Year of St. Francis to mark the 800th anniversary of his death, running until January 2027. During this time, the faithful can obtain a plenary indulgence by visiting Franciscan churches or praying spiritually if unable to travel, following the usual conditions of going to Confession, receiving the Eucharist, and praying for the pope’s intentions (e.g., one Our Father and Hail Mary). For example, in the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois, one can make a pilgrimage to St. Francis of Assisi Church in Teutopolis, St. Francis of Assisi Church in Springfield, St. Francis of Assisi Church in Hardin, or St. Francis Adoration Chapel in Alton (home of the Sisters of St. Francis of Martyr St. George).

**† Mass Intentions †**

**No Mass**

**† All Souls**

**† Henry Korte** — Int. of Suzanne & William Walker

**† Bill & Dolores Kalous** — Int. of Pat Kalous

**† Donna Rapp** — Int. of Lowell & Denise Wellen

**† Bill & Betty Haberer** — Int. of Tom & Karen Kalous

**† Deceased of the Schwarz Family** — Int. of Emily Schwarz & Family

**For the People of St. Gertrude, St. Nicholas & Immaculate Conception**

**† Charlie Korte** —Int. of Bill & Denise Trickey

**† Terry Weiss** —Int. of Eleanor Munie & Family

Mon. (Feb. 9) 8:00am  
Tues. (Feb.10) 8:00am (St.G)  
Wed. (Feb.11) 8:00am (IC)  
Thur. (Feb.12) 8:00am (St.N)  
Fri. (Feb.13) 8:00am (IC)  
Sat. (Feb.14) 4:30pm (St.N)  
Sun. (Feb.15) 8:00am (St.G)

Sun. (Feb.15) 10:00am (IC)

**Readings for the week of February 8, 2026**

**Sunday:**  
Is 58:7-10/Ps 112:4-5, 6-7, 8-9/1 Cor 2:1-5/ Mt 5:13-16

**Monday:**  
1 Kgs 8:1-7, 9-13/Ps 132:6-7, 8-10/ Mk 6:53-56

**Tuesday:**  
1 Kgs 8:22-23, 27-30/Ps 84:3, 4, 5 and 10, 11/Mk 7:1-13

**Wednesday:**  
1 Kgs 10:1-10/Ps 37:5-6, 30-31, 39-40/ Mk 7:14-23

**Thursday:**  
1 Kgs 11:4-13/Ps 106:3-4, 35-36, 37 and 40/Mk 7:24-30

**Friday:**  
1 Kgs 11:29-32; 12:19/Ps 81:10-11ab, 12-13, 14-15/Mk 7:31-37

**Saturday:**  
1 Kgs 12:26-32; 13:33-34/Ps 106:6-7ab, 19-20, 21-22/Mk 8:1-10

**Next Sunday:**  
Sir 15:15-20/Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34/ 1 Cor 2:6-10/Mt 5:17-37 or 5:20-22a, 27-28, 33-34a, 37

**VOCATION MINISTRY**

**PRAY FOR VOCATIONS:**  
Feb. 8, 2026

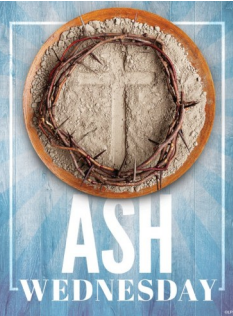
For married couples, that their love may reflect God’s grace and radiate Christ’s light to the world, strengthening them in their vocation.

For those preparing for marriage, that they may root their relationship in Christ, and build a strong foundation of faith, love and lifelong commitment.

For our parish, that we may nurture families through prayer and community, inspiring children and couples to respond to God’s call.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Immaculate Conception Chicken Dinner will be March 1st serving from 11am to 5pm. Signs are now available at the back of IC.**



**Ash Wednesday Mass Schedule:**

8AM @ St. Nicholas  
5PM @ St. Gertrude  
7PM @ Immaculate Conception

**STN Collection 1/31/26**

Envelopes/Loose	\$724.00
Sister Parish	\$20.00
Latin America	\$80.00

Budget Goal	\$1,257.00
Weekly Surplus/Deficit	<b>\$-533.00</b>
Support Needed (budget)	\$38,967.00
Support Actual	\$42,246.72
Surplus/Deficit YTD	\$3,279.72

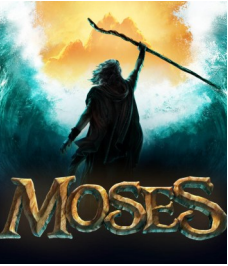
**“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16**

The generosity of being a good steward of your gifts has a positive effect on people, and it is contagious! Good works encourages more good works. Generosity is a by-product of a grateful lifestyle. The more we recognize God’s gifts, the more we want to share them. Good stewards recognize that God is working through them, and they don’t put themselves above the people they have been called to help.

**Salt without flavor is no longer salt. Light that illuminates nothing is no longer light. As Christians, we must be what we have been made to be. So think about it, carefully: what stands between you and being who you were made to be?**

**All Are Invited**

Bring your family and friends on February 15th to the St. Gertrude Hall



for a showing of Moses from the Sight & Sound Theatres in Branson, MO. The wooden doors will open at 2:45PM. The show will be from 3:00—5:30PM with a brief intermission providing light

refreshments. You are welcome to bring your comfortable chair with you or a pad for the metal chairs in the hall.

Entry Fee: Please bring a nonperishable item or monetary donation for the food pantry.



**STG Collection 2/1/26**

Envelopes/Loose	\$1,358.00
Catholic Times	\$30.00
Latin America	\$80.00
Maintenance Fund	\$110.00
Cemetery	\$90.00
Candles	\$23.00

Budget Goal	\$1,505.00
Weekly Surplus/Deficit	<b>\$-147.00</b>
Support Needed (budget)	\$46,655.00
Support Actual	\$42,607.66
Surplus/Deficit YTD	<b>\$-4,047.34</b>

**Observances for the week of February 8, 2026**

**Sunday:** 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time; World Marriage Day  
**Tuesday:** St. Scholastica, Virgin  
**Wednesday:** Our Lady of Lourdes  
**Saturday:** Sts. Cyril, Monk, and Methodius, Bishop; Valentine’s Day  
**Next Sunday:** 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time



**Let Jesus save your marriage in 2026!**

Renew your Sacrament, deepen your communication, strengthen your relationship, and rekindle your romance by attending a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experience! The following upcoming weekend experiences are available. Sign-up now as space is limited! For more information or to apply, go to [www.me.org](http://www.me.org), or call Terry or Eric Engholm at 314-649-7317.

4/17/26 to 4/19/26 St. Peters, MO

6/12/26 to 6/14/26 St. Peters, MO

7/31/26 to 8/2/26 Cape Girardeau , MO



**Marriage on Tap STL**

Join us on Thursday, March 5, 2026, at 6:00 PM for an evening of dinner and marriage enrichment at Syberg’s on Dorsett in Maryland Heights, Missouri. Our guest speakers will be Sue & Tony Morris, their presentation is entitled, "On a Journey Together - Aren’t We All?" The evening is sponsored by Worldwide Marriage Encounter. Dinner is \$66 per couple/\$33 per person. Cash bar will be available. Advanced registration is required and must be postmarked by February 27th & received by March 2, 2026. For more information, check out Marriage on Tap STL on Facebook or email us at [marriageontapstl@gmail.com](mailto:marriageontapstl@gmail.com).

**IC Collection 2/1/26**

Envelopes/Loose	\$3,366.00
Sister Parish	\$255.00
Catholic Times	\$50.00
Latin America	\$245.00
Eastern Europe	\$50.00
Building Fund	\$165.00
Candles	\$118.00

Budget Goal	\$2,672.00
Weekly Surplus/Deficit	\$694.00
Support Needed (budget)	\$82,832.00
Support Actual	\$83,846.93
Surplus/Deficit YTD	\$1,014.93



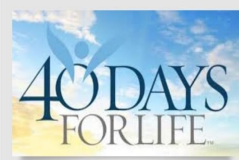
**2026 Lenten Mission**  
**Featuring: Patty Schneier**  
**Theme: See the Beauty; Discover the Joy**



**Monday, March 9, through  
 Wednesday, March 11  
 6:30 p.m.**  
**St. Elizabeth Catholic Church**  
**Babysitting Provided**  
**Reception following**  
**Wednesday Evening**



United For Others Members are to wear red/pink to meeting on Tuesday, February 10 at 6PM. Meeting will be held at Maedge's Restaurant in Alhambra. Please bring feminine products to donate for HACSM and a wrapped candy bar to exchange in game.



From February 18 to March 29, we are uniting with many others for another major simultaneous pro-life mobilization – the 40 Days for Life campaign. The mission of 40 Days for Life is to bring together the Body of

Christ in a spirit of unity during a focused 40 day campaign of prayer, fasting and peaceful activism, with the purpose of repentance, to seek God's favor to turn hearts and minds from a culture of death to a culture of life, thus bringing an end to abortion. We (Immaculate Conception, St. Gertrude and St. Nicholas parishes) chose to Adopt a Day in the 40 Days for Life Granite City campaign to end the demand for abortion. We were assigned Sunday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> as our adopted day, and we need prayer warriors join us in this important mission. We need prayer warriors to pray at the facility in Granite City, and we need some to pray from work, home, etc. too! 40 Days for Life works because prayer works! If you would like to pray for an hour or two on February 22, 2026, please contact Denise Trickey at 314-495-9080. Thank you for standing up for life!

**Meet Our Seminararians**



**Devin Flach**  
 Configuration II  
 Kenrick-Glennon Seminary

One thing I have learned about discernment is that it is not merely about my desire, but another desiring in me. My true life consists in following where there is a union of desire-that is, when my heart is in union with His.



We are once again doing a "Just Jeans Drive for the Homeless" during the month of February. We ask that you please donate new or gently used adult jeans during the month of February. We will have boxes, to place the jeans in, at the following churches, Immaculate Conception, St. Gertrude, St. Nicholas and St. Paul, we will also have boxes at the KC Hall in Highland and the Highland Police Station. At the end of February, the jeans will be delivered to St. Vincent de Paul Parish in St. Louis. Should you have any questions, please reach out to Bill or Denise Trickey at 314-495-9080.



**Virtues Explained!**  
**Goodness**

In the beginning, goodness was all there was. And in the end, only goodness will remain. The word "good" is repeated so often in the first verses of Genesis that it has become almost cliché. God sees what He has made, and He calls all of it "good" (Genesis 1:31). Likewise, on the very first page of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, we read that God created man "in a plan of sheer goodness ... to make him share in his own blessed life." (CCC 1). When we see goodness, we cannot help but think of God (Wisdom 13:1).

In baptism, the Holy Spirit gives us the sanctifying grace of justification, which is, among other things, the ability to grow in goodness through an increase in moral virtue (CCC 1266). Baptism, therefore, disposes us toward goodness, and the more we ask the Holy Spirit for goodness, the more it will be possible for us. ©LPi

**New! Sign up to receive diocesan pro-life newsletter –** Stay rooted in the Gospel of Life and connected to pro-life efforts across our diocese. Get quarterly updates on prayer opportunities, formation, advocacy, and human dignity issues — no fundraising, ever. Sign up today! Scan the QR code.



**Care Manager job opening –** Do you have a healthcare background? Do you love your Catholic faith and have a desire to help priests set and meet healthy living goals? Our diocese is seeking applications for a unique, mission-driven position dedicated to providing essential healthcare navigation and support for our clergy. This role does not require hands-on clinical care. Please submit your resume to [REC@metacareusa.com](mailto:REC@metacareusa.com).

"You are a beautiful, wonderful, special child of God, capable of sharing the person you are with other human beings. You have the gift of love, and you desire to share it with someone. That is a very real and powerful truth about you."

ANTHONY BUONO  
 Would You Date You?



**DynamicCatholic.com**

**FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME FEBRUARY 7 & 8, 2026**



**Saint Nicholas - Pocahontas**



**Immaculate Conception—Pierron**



**Saint Gertrude—Grantfork**

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME  
**YOUR LIGHT MUST SHINE.**

MATTHEW 5:16



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2026

©LPi

+BISHOP  
 THOMAS JOHN PAPROCKI  
 DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD  
 IN ILLINOIS

✠  
 REV. CALLISTUS OSIAGA  
 PASTOR

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 Office: 618-669-2391  
 Rectory: 618-654-2789

Office Address:  
 401 E State Street,  
 Pocahontas  
 Office Hours:  
 Mon.—Thurs. 9am to 4pm  
 Fridays 9am to 1pm

**Mass Times**  
**Immaculate Conception**  
 Wed. & Fri. —8:00am  
 Sunday —10:00am

**Saint Nicholas**  
 Thursday — 8:00am  
 Saturday — 4:30pm

**Saint Gertrude**  
 Tuesday — 8:00am  
 Sunday — 8:00am