



I've been hiking Camelback Mountain in Phoenix, Arizona most of my life. It is a vigorous forty-five minutes to the top. Near the peak, the end suddenly appears much further away, and steeper. At that moment, a descending hiker often offers encouragement: "Keep going! The peak is right there. It's not as far as it looks. You can do it!" It usually works. After another five minute push, you summit and enjoy a glorious panorama of the Sonoran Desert in the Valley of the Sun. When Jesus is asked about how many people are saved, He says, "Strive to enter through the narrow gate" (Luke 13:24). How many? Strive! Focus on your journey. What does heavenly census taking have to do with you or me? How would it help a hiker on a mountain to ask the others coming down, "How many people are going to make it to the top?" A normal response would be something like: "How is that a relevant question? Carry on!"

Jesus links one virtue directly to salvation: perseverance (cf. Matt 24:13; hypomone in Greek). Strive! Endure! Keep going! The one absolutely necessary virtue is perseverance, to not give up on our journey. The mountain we struggle to climb is often our own weakness, failures, and sins. Persevere in prayer. Keep celebrating the sacraments. Embrace daily duties. With God's grace, you are strong enough to keep going. Perhaps the peak is not as far away as you might fear. Keep going! — Fr. John Muir

**LITURGICAL MINISTERS FOR AUGUST 30 & 31, 2025**  
**Sat. Aug 30 @ 4:30PM @ St. Nicholas**  
Reader: Brenda Tebbe Music: Sally Rehberger  
Euch. Min.: Brenda & Marce Tebbe

**Sun. Aug 31 @ 8:00AM @ St. Gertrude**  
Reader: Chad Korte Music: Nick Worman  
Sacristan: Sue Dickman  
Euch. Min.: Carole Sauls & Sue Messerli  
Ushers: Randy & Dianne Leitschuh  
Servers: Katie Schwarz & Maris Barr

**Sun. Aug 31 @10:00AM @ IC**  
Reader: John Dea  
Music: Joy & Angela Winkeler  
Server: Rebecca Dea & Paige Knebel  
Euch. Min.: Mary Korte, Ruth Zurliene & Cindy Knebel



### O.C.I.A. (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults); formerly called RCIA

**Who comes to O.C.I.A.?** Anybody and everybody!  
Some of the most common reasons people attend O.C.I.A. are:

A personal call to join the Catholic Church, whether baptized in the Catholic Church, in another church, or never baptized.

A spouse of a member of the Catholic Church who desires to create harmony in the family by becoming a Catholic.

Someone who is planning marriage to a Catholic, and is considering joining the Catholic Church to bring unity to the marriage.

An individual who is baptized a Catholic, but has not received the Sacraments of Holy Eucharist or Confirmation; or who has stopped practicing the Catholic Faith and wishes to begin again.

**If you know of someone who falls into any of these categories, please let them know about upcoming inquiry sessions beginning on Wednesday, September 10th, 7PM at St. Nicholas Hall. If that person wants to attend inquiry sessions, has any questions or would like to know more about what the Catholic Church teaches please have them call Mark Williams at 618-960-3319.**

### † Mass Intentions †

**No Mass**

† **All Souls**

† **Lawrence Luebbers** — Int. of Bill & Denise Trickey

† **Gertrude McMurtrey** — Int. of Mark Williams

† **Ron Davis** — Int. of Dean Wernle

† **Paul & Diana Ragsdale** — Int. of Leo & Bev Kenny

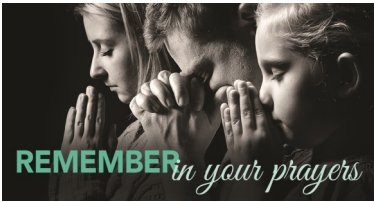
† **Roland & Agnes Keller** —Int. of Charlie & Cathy Stewart

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

† **Terry Webb**— Int. of Billy & Mary Jo Luitjohan Family

† **John Slifka** — Int. of Billy & Mary Jo Luitjohan Family

**August 23 & 24, 2025**



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. Brayden Baer, Pat Beard, Ana Cantrell, Sharon Cantrell, Steve Crawford, Don Dapkus, Adrian Clark, Dave Deiters, Teresa Dickman, Jean Fields, Scott Frank, Gabriel Frey, Jerry Fyke, Ed Gagen, Karen Grabowski, P.J. Hereford, Gene Joliff, Pat Kalous, Val King, Barrett Korte, Randy Korte, Ruth Korte, David Kuehn, Sue Luber, Christopher Marti, Taylor Marti, Barry May, Alex McCall, Eleanor Munie, Cody Neal, Suzanne Steinbring, Marcia Rowe, Gunner Sadler, Abby Schrage, Bill & Ruth Schroeder, Bertha Voss, Marie Weis, Ginny Werner, Bob Winet.

#### FOR OUR PARISHIONERS IN NURSING HOMES:

Lawrence Frank, Delmar Knebel, Ann Plocher, Barbara Weiss, Helen Wuebbles, Margie Zurliene and special people in our families.

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

Adam Canfield, Tim Doll, Chad Knebel, Michael Knebel, Dustin Korte, Solon McGill, Lt. Abigail Mesaros, Jerriett 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.**



**What must I do to inherit eternal life? This was the fundamental question the rich young man asked Jesus Christ. This should be the recurring question in the minds of all Christians as pilgrims of hope. Christ gave a direct answer: "keep the commandments."**

**The young man anxious to justify himself, claimed that he had kept all the commandments. Christ told him what he lacked: "Go, sell everything you have, and give the money to the poor; then come and follow me." The young man went away sad because he was a man of great possessions and could not detach himself from them. What has taken the place of God in our lives? We should not allow our possessions to possess us; rather, we should sacrifice our possessions to possess eternal life.**

**This September, we will be transitioning over to a new offering envelope provider, National Church Solutions (or NCS). This company has been producing envelopes for over 100 years and comes highly recommended by our diocese. The new offering envelopes will feature beautiful artwork and inspiring words of wisdom from the saints, with a different design every Sunday. All parishioners who receive envelopes already should continue to do so, and the new packets will arrive toward the end of August. Please let the parish office know if you do not receive them.**

### Readings for the week of August 24, 2025

**Sunday:**  
Is 66:18-21/Ps 117:1, 2 (Mk 16:15)/  
Heb 12:5-7, 11-13/Lk 13:22-30

**Monday:**  
1 Thes 1:1-5, 8b-10/Ps 149:1b-2, 3-4, 5-6a  
and 9b/Mt 23:13-22

**Tuesday:**  
1 Thes 2:1-8/Ps 139:1-3, 4-6/Mt 23:23-26

**Wednesday:**  
1 Thes 2:9-13/Ps 139:7-8, 9-10, 11-12ab/  
Mt 23:27-32

**Thursday:**  
1 Thes 3:7-13/Ps 128:1-2, 4-5/Mt 24:42-51

**Friday:**  
1 Thes 4:1-8 (429)/Ps 97:1 and 2b, 5-6, 10,  
11-12/Mk 6:17-29

**Saturday:**  
1 Thes 4:9-11/Ps 98:1, 7-8, 9/Mt 25:14-30

**Next Sunday:**  
Sir 3:17-18, 20, 28-29/Ps 15:2-3, 3-4, 4-5  
(1a)/Heb 12:18-19, 22-24a/Lk 14:1, 7-14



God created you on a special day. Please let us know when your birthday is, it's special and so are you. Starting in August, we shall include in the bulletin and pray in a special way for all those born in the month of August. We ask that you reach out to the parish office and let us know the month and day of your birthday. May God bless you abundantly, especially on your birthday!  
**Happy Birthday to Linda Nota on August 23rd and to Don Cureton on August 27th!**

**Share the Harvest — We have a table set up in the hallway at Immaculate Conception Church. Please bring fruit & vegetables from your gardens that you would like to share with the church community.**

**RESCHEDULED — St. Nicholas council meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 26th at 7:00PM**

STN Collection	8/16/25
Envelopes/Loose	\$534.00
Assumption of Mary	\$490.06
Capital Improvements	\$100.00
Budget Goal	\$1,257.00
Weekly Surplus/Deficit	<b>-\$232.94</b>
Support Needed (budget)	\$8,799.00
Support Actual	\$8,993.06
Surplus/Deficit YTD	\$194.06

**21st Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**"For behold, some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last." Luke 13:30**

Our cultural standards are different from God's standards. We often rank people by what they have, how powerful they are, or how successful they are. Jesus reminds us that God will not judge us by the same earthly standards. When God asks you, "What have you done with the gifts I have given you?" How will you respond?

**"Strive to enter through the narrow gate", Jesus tells us. "Many will attempt...but will not be strong enough." So let us never be so foolish that we rely on our own strength. Narrow does not mean unpassable—not it we ask for help.**



St. Gertrude Parish Council discussed adding a flag pole to the STG Cemetery at their last meeting. We have an Eagle Scout interested in doing this for his project. Anyone who is interested in attending an informational meeting about the flag pole can meet after Mass on Sunday, **September 7th** at 9:30AM at the cemetery. In case of inclement weather, we will meet at the parish hall. Any questions, call Judi Rode at 618-791-8204.

**St. Dominic Church in Breese is hosting The Eucharistic Miracles Exhibit, that was initiated by Blessed Carlos Acutis, soon to be Saint, that was a 16 year-old millennial. It consists of over 150 Eucharistic miracles approved by the Church that had been simply explained and shared with the world by Blessed Carlos Acutis. Using photographs & historical descriptions, the exhibition presents a magnificent display depicting the full approved exhibit of Eucharistic Miracles recorded throughout the ages. Affirming the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Enjoy a self-guided tour of these miracles & reflect upon how we reverently receive Jesus in the Eucharist today.**  
**Aug. 23 3-7PM & Aug. 24 9AM-3PM.**  
**CANONIZATION OF TWO NEW SAINTS!**  
**Sunday, September 7 is the date set for the canonization of Blessed Carlo Acutis and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati! This is an exciting moment for the Church as, during this Year of Hope, we honor two young saints who were not afraid to give their lives to God!**

STG Collection	8/17/25
Envelopes/Loose	\$1,175.00
Assumption of Mary	\$79.00
Sister Parish	\$20.00
Maintenance Fund	\$20.00
Candles	\$22.00
Budget Goal	\$1,505.00
Weekly Surplus/Deficit	<b>-\$251.00</b>
Support Needed (budget)	\$10,535.00
Support Actual	\$10,816.00
Surplus/Deficit YTD	\$281.00

### Observances for the week of August 24, 2025

**Sunday:** 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time  
**Monday:** St. Louis; St. Joseph Calasanz, Priest  
**Wednesday:** St. Monica  
**Wednesday:** St. Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church  
**Friday:** The Passion of St. John the Baptist  
**Next Sunday:** 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time



**Blood Drive at St. Nicholas Church Hall  
Tuesday, September 9th 2:00PM to 6:00PM**

**Please visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter STNICHOLASCHURCH to schedule an appointment.**

### Men's Leadership Summit taking place in Edwardsville Oct. 18

Join men from across the diocese on Saturday, October 18th at St. Boniface Church in Edwardsville (110 N Buchanan St) for a Men's Leadership Summit featuring John Edwards, host of Just a Guy in the Pew. The purpose of this summit is to bring single and married men together to support one another, get inspired by their faith, gain or enhance leadership skills, and discuss best practices in men's ministry.

John is a dynamic, inspirational speaker and spiritual leader. His background and down-to-earth, practical approach appeals to sons, fathers, brothers, and friends who are Just a guy in the pew and to those interested in men's ministry. Visit <https://dio.org/event/mens-leadership-summit/> to watch John's powerful story and to register. Cost is \$30 which includes materials and a catered lunch. Questions? Contact Gracie at (217) 321-1124, or email [gortiz@dio.org](mailto:gortiz@dio.org).

IC Collection	8/17/25
Envelopes/Loose	\$2,121.00
Assumption of Mary	\$410.00
Sister Parish	\$25.00
Building Fund	\$225.00
Candles	\$61.00
Budget Goal	\$2,672.00
Weekly Surplus/Deficit	<b>-\$141.00</b>
Support Needed (budget)	\$18,704.00
Support Actual	\$16,767.44
Surplus/Deficit YTD	<b>-\$1,936.56</b>

**August 23 & 24, 2025**



### Mass for an End to War and Violence in the World

Join in a special Mass dedicated to praying for peace and an end to all war and violence in the world. In the face of ongoing conflicts and the suffering they cause, the community gathers to seek divine intervention, promote reconciliation, and cultivate nonviolence in their lives and communities. Let us seek God's grace to become instruments of peace, working towards a world where justice, understanding, and love prevail over hatred and destruction.

**Thursday, August 28th 6:30PM**  
**Immaculate Conception in Pierron**  
**Fr. Callistus Osiaga, celebrant**

### Grantfork Village-Wide Garage Sale will be Fri., Sat., and Sun., Sept. 19, 20 & 21.

Garage sale participants: FREE to join for everyone! Grantfork vendors can use their yard or reserve a spot on the East side of St Gertrude's Parish hall. Out of town vendors may reserve a spot as well. Register by Sept. 12 to be included on the map. To sign up or get involved, contact Paige Fox at [pnfox89@gmail.com](mailto:pnfox89@gmail.com) or 618-444-9236 or Peggy Korte at [Spakorte@gmail.com](mailto:Spakorte@gmail.com) or 618-444-2940

**Times: Fri. Sept. 19 (12 pm - 5 pm)**  
**Sat. Sept. 20 (10 am - 5 pm)**  
**Sun. Sept. 21 (11 am - 2 pm)**

#### Participants' Contests:

- \* Most Fun House - voted by shoppers
- \* Best Bargains House/Spot - voted by shoppers
- \* Scavenger Hunt Prize -shoppers who complete the scavenger hunt will be entered into a drawing to win a prize!



### Devotions, Explained!

The Ignatian Spiritual Exercises are prayers and meditations which are meant to accompany souls on a journey toward deeper contemplation of God's love and a more meaningful understanding of His call to discipleship.

### Prayer for Holiness

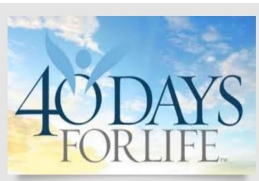
Good Shepherd, Guide me through the narrow gate. Remove from me anything that distracts me from You, Your love, Your invitation, Your mission. Keep me close to You, familiar at every step. Amen.

### Devotions, Explained! Ignatian Spiritual Exercises

The Ignatian Spiritual Exercises are prayers and meditations developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus (commonly referred to as the Jesuits).

St. Ignatius of Loyola (1492-1556) was born to a noble Basque family. In his youth, he spent time at the Royal Court of Castile and fought in the Spanish army. He experienced a profound religious conversion during a long period of convalescence following a battle injury. Living in a cave outside of Manresa, he began to keep the journal that became the basis of the famous Spiritual Exercises. The Spiritual Exercises are meant to accompany souls on a journey toward deeper contemplation of God's love and a more meaningful understanding of His call to discipleship in the life of each person. Divided into four stages, or "weeks," the exercises focus on the interior movements of the heart to unveil the will of God.

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From September 24 to November 2, 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, September 28<sup>th</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 September 28, 2025, please contact Denise Trickey at 314-495-9080. Thank you for standing up for life!

**Springfield Diocesan Council of Catholic Women 2025 Convention** – All women are invited to the annual convention on Wednesday, October 1, at St. Paul's Church & Trinity Hall, 1411 Main St., Highland. The day begins with registration and refreshments from 8:00–9:00 a.m., followed by the convention from 9:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m., including Mass at 11:00 a.m. with Bishop Thomas John Paprocki. This year's theme is "Let Yourself Be Loved" and will feature speaker Claire Dwyer, author of *This Present Paradise: A Spiritual Journey with St. Elizabeth of the Trinity*. Hosted by the Alton Deanery Council of Catholic Women. Registration forms are available at the parish office or [dio.org/events](http://dio.org/events) and are due by September 14. For more info. email [sdccwinil@gmail.com](mailto:sdccwinil@gmail.com) or call SDCCW President Janet Zimmerman at 217-494-4743.



**LAUDATO SI' MOVEMENT**  
Catholics for Our Common Home

October 1-3, Pope Leo XIV and high-level leaders from around the world will celebrate the 10th anniversary of *Laudato Si'* at the Raising Hope conference in Italy. The Raising Hope conference is a joyful call to action from change makers including Church leaders, young people, Indigenous leaders, policy makers, and grassroots advocates. Over three days, we'll raise hope together by celebrating *Laudato Si'* and discerning the most impactful ways to take action now.

You are warmly invited to register now to follow the livestream of these events. Go to: <https://raisinghope.earth/conference/>  
More information is available at the website above.

★ JOIN US FOR A SUPERHERO THEMED ★

**5K RUN**  
**2M WALK**

**RELEVANT** pregnancy options center | 618.654.3732 | 2653 Plaza Dr, Highland IL

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2025 AT THE CENTER**

**LET US NOT LOVE IN WORD OR SPEECH, BUT IN ACTION AND TRUTH. 1 JOHN 3:18**

WIN A FREE TRIP TO BRANSON!

### Meet Our Seminararians



**Joseph Tuttle**  
Configuration I  
St. Meinrad Seminary

**One thing I have learned in my discernment is to continually surrender to the will of the Father. I have learned to say with Jesus, "Not as I will, but as You will." (Matt. 26:39)**

**Grantfork Historical Society Rummage Sale Auction Barn Rt 160**

**September 18th (12-7 pm)**  
**September 19th (8am–5pm)**  
**September 20th (8am–12pm)**  
Household, Furniture, Décor, & more!  
Donation Drop Off: Sept. 11th from 4-7PM—No books, clothing or electronics; See Grantfork News FB page for additional dates.

21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

AUGUST 23 & 24, 2025



**Saint Nicholas - Pocahontas**



**Immaculate Conception—Pierron**



**Saint Gertrude—Grantfork**

• 21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME •

**“STRIVE TO ENTER THROUGH THE NARROW GATE.”**

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+BISHOP  
THOMAS JOHN PAPROCKI  
DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD  
IN ILLINOIS



REV. CALLISTUS OSIAGA  
PASTOR

SONYA CURRY  
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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