



I recently read a book called "The Defining Decade" by psychologist Dr. Meg Jay. She convincingly argues that a person's 20s are the most impactful decade of one's life. For example, a twenty-something who waits until she has absolute clarity before making commitments typically drifts and regrets it later. But those who dive into something meaningful — even with doubts and questions — tend to grow and find joy and better outcomes in life.

In other words, it takes courage, not perfect certainty to move forward.

As we celebrate the Ascension of the Lord, that insight comes alive in a new way. Matthew tells us: "When they saw Him, they worshiped, but they doubted." (Matthew 28:17) Even standing before the risen Christ, the disciples were a mixture of adoration and hesitation. It is as though they were in their spiritual 20s...unsure, doubting, but nonetheless called to act in worship and mission.

Here is the key: Jesus does not tell them to wait until they are sure of things. He sends them anyway: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations." (Matthew 28:19). The mission of the Church begins not with perfect certainty but with imperfect disciples who wonder and worship. Then they get going.

That is us, too. We may feel unsure of ourselves, perhaps full of hesitation about following Christ more fully. But now is not the time to wait for perfect clarity. Now is the time to worship and to go, trusting that He is with us always, even to the end of the age. —Fr. John Muir

LITURGICAL MINISTERS FOR MAY 16 & 17, 2026
Sat. May 23 @ 4:30PM @ St. Nicholas
 Reader: Don Cureton
 Music: Sally Rehberger, Barb Zaloga, & Colleen Lozier
 Euch. Min.: Doris Eilers & Joyce Schlemper
 Server: Pat Kalous

Sun. May 24 @ 8:00AM @ St. Gertrude
 Reader: Carole Sauls
 Music: Nick Worman & Randy Eckstein
 Sacristan: Wendy Essenpreis
 Euch.Min.: Terry & Sue Dickman & Amber Kapp
 Ushers: Karen & Nathaniel Straube
 Servers: Morgan & Cooper Dressler

Sun. May 24 @ 10:00AM @ IC
 Reader: John Dea
 Music: Joy Winkeler
 Servers: Rebecca Dea & Dylen Potthast
 Euch. Min.: Rick & Ruth Zurliene & Kristin Potthast

REMEMBER in your prayers

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, Eugene Henson, 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 Luber, Christopher Marti, Taylor Marti, Barry May, Alex McCall, Eleanor Munie, Cody Neal, Jeannie Oestringer, Robin Pollmann, Marcia Rowe, Gunner Sadler, Abby Schrage, Bill Schroeder, Suzanne Steinbring, Brenda Usher, Marie Weis, Rich Weis, Ginny Werner, Dean Wernle, Melanie Wernle.

FOR OUR PARISHIONERS IN NURSING HOMES:
 Delmar Knebel, Harold Schwarz, 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, Jerritt 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.

Readings for the week of May 17, 2026
Sunday: Acts 1:1-11/Ps 47: 2-3, 6-7, 8-9/Eph 1:17-23/Mt 28:16-20
Monday: Acts 19:1-8/Ps 68:2-3ab, 4-5acd, 6-7ab/Jn 16:29-33
Tuesday: Acts 20:17-27/Ps 68:10-11, 20-21/Jn 17:1-11a
Wednesday: Acts 20:28-38/ Ps 68:29-30, 33-35a, 35bc-36ab/Jn 17:11b-19
Thursday: Acts 22:30; 23:6-11/Ps 16:1-2a and 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11/Jn 17:20-26
Friday: Acts 25:13b-21/Ps 103:1-2, 11-12, 19-20ab/Jn 21:15-19
Saturday: Acts 28:16-20, 30-31/Ps 11:4, 5 and 7/Jn 21:20-25
Next Sunday:
Vigil: Gn 11:1-9 or Ex 19:3-8a, 16-20b or Ez 37:1-14 or Jl 3:1-5/Ps 104:1-2, 24 and 35, 27-28, 29b-30/Rom 8:22-27/Jn 7:37-39 or, for the **Extended Vigil:** Gn 11:1-9/ Ex 19:3-8a, 16-20b/Ez 37:1-14/Jl 3:1-5/ Rom 8:22-27/Jn 7:37-39 (see Lectionary for Mass Supplement, 62) **Day:** Acts 2:1-11/Ps 104:1 and 24, 29-30, 31 and 34/ 1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13/Jn 20:19-23

"I am praying for them..." John 17:9
 Prayer is the foundation of our Faith and the foundation of Stewardship. Prayer is always the first best option in any situation – not just our last resort. Pray for friends and family, and especially for those that don't treat you very well. Pray to give praise, to thank, and to ask God for help. Pray to see what God wants you to do with the gifts He has given you. Teach others how to pray. It has been said that teaching someone how to pray is the best gift you can give someone.

Observances for the week of May 17, 2026
Sunday: The Ascension of the Lord; 7th Sunday of Easter; World Communications Day
Monday: St. John I. Pope and Martyr
Wednesday: St. Bernardine of Siena, Priest
Thursday: St. Christopher Magallanes, Priest, and Companions, Martyrs
Friday: St. Rita of Cascia, Religious
Next Sunday: Pentecost Sunday

IC Church is looking for a cantor for the 10AM Sunday Mass starting August 2nd, 2026. Anyone interested please call or email the parish office.



May HACSM Pantry Needs: Italian salad dressing (plastic bottle) and croutons.
We appreciate your support! Thank You!



St. Gertrude Chicken Dinner — June 7th
 We are asking **ALL FAMILIES** to make **3 cakes** for the dinner. They can be any kind. Angel food, sugar free, or whatever you would like to make.
 Help is needed on **Saturday, June 6** to help set up for the dinner. We will start at 8am.
 Chicken Dinner gift certificates are available for \$15.00 each if you would like to purchase any to be given to the special people in your lives as a gift. Please contact Dianne Leitschuh at 618-410-0144 to get yours before the dinner.

St. Gertrude parishioners, it would be very helpful for all sold and unsold raffle tickets to be turned in by May 17, 2026. By doing this, the process of pre-sales of raffle tickets would be accounted for prior to the selling of them on the day of the dinner. Thank You!

Congratulations to the 2026 High School & College Graduates of Our Parishes
Highland High School:
 Laila Barr, Karlie Knebel, Clayton Neumann & Taylor Overby
College Graduates
Corrin Heilig — Masters Degree in Sustainable Agriculture, Murray State University
Katie Hutchinson — Masters of Science in Athletic Training, University of Indianapolis
Bryce Knackstedt — Bachelor of Science –Criminal Justice w/minors in pre-law, philosophy and sociology, Illinois College, Jacksonville IL
Katrina Korsmeyer — Bachelor of Science – Agricultural Education, Illinois State University, Normal
Joseph VonBokel — Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness Economics w/a minor in Crop, Soil, and Environment Management, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, IL

WE ARE PROUD OF YOUR MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS & WITNESS TO CHRISTIAN VALUES. WE PRAY THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT, SOURCE OF ALL WISDOM, CONTINUE TO GUIDE AND ENLIGHTEN YOU AS YOU CONTINUE ON YOUR JOURNEY THROUGHOUT LIFE.

St. Gertrude will have a breakfast immediately following Mass today to recognize the High School and College Graduates from the parish.
All are invited to attend!!
Please join us in congratulating the students!



Country Store at St. Gertrude's Chicken Dinner — Catholic Fraternal Life is bringing back the Country Store at STG's chicken dinner on Sunday, June 7th. We are asking for donations of baked goods, crafts, homemade jellies, produce, plants, & canned goods. Bring the items to the hall the day of the dinner. You do not have to price the items. Profit from this fund raiser is used for many programs like Matching Fund, Matching Gift, Hearts and Hands and Silver Star. If you have any questions call Wendy Essenpreis 618-530-0927, Kris Hundsdorfer 618-977-1570, Gail Ohren 618-830-1384 or Judi Rode 618-791-8204.
We appreciate your help!

Next St. Nicholas Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 19th at 7:00PM

Give hope this spring.
Give blood.
 American Red Cross
St. Nicholas Blood Drive at St. Nicholas Parish Hall on Tuesday, May 19th — 1:00 to 6:00PM
 Please visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter **STNICHOLASCHURCH** to schedule an appointment.



MEMORIAL DAY
CELEBRATE, HONOR, REMEMBER.
 Memorial Day Services — May 25, 2026
 8:00am Mass at Calvary Cemetery in Pierron
 10:30am Service at the UCC Cemetery in Grantfork
 Please bring lawn chairs.



VOCATION MINISTRY PRAY FOR VOCATIONS: May 17, 2026
 For the Church, that Christ's prayer for unity may guide all who serve Him.
 For those discerning their vocation, that they may be drawn into deeper communion with Christ and His Church.
 For our parish, that we may pray and work together to strengthen all vocations in unity of faith and purpose.

† **Mass Intentions** †
No Mass
 † **All Souls**
 † **Henry Korte** — Int. of Suzanne & William Walker
 † **Edna Jo Long** — Int. of Mark Williams
 † **Tommy Huelskamp** — Int. of Bill & Denise Trickey
 † **Ted, Marie, Randy & Ryan Schrage** —Int. of Steve & Evelyn Knebel
For the People of St. Nicholas, St. Gertrude & Immaculate Conception
 † **Dean & June Sauls** — Int. of Scott & Jamie Dressler
 † **Weakie, Ellie & Tammy Potthast** —Int. of Bob & Donna Whalen
 † **Melvin & Marian Utecht** —Int. of Lowell & Denise Wellen
 † **George & Margaret Daiber** — Int. of Derek, Megan & Leo Frey

Mon. (May 18) 8:00am
 Tues. (May 19) 8:00am (St.G)
 Wed. (May 20) 8:00am (IC)
 Thur. (May 21) 8:00am (St.N)
 Fri. (May 22) 8:00am (IC)
 Sat. (May 23) 4:30pm (St.N)

Sun. (May 24) 8:00am (St.G)
 Sun. (May 24) 10:00am (IC)
 Mon. (May 25) 8:00am (CC)

STN Collection	5/9/26
Envelopes/Loose	\$1,622.00
Ascension of the Lord	\$110.00
Sister Parish	\$50.00
Communications	\$180.00
Retired Priests	\$210.00
Budget Goal	\$1,257.00
Weekly Surplus/Deficit	\$475.00
Support Needed (budget)	\$56,565.00
Support Actual	\$62,466.27
Surplus/Deficit YTD	\$5,901.27

STG Collection	5/10/26
Envelopes/Loose	\$1,213.00
Sister Parish	\$30.00
Maintenance Fund	\$75.00
Communications	\$40.00
Cemetery	\$185.00
Budget Goal	\$1,505.00
Weekly Surplus/Deficit	-\$292.00
Support Needed (budget)	\$67,725.00
Support Actual	\$65,780.27
Surplus/Deficit YTD	-\$1,944.73

IC Collection	5/10/26
Envelopes/Loose	\$3,311.91
Communications	\$137.00
Building Fund	\$220.00
Candles	\$82.00
Budget Goal	\$2,672.00
Weekly Surplus/Deficit	\$639.91
Support Needed (budget)	\$120,240.00
Support Actual	\$123,819.20
Surplus/Deficit YTD	\$3,579.20



The National Night of Prayer on May 7th was held at Immaculate Conception where about 70 people attended to pray for our country & families. State Representative Charlie Meier made a special appearance and participated in prayer for our government.

Hitz Home Auxiliary Presents: June Salad Luncheon on Friday, June 5th at 1pm. Join us for an afternoon of fun and fellowship at Hitz Home Activity & Dining Room in Alhambra; Donation is \$8.00. We invite you to bring your favorite appetizer, dish, or dessert (a variety of meats will be provided). Share a delicious meal, silent auction, entertainment and raffle.

ANNIVERSARY BLESSINGS to the National Council of Catholic Women, celebrating 106 years of service and leadership in our Catholic values. Founded and approved by the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops on March 4, 1920. Primarily they began as Altar and Rosary Societies within churches, expanding to include other organizations as parishes grew in size, including Daughters of Isabella, Daughters of America, Right to Life, school mothers, mother clubs, and K.C. Auxiliaries, etc. Regardless of affiliations, all Catholic Women are part of the Council. The "ladder" might begin on parish level, then Deanery level (23 Parishes make up Alton Deanery), followed to the Diocesan level (5 Deaneries make up Springfield level), then proceed to the National level. We strive to make a difference by our actions and voices within our parishes, communities, National and International ministries. Please pray for guidance in their works and continued prayers for world peace.

Submitted by: Alton Deanery Council of Catholic Women Board

Blessing for Communications

Dear Jesus, On this World Communications Day, bless each of us as we communicate, whether by conversation, email, text, post, letter, or phone. May our words bring peace, comfort, healing, promise, joy, and love. May we bring your blessing wherever we go. Amen.



CARRY OUT CHICKEN DINNER Limited Dine-In Seating!

Sunday, June 7 Serving 11am - 4pm

St. Gertrude's Church 202 Locust St, Grantfork, IL **ALL DINNERS \$15**

Each Dinner Includes:

- 1/2 Chicken (Wing, Breast, Thigh, Leg)
- Dressing, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
- Green Beans, Slaw & Cake

No Substitutions

COUNTRY STORE Lots of Homemade Items!

QUILT RAFFLE & CASH PRIZES!

Baby Bottle Boomerang

PICK UP YOUR BOTTLE - MOTHER'S DAY - MAY 10
 FILL IT WITH CHECKS, CASH AND/OR CHANGE
 RETURN YOUR BOTTLE - FATHER'S DAY - JUNE 21

RELEVANT pregnancy options center



Jesus Christ is the manifestation of the Father's love; this love was sent into the world to be poured into the hearts of men, and enkindle in them the fire of that charity which burns and consumes him for the good of his children, so as to unite them in the same perfection of supernatural life, of faith, and of love of him who created and saved them.

Venerable Lucia of Fatima, O.C.D.
 (from the meditation for May 13, 2026)

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD MAY 16 & 17, 2026



Saint Nicholas - Pocahontas



Immaculate Conception—Pierron



Saint Gertrude—Grantfork

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

As he blessed them he parted from them and was taken up to heaven. - Lk 24:51

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

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 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

Alton Deanery Council of Catholic Women
Gathering Friday, June 5th

Hosted by Ss Peter and Paul Parish Ladies Auxiliary of Collinsville Knights. 207 Vandalia St., Collinsville.

Registration: 9:30am at the Church gathering space. Donation of \$5 to assist host parish with expenses. Proceed to church lower level (elevator is available) to Beveridge Hall. 10:00AM—Welcome: Prayer, breakfast refreshments. Guest Speaker: Sgt. Breanna Kemper Damm from the Swansea Police and Public Service Department. Sgt. Breanna's topic will be "Awareness of internet use and children".

Brief business meeting will follow: Prayer, pledge of allegiance, introduction of officers, reports.

Event concludes with a First Friday noon Mass celebrated by Father Michael Haag. For reservations please RSVP by May 31 and provide your name and parish. Via phone to Chris: 618-530-6469. If no answer please leave name and parish. Via email to Kristi: altondeaneryccw@gmail.com.