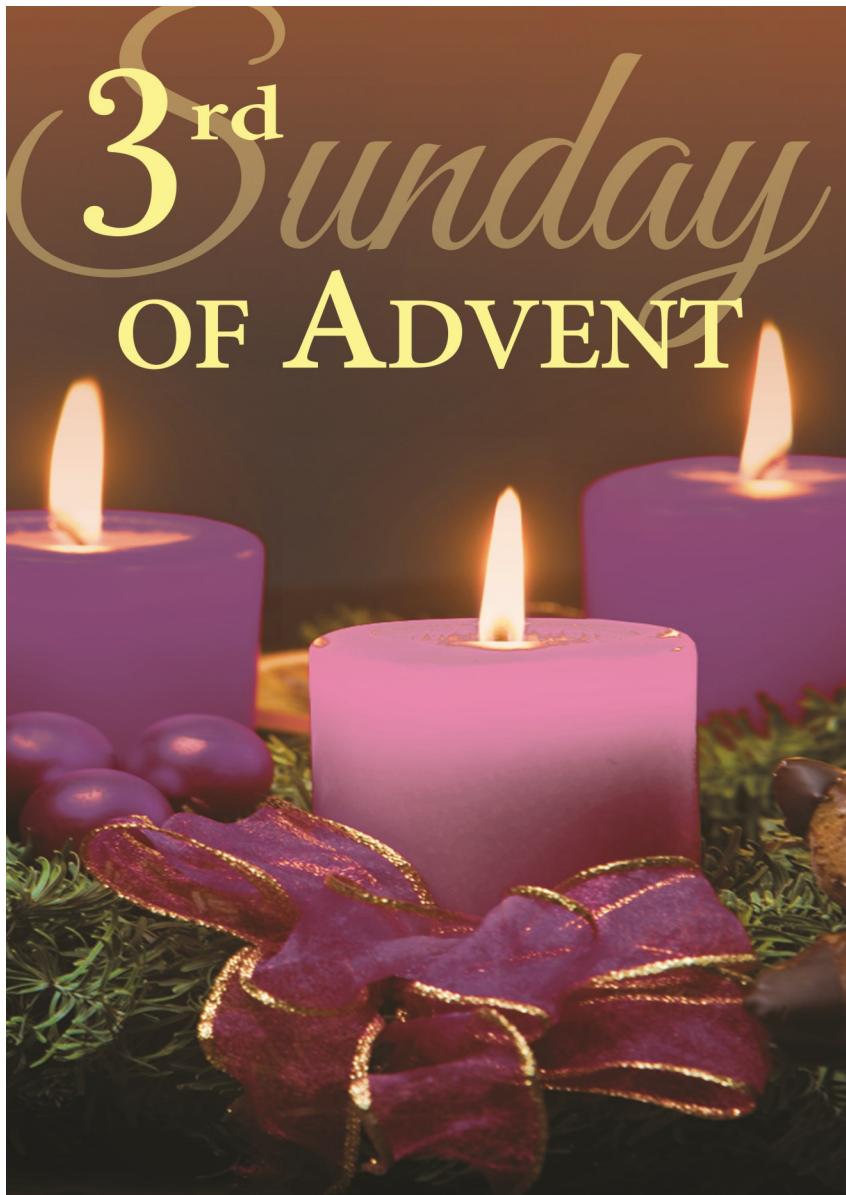




# Saint Henry Catholic Church

5315 W. Main St., Belleville, IL 62226



December 14, 2025  
Third Sunday of Advent  
Matthew 11:2-11

When I was 11, I was riding my bike on a Friday night in Scottsdale, Arizona. I saw giant spotlights swirling in the sky. Something amazing had to be happening. I pedaled after them with excitement. Sweaty and tired, I arrived, only to find a used car lot. Bright lights, flapping banners, inflatable balloon men swaying wildly in the wind. I stood there, heart sinking. All that spectacle, and all my effort ... for this?

As life proceeds, we learn what it is like to pursue promising but fruitless searches. This week we hear Jesus ask the crowds regarding John the Baptist: **"What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind?" (Matthew 11:7)**. He's not just describing the crowd's mis-aimed pursuit. He's naming our tendency to chase after what's flashy but flimsy.

What are our swaying reeds? For me, it is endless video reels on my phone, worldly pleasures, entertainment in sports, and the good opinion of others. Inflated distractions that bend whichever way the wind blows. But they can't satisfy my soul. What are your flimsy reeds? John the Baptist wasn't a swaying reed. He was rooted, grounded, unafraid to speak the solid truth. The people went to see him because, deep down, they were starving for something real.

This Advent, the Church asks us to reassess: What are we really looking for? Are we chasing the dazzling but hollow? Or are we seeking what is solid and lasting — that which points to Christ?

— Father John Muir

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## PASTOR - (618) 233-2423

Very Reverend Kenneth J. York

## DEACON

Deacon Gerald Bach  
dcaon1948@charter.net

Deacon James Law - (618) 406-5709 or  
deaconjlaw@gmail.com

## ORGANIST & CHOIR

Robert Wojcik - (618) 610-0121

## PARISH SECRETARY

Dawn Partington - (618) 233-2423 or  
Email : [sthenryc@peaknet.net](mailto:sthenryc@peaknet.net)

## Parish Office Hours

Mon.-Fri. 8:00 am - 4:00 pm  
Lunch 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

## CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER

TBD -Director  
Nicole Hettenhausen - Assistant Director  
[www.sthenryclc.com](http://www.sthenryclc.com) (618) 234-6061

## ST. HENRY'S PRAYER CHAIN

Carol Lesko (618) 698-5838

## Weekday Masses

Monday-Saturday 8:00 a.m.

## WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday 4:00 p.m.  
Sunday 8:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday 3:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Liturgical Ministers	Lector	Eucharistic Minister	Greeter	Gift Bearer	Usher
December 20 <sup>th</sup> Saturday, 4:00 PM	Janis LeChein	David Bollman Jeannette Yelinek	Pat Visintine Janet Visintine	Kathleen Dinan Terry Starwalt	Need Volunteer Need Volunteer
December 21 <sup>st</sup> Sunday, 8:30 AM	Lynne Fulte	Joyce Dierkes	Need Volunteer	Bernadette Gadu Alvina Tippy	Daniel Broeckling George Mehochko
December 21 <sup>st</sup> Sunday, 10:30 AM	Maureen Reed	Jerry Ahrens	Need Volunteer	Pat King Dawn York	Chris Knee Need Volunteer
December 24 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday, 4:00 PM Christmas Eve	Maureen Reed	Janis LeChein Dawn York	Pat King Virginia Miller	Bobby Elam Marilyn Elam	Mark, Trish, & Kacie Denton Kevin Effinger
December 25 <sup>th</sup> Thursday, 9:00 AM Christmas Day	Lynne Fulte	Jeannette Yelinek	Kathy Pajares	Joyce Dierkes Alvina Tippy	Chris Knee Need Volunteer

### Respect Life Corner

"O St. Bakhita, assist all those who are trapped in a state of slavery;

Intercede with God on their behalf so that they will be released from their chains of captivity. Those whom man enslaves, let God set free."

USCCB, "Prayer to St. Josephine Bakhita"

### LIVE THE LITURGY - INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

"Go and tell what you have seen and heard," Jesus says. When it comes to proving who he is, he always lets his actions do the talking. We have heard. We have seen. We must go and tell. Let's let our actions do the talking. Who do we think Jesus is?

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We offer our deepest sympathies and prayerful support to the families of

*Eileen O'Brien &  
Janet Baechle*

May our prayers be of comfort to their families in their time of loss and sorrow.

### Prayer for Advent – New Growth

Dear God,  
Bring new life! Your love creates and cultivates. Bring Your power into the places I think of as "deserts" and your grace to the prayers I fear may be "deserted." You can redeem and restore, bring a new song to my heart. Amen.

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### READINGS OF THE WEEK

#### Readings for the week of December 14, 2025

Sunday:	Is 35:1-6a, 10/Ps 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10 (see Is 35:4)/Jas 5:7-10/ Mt 11:2-11
Monday:	Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a/Ps 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9/Mt 21:23-27
Tuesday:	Zep 3:1-2, 9-13/Ps 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19 and 23/Mt 21:28-32
Wednesday:	Gn 49:2, 8-10/Ps 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17/Mt 1:1-17
Thursday:	Jer 23:5-8/Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19/Mt 1:18-25
Friday:	Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17/Lk 1:5-25
Saturday:	Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6/Lk 1:26-38
Next Sunday:	Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 (7c, 10b)/Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24

#### Observances for the week of December 14, 2025

Sunday: 3rd Sunday of Advent

Monday:

Tuesday:

Wednesday:

Thursday:

Friday:

Saturday:

Next Sunday: 4th Sunday of Advent

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#### Mass Intentions for the week of December 14, 2025

SUN 12/14	8:30 AM	Dolores Gantt
	10:30 AM	For the People
MON 12/15	8:00 AM	Sister Diane Marie Turner
	6:30 PM	Advent Penance Service
TUE 12/16	8:00 AM	David Hartenstein
WED 12/17	8:00 AM	Joseph Hubbard
THUR 12/18	8:00 AM	Lynne Schwartzhoff
FRI 12/19	8:00 AM	Mary Adams
SAT 12/20	8:00 AM	Frances Koszelink
	4:00 PM	Betty Sandy & Michael O'Malley
SUN 12/21	8:30 AM	For the People
	10:30 AM	Eileen O'Brien

## (PRACTICING) CATHOLIC - BENEATH THE SURFACE By Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

**Mini reflection:** We go to Mass. We go to Confession. We pray. We read Scripture. In doing all these things, again and again, we go out to the desert. Why? What are we expecting to see?

### What We See in the Desert

I've always wanted to see a real desert.

I know all about frigid, snowy winters and warm, wet summers. I grew up on rich soil that yields lush vegetation and bountiful harvests. But I've never experienced a desert, not in my own country or abroad, and I'm curious.

I know there must be something magical about the desert for it to feature so heavily in Scripture, for it to provide a backdrop to so many crucial moments of salvation history. The Israelites following the cloud, the temptation of Christ, the voice crying out: "Prepare the way for the Lord."

Why do these moments have to happen in a desert? Why do they make so much less sense in a tropical rainforest or a verdant forest?

I think it's because the desert doesn't have anything to offer us, at first glance. No one longs for the physical sensation of a dry heat and a beating sun. But the vast emptiness and the almost mystical harshness — even if we don't desire and delight in it, this is a setting that we understand, somehow, intrinsically. We know it deep within our soul. God is there.

We go to Mass. We go to Confession. We pray. We read Scripture. In doing all these things, again and again, we go out to the desert.

Why? What are we expecting to see?

If we expect to be entertained, we will be disappointed. If we expect reassurance, we will be disappointed. If we expect to feel pleasant and safe and sheltered, we will be disappointed.

The desert is there to challenge us. The desert is there to show us who we are, and who we can be.

So go.

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### Our Lady of Guadalupe, Explained!

The four apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe took place in December 1531, when Juan Diego, an indigenous convert to the Catholic faith, encountered a woman dressed as an Aztec princess on Tepeyac Hill in present-day Mexico City. The woman, who was pregnant, spoke to him in his native language. She identified herself as the Mother of God.

Over the next four apparitions, Our Lady requested that Juan Diego implore the local bishop to build a church on the hill, and performed miracles to prove her identity. Through one of the miracles, she imprinted her image onto Juan Diego's *tilma*, or cloak; the tilma bearing that image can still be viewed today at the basilica which now stands on the site of the apparition.

Our Lady of Guadalupe is venerated as the Patroness of the Americas, and she is beloved worldwide as a symbol of motherhood, faith and identity. Her feast day is Dec. 12. ©LPI

## The Messenger

Newspaper of the Diocese of Belleville

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faith and parishes in southern Illinois by subscribing to *The Messenger*. To subscribe online for the Paper or E-edition go to: [www.bellevillemessenger.org](http://www.bellevillemessenger.org) or Call 618-233-8670.



St. Augustine's Queenship of Mary Sodality would like to THANK all who came to Annual Pot Luck Dinner/Ornament Auction on November 18.

We raised over \$600 for the pregnancy care center. Thank You!!!



### PRAYER REQUESTS

*"Heavenly Father, we offer all the prayer requests on our prayer chain to you. We ask that you would hear and answer each one according to your perfect will. We trust in your love, your power, and your grace. May your peace reign in our hearts and in the lives of those we are praying for."*

Abby	Diane	Marabeth
Alice	Eileen	Margaret
Ann	Gruenewald Family	Mark
Barb	Jane	Michael
Bob	Joan	Mike
Cathy	Joann	Naji
Chad	Joe	Schaeffer Family
Cissell Family	Kay	Schmitz Family
Coleman	Kayla	Tanya
Cooper	Lidia	Tom

Please keep in your prayers all who are ill, specially those listed below, their families and their caregivers.

To add names to the Prayer List,

please contact Carol Lesko by phone at 618-698-5838. If she unavailable to take your call please leave a message.

Names will be published for 4 weeks unless we are notified to retain them longer.

# Advent WEEK 3



**\*\*All parish support listed is from the week's collections, mailed in, and online donations.\*\***

**Due to an Early Bulletin Deadline  
the Weekly contributions for the weekend of  
December 14th will be printed in the  
December 21th bulletin.**

### CATHOLIC TRIVIA – JUST FOR FUN

**Question:** According to tradition, what are the names of Mary's parents?

**Answer:** St. Anne and St. Joachim.

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### Weekly Schedule

December 14, 2025	
<b>Sunday</b>	- 8:30 am Mass Live Stream Mass 8:30 am - 10:30 am Mass
<b>Monday</b>	-
<b>Tuesday</b>	-
<b>Wednesday</b>	- Eucharistic Exposition 2:30-4:30 pm - Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm
<b>Thursday</b>	-
<b>Friday</b>	-
<b>Saturday</b>	- 4:00 pm Mass
<b>Sunday</b>	- 8:30 am Mass Live Stream Mass 8:30 am - 10:30 am Mass



The Parish Rosary Program. Each week parishioners are requested to either email to the church secretary [sthenryc@peaknet.net](mailto:sthenryc@peaknet.net) or drop a slip of paper in the collection basket with the number of rosaries they prayed this week.  
(started February 12, 2023)

Weekly	Year to Date	Grand Total
109	6,453	16,491

### Parish Support

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**\*\*All parish support listed is from the week's collections, mailed in, and online donations.\*\***

**November 30, 2025**

Envelopes/Loose	\$ 2,517.27
St. Vincent de Paul	\$ 163.25
Guatemala	\$ 15.00
Catholic Campaign for Human Development	\$ - 0 -
Christmas Flowers	\$ 95.00

**THANK YOU**  
to everyone who supports our parish through  
donations, prayer, and or service!

### Retirement Fund for Religious

They gave their lives in service- now they need your help. For decades, women and men religious have cared for others, teaching, praying, and serving those in need. Many now face retirement without sufficient savings. Your support ensures they receive the care they deserve. Let us now offer them the dignity they have so selflessly granted to others. Your generosity today is not just a donation-it's a way of thanking them for their lifelong service. Please give to the Retirement Fund for Religious.

### Stewardship

My church is composed of people like me.  
I help make it what it is.

It will be friendly, if I am.  
Its pews will be filled, if I help fill them.

It will do great work, if I work.

It will make generous gifts to many causes,  
If I am a generous giver.

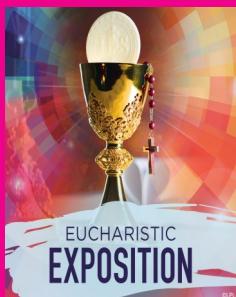
It will bring other people into its worship and fellowship,  
if I invite and bring them.

It will be a church of loyalty and love,  
of fearlessness and faith, and a church with a noble spirit  
If I, who make it what it is, am filled with these same things.

Therefore, with the help of God, I shall dedicate myself to the  
task Of being all the things I want my church to be.

Author Unknown





The Chaplet of Divine Mercy is the most powerful prayer a person can say to obtain God's mercy!

If you have never experienced The Chaplet in song then you are in for an amazing experience.

Eucharistic Exposition every Wednesday from 2:30-4:30.

## BIRTHDAYS

Ciera Goodwin 12/15  
 Bruce Cepicky 12/16  
 Martin Frey 12/17  
 Crisanta McCall 12/17  
 Mary Kay Derfler 12/20

Ann Jackson 12/20  
 Barbara Turner 12/20  
 Andrew Wuller 12/20  
 Emily Morrell 12/21



### Warm Heads, Warm Hands, Warm Hearts!

The Saint Vincent de Paul Society of St. Henry Parish is seeking for donations of children's and adult's mittens or gloves, hats, caps and socks for those in need during the cold winter months. Your unwrapped donations will be collected during Advent.

The unwrapped donations may be placed in the Mittens Box, which will be in the back of church.

Thank you for your generous donations, they are greatly appreciated!

**Advent Penance Service**  
**Monday, December 15**  
**6:30pm in Church**



# Christmas DINNER

**Thursday, December 25, 2025**

**SERVING 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM**

St. Henry Parish  
 Msgr. Voss Parish Center  
 5303 W. Main Street, Belleville

**CALL 618-722-5024  
 BY DECEMBER 16  
 TO MAKE RESERVATIONS**

No Carry-Outs Available  
 A meal delivery (up to three) is available to the homebound

Sponsored by the Diocese of Belleville and Catholic Charities of Southern Illinois

**Rejoice! Rejoice!  
 Emmanuel!**



**WINTER**  
*Coat Drive*

*Help families in need with your donations!*

St Henry Ladies Club is sponsoring a new and used coat drive for toddlers through Seniors.

We are collecting the coats through December.

Please place clean coats in the gray trash cans in the back of church.

They will be donated to Hubbard's Haven.

**Thank you for all your support!**