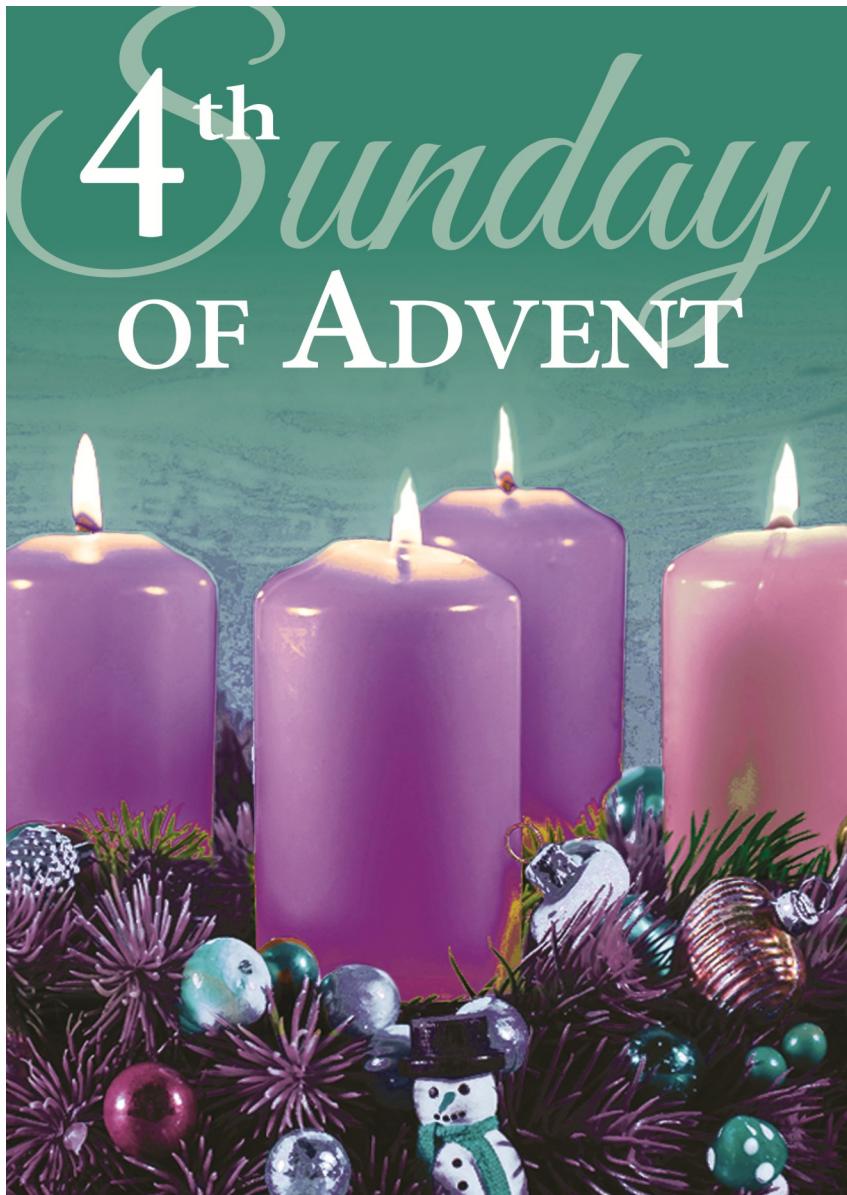




Saint Henry Catholic Church

5315 W. Main St., Belleville, IL 62226



December 21, 2025
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Matthew 1:18-24

A priest friend recently told me a remarkable story. One of his cousins reported having a vivid dream in which an angel told him the family needed to exhume their grandmother's body from a cemetery in New York and return it to her birthplace in Romania. She had been dead nearly ten years. As you might expect, the family thought it was, well, crazy. But astonishingly they exhumed her body. It was incorrupt, showing no signs of decomposition. That experience sparked healing, faith, and reconciliation throughout the family.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Joseph also receives a dream. He's confused, afraid. But in the quiet of sleep, God speaks: **"Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home"** (Matthew 1:20). When he wakes, Joseph acts. He doesn't overanalyze or dismiss the message. He trusts, and acts.

God still speaks — not necessarily through literal dreams but through those deeper intuitions of the heart. St. Ignatius of Loyola taught that God's voice draws us into peace, courage, and love. But we have to listen to it. Advent is a time for stillness. As we prepare for Christ's coming, we're invited to enter that quiet space where God's voice can be heard.

When and how do you become most receptive to God? Is it in silence? In prayer? In nature? At Mass? This week, go there. Be still. Listen. And like Joseph, have the courage to act on what God shows you.

— Father John Muir

©LPI

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

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 (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 24th 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 25th Thursday, 9:00 AM Christmas Day	Lynne Fulte	Jeannette Yelinek	Kathy Pajares	Joyce Dierkes Alvina Tippy	Chris Knee Need Volunteer
December 27th Saturday, 4:00 PM	Janis LeChein	Betty Cerulli Ramona Effinger	Mary Jo Hanvey Virginia Miller	Kathleen Dinan Terry Starwalt	Kacie Denton Susan O'Malley
December 28th Sunday, 8:30 AM	Karen O'Dell	George Mehochko	Need Volunteer	Bernadette Gadu Kathy Pajares	Daniel Broeckling Paul Schwartzhoff
December 28th Sunday, 10:30 AM	Sue Bolen	Beth Regensberger	Joyce Dierkes	Pat King Need Volunteer	Jerry Ahrens Chris Knee

Respect Life Corner

"O Blessed Mother, at the angel's word you went in haste to the aid of your cousin Elizabeth. Although pregnant yourself, you placed her needs before your own. By your example of radical solidarity, teach us to reverence and protect those in need, without conditions or expectations... Obtain for us the grace to bring Christ to any expectant mother who is alone and afraid."

USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities
Prayer for Radical Solidarity
(www.respectlife.org/prayer-for-radical-solidarity)

Vocation Corner

Today we hear of Joseph's call to be the Head of the Holy Family. What a wonderful act of selflessness - turning his whole life over to the will of God, even under some really stressful circumstances. This is the call for each one of us – to be "righteous". This should be our daily goal. Encourage everyone to follow their unique vocation to follow the Lord.

LIVE THE LITURGY - INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

Sometimes we want God's instructions to be clear and precise — like the angel in Joseph's dream. But Joseph's understanding was only as strong as his devotion to God's will. If we give our lives to God as Joseph did, we will know what he asks of us.

©LPI

WEEK 4
Advent
©LPI

READINGS OF THE WEEK

Readings for the week of December 21, 2025

Sunday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 (7c, 10b)/Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24
 Monday: 1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd/Lk 1:46-56
 Tuesday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14/Lk 1:57-66
 Wednesday: Morning: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29/Lk 1:67-79
 Thursday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 (2a)/Acts 13:16-17, 2 2-25/Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25 Night: Is 9:1-6/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13 (Lk 2:11)/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14 Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20 Day: Is 52:7-10/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 (3c)/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14
 Friday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17/Mt 10:17-22
 Saturday: 1 Jn 1:1-4/Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12/Jn 20:1a, 2-8
 Next Sunday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 (see 1)/Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

Observances for the week of December 21, 2025

Sunday: 4th Sunday of Advent
 Monday:
 Tuesday: St. John of Kanty, Priest
 Wednesday: Christmas Eve
 Thursday: The Nativity of the Lord
 Friday: St. Stephen, First Martyr
 Saturday: St. John, Apostle and Evangelist
 Next Sunday: The Holy Family

©LPI

Mass Intentions for the week of December 21, 2025

SUN 12/21	8:30 AM	For the People
	10:30 AM	Eileen O'Brien
MON 12/22	8:00 AM	Fr. Ronald Weber
TUE 12/23	8:00 AM	Jeannette Barks
WED 12/24	8:00 AM	Judith Marchand
	4:00 PM	Alex Muntan & Nick Tebbe
THUR 12/25	9:00 AM	For The People
FRI 12/26	8:00 AM	Wayland Adams
SAT 12/27	8:00 AM	William Eckmann
	4:00 PM	Quentin Lauer, Cardoz 50th Wedding Anniv.
SUN 12/28	8:30 AM	John Rensing
	10:30 AM	For the People

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

Mini reflection: Advent is drawing quickly to a close, and Christmas is coming soon. The change is upon us. Do we rise to accept it, or do we fall on our faces in fear?

The First Transfiguration

I imagine Joseph waking up the morning after the dream, blinking in the dim half-light of the dawn.

One day, decades from now, the baby his wife carries will stand on a mountaintop. His face will shine like the sun, and those who look upon him will fall down upon their own faces in fear.

We call this the transfiguration, and Joseph won't be there to see it. But that doesn't matter. What those men will learn on the mountaintop, Joseph already knows. He learned it last night.

Today, he shrugs off the remnants of slumber and stands up.

"Rise, and do not be afraid." This is what the baby — a baby no longer, but a man now, one in the last days of his life — will say to his companions on the mountain a few decades from now. They will look up to see him standing there the same as he always was, and they will realize that he did not change at all. They did.

"Do not be afraid." This is what the angel said last night as he revealed to Joseph the will of God: that Joseph take Mary and the Child as his own, despite having so many reasons not to do so. And today Joseph wakes up and the world is the same as it always was: Mary is pregnant, and the Child does not belong to him.

No, the world has not changed. Joseph has.

He rises, and goes to Mary.

Advent is drawing quickly to a close, and Christmas is coming soon. The change is upon us. Do we rise to accept it, or do we fall on our faces in fear?

©LPi

Prayer for Advent – Miracles

Dear God,

You are in the miracle business. I still believe that You can move mountains and separate seas. Break into every unknown and astound us with Your goodness and grace.

Amen.

©LPi



Las Posadas, Explained!

Las Posadas, typically celebrated between Dec. 16 and Dec. 25, is a Mexican tradition which recreates the Holy Family's search for lodging in Bethlehem. A novenario, or a devotion which extends over a period of nine days, Las Posadas is a celebration of anticipation for the birth of Jesus Christ, who seeks refuge in the heart of every man and woman.

Each night of Las Posadas, a couple portraying Mary and Joseph knocks on the doors of different homes looking for a place to stay. Traditionally, the Holy Family is accompanied by a procession of people singing hymns and bearing candles who stand outside the home as they are denied entry again and again. Finally, they come to the "inn," the house or church that welcomes them. Carols are sung, a feast is enjoyed and star-shaped piñatas are broken open.

Still practiced in Mexico today, Las Posadas has also become an important cultural and spiritual touchstone for communities of Mexican immigrants who have moved abroad.

©LPi

The Messenger

Newspaper of the Diocese of Belleville

Merry Christmas from The Messenger!

Don't forget to Subscribe by

calling The Messenger at 618-233-8670. To subscribe online go to www.bellevillemessenger.org. Tax-deductible donations are also appreciatively received.

Retirement Fund for Religious

Heartfelt gratitude for your generosity! "Thank you very much for your donations, always," says Sister Olivia Bellegante, 93, a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in St. Louis, Missouri. Your gift directly impacts thousands of senior religious, providing the support they need in their later years. Learn more at retiredreligious.org.



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	Margaret
Alice	Eileen	Mike
Ann	Gruenewald Family	Naji
Barb	Jane	Pat
Bob	Joan	Schaeffer Family
Cathy	Joe	Schmitz Family
Coleman	Lidia	Tanya
Cooper	Marabeth	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.



****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 21th will be printed in the
December 28th bulletin.**

CATHOLIC TRIVIA – JUST FOR FUN

Question: Which saint's nickname is “Santa Claus”?

Answer: St. Nicholas

©LPI

Weekly Schedule

December 21, 2025

Sunday	- 8:30 am Mass Live Stream Mass 8:30 am - 10:30 am Mass
Monday	-
Tuesday	-
Wednesday	- NO Eucharistic Exposition - Christmas Eve Mass 4:00 pm
Thursday	- Christmas Mass 9:00 am
Friday	-
Saturday	- 4:00 pm Mass
Sunday	- 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 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
141	6,594	16,632

Parish Support

©LPI

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

December 7, 2025

Envelopes/Loose	\$ 5,598.87
St. Vincent de Paul	\$ 488.25
Guatemala	\$ 222.00
Retirement fund for the Religious	\$ 32.00
Immaculate Conception	\$ 98.00
Christmas Flowers	\$ 125.00
Christmas Offering	\$ 30.00
Christmas for the Needy	\$ 10.00
Solemnity of Mary	\$ 5.00

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

The 2025 Catholic Service and Ministry Appeal Hope in the Lord

The true joy of Christmas is in the everlasting love of Christ. May you find His peace, love and joy now and in the coming new year. With deepest gratitude for your prayers and generosity,

*Ministries and Programs Funded by
The Catholic Service and Ministry Appeal*

National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows – Shrine Grounds and Visitors Center

From November 21 through December 31, 2025, 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Indoor activities are closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day.

The Way of Lights Display, using over 1.5 million beautiful lights, depicts the journey of Mary and Joseph as they travel to Bethlehem. With new and beautiful colored lights, we celebrate the birth of Jesus and continue to offer activities for all to enjoy!
Cost: No charge for display; donations accepted; additional charges for some activities.

For more information, call 618-397-6700 or visit our website at <https://snows.org/wayoflights>

Diocesan Christmas Collection December 24-25

The 48th Annual Diocesan Christmas Collection will be taken up at all Masses on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Parishes and agencies throughout the diocese will request monies from this collection during 2026 to assist those who are in need with food, clothing, shelter, utility payments, healthcare and medications, funeral and burial expenses, transportation and emergency assistance of all types. Please consider giving as you are able; thank you so much.



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

Raymond Willett

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

Birthdays

©LPi

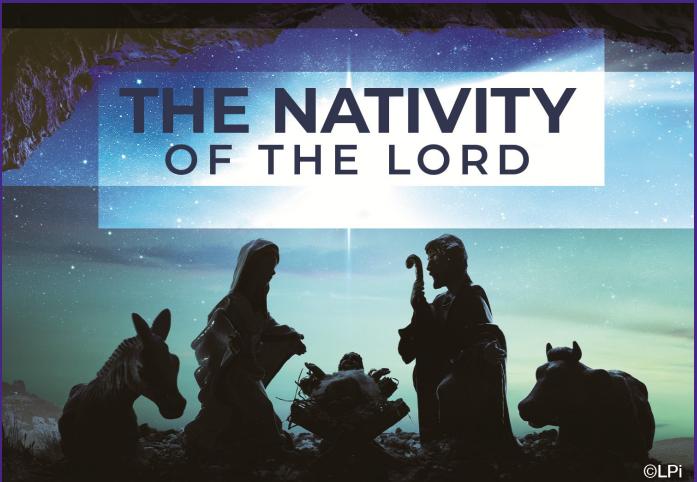
Rebecca Choat	12/23	Brooks Heatherly	12/24
Terri Douglas	12/23	Joaquim Cardoz	12/25
Victoria Howard	12/23	Noah Dachsteiner	12/25
Aiden Sonnenberg	12/23	Bradley Bleich	12/26
Ben Templin	12/23	Willie Arnold	12/27
Renee Brutto	12/24	Lucy Lynes	12/27
Gary Gebhart	12/24	Jill Broeckling	12/28
Michael Grosse	12/24		



CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Holy day of Obligation
Christmas Mass Eve Mass at 4:00pm
Christmas Day Mass at 9:00am

Holy Day of Obligation
Solemnity of Mary (January 1st) at 9:00 am



**Warm Heads, Warm
Hands, Warm Hearts!**

Last Weekend to Donate!

The Saint Vincent de Paul Society of St. Henry Parish is seeking for donations of children's and adult's mittens and gloves, hats and caps and socks for those in need during the cold winter months. Your unwrapped donations will be collected during Advent. Donations may be placed in the Mittens Box in the back of church. As always, thank you for your generous donations, they are greatly appreciated!

**Please give a warm
St. Henry Welcome
to**

**Dave & Mary Stroot
Sara Grant**

**We are pleased that you have chosen
to be part of our parish family!**



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!

