

First Sunday of Advent
November 29, 2026



SS. SIMON & JUDE CATHOLIC CHURCH
304 North Macoupin Street, Gillespie, IL 62033

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH
300 West Central Street, Benld, IL 62009

Welcome to Ss. Simon & Jude / St. Joseph!
Whether you are an existing member, visiting family or new to the Parish we are happy you are here. If you are new to our parish, please call the office to register or to know more about our Parish Family. We look forward to meeting you!

Parish Office
Office Hours: Tuesdays 9:00am-Noon

Pastor
Fr. Joe Koyickal, SAC
jkoyickal@dio.org
217-839-3456

Parish Administrative Assistant
Donette Clark
simonjude3456@sssimonjudegillespie.com
Office Phone: 217-839-3456

Director of Religious Education
Donette Clark
donette.clark@sssimonjudegillespie.com

Bulletin Notices due by 9am on Wednesdays
Bulletin Submissions: amy.killam@ssmaryjosephcarlinville.com

website: www.3parishes1faith.com
Facebook @ SS Simon & Jude - Gillespie and St. Joseph's - Benld

Diocesan Website: www.dio.org
Diocese Victim Assistance Coordinator and liaison between the Diocese & anyone with an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor– (217) 321-1155.

PRAYER & DEVOTIONS

Eucharistic Adoration
Saturdays in Gillespie 3:00-4:00pm

Reconciliation
Saturdays in Gillespie 3:00-3:45pm
Sundays in Benld 7:15-7:45am
By Appointment

Rosary
Sundays 7:30am in Benld

Fatima Frist Satruday Devotion
8:30am in Benld

MASS SCHEDULE

Changes to the schedule will be announced on Facebook

Tuesday	8:00am	Daily Mass in Gillespie
Wednesday	8:00am	Daily Mass in Benld
First Friday	8:00am	Daily Mass in Gillespie
Saturday	4:00pm	Weekend Mass in Gillespie
Sunday	8:00am	Weekend Mass in Benld

FROM THE PASTOR

Fr. Joe Koyickal, SAC jkoyickal@dio.org

A GIFT FOR JESUS: Prepare Your Personal Gift for Jesus This Christmas!

The Holy season of Advent is here! This is one of the busiest times of the year. We decorate our homes, shop for Christmas gifts, prepare special meals, greet and exchange gifts, attend parties, and make all kinds of arrangements to celebrate Christmas. These are beautiful traditions, and they bring joy to our families.

But amid all our preparations, there is one danger: **we can become so busy preparing for Christmas that we forget the One whose birthday we are celebrating!**

We prepare our homes, but do we prepare our hearts? We buy gifts for one another, but what special gift are we preparing for Jesus? This Advent, let us make a special effort not to miss Christ in our Christmas preparations! Can you spare 5-6 minutes each day for Jesus?

Here is a simple Family Advent Challenge

I invite every family in our parishes to take part in a simple but meaningful Advent activity: **Prepare a special Christmas gift for Jesus as a family!** Here is what it is all about. Simple and plain! All can join. No age bar!!

1. **Prepare an Advent wreath.** Make one together as a family or purchase one. Place it in a special location in your home where the family can gather for a few minutes of prayer every day.
2. **Gather around the Advent wreath every day.** Set aside just five or six minutes at a convenient time. It could be before or after dinner, before bedtime, or whenever the family can come together. You can do as an individual too, if not available for a common time. Each week, we will reflect on one of the four Advent themes: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. A short reflection, a Scripture passage, a question for reflection or sharing, and a family prayer. You will also be given some suggestions for act of love, kindness or charity to choose from. Do one of those things each day as explained below. This will help us prepare our hearts for Jesus. You will be provided with a flyer each week with prayers and the suggestions for good deeds.
3. **Make every day an opportunity to give Jesus a gift.** Each day, choose at least one simple act of kindness, love, charity, forgiveness, or sacrifice. Every member of the family is encouraged to do at least one good deed each day. It need not be anything extraordinary. Helping someone at home, sharing with a person in need, forgiving someone, visiting someone who is lonely, offering a prayer for someone, or making a small personal sacrifice can become a beautiful gift to Jesus.
4. **Collect your gifts for Jesus!** After your daily act of kindness, write it on a small slip of paper and place it in a special family box. You may call it your "Family Gift to Jesus Box." As the days go by, your box will fill up with little gifts: not toys, money, or material things, but acts of love offered to Jesus.
5. **Bring your gifts to Jesus on Christmas!** On Christmas Day, bring your family's collected slips of paper to church. We will have a special collection box in the church where all families can drop their gifts of good deeds. These gifts will be brought forward along with the gifts of bread and wine during the Offertory procession at Mass, symbolizing the love, prayers, kindness, and sacrifices that our families have offered to Jesus throughout Advent. Let this Advent be different. Let us not simply count the days until Christmas. Let us fill each day with love, goodness, and kindness.

Thus this Christmas, when we come to the manger, let us not come empty-handed. Let us bring Jesus a heart full of love and a box full of good deeds!

May every family make room for Jesus, and may every home become a little Bethlehem!

Blessings of Peace and Joy Always! 

PARISH NEWS



Now until Sun, Dec 13: Ornaments The Altar Society is offering poinsettia ornaments for $5 to adorn our Christmas trees. Proceeds will be donated to the Alton Catholic Children's Home. The names of those being remembered will be displayed in the church vestibule. After the Christmas decorations are taken down, you may take home one of the ornaments as a keepsake. Order forms are available in the bulletin and on the counter in the vestibule. Please make checks out to Ss Simon and Jude Altar Society. Questions please call Mary Newman at 217-825-9171. All names should be submitted by December 13.

Mon, Dec 7: Altar Societies Christmas Party The Altar Societies of St. Joseph & Ss Simon & Jude invite you to their Christmas Party on Mon, Dec 7, at Lumpy's in Gillespie starting at 5:30pm with social time. Enjoy a buffet dinner & entertainment. Dinner will include fried chicken, pasta, a vegetable, salad, dessert, tea &coffee. Cost is $30 per person. A cash bar will be available. Reservations are due by Sunday, November 22. Please place your reservation in the collection basket in an envelope marked "Party" on the outside. Include the names of everyone attending. Checks should be made payable to Altar Society. Questions? Please contact Cindy or Mary.

Sun, Dec 13: Christmas Caroling Mark your calendars! Benld & Gillespie parishes plan to go Christmas caroling the afternoon of Sun, Dec 13 and all from the Tri-Parish Family are welcome to join in the fun! We will meet at Ss. Simon & Jude parking lot behind the school at 1pm. If any Benld or Gillespie residents are interested in having carolers visit their home, contact Roger at 217-839-4036. Please provide your name, physical address and phone number. Time constraints limit us to visiting just a few homes in Benld and Gillespie, as well as the nursing home.

The Week Ahead

Please note that calendar events are based on requests for reservations, and we are not always informed when events are cancelled. If you have any quetions if an event is happening, please contact the head of that committee/group.

Mon 30	Tue 01	Wed 02	Thu 03	Fri 04	Sat 05	Sun 06
					Eucharistic Adoration in Gillespie 3-4pm	Praying Rosary in Benld at 7:30am **Christmas Play Practice 9-9:30am** **PSR 9:30-10:30am** **YG 6-7pm**



Donette Clark, DRE donette.clark@sssimonjudegillespie.com

PSR / HS YOUTH GROUP CORNER

3rd Grade students must attend PSR & Mass in order to be eligible for their sacraments.

PSR Class: Sundays from 9:30am-10:30am at SSSJ School

Upcoming PSR Classes
Dec 6, Dec 13, Dec 20 (No Class), Dec 27 (No Class)

Youth Group: Sundays from 6-7pm at SSSJ School

Upcoming Youth Group
Dec 6, Dec 13, Dec 20 (No Class), Dec 27 (No Class)



Christmas Program: This year's Christmas Program will be on Saturday, 12/19 after 4pm Mass. Practices will occur prior to PSR class from 9:00-9:30am on 12/6 & 12/13. *Practices are not mandatory, but preferred.* All are welcome to participate.

Dear Padre

November 29, 2026

To justify or rationalize cutting off family members with whom there is discord, someone recently referenced Jesus telling his disciples that he did not come to bring peace, but to bring division. Are we called to pursue division in family or other relationships when we think someone has done something wrong and has not received the justice we think this person deserves?

The actual quote is, "Do not think that I have come to bring peace upon the earth. I have come to bring not peace but the sword." Jesus continues, "For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one's enemies will be those of his household" (Matthew 10: 34–36).

In this passage, Jesus is talking about the sacrifice involved in becoming his follower. Many Jews who wished to become followers of Jesus in the early days of the Church had to choose between family and their own conscience. Jesus says, "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me" (Matthew 10: 37-38).

To apply this idea to arguments among family members is probably stretching Jesus' intention further than what he had in mind. ●

Fr. Gary Lauenstein, CSsR / DearPadre.org

A Journey in Faith
OCIA
Order of Christian Initiation
(formerly known as RCIA)

OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults) is a welcoming journey of faith for adults who want to learn more about Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church. It is a time to ask questions, explore Scripture, discover the beauty of the Catholic faith, and grow in a deeper relationship with God.

If you would like more information please contact the parish office or Don Reid.

<u>Classes will be held in the Ss. Mary & Joseph Conference Room at 7pm</u>
We will be taking a break in December. Next class will be in January.

SS. SIMON & JUDE CHURCH

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, November 28
4:00pm Vigil **The Mussatto Family / Terry Plovich +**
(P. Zaksas/ Plovich Family)

Tuesday, December 01
8:00am Dorothy Preston +
(MM Preston)

Friday, December 04
Becky Cerkoski +
(Cerkoski Family)

Saturday, December 05
4:00pm Vigil Jack Plovich / Bill Newman +
(C. Plovich / G. Leone)

STEWARDSHIP
MANAGING GOD'S GIFTS TO US

Weekend Envelopes, Checks & Cash
$1,281.00

PSR & Building Fund
$15.00

Holy Day:
$0.00

Special: V. Candles & Cemetery
$225.00

Total: $1,521.00

Thank you for your continued generosity!

ST. JOSEPH CHURCH

MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, November 29
8:00am **For the Tri-Parish Community**

Wednesday, December 02
8:00am Lou Polovich
(Parishioner)

Sunday, December 06
8:00am Rose Marie Tebbe +
(Tebbe Family)

STEWARDSHIP
MANAGING GOD'S GIFTS TO US

Weekend Envelopes, Checks & Cash
$1,094.00

Building Fund & PSR
$20.00

Holy Day:
$0.00

Special: Capital Campaign
$10.00

Total: $1,124.00

Thank you for your continued generosity!

PARISH LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Saturday, December 05, 2026 at 4:00pm

Greeters:	Carol Chesus & Rhonda Heyen
Lector:	Rhonda Heyen
Euch. Ministers:	N. Schmidt, M. Newman, C. Chesus
Gift Bearers:	Theresa Duncan
Altar Servers:	Volunteers Needed

Sunday, December 06, 2026 at 8:00am

Greeters:	Michelle Bertetto & Peg Allen
Lector:	Bill Bertetto
Euch. Ministers:	J. Kelly, E. Saracco, B. Bertetto
Gift Bearers:	Ralph Tebbe Family
Altar Servers:	Lucca Kapp

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED:

Dennis Skeldon, Michael McCullough, Brian Orr, Matt Orr, Meredith Heyen, Kyle Billings, Peggy Geurin, Joey Bertetto, Virginia Gruenenfelder, Jerri Bayse, Stacy Stoops, Brenda Lowe, Adrianne Devlin, Dave Bedinger, Joe Chiarodo, Carol Bangert, Hazel Bono, Kelly Favre, Clark Jillson

SS. SIMON & JUDE / ST. JOSEPH HAS A TEAM OF PRAYER WARRIORS THAT ARE COMMITTED TO PRAYING FOR YOUR INTENTIONS. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE AN INTENTION INCLUDED, PLEASE CONTACT THE PARISH OFFICE.

UPCOMING MASS SCHEDULE

Tues, December 8 (Immaculate Conception - Holy Day of Obligation)
8:00am: Ss. Simon & Jude
6:00pm: Ss. Mary & Joseph

Confession & Adoration During Advent
Wed, Dec 9: Ss. Mary & Joseph - PSR Confessions 4-5pm. First Reconciliation for our 3rd Graders at 5:15pm
Tue, Dec 15: Ss. Simon & Jude - Confessions for the PSR kids and adults from 6:00pm-7:30pm
Wed, Dec 16: St. Joseph - Confessions for the adults from 8:30am-9:30am
Wed, Dec 16: Ss. Mary & Joseph - PSR Mass at 5:15pm (all are welcome to attend)
Ss. Mary & Joseph - Confessions for the adults from 6-7:30pm

Sat, December 19: Gillespie/Benld Children's Christmas Program after 4pm Mass

Sun, December 20: Carlinville PSR Nativity Program after 10am Mass



Thurs, December 24 (Christmas Eve)
4:00pm: Ss. Mary & Joseph
4:00pm: Ss. Simon & Jude with Fr. Don Goergen
6:00pm: St. Joseph (5:30pm Christmas Carol Singing)

Fri, December 25 (Christmas Day)
8:00am: Ss. Simon & Jude
10:00am: Ss. Mary & Joseph

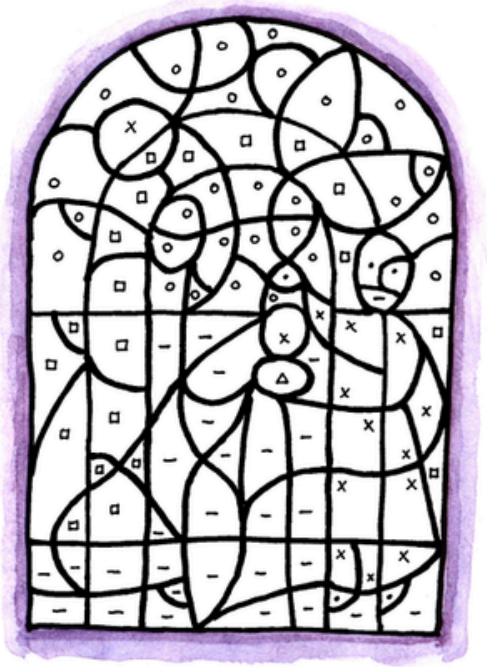
December 26 / December 27: Normal Weekend Schedule

Thurs, December 31 (Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God – Holy Day of Obligation)
4:00pm: Ss. Mary & Joseph
6:00pm: Ss. Simon & Jude

Fri, January 1, 2027 (Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God – Holy Day of Obligation)
8:00am: St. Joseph

The Kids' Bulletin

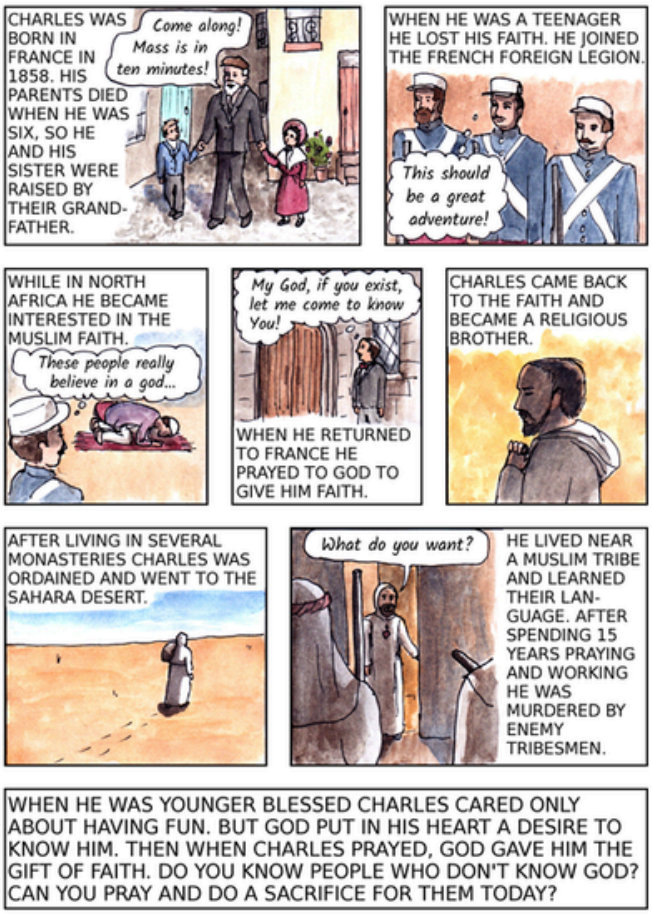
First Sunday of Advent
November 29th, 2026



In the Gospel, Jesus tells us to always be ready.
Here's someone waiting
for his master to return...
Use this code to colour the picture in:

◦ DARK BLUE	▫ GREY	- BROWN
• SKIN COLOUR	× WHITE	▵ RED

Blessed Charles de Foucauld
December 1



WHEN HE WAS YOUNGER BLESSED CHARLES CARED ONLY ABOUT HAVING FUN. BUT GOD PUT IN HIS HEART A DESIRE TO KNOW HIM. THEN WHEN CHARLES PRAYED, GOD GAVE HIM THE GIFT OF FAITH. DO YOU KNOW PEOPLE WHO DON'T KNOW GOD? CAN YOU PRAY AND DO A SACRIFICE FOR THEM TODAY?

Advent is Here!
Jesus is coming!



Advent is here! It's time to begin preparing for the coming of Jesus at Christmas.

Jesus came the first time long ago in Bethlehem. Now He comes to us every time we go to Mass, in Holy Communion. But we celebrate Jesus' coming in a special way at Christmas time.



Advent is the time to get ready for Christmas. We get our houses ready by cleaning and decorating. We get our souls ready by cleaning out our sins when we go to confession, and by learning and thinking about Jesus.

Here are some things that will help you get ready for Christmas:

~ Light a candle on an advent wreath when you say your prayers every day.

~ Read a book about Advent or Christmas.

~ Go to Confession before Christmas.



~ Do nice things for people. Remember that anything you do for some-one else you do for Jesus!

Answers to Fill in the Blanks: know, man, servants, each, watch, therefore, you, lord
WATCHFUL!

www.thekidsbulletin.com

Fill in the Blanks

In today's Gospel reading Jesus tells the people to be ready for His next coming.
Fill in the blanks with the words at the end and use the letters in sqares to fill in the blanks at the end, in the order they come.

You do not __ __ __ [_] when
the time will come.
It is like a __ [_] __ traveling abroad.
He leaves home and places
his __ __ __ __ __ __ [_] __ in charge,
__ __ [_] __ with his own work,
and orders the gatekeeper
to be on the __ __ __ __ [_]
Watch, __ __ __ __ __ [_] __ __ __;
__ __ [_] do not know
when the [_] __ __ __ of the house is coming.
Be __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ !

THEREFORE		KNOW	MAN
	EACH		
SERVANTS		LORD	YOU



SS. SIMON & JUDE CHURCH

MISSION STATEMENT

We the faith community of Ss. Simon & Jude are called to worship as a family, to nurture and grow our faith and to be a welcoming, evangelizing and serving community.

PARISH COMMITTEES & GROUPS

Parish Council:
Mary Newman, Matt Brown, Harry Cavanaugh, Theresa Duncan, Brenda Lubrant, Roger Niehaus, Bob Tucker, Artie Vallerius, Denise Wirth, Fr. Joe Koyickal

Finance Council:
Harold Newman, Doug Goings, Kristine Jarden, John Marciukaitis, Weye Schmidt, Fr. Joe Koyickal

Ss. Simon & Jude Altar & Rosary Society Contact:
Mary Newman

Knights of Columbus Contact:
Dennis Janssen

Music Ministry Contact:
Pete Bertino

ST. JOSEPH CHURCH

MISSION STATEMENT

With the Lord's kindness and guidance, we hope to keep St. Joseph Church alive and well so that we may continue to grow in faith and spirit for future generations.

PARISH COMMITTEES & GROUPS

Parish Council:
Cindy Saracco, Bill Bertetto, Donna Dopuch, John Fassero, Ruth Gill, JO Kelly, Chester Wyatt, Fr. Joe Koyickal

Finance Council:
Ed Saracco, Jerry Marcacci, Jerry Saracco, Fr. Joe Koyickal

St. Joseph Altar & Rosary Society Contact:
Cindy Saracco

Knights of Columbus Contact:
JO Kelly

Music Ministry Contact:
Sarah Williams

BAPTISMS

In order for a child to be baptized, the Church requires that the minister performing the baptism have a reasonable hope that the child will be raised in the practice of the faith. Attending Mass regularly and being a registered member of the parish provides this reasonable hope. Please contact the parish office for further details.

SACRAMENT OF FIRST RECONCILIATION, FIRST COMMUNION & CONFIRMATION

3rd Grade students must attend PSR & Mass in order to be eligible for these sacraments.
Contact the DRE, Donette Clark, for more information.

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

A couple wishing to be married in Ss. Simon & Jude / St. Joseph Catholic churches must contact the parish office six months prior to the intended date. The couple must be registered in the parish & attend Mass regularly.

COMMUNION & ANOINTING OF THE SICK

If you are sick or homebound & would like to receive communion or be anointed, please contact the parish office.