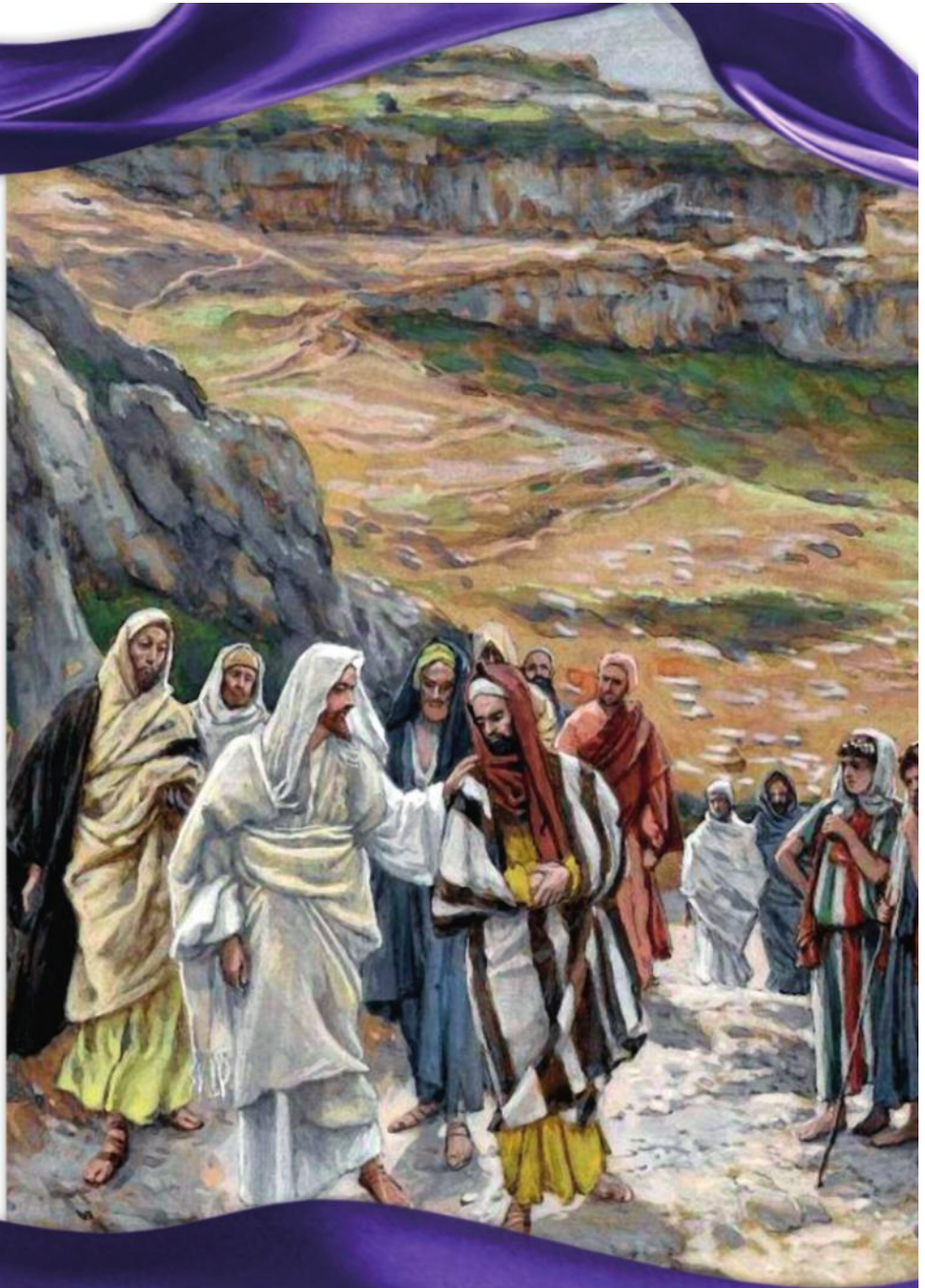


“The hour has  
come for the  
Son of Man  
to be glorified.  
Amen, amen,  
I say to you,  
unless a grain of  
wheat falls to the  
ground and dies,  
it remains just  
a grain of wheat;  
but if it dies,  
it produces  
much fruit.”

*John 12: 23,24*

Jesus Discourses with His  
Disciples by James Tissot  
Circa 1886-1894



5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF  
**LENT**

©Diocesan

**St. Mary's Catholic Church**

**Pontiac, Illinois**

**March 17, 2024**

ST. MARY'S CHURCH  
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH  
119 E. HOWARD ST., P.O. BOX 374  
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS 61764

Phone: 815-844-7683 Fax: 815-842-4345

Parish & School Website: [www.stmaryspontiac.org](http://www.stmaryspontiac.org)

Facebook: St. Mary's Parish-Pontiac

PASTOR: Fr. Joseph A. Baker

[frijbaker@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:frijbaker@stmaryspontiac.org) 309-657-0966

PERMANENT DEACONS:

Dcn. Jim Wallace [servant518@outlook.com](mailto:servant518@outlook.com)

Dcn. Ray White [deacon.ray@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:deacon.ray@stmaryspontiac.org)

PARISH SECRETARY/BOOKKEEPER: Patti Zehr

[zehr.patti@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:zehr.patti@stmaryspontiac.org)

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR: Danielle Gill

[gill.danielle@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:gill.danielle@stmaryspontiac.org)

EVANGELICAL CATHOLIC COORDINATOR: Margo Law

[law.margo@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:law.margo@stmaryspontiac.org)

MUSIC DIRECTORS: Marie Kane, Merryn Krenz,  
& Kathy Schulz

**OFFICE HOURS:**

Monday-Friday 9:00 am to 12 noon and 1:00-4:30 pm

Closed on Friday afternoons Memorial Day to Labor Day

**MASS TIMES:**

Saturday 4:00 pm Sunday 7:00 am & 9:30 am

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 7:00 am

Thursday 8:15 am when school is in session

**CONFESSION TIMES:**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 6:30-6:50 am

Wednesday 12 noon -1:00 pm

Saturday 2:30-3:30 pm

**ST. MARY'S SCHOOL:**

414 N. Main St., Pontiac, IL 61764

Phone: 815-844-6585

Principal: Mrs. Karen Jones, [jones.karen@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:jones.karen@stmaryspontiac.org)

Facebook: St. Mary's School

Instagram: stmaryspontiac

**ST. MARY'S FOOD PANTRY:** 401 E. Water St. Open to  
Livingston County residents every Thursday from 12 noon to 3 pm.  
Phone: 815-844-FOOD(3663)

**SCRIP:** SCRIP is now an electronic only format using the  
RaiseRight app or at [www.raiseright.com](http://www.raiseright.com). If you do not have an  
online account and would like to set one up, please contact Taryn  
Tissiere at [tissiere.taryn@stmaryspontiac.org](mailto:tissiere.taryn@stmaryspontiac.org) or 815-979-7663.



**STEWARDSHIP**

Collection last Sunday: \$13,140.65

St. Mary's Food Pantry Collection was \$1,885.00.

Building Maintenance Fund Collection: This weekend.

THANK YOU to those who regularly support our parish.



*Mass Intentions*

Saturday, March 16

4:00 p.m. 25th ann Donald Ocean

Sunday, March 17 (Fifth Sunday of Lent)

7:00 a.m. Parish

9:30 a.m. WATCH Team

Monday, March 18 (St. Cyril of Jerusalem)

7:00 a.m. William Patrick & Ellen Mullen

Tuesday, March 19 (St. Joseph, spouse of the BVM)

7:00 a.m. Mike & Alice Ganta

Wednesday, March 20

7:00 a.m. Frances Russow

Thursday, March 21

8:15 a.m. Rita Schaeffer

Friday, March 22

7:00 a.m. Ron Paris

Saturday, March 23 (St. Turibius of Mogrovejo)

4:00 p.m. 2nd ann Sharil Ryan

Sunday, March 24 (Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord)

7:00 a.m. Parish

9:30 a.m. Ken Russow, Louie Lyons, Gene Lyons,  
Edward Lyons, Joe Rathbun

**EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:** The Adoration Chapel is  
open each weekday, Monday-Friday from 8am until 8pm and Sat-  
urday from 8am until 3pm. If you would like to spend an hour with  
Jesus or share an hour with someone, please contact Darlene  
DeMattia at 815-674-2375 or the Parish Office at 815-844-7683.

**BAPTISM PREP CLASS:** If you are looking to have your first  
child baptized, please call the parish office at 815-844-7683 to re-  
serve your spot in our Baptism preparation class which takes place  
on the **third Thursday of each month at 6:00pm**. \*Please do not ask  
godparents until the class has been attended, as this will be a topic  
that is covered.

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS NEEDED AT HOSPITAL:** We  
are looking for 5 Eucharistic Ministers to offer Communion to any  
Catholic patients at St. James Hospital in the event that the Chap-  
lain would be absent. If you would be willing to assist in this very  
important ministry please call Bryan Schweigert at (815)-867-0958.  
Your help would be greatly appreciated !

**NEW ALTAR SERVERS:** If you are interested in being an  
Altar Server please call or text Julie Wenger at (815) 252-5947.

**FALLEN AWAY CATHOLICS:** Do you know a member of  
our church who has stopped attending Masses since Covid, or for  
another reason? We would like to reach out to these church mem-  
bers. Please call the parish office at 815-844-7683 with names.

**MASS AT LOCAL NURSING HOME:** Mass will be offered at  
Accolade Health Center on **Friday, March 22 at 9:30am**.

**THANK YOU** for all your prayers, cards (both sympathy and  
anniversary), Masses, calls, visits, food, flowers, and memorials.  
Your thoughtfulness and kindness will not be forgotten.  
PLEASE hug your loved ones often and make sure they HEAR you  
tell them you love them, for you never know how long they will be  
with you. Take Care & God Bless. Dcn. Jim & Laura Wallace

ST. MARY'S CHURCH  
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS

**IGNITING THE FLAME RETREAT – 2024**

**When:** Saturday, March 23, 7:45 a.m. - 8:15 p.m.  
**Where:** St. Mary's Parish Hall in Pontiac  
**Who:** You! and your friends & family  
**What:** Presentations by Father Joe and several members of the laity, Mass, small group discussions, prayer and mediation, adoration, opportunity to go to confession, and light breakfast, lunch, and dinner prepared by St. Mary's own Peg Meier.  
**Why:** To enjoy a day with fellow people of faith as we strengthen our personal relationships with Christ and each other. (We might even get to know that person who sits next to us at Mass!)  
**How:** Text or Call Linda at 815-848-2506 by Sunday, March 17 to register, or for more information  
**Cost:** Freewill donation to cover meals



Join us for our upcoming monthly Holy Hour for Vocations which will include time for quiet prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament, group prayers for Vocations, and will conclude with Benediction.

**Thursday, March 21 at 6:30pm**

Our diocese and our world need many good, holy priests and consecrated men and women, in addition to faithful marriages, to continue God's mission on this earth. Please join us to pray for all vocations.

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS** will meet **Wednesday, March 20 at 6pm** in the Our Lady of the Rosary Room of the parish hall.

**ATTENTION LADIES IN YOUR 20'S AND 30'S:** Join us the **third Wednesday of every month** for fellowship as we work our way through the Gospel of Luke in 2024. Come to as few or as many as you can make. If interested or if you have any questions, text or call Kate Harrold 815-848-1705.

**ST. MARY'S YOUTH GROUP:** All high school students are invited to join us every Sunday evening from 6:30-8pm. Youth group meets in the upstairs of the Parish Center (former rectory). Please use the back door.

**LEGION OF MARY:** Want to tell the world about Jesus through Evangelization? Become a disciple. Join the Legion of Mary **every Thursday at 7:00pm** in the Parish Center. Please use the back door.

**WOMEN'S GUILD RUMMAGE SALE FUNDRAISER:** The Women's Guild will be holding a Rummage Sale Fundraiser in the parish hall on **Friday, June 7 & Saturday, June 8**. Donated items in good condition are needed for the sale such as books, jewelry, linens, toys, household items, decorations and miscellaneous items. **NO CLOTHES!** Start saving your items. Drop off information will be provided closer to the sale date.

**SAVE THE DATE ~ SMS GOLF OUTING  
SUNDAY, AUGUST 4  
MORE DETAILS COMING IN MAY**



**STATIONS OF THE CROSS** will be held each Friday of Lent at 5:30 p.m. in the church. On Good Friday, there will be Stations of the Cross at 12noon.

**LENTEN PENANCE SERVICES:** Extra priests will be on hand to hear individual confessions.

**Tuesday, March 19 from 4:30-5:30pm** at St. Patrick-Dwight followed by Mass at 5:30pm then a Mission Talk at 6pm by Fr. Luke Spannagel

**Wednesday, March 20 at 6:30pm** at St. Mary's-Pontiac

**PLANTS NEEDED FOR GETHSEMENE GARDEN:** We are in need of all sizes of green plants for our Holy Thursday display. Plants can be dropped off at the church during Holy Week before Wednesday at noon, then picked up on Good Friday before 10am.

**HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE**

**Monday, March 25**

6:30-6:50am – Confessions

7am – Mass

**Tuesday, March 26**

6:30-6:50am – Confessions

7am – Mass

**Wednesday, March 27**

6:30-6:50am – Confessions

7am – Mass

12-1pm – Confessions

5-6pm - Confessions

**Holy Thursday, March 28**

7pm - Mass of the Lord's Supper

12 Midnight - Adoration Closes

**Good Friday, March 29**

12pm - Stations of the Cross

3pm - Passion Service

**Holy Saturday, March 30**

12-2pm - Confessions

7:30pm - Easter Vigil Mass (NO 4pm Mass)

**Easter Sunday, March 31**

Masses at 7am, 9am and 11am

**EASTER FLOWERS** may once again be purchased in memory or in honor of a loved one to help decorate the church for Easter. All memorials and honors will be listed in the Easter Sunday bulletin. Please place money and the form below in an envelope marked "Easter Flowers" and place it in the collection basket.

**PLEASE PRINT NAMES AS YOU WANT THEM TO APPEAR IN THE BULLETIN.**

**IN MEMORY OF** \_\_\_\_\_

**IN HONOR OF** \_\_\_\_\_

**YOUR NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

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Making Disciples for the Mission  
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**SCHOOL**

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**SATURDAY, APRIL 13**  
**FEATURING DJ BLAKE STADEL AS EMCEE**

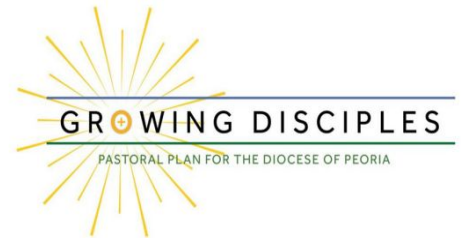
**TOP 10 WIN CASH PRIZES!**

Your \$100 ticket admits two adults to Pontiac Elks Lodge for the event and includes dinner, beer, a chance to win fantastic prizes, and the opportunity to participate in live & silent auctions. Tickets can be purchased at the school or on our website [school.stmaryspontiac.org](http://school.stmaryspontiac.org).

5:15 pm Doors open  
5:30 - 7:30 pm Buffet dinner served  
6:30 pm DrawDown of tickets begins followed by Live Auction

ONLY 300 TICKETS WILL BE SOLD. • NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN. • THIS EVENT IS FOR ADULTS 21+ ONLY.

St. Mary's School • 414 N. Main St. • Pontiac, IL 61764 • 815-844-6585 • [school.stmaryspontiac.org](http://school.stmaryspontiac.org)



We have several updates regarding our Growing Disciples Initiative:

- The Growing Disciples Core Team has met with the Pastoral Commission (comprised of parishioners from each vicariate) and the Presbyteral Council (comprised of priests from each vicariate) to review the Round Three models it created based on the feedback from the Round Two models. All the feedback from both meetings has been submitted to the Bishop to consider as part of his discernment.
- The Round Three models recommended to the Bishop by the Core Team will be made public. The Bishop wanted you to see the information he is discerning for several reasons:
  - \*He is committed to transparency in the Growing Disciples process.
  - \*There are changes from the Round Two models based on the feedback the Core Team received.
  - \*It will help all of us begin to work within our parish community and nearby parishes to prepare hearts and minds for change. Regardless of what may happen to our parish, everyone will experience a change, whether it is a new structure for our parish or the parish we grew up in, a new priest, or a renewed commitment and focus to evangelization and growing disciples.
- The Round Three models will be posted on [growingdisciplescdop.org](http://growingdisciplescdop.org) on Sunday, March 10 at 6 pm.

The time for the Bishop's discernment has begun. He will take everything he has heard and seen, revisit notes and letters, and bring it all to prayer. Please pray that the Holy Spirit continues to guide him and the Growing Disciples process.

Please email [growingdisciples@cdop.org](mailto:growingdisciples@cdop.org) with any questions or concerns you may have.

### SPALDING SCHOLARSHIPS: Your child can attend a Catholic School, Financial Assistance Available

Tuition assistance scholarship grants from the endowment fund established as a result of the Diocese of Peoria ROOTED IN FAITH Campaign and named in honor of Archbishop Spalding, the first Bishop of Peoria, will be available for the 2024-2025 school year for students enrolled in or intending to enroll in grades Kindergarten through 12 in any Catholic school located in the Diocese of Peoria whose families are active members of a Catholic parish in the diocese. All grants will be based on financial need objectively assessed. Information about the grants and application materials may be obtained from any Catholic elementary or secondary school in the Diocese of Peoria or on the Diocesan website [www.cdop.org](http://www.cdop.org) under *Catholic Education* and then under *Financial Assistance*. Consult the detailed protocols and procedures and checklist for all requirements necessary to be eligible for an award. Parents must apply online at: [online.factsmgt.com/aid](http://online.factsmgt.com/aid). Families of students currently receiving grants are reminded that all grants are for one year only, and anyone seeking to renew a grant for the 2024-2025 school year must reapply. Deadline date for the completed application is April 26, 2024. Notification of grant awards will be made in June of 2024.



## ***ENCOUNTERING THE EUCHARIST***

The Holy Eucharist is a need of the heart of Christ, just as it is a need of our hearts." "Sanctify and dedicate yourselves in all things in the spirit of love which prompted Our Lord to institute the Holy Eucharist, wherein He perpetuates the gift of His love to the glory of the Father.  
*~from the writings of St. Peter Julian Eymard*

THANK YOU to all those that viewed the International Eucharistic Miracles exhibition. If you were not able to view the Miracles or couldn't view them all, you can learn about the International Eucharistic Miracles exhibition, conceived and designed by Blessed Carlo Acutis at: [www.miracolieucaristici.org](http://www.miracolieucaristici.org) and [www.carloacutis.com](http://www.carloacutis.com)

All Eucharistic videos shown the past few months can be viewed at:  
[church.stmaryspontiac.org](http://church.stmaryspontiac.org) > News & Events > Encounter the Eucharist

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, April 14: After 7 & 9:30 AM Masses Coffee/Donuts/Eucharistic Video in MPR  
July 17-21: 10th National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis  
> <https://www.eucharisticcongress.org/register>

## **Be There When God Moves**

July 17-21, 2024, tens of thousands of passionate Catholics will experience an outpouring of grace on a scale this generation has never seen. This historic moment is called the 10th National Eucharistic Congress. Catholics from every corner of the U.S. will be in Indianapolis for this transformative gathering, and YOU are invited to represent our parish at this pivotal moment!

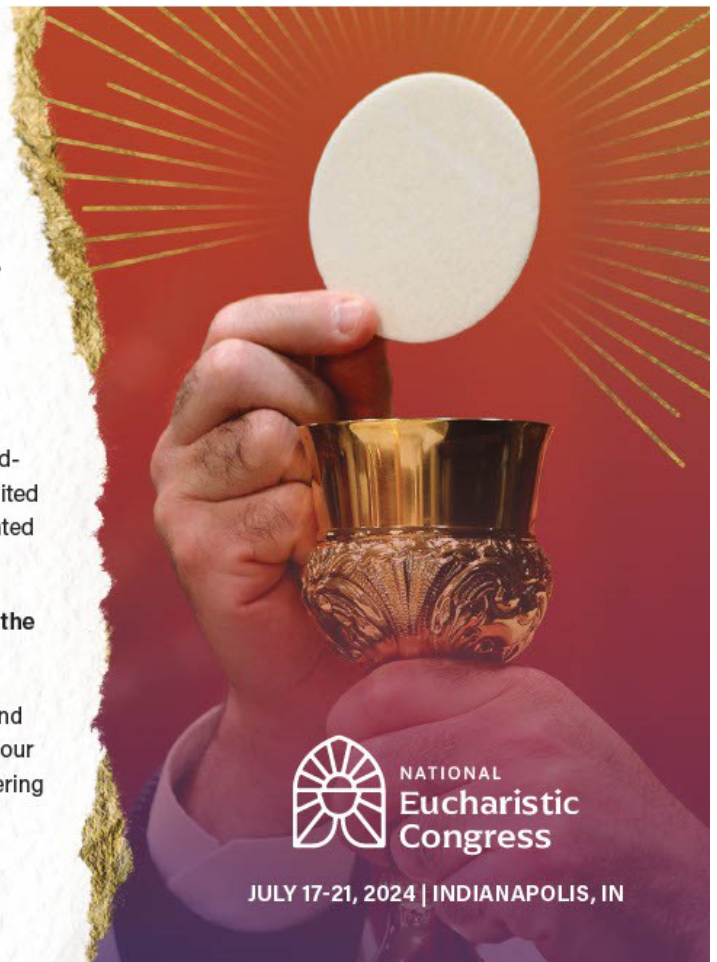
Whether you join us for the full experience or one day, you'll enjoy world-class teaching from some of the most trusted Catholic voices in the United States. Come encounter and worship Jesus in a new way, and be anointed to share those graces with our community when you return home.

**More than ever, you will be proud to be Catholic and excited about the future of the Church in America.**



Scan the code to learn more about the event and explore the full schedule for each day. Contact our parish office for more information about registering with your fellow parishioners.

[eucharisticcongress.org](http://eucharisticcongress.org)



NATIONAL  
Eucharistic  
Congress

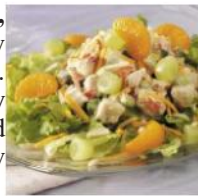
JULY 17-21, 2024 | INDIANAPOLIS, IN

ST. MARY'S CHURCH  
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 17, 2024

Sunday	Fifth Sunday of Lent Jer 31:31-34; Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15; Heb 5:7-9; Jn 12:20-33
Monday	Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41c-62; PS 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6; Jn 8:1-11
Tuesday	St. Joseph, Husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary 2 Sm 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16; Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29; Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22; Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24a or Lk 2:41-51a
Wednesday	Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; Dn 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56; Jn 8:31-42
Thursday	Gn 17:3-9; Ps 105:4-5, 6-7, 8-9; Jn 8:51-59
Friday	Jer 20:10-13; Ps 18:2-3a, 3bc-4, 5-6, 7; Jn 10:31-42
Saturday	Ez 37:21-28; Jer 31:10, 11-12abcd, 13; Jn 11:45-56
Sunday	Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion Mk 11:1-10 or Jn 12:12-16; Is 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24; Phil 2:6-11; Mk 14:1—15:47 or Mk 15:1-39

**SPRING SALAD LUNCHEON: Thursday, March 21 from 11am to 1pm** St. Andrew Catholic Church, 110 E. Ash Street, Fairbury. Serving Ham, Salads, Rolls & Beverages. By Donation Only. Carry-outs available. Hosted by the Altar & Rosary Society of St. Andrew Church.



St. Mary's Parish is now offering Online Giving.

Online Giving can be used to give to:

- Sunday Offering
- School Collection
- Food Pantry
- Building Maintenance Fund
- Memorials/Gifts
- School Annual Fund
- Scholarships

**Start giving online today!**

1. Visit our website at [www.stmaryspontiac.org](http://www.stmaryspontiac.org) and click on the online giving link.
2. Create an account.
3. Schedule your gift. Gifts given via checking or savings account have no service charge. Debit and credit card gifts will be assessed a 3% fee.

Please prayerfully consider giving online. If you have any questions, contact the parish office at 815-844-7683. Online Giving is provided by Our Sunday Visitor, a Catholic not-for-profit organization serving parishes for more than 100 years.

PRAYER INTENTIONS OF THE  
HOLY FATHER FOR MARCH

**For the new martyrs:** We pray that those who risk their lives for the Gospel in various parts of the world inflame the Church with their courage and missionary enthusiasm.



CATHOLIC  
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7 days a week, 24 hours a day! Catholic Spirit Radio broadcasts EWTN and local programming for you! It's lively, entertaining, and informative. Catholic Spirit Radio is on 89.5 FM and 92.5 FM, and now on 88.3 FM in the Pontiac area, and online at

[www.catholicspiritradio.com](http://www.catholicspiritradio.com) We

would like to thank the following local businesses for underwriting the efforts of Catholic Spirit Radio: Knights of Columbus Council #854, Baby Bulls Restaurant & Lyons-Sullivan Realty. If you would like to support CSR, please contact Jerry LoPiccolo at 630-514-6221.

**ROSARY ON CATHOLIC SPIRIT RADIO: Everyday at 4:30am and 8:30pm.**

**MASS IS BROADCAST EACH MORNING AT 7AM**

**Catholic Spirit Radio has a new free app.**

They upgraded so that listeners with newer phones, tablets, and other listening devices can access Catholic Spirit Radio programs and podcasts. Go to Google Play or Apple App store to find the new app:

**Catholic Spirit Talk Radio.**

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**PART-TIME CUSTODIAN NEEDED:** St. Mary's Parish is looking to hire an able-bodied individual to serve as a part-time custodian for St. Mary's School. Qualifications for this position include: striving to live a Christian life - be practicing the faith if Catholic, if not Catholic, have a respect for the Catholic Church and be comfortable working in a Catholic environment, possessing knowledge, skills, and experience in handling janitorial equipment and basic maintenance tools; assisting the head custodian in duties/projects as needed; maintaining security of buildings, equipment, and tools. Duties would be cleaning of classrooms, hallways, gym following games, offices, pre-K area, and the parish hall, setting up and taking down of tables and chairs as needed, making sure all lights are out and doors are locked, and collecting trash or anything else determined by the maintenance director. Hours would be late afternoon/early evening. If interested, please send a letter of interest, stating qualifications and references, to Fr. Joseph Baker, P.O. Box 374, Pontiac, IL 61764 or drop it off at the church office.



**ST. MARY'S CHURCH  
PONTIAC, ILLINOIS**

**PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH & SCHOOL FAMILIES THIS YEAR**

*We ask everyone to pray for specific church and school families each weekday.*

*A list will be published here in the bulletin and in the newsletter you receive in the mail.*

*Please remember these families in your prayers each day for them to grow in their faith this year.*

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Mon Mar 18   | Doug & Linda Zick Family, Jim & Denise Anderson Family    |
| Tues Mar 19  | Kristi Wright Family, Frank & Kathy Arbogast Family       |
| Wed Mar 20   | Shirley Wynant Family, Janet Andres Family                |
| Thurs Mar 21 | Mary Ann Wright Family, Bob & Nancy Arbogast Family       |
| Fri Mar 22   | David & Deb Zega Family, Michael & Theresa Arduini Family |
| Mon Mar 25   | Rita Wright Family, Amber Bartolo Family                  |
| Tues Mar 26  | Glenn & Jan Zehr Family, Tracy Arduini Family             |
| Wed Mar 27   | Kelly Zehr Family, Joan Baier Family                      |
| Thurs Mar 28 | Cindy Baker Family, Ed & Andrea Bartolotta Family         |
| Fri Mar 29   | Barbara Barton Family, Mike & Jennifer Armstrong Family   |



**MAY GOD BLESS ALL OUR FAMILIES EVERY DAY!**

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For further information,  
please call the parish office.

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