

READINGS

**First Reading:** (Isa 35:10)  
Those whom the LORD has ransomed will return and enter Zion singing, crowned with everlasting joy; they will meet with joy and gladness, sorrow and mourning will flee.  
**Psalm:** (Ps 146)  
Lord, come and save us.  
**Second Reading:** (Jas 5:7)  
Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord.  
**Gospel:** (Mt 11:4-5)  
Jesus said to them in reply, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regains their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.”

MASS INTENTIONS

C = CHESTER \* EG = ELLIS GROVE \*  
J = PR DU ROCHER

**Saturday, Dec. 13**  
**4:00PM (C)** Steve Kickham by Kathy Albrecht  
**6:00PM (J)** Jim Sirtak & Fr. Dan Jurek  
**Sunday, Dec. 14**  
**8:00AM-(EG)**  
**10:00AM (C)** Rick Reed by Lois Reed  
**5:00PM (C)** Ruth Petrowske by the Family  
**Monday, Dec.15**  
**8:15AM (C)** Gary Casetta  
**Tuesday, Dec. 16**  
**7:30AM (J)** Terry Laurent  
**Wednesday, Dec. 17**  
**8:15AM (C)** Brian Petrowske by the family  
**Thursday, Dec. 18**  
**8:00AM (J)** For those on our prayer list  
**Friday, Dec. 19**  
NO MASS  
**Saturday, Dec. 20**  
**4:00PM (C)** Gary Casetta by Loren & Peggy Jany  
**6:00PM (J)** Jim Sirtak  
**Sunday, Dec. 21**  
**8:00AM-(EG)**  
**10:00AM (C)** Roger & Ruth Petrowske by the family  
**5:00PM (C)** For our Parish families

MASS SCHEDULE ~ December

**Saturday:** 4pm: Chester 6pm: Prairie du Rocher  
**Sunday:** 8am: Ellis Grove 10am: Chester

GOSPEL REFLECTIONS

The first reading (Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10) brings the theme of hope, joy and recompense before us. Those who have been freed from captivity will return home in excitement. Miracles

will also unfold because our Savior and Messiah is closer than we can imagine.

In the second reading (James 5:7-10) we are reminded that Patience is key in awaiting the Messiah. The coming of the Lord is at hand as the GAUDETE SUNDAY celebration of today reminds us. As farmers patiently await their harvest, so too we should look in joyful hope, to the visit of our Savior at this season.

In the Gospel (Matthew 11: 2-11) John the Baptist sent his disciples to Jesus for some tough questions. What would the coming of the Messiah, mean for the people? Will there be liberation, hope, optimism, increased faith and good news? Jesus gave them not just answers but told them to become witnesses to what was happening. Advent makes us witnesses willing to tell people what the Savior has done for us and around us. Amen.

PARTNERSHIP EVENTS

OCIA

Interested in becoming Catholic or learning more about the Catholic Faith? St. Mary’s in Chester is planning to offer O.C.I.A. (Order of Christian Initiation for Adults) starting this September. Please call the parish office or contact Brad for more info: [bradcolvis@gmail.com](mailto:bradcolvis@gmail.com).

CONFESSIONS

**St. Joseph:** Tuesday & Thursday mornings & Sat. evenings after Mass or by appt.  
**St. Mary’s (C):** Saturday evenings before Mass 3:15pm-3:45pm  
*Any other confessions can be made by appointment.*

ADORATION

\*\*\*All Are Welcome\*\*\*

**St. Joseph:** First Monday of every month @ 7PM  
**St. Mary’s (C):** First Tuesday of every month @ 7PM  
**St. Mary’s School:** The First Friday of every month at 8:30am

MASS OF HEALING

First weekend of the month following each Mass.



Christmas Party, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> from 5-7pm At Ellis Grove.  
We will be Feeding the hungry again on January 17<sup>th</sup>. All are welcome!

**We have a Facebook Page:** If you or your family would like to join, please let Jill Whelan (618-719-9344) or Dawn Walker (618-317-5104) know so we can send you an invite.

STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION

COMMUNION

If you are unable to attend Mass and would like to receive communion contact: Diane Mudd 284-7150 (Ruma), Leonard DeRousse 284-6655 before 7pm (Prairie du Rocher), Rosemary Bert 615-6135, Paula Platt 615-5545, Martha McDonald 615-6624 or Barb Otten 615-2442 (Chester).

PRAYER CHAIN

If you need the emergency power of prayer or want to belong to the prayer chain, please call Marie Henry 618-282-2876 or 618-559-6511 (Prairie du Rocher) or Rosemary Bert 618-615-6135 or Martha McDonald 618-615-6624 (Chester).

WOMEN’S SUPPORT GROUP

Meetings are held the third Thursday of every month at 10am at Linda Stern’s home, 106 Hillcrest Dr., Chester. Come and connect with others who are making their way since losing their spouses. If you have any questions, call Linda (618-201-2957) or Martha McDonald (618-615-6624).

PRAYER REQUEST

The homebound, nursing home residents, cancer patients, our military, the lonely, the homeless, those incarcerated.  
Donna Schweizer, Terry Moore, Mike Vasquez,  
Tom Sauer, Mary Beck, Bruce Kettmann,  
Jaci Bert, Amanda Loudenback, Sonny & Roseann Glenn,  
Judy Kempfer, Peggy Helmers, Evelyn Marquardt,  
Roger Knott, Albert Deterding, Raymond Ellner,  
Tony Melliere, Eric Mathews, Bill & Erlene Hanger, Julia Hartman, Savanna Zieger, Sharon Bryant, Huckson McGee

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARY’S

Danny Miller 12/13, Tim Miller 12/13,  
Paulette A. Deterding 12/14, Jolene Heine 12/14,  
Cheryl Gross 12/14, Evelyn Marquardt 12/15,  
Becky Popejoy 12/15, Jennifer Wingerter 12/16,  
Christa Howie 12/16, Nate Maes 12/16,  
Linda Hayden 12/17, Stephanie Lockhart 12/17,  
Mary Ridgway 12/18, Jason Surman 12/18,  
Katie Popejoy 12/19, Joyce Ellner 12/19

ST. JOSEPH, PRAIRIE DU ROCHER EVENTS

Weekly Tithes & Offerings

Online Giving ~ [www.stjoespdr.org](http://www.stjoespdr.org)

**St. Joseph’s: Weekly Goal: \$1700 Beginning 7/1/2025**  
**Envelopes (37)** \$1577 Loose: \$133, Flowers: \$140  
Candles (Nov.) \$31  
**YTD:** goal: \$39,100 collected: \$39,206

Liturgical Calendar ~ St. Joseph

**Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>** (S) Jack, Lilly & Lexie (L) Katie, (B) Marie, (C) Carla & Leonard  
**Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>** (S) Mason & Alex (L) Chad, (B) Jill, (C) Nancy & Marie



**Parents,** PSR starts promptly at 7:15am  
Jill will arrive at 7am to open.  
Last day of PSR for the year will be Tuesday December 16<sup>th</sup> we end with an all-class Mass.  
Congratulations to Peyton & Claire on making their 1<sup>st</sup> Reconciliation last Tuesday.

Collection Totes

In the back of church are two totes for the collection of non- perishable food items for the Prairie du Rocher school food pantry and warm clothes for our trip to SVDP breakfast program on Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>

Christmas decorating

Anyone who wishes to help decorate the church for Christmas we will be decorating on Sunday Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> @9am

In Deepest Sympathy

*We offer our sincere condolences to John & Shirley Mathews on the recent loss of their brother Lyle Mathews. May the Lord grant them comfort during this most difficult time. May he rest in peace.*

ST. MARY’S CHESTER EVENTS

Weekly Tithes & Offerings

Online Giving ~ [osvhub.com/maryhoc/funds](http://osvhub.com/maryhoc/funds)  
**Weekly Goal: \$8901 ~**

**Mass Streaming:** Masses are being streamed on YouTube. Search *Mary Help of Christians Chester* to find the streamed Masses.

Servers Schedule

**Sat. Dec 13** ~ Brynn & Bryce  
**Sun. Dec 14** ~ Jackson, Cody & Caroline  
**Sat. Dec 20** ~ Gavin & **ONE VOLUNTEER NEEDED**  
**Sun. Dec 21** ~ Parker, Ezra, & Maren

**Lectors & Eucharistic Ministers Schedul**  
**Sat. Dec 13** ~ (L) Linda (H) Kathleen (C) Megan, Martha  
**Sun. Dec 14** ~ (L) Dainelle (H) Sam (C) Sarah, Norman, Jeannie, Diana  
**Sat. Dec 20** ~ (L) Paula (H) Paula (C) Larry, Marlene  
**Sun. Dec 21** ~ (L) Jocelyn (H) Greg (C) Bill, Barb, Kevin, Aaron

In Deepest Sympathy

*We offer our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Jackson Scanlan, grandson of Joe and Gina Cushman, former parishioners. May the Lord grant them comfort during this most difficult time. May he rest in peace.*



**Thank You!** Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to all of you who donated baked goods for the Church Tour. It is wonderful to have so many come through for us when it's needed. Thanks again!

**Church Decorating:** We will be decorating the church after 10:00 am Mass on Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup>. It's a big job, and we would appreciate your help!

**St. Mary's Council of Catholic Women Quilt of the Month:** If you would like to donate a new, hand-quilted quilt for this project, we would very much appreciate it. The 2026 Quilt of the Month Tickets are being sold at this time.

**KC Hall Monday Lunches:** Monday, 12/15 ~ Pork fritter, mashed taters & gravy, green beans, broccoli salad. Served from 11 am – 1 pm. \$12/person.

**KC Monthly Meeting:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month at 6pm. Next meeting 12/18/25.

**Giving Tree:** The giving tree has the names of 7 parishioners at High Point (formerly Craig Manor) and 9 at Three Springs Rehab. Center. There are also ornaments for food or baby items for the food pantry. Food Pantry items can be taken there on Wed. from 9 – 2 pm. (618) 826-3141. Please bring your gifts back to church by Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Chester Christian Food Pantry:** Items needed: canned meats, canned fish, canned fruit. Monetary donations are much appreciated! 270 households/695 individuals (233 children) were served in November. Next mobile market: January 28, 2026.

**St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery:** We are looking for someone who is interested in the grass mowing and upkeep of the cemetery. The position will be available starting January 1<sup>st</sup>. Anyone interested should contact the Church Office.

**Mass Intentions:** Mass intentions are \$10 each. Effort is made to accommodate specific date requests, but all cannot always be accommodated. Requests and payment can be placed in the collection basket or mailed to the Church Office.

**2026 Gala Dinner Auction:** Shopping for donations is easy from the Amazon Wish List using this QR code. Your support is much appreciated!



**ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**KC's SMS Family Christmas Party:** Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at 5pm.

**AROUND THE DIOCESE**

**The 2025 Catholic Service and Ministry Appeal:**  
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.

**The Messenger:** Give the gift that keeps on giving! The Messenger! To subscribe online for Family or Friends, go to: [www.bellevillemessenger.org](http://www.bellevillemessenger.org) or call (618) 233-8670.

**Annual Diocesan Christmas Collection:** The 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Diocesan Christmas Collection will be taken up at all Masses on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Parishes and agencies throughout the diocese can 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.

**Christmas Clothing Drive:** St. Anne Cradle of Hope in Carbondale is in need of new and gently used children's clothing. M/W 10a-2p and Th 1p-4p.



**Diocesan Christmas Dinner:** The Catholic Diocese of Belleville will sponsor the annual Diocesan Christmas Dinner on Christmas Day from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm in the Monsignor Bernard Voss Parish Center of St. Henry Parish, 5303 West Main Street in Belleville. If you or someone you know would like to attend the dinner or need a meal delivered in the Belleville area, please call (618) 722-5024 no later than 12/16/25.

**THE ADVENT WREATH**

**Candle 1 ("The Prophet's Candle")** is purple, lit during the first week of Advent, and symbolizes hope.  
**Candle 2 ("The Bethlehem Candle")** is purple, lit during the second week of Advent, and symbolizes peace.  
**Candle 3 ("The Shepherd's Candle")** is pink or rose-colored, lit during the third week of Advent, and represents joy.  
**Candle 4 ("the Angle's Candle")** is purple, lit during the fourth week of Advent, and represents love.  
**Candle 5 ("Christ's candle")** is white, lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, and represents the Advent child, Jesus.



# 3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

— G I D —

"This is the one about whom it is written: Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you." - Mt 11:10

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



**PASTOR: FR. SEBASTIAN**  
Website: [www.stjmm.org](http://www.stjmm.org)

**Mary Help of Christians**  
911 Swanwick St, Chester, IL 62233  
Parish Secretary: Rose Dethrow  
Parish Phone: 618-826-2444  
School Phone: 618-826-3120  
School Website: [www.stmaryscatholicchesteril.org](http://www.stmaryscatholicchesteril.org)  
Email: [Stmaryschurch@stjmm.org](mailto:Stmaryschurch@stjmm.org)

**St. Mary of Divine Maternity**  
7362 Shawneetown Trail, Ellis Grove, IL 62241  
Parish Secretary: Gerry Valleroy  
Deacon Al Dubois  
Parish Phone: 618-859-3541

**St. Joseph**  
802 Middle St, Prairie du Rocher, IL 62277  
Parish Secretary: Jill Whelan  
Parish Phone: 618-284-3314  
Email : [sjospdr@htc.net](mailto:sjospdr@htc.net)  
Website : [www.stjoespdr.org](http://www.stjoespdr.org)

*We extend a very warm welcome  
to all those who are new to our parishes.  
We would love for you to become  
permanent members of our  
Parish Partnership Family!  
Please contact the Parish Secretary  
at the office number listed above.*