

**12,576** That is the number of decades of the Rosary that have been pledged by the members of Saint John the Baptist, Saint Joseph, Saint Dominic and Saint Mary of the Woods parishes. When you add up all the decades, that comes to about 55 Rosaries being prayed every day of Lent for our merger – for our unity as a new parish and for the conversion of hearts and minds of those not yet in our parish.

THANK YOU for your prayers! It gives me great confidence that this merger will be a success. It is vital that we have vibrant parishes here in our farming communities, spotting the countryside in rural, central Illinois. Where do people go to meet the Lord Jesus, to receive new life and salvation, to know the liberating love of God...if there is not a vibrant parish within a reasonable driving distance? By uniting our parishes' energy and resources, we will set out, recommitted, to continue the work of the Lord for the coming generations.

**The Rosary**

As we have been offering decades of the Rosary for this revitalizing effort, people have been asking me questions about the Rosary – which I am very happy about. This is the essential Catholic prayer – second only to the Mass itself – by which we are promised a great outpouring of God's grace through the hands of Holy Mary. She is our mother and our intercessor; she prays with us and for us; she stands outside of time, beside Jesus her Divine Son, receiving our petitions and dispensing God's grace. The saints throughout the ages have sung the praises of the Rosary: "Of all prayers, the rosary is the most beautiful and the richest in graces...love the Rosary and recite it every day with devotion" (Pope St. Pius X); "Our Lady has never refused me a grace through the recitation of the rosary" (St. Padre Pio); "Give me an army saying the Rosary and I will conquer the world" (Pope Blessed Pius IX).

The main question I have been asked by a few people is what to do with the "mysteries." The mysteries are meant to be meditated upon as you pray each decade of the rosary. For example, the first "Joyful Mystery" is the Annunciation of the angel Gabriel to Mary that she is called to give birth to the Son of God. There are 20 mysteries, so if a person prays the Rosary each day, they meditate on the whole life of Jesus over the course of four days. Traditionally, we meditate upon the "Joyful Mysteries" on Monday and Saturday, the "Sorrowful Mysteries" on Tuesday and Friday, the "Glorious Mysteries" on Wednesday and Sunday, and the "Luminous Mysteries" on Thursday.

**Not Too Late**

If you haven't submitted a Rosary pledge card yet, it is not too late. I have already received a couple more Rosary pledge cards since Ash Wednesday – get yours in soon and we will update the number of decades!

**Saint quote:**

"How beautiful is the family that recites the Rosary every evening." St. John Paul II

**St Joseph Lector**

**Sat. Mar 8th Kelch**  
**Sun. Mar 9th Harmon**

**Sat. Mar 15th Burns**  
**Sun. Mar 16th Wilbur**

**Financial Stewardship**

Today's first reading describes the offering of first fruits the people of Israel were to present to the Lord in thanksgiving for their deliverance from Egypt and the gift of the promised land. Is my offering at today's Mass an appropriate response to the many blessings the Lord has given me?

**March 2nd**

**St Joseph \$ 1,958.00**

**St James \$ 622.00**

**March Mission of the Month - Haiti**



**SAINT JOSEPH, BRIMFIELD - SAINT JAMES, WILLIAMSFIELD**

Father Deogratias Mpewo, Pastor Deacon Ray Burton  
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**1st Sunday of Lent March 9th, 2025**

*"I have now brought you the first fruits of the products of the soil which you, O Lord, have given to me." - DEUTERONOMY 26:10*

This line from the Old Testament offers two challenges. First, do you give to God from your "first fruits" - the first and best that you have to offer? Or do you give from what you have leftover? Second, do you realize that everything you have and that everything you are has been given to you by God? We aren't owners of anything, we are merely stewards of God's gifts. Pray for a grateful and generous heart, every day, in all circumstances.

**St. Joseph**

Sat. Mar 8th 3:30 pm—4:45pm Confessions  
5:00 pm Tom & Ann Maher +  
Sun. Mar 9th 10:30am Paul Gilles+  
Mon. Mar 10th 8:00 am Special Intention ( Fr Deo)  
Tues. Mar 11th 8:00 am People of St James Parish  
Wed. Mar 12th 8:00 am Joe Murdock+  
5:00-6:45pm Confessions and Adoration  
7:00 pm Stations of the Cross  
Thurs Mar 13th 8:00 am Francis & Fredrick Carroll+  
Fri. Mar 14th 8:00 am People of St Joseph Parish  
Sat. Mar 15th 3:30 pm—4:45pm Confessions  
5:00 pm Pat Kelch+  
Sun. Mar 16th 10:30am Celine Estes+ & Family

Lenten Mass & Stations of the Cross Schedule  
in the back of the church

**St. James**

**Sunday Confessions**

**8:00 — 8:25 am**

**Sun. Mar 9th 8:30am**

**Rev. John C Collopy+**

Offered by  
Collopy and Doubet  
families

**Fri. Mar 14th**

**5:30-6:20 Confessions**  
**6:30pm Stations of the Cross**

**Sun. Mar 16th 8:30am**

**Aaron Fisk**  
(Good Health)  
Offered by  
Suzie Wanner

**St Joseph is not closing**

Bishops original letter is in the back of the church and on the parish website for you to read about the merging of our parishes.

If you hear this rumor—please tell them it is not true.

**St James Parish Status**

The bishops letter stated that the parish of St James was in the 3 year group. We have time before we need to start the processes of merging. There is nothing to report at this time.

St Joseph is on the 2 year and its already almost a year. If you have any questions, please feel free to talk to Fr. Deo or Pauline.

As we enter into this Lenten season, the Church once again invites us to use this opportunity to share more fully in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ.

It is essential that we cultivate a deeper sense of prayer, fasting and almsgiving to better offer our lives to Our Lord. As we make our way through the Triduum and to that glorious day of the Lord's Resurrection, we pray that all of us will be ever more attentive to our spiritual devotions and especially to the Word of God during these forty days. May the guidance of the Holy Spirit assist us in our Lenten journey.

### REGULATIONS FOR LENT AND THE EASTER TRIDUUM

Lent is the principal season of penance in the Christian year. Priests, religious and laity are strongly urged to develop and follow a program of voluntary self-denial, attentiveness to prayer, and especially to works of charity and mercy.

Everyone of 14 years of age or over is bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2025, and all the Fridays of Lent.

Everyone 18 years of age and under 59 years of age is bound to fast on Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2025, and Good Friday, April 18, 2025.

On these two days of fast and abstinence, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, only one full meatless meal is allowed. Two other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted on these two days, but liquids including milk and fruit juices are allowed. When health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige.

To disregard completely the law of fast and abstinence is a serious matter.

### CCD and Confirmation Schedule

St Mary—Princeville

March 9th—Class

March

16th—Class

March 23rd—NO Class

### Youth Group Schedule for 7-12th graders

5:30pm—7:30pm

March 16th

March 30th April 13th

April 27th (Starved Rock)

If you want to join the Youth Group

or have questions please call

Annie Bosch 309-231-8084

### PANCAKE BREAKFAST

was a great time.

**Thank you** to all the organizers, volunteers and everyone who came to for the food and fellowship.

We are making plans for another parish event in the near future.

Hallow App for lent

Hallow.com/parish



They also have different people you can follow the rosary with, such as Mark Wahlburg, Bishop Barron and other.

### Did You Know?

The 150th anniversary of the Diocese of Peoria began on February 12, 2025 with the opening Mass at the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Peoria, and will continue until the closing Mass on May 22, 2027.

We will be celebrating this milestone for two years. As the story goes, on February 12, 1875, the Holy Father established the Diocese of Peoria and sent a letter, appointing Fr. Michael J. Hurley as Bishop. Fr. Hurley wrote back to the Holy Father, saying he did not accept the appointment. However, Rome never received the reply as the ship that carried the letter sank! Finally, after being made aware that there was no Bishop to oversee the new Diocese, Bishop John L. Spalding was appointed and began leading the Diocese in 1877.

The marking of the 150th anniversary of the Diocese of Peoria is meant to be a time of great spiritual, ecclesial and social significance in the life of the local Church.

*Proclaiming Christ and Making Disciples* are the central messages that will be encompassed through pilgrimages, formation, social service opportunities, and other events through the two year period.

### 1st Sunday of Lent

ENTERING THE DESERT FOR GENUINE CONVERSION:

Lent is a time when we are invited to go into the desert with Jesus: to share both his conflict and his victory, to feel something of our own weakness and temptations, to know the depth of our reliance on God's grace. Only so can genuine conversion occur.

Jesus' temptations are a warning that we can ruin our lives if we stray from the path God wills for us. The 1st temptation was decisively important. On the surface it is a desire for something innocent and good: why not call on God's power to satisfy our hunger. Jesus' reply, "One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God", implies that we must always seek God's will above all. At every moment we must listen to God's word, seek God's will.

Our deepest needs are not met by physical food and drink. Human beings need more, for spiritual nurture. To help save other people from hunger and misery, we need to listen to God, who awakens in our conscience a hunger for justice and solidarity. Jesus wants us to be aware that human beings do not live on bread alone. We also need to nurture the spirit, know love and friendship, develop solidarity with those who suffer, listen to our conscience, open to the ultimate mystery of sharing, that joins us with God.

When we want to give in to any temptation, we will always find reasons, arguments and logic to support our desires. But we need wisdom from God to challenge, question and walk over our temptations.

The 1st temptation was to turn stone into bread. Stones were in plenty around Jesus. If all the stones changed to bread, there would be enough food for a lifetime. Giving in to this 1st temptation is like trying to accumulate for a lifetime when God wants us to live one day at a time. Giving in to this temptation will lead us to pillage, plunder, cheat, grab and snatch from others as much as we can.

The 2nd temptation was that Satan would give all the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would worship him. This temptation is all too evident from the growing power struggles seen in the world today and an increase in violence and bloodshed; nations trying to out-do another in economy and weaponry to become world-superpowers and ethnic groups claiming superiority over another. This temptation for power begins at the individual level when we forget Jesus' teaching 'those who wish to be 1st must be the servant of all' leading us to clamor for power, position and fame even at the cost and dignity of another.

The 3rd temptation was for Jesus to perform a spectacular act of falling from the pinnacle and not getting hurt. This temptation reveals itself in certain dangerously advancing technologies where man is trying to play God. Technology is good if it improves the quality of life, but dangerous when the creature wants to become a creator. When we rely only on our own strengths and intelligence we will disregard God. Paradoxically, our intelligence itself has breached nature's course and aggravated natural calamities.

So when temptations face you, don't just say 'no' but question it as Jesus did. Liken your temptations to any of his temptations and seek the wisdom of God to handle it.

***I WISH YOU A FRUITFUL LENTEN SEASON. FR. DEO.***

Go to [www.cdop150.org](http://www.cdop150.org) to check out all the happenings with the 150th celebration. There are Pilgrimage sites and info on the plenary indulgence.

### Server Training

Anyone who would like to serve come on any Saturday at 4pm. You will meet with Deacon Ray for training.



Altar Servers

Thanks for volunteering.