

Gathered Together: A Lenten Journey of Love and Belonging

**Third Sunday of Lent | March 23, 2025
| Luke 13:1-9**

**Theme for the week: Tending the Garden
Reflection for the Third Sunday of Lent**

Today's Gospel reading is the scriptural equivalent of the old image of the man on the sidewalk wearing a sandwich board that reads: The End is Near.

While the sidewalk evangelist may have gotten more laughs than converts, Jesus' words emphasize the urgency of repentance in a way that is tough to ignore. In the first part of the reading, Jesus responds to a "news report" about Galileans killed by Pilate, presumably as they offered ritual sacrifices, and another story about people crushed by a falling tower. He reframes both tragedies—not as divine punishment but as stark reminders of life's fragility. None of us know how much time we have, so Jesus challenges his listeners to examine their spiritual state now rather than assuming there's always time to make things right with God.

Jesus then reinforces this call to repentance with a vivid parable about an orchard owner, a gardener, and a barren fig tree. The orchard owner wants to cut the tree down, but the gardener pleads for one more year to tend and nurture it. As with all of Jesus' parables, there are layers of meaning to consider. The fig tree can represent us individually—our spiritual lives may have become stagnant, bearing little or no fruit. But it can also symbolize those who are distant from God: people who are struggling, lost, or alone.

Here's the challenge: As Christians, we're not only called to ensure our own trees bear fruit but also to take on the role of the gardener. We are invited to intercede, nurture, and tend the barren trees,

offering time, patience, prayer, and love to help others grow. In doing so, we become participants in the mercy and grace of God.

This Lent, how can we embrace the gardener's mission? Who in our lives might need our care, encouragement, or prayer to bear the fruit they are capable of? Let us ask God for the courage and wisdom to meet this challenge, sharing His mercy with a world that is so often fragile and in need of hope.

Daily Challenges

3/16/25 – Today, reflect on your own "fruitfulness." Where might you need God's grace to grow?

3/17/25 – Spend some time in prayer for the "lonely trees" – strangers or friends who are far away from God.

3/18/25 – Pray the Divine Mercy chaplet at 3 pm.

3/19/25 – Text a friend and ask for their prayer intentions. Let them know it can be as specific or vague as they like, whatever they are most comfortable with. Then, offer an Our Father or a Hail Mary for their intentions.

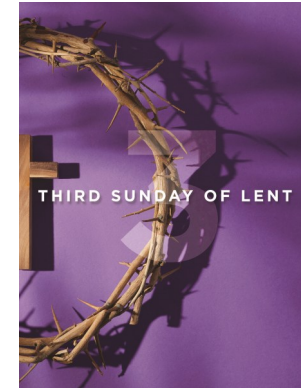
3/20/25 – Spend an hour helping someone who needs it, whether it's running errands for them, watering plants, or just listening.

3/21/25–Share a recipe for your favorite meatless dish with a Catholic friend and remind them: today is a day to abstain from meat!

3/22/25–Prepare for the Fourth Sunday of Lent by reading the Gospel, Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

**Saint Mary's Village Church
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(812) 535—1261
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**March 23, 2025
3rd Sunday of Lent**



Weekend Worship Sunday 9 am

**Parish Life Coordinator
Elizabeth Davis
elizabeth@shjth.org
(812) 240—5234
Hours: TH, F 9—4**

**Secretary
Connie Fitch
secretary@shjth.org
(502) 821—1022
Hours: W, F 8:30—2:30**

We welcome new members. To enroll, call the Parish Office or contact Connie Fitch.

**Coordinator of Religious Education
Jena Robertson
jenaleerobertson@gmail.com
(812) 243—5070**

**Sacramental Minister
Fr. Darvin Winters**

Fr. Darvin is available to hear confessions on Saturdays from 4—4:20 pm at Sacred Heart or by appointment.

The sacraments of Baptism and Matrimony are arranged by calling the Parish Office to schedule preparation.

WEEKEND MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Date	Mar 23	Mar 30
Lector	Edie Breneman	Carol Cummins
Server	Dallas Thralls Vivian Sereno	Lane Norton
Gift Bearers	Breneman Family	Brockmeier Family
Ushers	Scott Thralls Nick Savant	Tom McKinney Owen Ramsey
EMs	Bonnie Warn Krista Toney	Pam Norris Carol Cummins
Counters	Patty Curley Colleen Meyers	Terry & Kay Jatczak
Cleaners	Chris & Marlene Smithson	

Finance Report

Description	March 16	Budgeted
Sunday Collection	\$ 2,954	\$ 2,308
Galvin Fund	\$ 40	\$ 115
Black & Indian Mission	\$ 10	
Easter Flowers	\$ 120	
Ash Wednesday	\$ 548	
Candle Money	\$ 22	

Parish & Finance Council

The Parish Council and Finance Committee will meet today in Galvin Hall.

Please Pray For Our Loved Ones

David Auterson	Gary Garzolini
Jon Auterson	John Heck
Ray Edwards	Dan Kane
Jane Frazier	Rosie Meehan

Bingo Update!

Thank you to Kelly & Robin for an amazing meal! Our parishioners came through with very tasty desserts! And, of course, everyone who showed up, supported & volunteered at the Bingo Fundraiser, especially the fine work of our fundraising committee... YOU all made it a HUGE success! You raised \$4,405 minus the cost of the bingo cards (\$512) which left a profit for the church of \$3,893! Wow!!



Just a reminder that the Palm Sunday Bake Sale is coming up soon, on April 13! Come join us for a cup of coffee/tea and some fellowship! Bring your offerings of baked goods, treats, and crafts before Mass! Questions? Ask Karen or Robin! See you there!

A Lenten Prayer

In families striving to stay intact through adversity, Let us see Christ.

In the poor and lowly of the world, Let us see Christ.

In those forced to leave their homes because of war or famine, Let us see Christ.

In children who go to bed hungry and who cannot attend school, Let us see Christ.

In those who are living with HIV/AIDS and other diseases, Let us see Christ.

In immigrants and refugees seeking freedom and hope, Let us see Christ.

In those who are orphaned or abandoned, Let us see Christ.

In the elderly who are forgotten, Let us see Christ.

In those who struggle to find meaningful work, Let us see Christ.

In those who work for justice and peace for all people, Let us see Christ.

LET US PRAY.

Jesus, teach us to recognize your presence in those who are in need. May we give of ourselves in service to them and so hasten the coming of the Kingdom you have promised, where you live with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. AMEN.

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Mass Intentions

3/23 In Loving Memory of Doug & Randy Marris and John Sullivan
3/30 In Honor of Angie Ellis

Reconciliation Opportunity

St. Margaret Mary will be hosting "12 Hours of Grace", a Lenten Penance Service from 9 am to 9 pm on Friday, March 28. This is a great reconciliation opportunity prior to Easter. You are welcome to stop by anytime during this window.

March 28

St. Patrick's Church
4—7 pm
Sponsored by K of C



Crackers for a Cause

Religious Ed classes are collecting Crackers for a Cause between now and Easter. Parishioners can help by donating crackers to the classes. Please label them for which class you'd like to donate them to before placing them at the back of church or give them to Jena. Kids and parents are encouraged to bring as many as they can as well. Thank you so much for your support!



BIRTHDAYS

Steve Norris	25
Tom McKinney	27
Teresa Maher	30