



## *St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Community*

Madison Heights, MI [www.stvincentferrer.net](http://www.stvincentferrer.net)

**JANUARY 26, 2025 + THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

### **From The Pastor**

Some years ago, Pope Francis named the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time, 'Word of God Sunday.' Why did the Pope do that? What was the purpose of his intention? Faith needs to be nourished. Faith needs to be informed to animate the truth it reveals. More than information for the head in the practice of religion, the Word of God informs the heart to instill faith, building maturing trust, to increase love and commitment to God in Christ.

The Word of God is a living relationship with the Lord Jesus, who is himself the Word. From the words of St. Paul, 'faith comes from hearing.' Listening is a verb, a word of action. Hearing is the fruit of listening only if the hearer takes in what is heard, allowing it to make an impact. This is never truer in the faith relationship. Biblically, to listen means to obey; to take in, receive, to allow and impact and to respond. We are all familiar with the phrase 'in one ear and out the other.' That is not hearing. Something may be heard, but there is no impact or response. One becomes deaf to what is heard.

To hear the Word of God is to allow the Word to become part of us in a living way. The Word is not only informative, but formative. In faith, we allow the Word to have an impact on our lives upon the mind, heart, soul, body, and spirit, the whole self. In this way the Word becomes redemptive. The Word of God heals, forgives, inspires, awakens, and sometimes convicts. The Word of God is transformative. It can lift us beyond ourselves to the inner awareness of God's presence, an action of the Holy Spirit, or a new rhythm of life that inspires hope and freedom.

Consider the power of the Word in the first reading. Historically, the people have recently returned to their homeland after a generation of exile in Babylon. They returned to a ruined city and the destruction of their beloved Temple. In the course of time, the old scrolls of the Law, the Torah were found.

Today's reading is a gathering of the people to hear the Word of God for the first time in a generation. Ezra the priest-scribe not only reads to them from the Torah but also includes its interpretation. Think of an all-day long liturgy of the Word.

People are transformed in hearing the Word. They are weeping in remembrance of the Covenant of the Law they had formally held with God. They are filled with joy, humility, and the sadness of having lost the Law and the practice of their religion. Some may have

felt guilt or a need for holy repentance in the revival of their covenant with God as they work to restore their city, society, and Temple. Consider the emotions and spiritual awakening this has stirred in the people. Their hearts and souls are revived.

Moving forward many more generations, the gospel presents us with the living Word of God in Jesus himself, the long-awaited Messiah/Christ. Jesus is speaking the word in his inaugural address in his home synagogue. Notice the words he chooses as his mission statement taken from the Prophet Isaiah. This is a passage we have heard many times. Consider the words as if they were directly spoken to you.

Jesus claims the Spirit of the Lord is upon him as he has been anointed in the Spirit. You too have been anointed by the Spirit. The Spirit of God is upon you. Have you listened and heard that? Have you taken it in? This is an act of faith. In the Spirit, Jesus comes to bring gladness to the poor. What is poor in you that needs the word and the Spirit of Jesus? Are you poor in spirit? Sad, lonely, unhappy, lacking hope? Jesus is here to help you with that.

Jesus proclaims liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind. Where may you be bound up; a place in you that seeks new freedom? Old hurts, resentments, anger, unforgiveness, political dissention? Long ago buried problems left unresolved? What blind spots might you have that hinder a greater freedom, joy, or hope in your life? What may be binding up the love in your life that you wish were more free or active?

Jesus seeks to let the oppressed go free and proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord. We are all held back by something. Physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, or social maladies that make life hard, leaning against a greater freedom to realize and accept the love and redemption the gospel proclaims.

This is the power and the intention of the Word of God. It is the invitation of the Word to surrender our lives, with all our imperfections, to the truth of the love of our Savior. It is not easy to surrender; but take note that God surrendered to us in the Lord Jesus to save and set us free. God would love us to return the favor and surrender ourselves to the healing forgiveness the transformation of the Gospel promises us. Love the Word of God. Read it. Take it in. Allow it to become a living relationship in your life.

Father John Esper

# LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

## DAILY MASS

8:00am Monday thru Thursday

## WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday - 4:00pm

Sunday - 9:00am

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays 3:00 - 3:45pm  
in Chapel



Live Streaming of Mass  
Monday thru Thursday 8:00am  
and Sunday 9:00am

Adoration on Tuesdays  
8:45am to 10:00am

Livestream of Rosary on  
Thursdays following Mass

Search for St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church (in Madison Heights) on youtube to find our channel or connect via our APP or website

# CONTACT INFORMATION

## ST VINCENT FERRER PARISH OFFICE

28353 Herbert St., Madison Heights, MI 48071  
248-542-8720 Fax 248-542-8721  
Website: [www.stvincentferrer.net](http://www.stvincentferrer.net)

## PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday

9am to Noon - 1:00pm to 4:30pm,

Friday 9am to Noon, Closed Saturday & Sunday

### Parish Office Staff

Reverend John C. Esper, Priest in Solidum  
Deborah Tourville, Bus. Mgr/Adult Faith Formation  
Sheryl Brown, Parish Secretary/Bulletin  
Jim Balistreri, Music Coordinator  
Mary Ann Przybysz, Evangelical Charity Coordinator/  
Order of Christian Initiation of Adults(OCIA) Coordinator  
Carl Copen, Facilities Supervisor  
Alex Mototolea, Maintenance

### FAITH FORMATION OFFICE

248-398-1743 – call for appointment

Matthew Zinser, Childhood Faith Formation Coordinator

For information on Baptisms, OCIA and  
Funerals contact the Parish Office 248-542-8720

# MASS INTENTIONS

## MONDAY, January 27, 2025

8:00am Mass: Christopher Hudy (Special Intention) req. by Mom

## TUESDAY, January 28, 2025

8:00am Mass: Frank Bugaiski† req. by Bernadette Gutowski

## WEDNESDAY, January 29, 2025

8:00am Mass: Ralph, Muriel & Judy Orlando† req. by Family

## THURSDAY, January 30, 2025

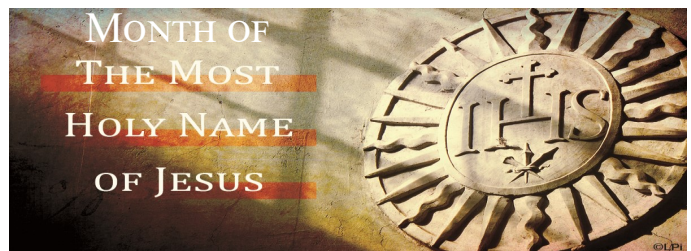
8:00am Mass: Diane Seavitt-Conway† req. by Mary Jane Guc

## SATURDAY, February 1, 2025

4:00pm Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family

## SUNDAY, February 2, 2025

9:00am Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family Daniel Sanocki† req. by Sanocki Family



# READINGS FOR THE WEEK

## January 26, 2025

Sunday: Neh 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10/Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15 (see Jn 6:63c)/1 Cor 12:12-30 or 12:12-14, 27/Lk 1:1-4; 4:14-21  
Monday: Heb 9:15, 24-28/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4, 5-6/Mk 3:22-30  
Tuesday: Heb 10:1-10/Ps 40:2 and 4ab, 7-8a, 10, 11/Mk 3:31-35  
Wednesday: Heb 10:11-18/Ps 110:1, 2, 3, 4/Mk 4:1-20  
Thursday: Heb 10:19-25/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6/Mk 4:21-25  
Friday: Heb 10:32-39/Ps 37:3-4, 5-6, 23-24, 39-40/Mk 4:26-34  
Saturday: Heb 11:1-2, 8-19/Lk 1:69-70, 71-72, 73-75/Mk 4:35-41  
Next Sunday: Mal 3:1-4/Heb 2:14-18/Ps 24:7, 8, 9, 10/Lk 2:22-40 or 2:22-32



### 3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

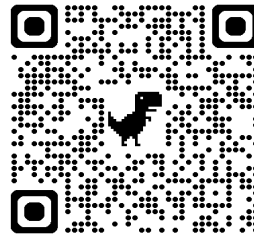
A young couple in my parish told me they were expecting their second child, a baby boy. I knew that their five-year old only child Emma had been desperately wanting to be a big sister for years, so I said, “Emma must have been so happy when you told her the news.” “Actually,” they said, “she burst into tears. She wanted a baby *sister!*” How often in life God wonderfully fulfills our desires and we are sad because we don’t approve of the *way* he does it. We want to control the gift and the delivery method.

The same thing occurs in the Gospel this week when Jesus announces in his hometown that the promise of an Anointed One bringing glad tidings to the poor is “**fulfilled in your hearing**” (Luke 4:21). After a moment of elation, his fellow townsfolk realize *this man* is the way God is fulfilling his promises, and they erupt into a violent outburst. So Jesus departs. How sad for them.

Every single Sunday at Mass, including this one, some version of this happens to many of us. God’s word announces the fulfillment of God’s promises in Christ, and we easily overlook or disdain it. His way is almost never according to our narrow expectations. What’s required of us is to set these aside, and to embrace a new openness to God’s gifts, no matter how he wishes to give them. God is fulfilling his promises the way He likes — why be sad?

— *Father John Muir* ©Lpi

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 <p>It's Catholic Schools Week! Did you know that the following saints were also educators?</p>	 <p>St. John Baptist de La Salle is the patron saint of all teachers of youth.</p>
 <p>St. Elizabeth Ann Seton established the parochial educational system in America.</p>	 <p>St. Thomas Aquinas is the patron saint of universities and scholars.</p>

## OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK

- Sunday: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time; Celebrate Catholic Schools Week
- Monday: St. Angela Merici, Virgin
- Tuesday: St. Thomas Aquinas, Priest and Doctor of the Church
- Friday: St. John Bosco, Priest
- Next Sunday: The Presentation of the Lord, World Day for Consecrated Life

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Jan. 26 to Feb. 1

### 2025 THEME “UNITED IN FAITH AND COMMUNITY”

“our parish communities have a mandate from the Gospel to preach the good news. Moreover, that is exactly what a good Catholic school does. It is another one of the ministries of a parish: to educate well-rounded individuals in Gospel values, preparing those young individuals to take their eventual place in the larger secular community. All the educational efforts of the parish school are focused on the life of faith. That faith is formed in knowledge of the teachings of the Church and of the Gospel, and those qualities are demonstrated through a life of service to the community.”

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Pray for all involved in Catholic schools and Religious Education Programs in our Family of Parishes.

### St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Community



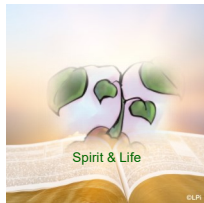
extends its deepest sympathy and support to the family and friends of

**Patricia Melchert  
Mary “Molly” Gheldof**

Please remember them and the souls of all the faithful departed in your prayers.

May all the deceased be welcomed into paradise!

## Plant Your Works in the Word



One of the things about Scripture is that even the smallest word and shortest phrase can be critical to the overall message. When you take a quiet moment to rest with the Word, you find how quickly the most mundane sentence can reach out and grab you, pulling you into a deeper contemplation of some truth you hadn't even considered until then.

But we often fail to act as the Israelites in the Book of Nehemiah, standing before the Water Gate "listening attentively." Whether it's at Mass during the Liturgy of the Word or at home poring over the Bible, time after time we find ourselves less mindful than we could be. Our ears accept the sounds of the words and our eyes glance over the shape of the letters.

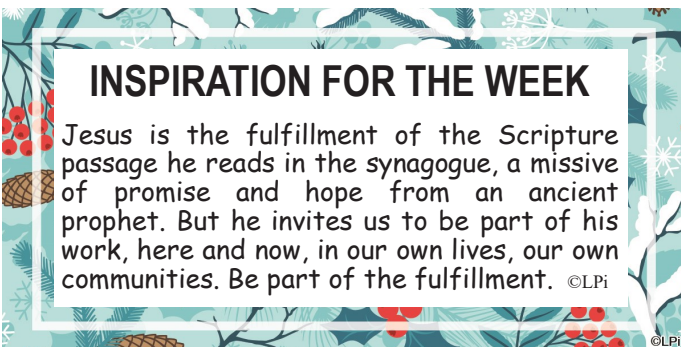
But are we mindful — truly?

The best answer is hopefully at least sometimes. There are always tasks to be completed, problems weighing on our minds that we can't quite give over to God. We lose ourselves in these things instead of in Scripture. We "clock in" with Bible reading instead of "diving in."

We can never forget that the words of the Lord are spirit and life. They are the soil that quickens the seed of all stewardship. There is no mindfulness, no prayer, no graciousness, no gratitude or accountability or sense of commitment unless there is the Word.

So let us pray today for mindfulness, that our every action will be grounded in the law of God — giving it true spirit and life.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS  
©LPi



### INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

Jesus is the fulfillment of the Scripture passage he reads in the synagogue, a missive of promise and hope from an ancient prophet. But he invites us to be part of his work, here and now, in our own lives, our own communities. Be part of the fulfillment. ©LPi

## CATHOLIC TRIVIA – JUST FOR FUN

**Question:** What do we call the successors of the apostles in communion with the pope?  
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Answer: Bishops

## DEVOTIONS, *EXPLAINED!* – CONNECT WITH TRADITION AND GROW YOUR FAITH

### Examination of Conscience, *Explained*

In Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, the apostle writes that it is imperative for a Christian to reflect on his conscience before he partakes of Holy Eucharist: "Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup" (1 Corinthians 11:28). The practice of examining one's conscience before seeking the Sacrament of Reconciliation thus dates to the very beginning of the Christian faith and was encouraged as a regular practice by many saints and founders of religious orders as a means of growing in virtue.

An examination of conscience, when it relates to the sacrament, simply means reflecting on one's actions (and particularly the intentions behind those actions) since the penitent's last absolution, making note of lapses in judgment that should be confessed. A good basis for this reflection can be the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes and the seven deadly sins.

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## Prayer REQUESTS

...all government leaders to seek wisdom in finding peaceful solutions to world wars and tensions.  
...medical and humanitarian aid for

those suffering from hardship due to catastrophic weather, fires, wars, floods, earthquakes and disasters.  
...respect for life from conception to natural death  
...the safety of men and women dedicated to protecting lives and freedom.

...the homeless, the addicted and all who are suffering physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.  
...all who are sick, homebound, undergoing or recovering from surgery, medical procedures, treatments or testing, and those who have made specific prayer requests.

Lord Jesus,

You are the Divine Physician and Healer. To You, we lift up in prayer all who are lonely, homeless, sick or addicted; all who are unemployed or underemployed; all who are anxious or depressed and all who are suffering in any way spiritually, physically or emotionally. In their pain and brokenness, we ask that you bring them the comfort of your loving presence. In You, may they find strength for the day and hope for the journey. Amen

**WHY DO WE DO THAT?  
CATHOLIC LIFE EXPLAINED**  
**LOVE AS A THEOLOGICAL VIRTUE**

**Question:** I’ve heard that love is a theological virtue. What does that mean?

**Answer:**

Charles Shultz, the creator of the *Peanuts* comics wrote, “I love mankind ... it’s people I can’t stand!” This good humored comment gets at an important truth. St. John wrote a very strong statement in one of his letters: “If anyone says ‘I love God,’ but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen” (1 John 4:20). How often do we say “I love the homeless,” but ignore the parish food drive? Or insist on the importance of respecting others, but don’t bother to say hello to our cashier? If we can’t love an individual person, we might not love people like we think, and we certainly need to work on our love for God.

Love is “the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for His own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God” (CCC 1822). God knows acts of love of Him and others isn’t always easy. So He invites us to pray for the grace to do it. The virtue of love gives us the grace and strength we need to offer our lives to God and love people in our lives, especially those who are difficult to respect, tolerate, and care for. Real love, of course, is risky. Real love wills the good of the other when we just want good for ourselves. Real love gets up on the cross when we’d prefer to take a nap in Gethsemane. Real love changes things.

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**MEN’S FELLOWSHIP & SCRIPTURE REFLECTION**



**Saturday, February 1st at 9am**  
**Faith Formation Office in School**

The men’s fellowship group gathers for a scripture reflection/sharing every other Saturday. All men are welcome. No fees or registration are required.

**QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK FOR REFLECTION**

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** Neh 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10

**Question:** Ezra and Nehemiah (the religious and political leadership of the day) grounded their work in Scripture. How does Sacred Scripture guide your life?

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** 1 Cor 12:12-30 or 12:12-14, 27

**Question:** Paul uses the human body as an analogy for the many and varied parts of the Christian community. What role would you like to have in your parish?

**Gospel** Lk 1:1-4; 4:14-21

**Question:** We hear how Jesus began to reveal his true identity as Israel’s long-awaited Messiah in his hometown of Nazareth. Have you ever received news that you thought was unbelievable? What was it?

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**Ministry Schedule**

February 1/2, 2025

Mass	4:00pm	9:00am
Sacristan	P Miles	T Karolski
Reader #1	M Simmons	J Kosnak
Reader #2	P Miles	T Karolski
EME	M Simmons	M Waskowski
	R Pasiak	D Gray
	T Riley	R Grant
Greeters	R Bertolini	D Vu
	L Collins	M McLaughlin
	T Pasiak	B Gutowski
	R Pasiak	B Turchin

**Traveling Chalice Host beginning week of February 1/2**  
Jane McKay



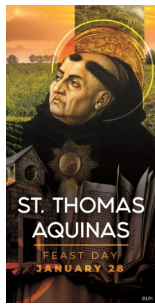
**How Can I Participate in the Jubilee Year?**

“Archbishop Vigneron encourages you to embrace the invitation to become a true pilgrim of hope, both spiritually and physically. First, you can go to (or return to) the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In addition, you can visit any of the official archdiocesan pilgrimage sites, where you will be able to pray the official prayer for Jubilee Year 2025, unite yourself spiritually with all who will journey as pilgrims to Rome, and obtain an indulgence freeing you from the temporal punishment caused by sin.”

From aod publication *The Jubilee of Hope*

Note: National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica in our Family of Parishes is a pilgrimage site.

## GETTING TO KNOW OUR SAINTS



**ST. THOMAS AQUINAS**  
**1225-1274**  
**JANUARY 28**

One of the most famous members of the Dominican Order, St. Thomas Aquinas is well-known by many for his theological work, “*The Summa Theologiae*.” Born in Italy, his mother wanted him to become a Benedictine and had high hopes that he would eventually become abbot of Monte Cassino, where he spent much of his youth. To change his vocation, she had him kidnapped by his brothers on his way to Paris at the age of 19. He spent two years in their captivity. Despite this, nothing could shake him from his vocation to become a Dominican priest and he was eventually released. Once free, he went to Paris and then to Cologne, where he finished his studies with Albert the Great.

His greatest contribution to the Catholic Church is his writings. The unity, harmony, and continuity of faith and reason, of revealed and natural human knowledge, encompasses his writings. The *Summa Theologiae*, his last and, unfortunately, uncompleted work, deals with the whole of Catholic theology. The patron saint of teachers, theologians and students, St. Thomas Aquinas died in 1274. His life and the impact he had on the whole Church, however, remains alive today.

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## The Daily Journey of Life

Remember that time when you arrived at school to take a test or quiz on material you failed to read? Maybe it was on a classic book or a chapter in a science textbook. Did your blood pressure go sky high and the sweat start to show on your forehead? Squirming in the seat, you wondered what you could have done to avoid feeling this way. Then it came to you: you should have read what you were supposed to read!

Procrastination, indifference, poor scheduling of time, and stubbornness are all reasons why we fail to be prepared for a situation that arises in our lives. We lack commitment in doing what we are asked to do or what we know we should do. This is certainly true in our spiritual lives as well. We may choose to bear the label of disciple or good steward, but we don’t really prepare ourselves for the daily journey of life.

Sacred Scripture can prepare us more fully for the circumstances of life, but not if we fail to read it. The words contained there are Spirit and life for us. They help us to understand where we fit into the Body of Christ and how we are to respond to the daily call of Christ. Everyday Stewards should be committed to reading and reflection of the Word of God. We know we should spend time with God’s Word, but too often we fail to do so due to the same reasons already mentioned. When we failed to read in school, perhaps we failed the test and it hurt our grade. When we fail in life due to lack of preparedness, sometimes the consequences are more severe.

## These Evil Days

By Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

“Alas, that these evil days should be mine.”

If you’ve ever seen “The Lord of the Rings,” you might recognize this quote from “The Two Towers.” The words are spoken by King Theoden at the grave of his only son and heir, as Theoden contemplates the coming war for Middle Earth, a war which has already claimed the life of his son, a war he wants no part of, a war that seems utterly hopeless and unwinnable.

*These evil days.*

You don’t have to be a fantasy enthusiast or even a Tolkien fan to identify with Theoden here. We have all experienced this same feeling of despair, perhaps increasingly in this age of technology and social media, when the ills of the whole world — violence, injustice, moral disorder and chaos — are in our faces, on our phones, looming over our days.

But when we despair like this, we forget an important truth: this is the time of fulfillment, and we are lucky enough to be living through it.

Yes, the world is broken. It was broken two thousand years ago, too, when Jesus stood up in the synagogue on the Sabbath and read the words of the prophet Isaiah: “He has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives...and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.”

Jesus didn’t come to fix the brokenness of the world. He came to fix *our* brokenness. He offers us not relief from the trials of life, but an answer to the question of how to live in joy, in love and in purpose in the midst of these evil days. ©LPi

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

©LPi



## MASS SCHEDULES

### *National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica*

2100 W. 12 Mile, Royal Oak, 48073

SATURDAY- 8:30am and  
4:30pm (livestreamed)

SUNDAY-7:30am, 9:30am, 11:30am  
3:30pm (Spanish), and 6:00pm

WEEKDAYS (*Monday thru Friday*)  
6:30am (livestreamed), 8:30am

### *St. Justin, St. Mary Magdalen*

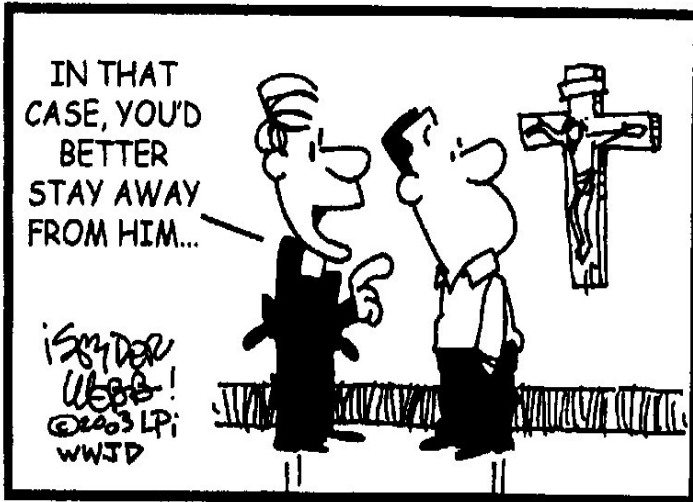
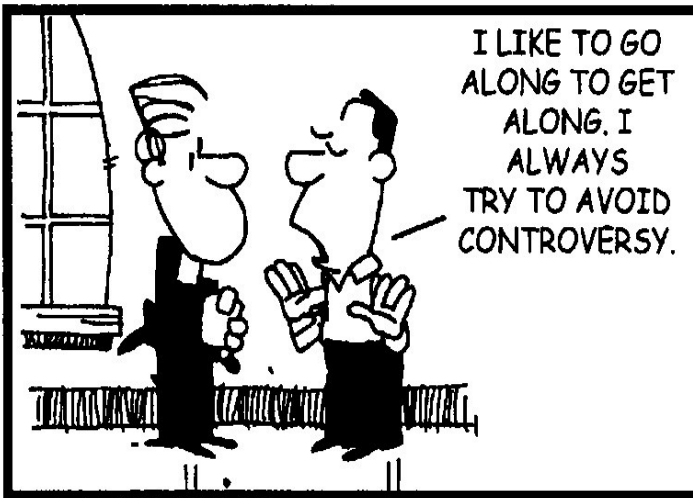
1631 E. Elza Hazel Park, 48030 (St J)  
50 E Annabelle Ave. Hazel Park, 48030 (St MM)

SATURDAY - 4:00pm - St. Justin  
SUNDAY - 10:00am - St. Mary Magdalen

### *St. Mary*

730 S. Lafayette, Royal Oak, 48067

SATURDAY - 4:30pm  
SUNDAY - 9:00am, 11 am  
MON, TUES, THURS, FRI - 7:30am  
WED - 12:10pm



## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP GIVING - WEEK ENDING JAN. 18/ 19, 2025

<i>Fiscal Year 7-1-24 to 6-30-25</i>	Budgeted	Actual	Over/Under	YTD
Offertory Env. Used & e-fund participants	243	89		
Offertory	\$ 5,185.00	\$ 6,398.71	1,213.71	10,093.59
Energy, Coffee/Donuts, Flowers/Trees, Candles, Mass Intentions	472.00	327.75	(144.25)	571.75
Fundraising: includes Budget Deficit envelope, CSA returned	1,673.00	85.00	(1,588.00)	(7,186.21)
Bequests		54.00		1,037.00
AOD Collections:				
Holy Days:				5,570.00
CSA 2024 Pledged 76,160.34				Paid 74,150.34

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