A leper came to Jesus and begged him:
“If you wish, you can make me clean.”
Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said,
“I do will it. Be made clean.”
The leprosy left him immediately.

Mark 1:40-42
NEW PARISHIONERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME! Call or come to the Parish Center to register.

BAPTISMS: Dates for Baptism will be arranged after attending the Pre-Baptismal Catechesis. Call Annette in the Parish Office for information.

MARRIAGES: Call Annette in the Parish Office to arrange preparation 6 months in advance.

SICK CALLS: Call Annette in the Parish Office and Ministers of Care will visit the sick or shut-in.

RECONCILIATION: Saturday 4:20-4:40PM in the Reconciliation Room.

FOOD PANTRY: Our pantry is open Wednesdays from 9AM-12PM. Call 630.393.2400 x 112.

FUNERALS: The Pastoral Staff works with families to plan the Funeral Mass.

SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES: Call Dwight Sherman at 630.393.3221 or 630.362.1324.

CRISIS PRAYER CHAIN: Contact Deacon Joe Urso at 630.853.2070 at joe.urso@outlook.com.

LIVING GOD’S WORD: Jesus, you came to bring us into deeper communion with the Father and one another. Give us the courage to reach out, as you did, to those in need of our compassion and help. Let us not be afraid of the opinions of others when we see that good can be done. Amen.

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ASH WEDNESDAY

Join us on Ash Wednesday for Mass at 7AM, Noon or 7PM. Ashes will be available in the church all day if you choose to bless yourself.
Our Lenten Cross of Mercy

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might have eternal life”. John 3:16

As we return to God with our whole heart this Lent we journey with Jesus and His Cross of Mercy. St. John Paul II wrote that Mercy is love’s second name. He taught that mercy is the greatest attribute of God. Mercy is love’s result and extension. Jesus is Divine Mercy. He loved the sinful world enough to suffer and die for our redemption. The cross is our visual reminder of His great mercy. The virtue of mercy flows from love of neighbor. It is that virtue that leads us to help a person suffering from want or despair.

Lent is a special time of prayer, penance, sacrifice, and good works in preparation for the celebration of Easter. This year our parish will focus on the Spiritual and Corporal works of mercy. Our Mercy Cross, located in the baptismal font, is the symbol of our desire to fulfill the promises of our baptism, promises that we will renew on Easter.

As we embrace our need for God’s mercy and unconditional love we recognize our need to share His mercy and love through our words and deeds. All are invited to practice the works of mercy during the 40 days of Lent. Each time you perform one of the Corporal or Spiritual Works of Mercy you are invited to attach a tag to one of the nails on the cross.

When we enter the church, throughout Lent, the cross will be a constant reminder of God’s great fountain of mercy for us. And how His mercy flows through us into the world.

♦ Corporal Works of Mercy: feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned, bury the dead, give alms to the poor

♦ Spiritual Works of Mercy: instruct the unbelieving, counsel the doubtful, admonish sinners, forgive offences willingly, comfort the afflicted, pray for the living and the dead and bear wrongs patiently

Friday Night Soup Supper

Please join us for our annual Lenten Tradition of Friday Night Soup Supper in the ACL after Stations of the Cross. Mark your calendars for the six Friday nights February 16 & 23, March 2, 9, 16 & 23. Come for the delicious soups and wonderful fellowship. We hope to see you there!

If you have any questions, contact Pam Moseley at 630.293.4955 or email pjm9923@yahoo.com

Today’s Gospel centers on the plight of a leper and Jesus’ response of healing. In Hawaii, the bacterium that causes leprosy probably entered from China in the mid-1800s, and the native islanders were susceptible to the dreaded disease. In 1866, the government literally dumped the sufferers on a remote and virtually inaccessible island peninsula with towering cliffs. Thrown off ships into the sea, the sick people were told to swim for the beach and head for caves, and for seven years the only supplies were similarly cast into the sea to drift ashore. It was then, 1873, that a thirty-three-year-old Belgian priest, Damien de Veuster, went voluntarily to Kalaupapa. Before long, he cajoled the government into funding his mission and its hospital, built a village with proper homes and sanitation, and recruited Mother Marianne Cope to bring sisters from Syracuse, New York, to nurse the sick. Damien, who eventually died of leprosy, has been canonized, and Mother Marianne as well.

Although leprosy has been curable since the 1940s, today a few patients remain in their lifelong home, now a national historic site. The peninsula is still utterly isolated from the outside world, and the speed limit for the few cars there is 5 mph since there’s nowhere to go! The hospital is still well-staffed and equipped, but access is regulated and visitors must take an official tour, often involving a descent down the cliffs by “Molakai mule.” There are few places on earth that evoke the healing power of Jesus, or our call to follow the Healer, more than Damien’s beloved island mission.

—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.
Whole Parish Catechesis
Readings and Questions for Faith Sharing

Reading I: Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46
♦ Those who are sick shall live outside the camp.

Background: The Book of Leviticus is a collection of laws, many having to do with the proper worship of God. In today’s reading we hear of illness and exclusion from communal life. Because people did not know about the process of contagion at the time, the community banished persons with any skin disease as long as the disease lasted.

Reading II: 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1
♦ Imitate me as I do Christ.

Background: The passage from 1 Corinthians refers to a concern the early Christians had about eating meat that had been sacrificed to idols. Paul makes the point that our behavior toward others is more important than what we eat or drink. Paul’s advice is to avoid offending one another at all costs.

Gospel: Mark 1:40:-45
♦ If you will do so, you can cure me.

Background: The Gospel story shows that Jesus not only has the power to cure disease, He also has the power to heal the separation from the community and the separation from God, which leprosy signified. Jesus’ approach to the leper would have scandalized the people of His time. By touching the leper, Jesus demonstrated the arrival of the kingdom of God.

Theme: Jesus wants to make us whole.

Question for Adults:
Name a time when you experienced Jesus’ healing touch.

Question for Youth:
How has Jesus touched your life? How are you changed because of that touch?

Question for Children:
What do you want to ask Jesus to do for you?

The Road to Redemption
Join us this Lent for The Road to Redemption, a six week study of the Sunday readings for Lent. Are our hearts ready to accept the passion of our Lord so that we may share in His glorious Resurrection? The six weeks leading up to Easter mark our own 40 days in the desert with Jesus. Lent is an intense time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving for the entire Church.

This year the Sunday gospel readings at Mass come from the Gospels of Mark and John. Our engagement with these gospels creates a beautiful tapestry of prepared anticipation for the Easter season into our hearts.

This study follows the Catholic Scripture Study format, but concentrates on the Sunday lectionary readings and incorporates the ancient method of Lectio Divina (praying the scriptures). Lectio Divina is a powerful way to ‘hear’ God speaking to us personally through scripture.

Fr. Mitch Pacwa is our presenter via DVD. An optional study guide may be purchased for $18. If you wish to purchase a study guide, place your order by phone to Annette at 630.393.2400 x 122 or email annette@st-irene.org by January 29th.

We will meet on the following Wednesday afternoons from 1-2:30PM in the Holy Family Room of the Parish Center: February 14, 21, 28 and March 7, 14, 21. Hope to see you there.

Grief Support
Losing someone close is never an easy part of life, and grief is a natural and necessary component of the healing process. Every individual’s experience with grief is unique. We recognize the importance of having a strong support system. Our parish offers a bereavement support group to assist those who have experienced the loss of a loved one. The last winter session is Thursday, February 15th at 6:30PM in the Holy Family Room of the Parish Center.

Pledge your gift to the CMAA!
This is Commitment Weekend, when we are all asked to pledge our support for the 2018 Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal (CMAA).

As Bishop Conlon shared in his homily today, God calls all of us be His partners in caring for those in need in the Diocese of Joliet. The CMAA supports thirty ministries that benefit so many and allow us to do God’s work here on earth. Our parish could not possibly accomplish all that the Diocese is able to when we all work together.
Knights of Columbus Eyeglass Drive

In part, Mark 8:25 reads, “Then his eyes were opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.” This sums up what the Knights of Columbus are striving for in our Eyeglass Drive.

Please bring and donate your old or unwanted eyeglasses and drop them off in the collection box in the back of the church. Eyeglasses will be forwarded to the Lions Club International local chapter for renovation and reuse by those in need. The collection box will be in the back of the church until May 1st.

Questions may be directed to Joseph Kubal at 630.983.6159 or jdrk4715@aol.com.

Thank you for your support.

Marriage Night of Enrichment

What have you done for your marriage lately? On Saturday, February 24th after the 5PM Mass, St. Irene will host a Marriage Night of Enrichment. Come join fellow parishioners for a pizza and salad date night. Catholic Marriage Speakers Troy and Kathleen Billings will present on the importance of “Dating Your Spouse”. Childcare will be provided for a fee of $10 per family. Sign up will take place in the back of church the weekends of February 10th and 17th. If you have been telling your spouse “We need a date” here is your chance! We've done all the work for you.

Extraordinary Ministers Meeting

Monday, February 19 at 7PM in the church
Fr. Jim will bless us and anoint our hands

We will have a training session for some of the Ministers that wish to become Co-Captains and for those bringing Communion to the Handicapped. Parishioners who wish to become Eucharistic Ministers are invited to attend this very important meeting. There will be a training session also at this meeting and other meetings as needed for new Ministers. Remember that you are bringing the Body and Blood of Christ to the People of God.

Vivat Jesus,
Ray Scott
e-mail: THEOPSROOM@AOL.COM
Phone: 630.393.0868

Remember our Faithful Departed in your Prayers

♦ Sr. Rosie Eck, CSJ

FEED the HUNGRY

Please help us refill the Food Pantry shelves with macaroni & cheese, ravioli, spaghetti’s, spaghetti, pasta sauce, soup and peas.

The loving spirit of the St. Irene Community is shown through your generosity to the poor.

Are you looking for an education change for your children?

St. Irene School welcomes you to consider us for the 2018/2019 school year.

There are openings in all grades, Pre-K through 8th Grade. Public school transfers are also eligible for a $2,000 discount per child for grades 1 through 8 for their first year. Scholarships may also be available. Please contact our school office at 630.393.3903 x 116.

www.st-ireneschool.org

St. Irene 8th Grade Boys Basketball Team wins the 2018 Aurora Catholic League Consolation Championship!
## This Week’s Meetings

### Sunday, February 11
- 7a-12:30p - Hospitality (ACL)
- 10-10:30a - Children’s Liturgy of the Word (ACL)
- 11a-12:15p - HS Confirmation Class (HF)

### Monday, February 12
- 1-2:30p - Consoling the Heart of Jesus (ACL)
- 5-6:30p - Basketball Practice (ACU)
- 7-8:30p - Consoling the Heart of Jesus (ACL)

### Tuesday, February 13
- 3-5p - Basketball Practice (ACU)
- 7-8p - Ladies of Columbus (ACL)
- 7-8p - Bridge Communities (Staff)

### Wednesday, February 14
- 8-10:30a - PACE (ACL)
- 12:15-3:30p - Band (ACL)
- 1-2:30p - Lenten Scripture Series (HF)
- 5:30-6:30p - Kids Choir (C)
- 6:30-8p - Jr. High RE (S, HF, SF, AC)

### Thursday, February 15
- 1:45-5p - Basketball Practice (ACU)
- 5-6:30p - Basketball Practice (ACU)
- 6:30-8p - Grief Support (HF)
- 7-8p - Rosary Group (ACL)

### Friday, February 16
- 12:15-3:30p - Band (ACL)
- 7-7:30p - Stations of the Cross (C)
- 7:30-9p - Soup Supper (ACL)

### Saturday, February 17

### Sunday, February 18
- 10-10:30a - Children’s Liturgy of the Word (ACL)
- 11a-12p - Minister of Care Meeting (ACL)
- 11:15a-12:15p - Special Sacrament Group (S)

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## Lenten Regulations

1. Everyone 14 years of age or over is bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and all the Fridays of Lent.
2. Everyone 18 years of age and under 59 years of age is bound to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.
3. On these two days of fast and abstinence, 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.
4. To disregard completely the law of fast and abstinence is seriously sinful.
5. Lent is the principal season of penance in the Christian year. All of the faithful are strongly urged to develop and follow a program of voluntary self-denial (in addition to following the Lenten regulations), serious prayer, and a performance of works of charity and mercy.

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## PROTECTING GOD’S CHILDREN

This workshop is for **anyone** who ministers to minors at St. Irene Parish.

Upcoming workshop at St. Irene is Thursday, March 1st at 6:45PM in the ACL.

Registration for the classes can be found at [www.virtusonline.org](http://www.virtusonline.org). Select Diocese of Joliet - St. Irene and then select the date to register.

**Registration is required.** If unable to do online, please call Pamela at 630.393.2400 x 120.

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## St. Irene Rosary Group

The St. Irene Rosary Group meets the third Thursday of each month in the ACL from 7-8PM then followed by fellowship. Please plan on joining us on February 15th and bring a friend.

For more information, please call Jeanette Clark at 630.292.9349.

## Lent

Join our faith community—and nearly 14,000 Catholic communities across the United States—in a life-changing Lenten journey of encounter with CRS Rice Bowl. Pick up your family’s CRS Rice Bowl after all Masses this weekend. During the 40 days of Lent, as companions on the journey, we will encounter our neighbor.
St. Irene Vocation Prayer

In every age Lord, You raise up women and men who are strong in their faith and bold in their actions to give witness to the Gospel.

Fill St. Irene Parish Community with Your Spirit and give us a burning desire to make a difference in our world. Because of our love for You, Bless our Church with holy and courageous priests, deacons, religious sisters and brothers, devoted married couples, dedicated single men and women, and enthusiastic youth.

We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Paige C. Robertson
John Rossi
Michelle Vize
Ann Mulcahy
Susanne Lambert
Bev Olveri
Patti Menconi
Kate Preston
Mary Hafertepe
Judy Colonero

Liturgical Calendar

Monday, February 12
Weekday
7:00AM - Rosemarie DiCarlo-Cottone/ 1st Anniversary
Joseph Kocan, Sr./ Kristin Kocan

Tuesday, February 13
Weekday
7:00AM - W. Jack Peterson/ Cathy Kott

Wednesday, February 14
Ash Wednesday; Fast & Abstinence
7:00AM - Sr. Rosie Eck/ St. Irene Community
12:00PM - For the Poor and the Hungry
7:00PM - For the Healing of Our Friends & Family

Thursday, February 15
Lenten Weekday
7:00AM - For Those Who Attend 7AM Mass
Ted Mlsna/ Family
7:30AM - Eucharistic Adoration

Friday, February 16
Lenten Weekday; Abstinence
7:00AM - St. Irene Faith Community
8:15AM - No Mass

Saturday, February 17
Vigil: 1st Sunday of Lent
5:00PM - Leahy, Grillo and Pierson Families
W. Jack Peterson/ St. Irene Community

Sunday, February 18
First Sunday of Lent
8:00AM - Ms. Bea/ St. Irene Community
10:00AM - RCIA Rite of Sending
Martin Patton/ St. Irene Community
Mary Paschall/ Sanders Family

Readings for the Week

Monday: Jas 1:1-11; Ps 119:67-68, 71-72, 75-76; Mk 8:11-13
Tuesday: Jas 1:12-18; Ps 94:12-13a, 14-15, 18-19; Mk 8:14-21
Wednesday: Jl 2:12-18; Ps 51:3-6ab, 12-14, 17; 2 Cor 5:20-6:2; Mt 6:1-6, 16-18
Thursday: Dt 30:15-20; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Lk 9:22-25
Friday: Is 58:1-9a; Ps 51:3-6ab, 18-19; Mt 9:14-15
Saturday: Is 58:9b-14; Ps 86:1-6; Lk 5:27-32
Sunday: Gn 9:8-15; Ps 25:4-9; 1 Pt 3:18-22; Mk 1:12-15

Communion Assistance

We want to insure that every parishioner who wishes to partake in the Communion Sacrament be able to do so. In order to assist us with this process, please notify an usher prior to the start of Mass if you or someone in your party needs communion brought to you. Extraordinary Ministers will bring the hosts and wine to you in your pew.