



St. Gertrude Chicago

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**Bulletin for
Sunday,
December 14, 2025**
The Third Sunday of Advent

The Latest Parish News

The Third Week of Advent

As we enter the Third Week of Advent—Gaudete Sunday—we are invited to pause and let joy find its way into our hearts. This joy is not the fleeting happiness the world often promises, but a deeper assurance that God is near, working quietly and lovingly in the hidden corners of our lives. Even if the season feels hectic, heavy, or hurried, Advent whispers that grace is still unfolding.

In the Scriptures for this week, we hear the call to rejoice, not because everything is perfect, but because Christ is drawing close. Joy becomes an act of trust—a way of saying that God is at work even when we cannot yet see the fullness of His plan.

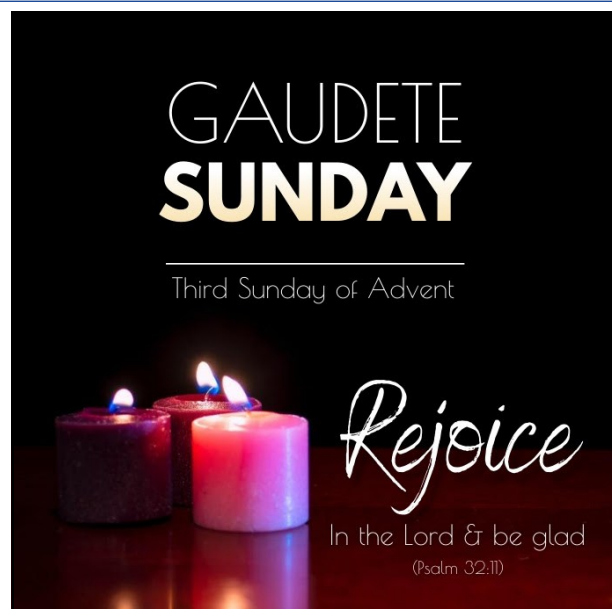
John the Baptist reminds us that our role is to prepare the way in small, faithful steps: acts of kindness, moments of patience, gentle attention to the needs around us.

May this sacred time open us to a joy that meets us where we truly are. May we welcome Christ not only into our celebrations, but into our longing, our hopes, and even our unfinished places. And may the light of this week guide us as we draw nearer to the mystery of Christmas and the God who comes to dwell among us.

Second Collection for Retirement Fund for Religious is This Weekend

Women and men religious have dedicated their lives to serving others—through prayer, ministry, education, and compassionate care—often with little or no compensation.

Now, many of their communities lack the resources needed to support them in retirement. As they grow older, they face rising costs for essential care and medications. By giving to the Retirement Fund for Religious, you can help ensure they receive the support they deserve. Thank you for giving generously!



Parish Events & Activities



Letter from Cardinal Cupich: Second Collection for Retirement Fund for Religious This Weekend

Dear Friends in Christ,

On the Third Sunday of Advent, parishes throughout our Archdiocese will participate in the Retirement Fund for Religious collection, an annual appeal that benefits nearly 20,500 elderly religious sisters, brothers, and order priests nationwide.

As I look back on my years as a priest I have an abiding sense of gratitude for the women and men religious who have deeply influenced my own journey of faith. These faithful servants have long been a source of inspiration and support in our archdiocese through their lives of dedicated service to the Church. Perhaps you, too, have known a religious whose quiet dedication, prayerful presence, or selfless acts have helped you to daily live the Gospel message.

Today, the challenges many of these senior religious and their communities face in meeting their retirement needs are greater than ever. Most received little or no pay for their service, and their communities now struggle to cover rising health care expenses and the increasing cost of day-to-day eldercare. As the number of religious decreases, the financial burdens continue to grow, and the need is great.

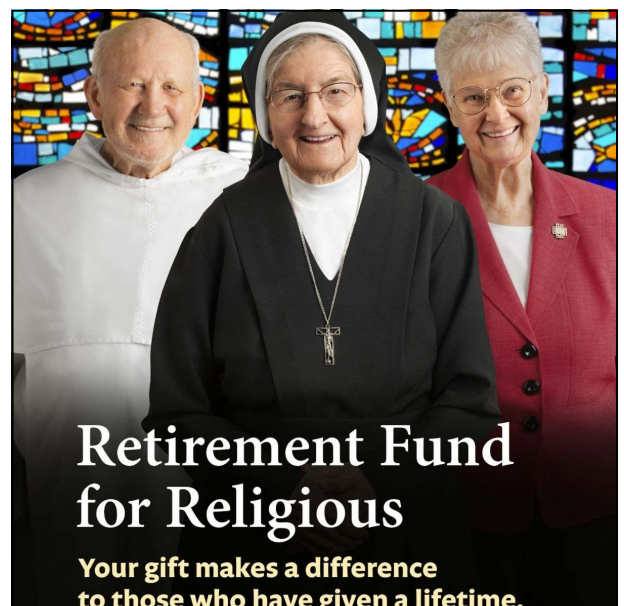
Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious make a real, tangible difference to these many women and men religious. Contributions directly support their ongoing care today and help ensure that their communities can plan wisely for the future care of all their members.

Aware that you are asked to support many worthy causes, I invite you to consider making a gift to this year's December 13-14 collection as you are able, and to continue to pray for all our elderly religious. You can be assured of their prayers for you.

May God's abundant blessings be upon you and your loved ones during this Holy Season of Advent. With kind regards I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Cardinal Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago



ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO
CATHOLIC CHARITIES
Archdiocese of Chicago

Harvest of Hope

Archdiocese-wide Food Drive

The Federal **SNAP** benefits that help **700,000** neighbors across the archdiocese put food on their tables have been **drastically reduced**.

Please help us ensure **food pantries** run by local parishes and Catholic Charities are **fully stocked** as we approach the holiday season.

Vicariates I and II – What you can do:

Between **November 29** and **December 14**, donate the following non-perishable foods at your parish:

- Canned chicken
- Canned soup
- Canned tuna
- Canned beef
- Canned salmon

Harvest of Hope: Archdiocese-wide Advent Food Drive

This is the final weekend of the Harvest of Hope food drive coordinated by the Archdiocese. Thank you so much for participating and helping ensure food pantries run by local parishes and Catholic Charities are fully stocked as we approach the holiday season.

Please place any donation you may have in the donation box labeled "Catholic Charities" in the vestibule in the back of church through this weekend.

We are so grateful for your generosity!

Giving Tree Program Info

The Giving Tree Program is now underway! This year, we are collecting gift cards to support RefugeeOne, St. Gertrude's Refugee Ministry, and Centro Romero, which serves survivors of domestic violence. Gift cards offer families the dignity and freedom to choose what they most need, and we encourage donations in \$20 increments.

Cards from anywhere are welcome, but ones from Target, Jewel, Walmart, Aldi, or Ventra are considered especially helpful.

Please place your gift cards in the boxes near the statue of St. Teresa of Ávila at the front of the church by December 28.

If you have questions, contact Eloy Escamilla at eescamilla@stgertrudechicago.org or Joe McMahon at jpmgm@aol.com.



Guadalupanos Rosary Group (Grupo del Rosario de Guadalupanos) on Friday Evenings

All are welcome to attend the bilingual weekly Rosary group held on Friday evenings at 7:00 pm in the dining room of the Ministry Center, located at 6214 North Glenwood Avenue.

Recitation of the Holy Rosary after 7:30 am Mass

Additionally, the Rosary is said every Monday through Saturday in the church right after the 7:30 am mass. Please consider joining us in church—we would love to have you!



Coat Drive for Cradles to Crayons

This Advent season, altar server and parishioner Ethan Craft is leading a winter coat drive to support Cradles to Crayons, a local charity that provides essential items to school-age children throughout the Chicagoland area. Cradles to Crayons works to ensure that every child has the clothing they need to stay warm, safe, and ready to learn—especially during Chicago's harsh winter months.

Ethan, now an 11th-grade student at Saint Patrick High School and a graduate of Northside Catholic Academy, is organizing this drive as part of his

service in the Cradles to Crayons Teen Leadership Corps. His project focuses on helping local children stay warm through the simple, meaningful act of sharing what we can.

A donation box will be placed in the back of church/entryway, clearly marked with flyers that identify the charity and list requested items. Gently used coats, along with hats and gloves, are gratefully accepted through the end of the month.

For more information, please reach out to Ethan Craft or his father, Jason Craft, at jason.craft773@gmail.com. Thank you for helping make a difference!

St. Gert's Annual Greenery Sale: Buy Trees, Wreaths, and Garland This Sunday

St. Gertrude greenery sale is a great opportunity for parishioners to get ready for the holidays while supporting our parish's ministries.

Each 6' Christmas tree is \$55. Three different sized wreaths are available—the 18" wreath is \$25, the 24" is \$27, and the 36" is \$35. Garland is also available for \$40 per 5' length.

In-Person Sales

Greenery will also be sold at the playlot on the west side of the Social Hall, 1401 W. Granville Avenue, on December 14 and December 21 from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. Only cash and checks are accepted for in-person sales.

Online Orders and Paper Forms

The option to purchase greenery online is available at bit.ly/StGertsChristmasGreenery. Details about payment and dropping off a paper form are available online.



Encountering the Mystery of God's Presence Through Sacred Art is This Wednesday

The Adult Spirituality and Formation Committee invites you to join the remaining Advent faith session designed to deepen our journey of awareness and hope this Advent.

Encountering the Mystery of God's Presence Through Sacred Art with Jim Neafsey will take place Wednesday, December 17 from 7:00–8:30 pm in the Ministry Center Chapel.

We will explore how gazing at a contemporary work of art titled *Sacred Bond* can become a form of prayer that invites us to experience God's presence in our own lives. The radiance of a star-filled night sky and the expressive faces of a mother and child traveling through the darkness can awaken deep connections to our longings and life experiences.

Together, we will take time to share what in the painting captures our attention and what moves or touches us. We will also reflect on how *Sacred Bond* can deepen our understanding of the mystery of Christmas and speak to today's struggles for justice and peace.

Jim Neafsey, a St. Gertrude parishioner, is a painter of sacred images and has served as a spiritual director, retreat leader, and teacher of spirituality for over 50 years.

To register, email Mary Ann O'Connor at maryann.oconnor@rcn.com.



"Brewed at St. Gertrude" is December 21

The final *Brewed at St. Gertrude's* hospitality for 2025 will take place after 10:30 am Mass on Sunday, December 21 in the Social Hall.

Join us for a holiday celebration that will include music, festive treats, and a visit from Santa. The *Brewed* planning committee invites volunteers to join them in:

1. Decorating the Social Hall on the evening of Saturday, December 20;
2. Helping staff the event; and/or
- 3.) bringing food for the event on Sunday.

If you would like sign-up for any of these activities, please email Michelle Nickerson at mnickerson@luc.edu.



Help Needed to Decorate the Church for Christmas!

As we prepare our worship space for the joy of Christmas, we invite members of our community to lend a hand in decorating the church.

On Monday, December 22 and Tuesday, December 23 at 1:00 pm, volunteers will gather in the church to help set up Christmas trees, arrange ornaments, and bring the beauty of the season to life.

Teenagers, young adults, and adults are all welcome—no special skills required, just a willing spirit and a bit of holiday cheer.

If you'd like to join or have questions, contact Eloy Escamilla at eescamilla@stgertrudechicago.org for more information. We look forward to decorating with you!

Deanery-wide Advent Reconciliation Service Planned for Monday, December 22 at St. Ita's

A deanery-wide reconciliation service will be held at St. Ita's, located at 5500 North Broadway, on Monday, December 22 at 7:00 pm.

There will be several priests on hand speaking a variety of languages to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with participants.



Recent Text (and Email) Phishing Scams

Over the past two weeks, we've received numerous calls, emails, and messages from our website from parishioners alerting us that someone is texting (and emailing) them, impersonating staff, falsely claiming that they in need of monetary assistance.

We are so grateful so many of you let us know what was happening! Please know that we would never send a general request for help through texts and email. Any legitimate request for support would only come through the bulletin or our official parish email (news@stgertrudechicago.org) via the bulletin or an e-blast.

Be sure to double-check the sender's area code/phone number and email address. These scams can be very convincing, and we all need to stay vigilant.

Thank you for your awareness and caution!



Sign Up to Be a Part of our Christmas Eve Pageant

During the Gospel at the 5:00 pm Christmas Eve Family Mass, the children of St. Gertrude will bring the Nativity story to life in a joyful, heartwarming pageant.

We are seeking children ages 5 and older to participate, and adults to assist with organizing and guiding the event. Additionally, we are hoping to find a family with an infant or young baby to portray the Holy Family this year.

If you or your children would like to take part in this special celebration, please contact

eescamilla@stgertrudechicago.org.

Christmas Mass Schedule/ Office Closings

Christmas Eve

- Rectory office closed
- 5:00 pm - Family Mass (Christmas pageant)
- 8:00 pm - Carols in Church
- 8:30 pm - Vigil Mass

Christmas Day

- Rectory office closed
- 8:00 am Mass
- 10:30 am Mass
- No Gym Mass

Friday, December 26

- Rectory office closed
- 7:30 am Mass

New Year's Eve (Wednesday, December 31)

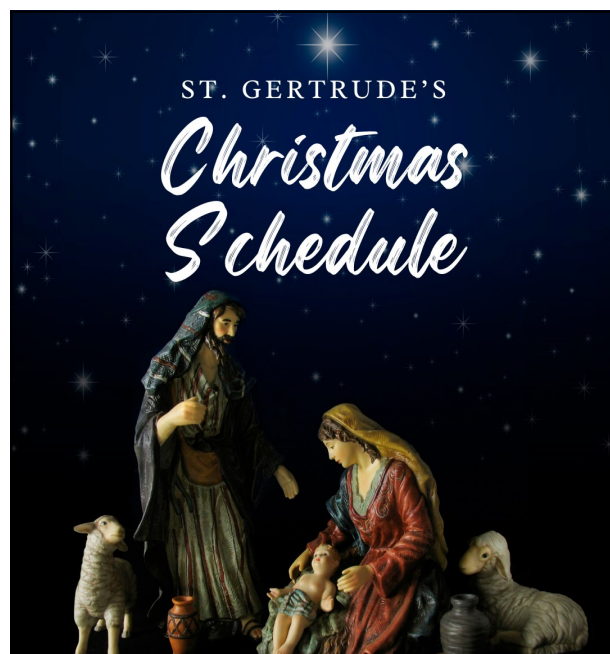
- 7:30 am Mass

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Thursday, January 1)

- Rectory office closed
- 10:00 am Mass

Friday, January 2

- Rectory office closed





Care for Real Collection is December 27-28

Our next Care for Real collection drive is December 27 and 28 before and after masses.

Please visit <https://linktr.ee/cfrchicago> for information about donating and links to their Facebook and Instagram pages to see what they are specifically looking for at this time.

Our collection drive for Care for Real is always the fourth calendar weekend every month, and our asylum seekers' collection is the first weekend of each month.

We are so grateful for your help supporting Care for Real as they work to provide food and much-needed supplies to our neighbors who are struggling.

Parish Photo Directory: December Dates Filled, January Date Added

All December photography appointments have been filled. The remaining available session date is Tuesday, January 13. Should this date reach capacity, an additional session may be offered.

Parishioners for whom this date is not suitable are invited to email Jen Reyes at stgertrudeparishcouncil@gmail.com to discuss alternative arrangements.

Appointments can be made after Mass or online at schedule.ucdir.com (Church code: IL457, Password: photos.)



Our Online Events and Activities Calendar

Upcoming events are listed on the home page and in our [Events calendar](#), found under the News/Programs heading! The calendar also lists mass times and weekly activities.

Wondering about some of our [social activities](#) or [prayer groups](#)? Our *Parish Ministries* page, found under our *Get Involved* heading, shares various ways to get involved in the parish, and our [Contact Us page](#) has details on each member of our staff.

Parish News

Growing in Faith

Happy Sunday! My name is Dani, a recent member of the Gertrude community. When asked to write this reflection, I wasn't sure what value I could share. But then I remembered if C.S. Lewis could write a best-seller and by self-omission claim "I am a very ordinary layman of the Church," well then, I could give it a go.

More than once, I've been judged of having little patience. Mostly true – it comes from a place of anxiousness and eagerness, especially at work. Being in public service for a decade, the everyday can be a real-life Parks and Rec scene: not enough resources, results taking too long, and constantly pounding your head on the wall out of frustration. But as I was re-reading Matthew, the story of John the Baptist caught my attention.

Here you have a person trekking through the wilderness going from crowd to crowd preaching the Word to anyone who would listen and all I could think to myself, "Wow, this guy must have been obnoxiously persistent, even in the face of doubt. How did he keep going?" Was it divine insight? Omnipotent knowledge? Or was it...patience? The kind that is neither passive nor idle but active. The kind where you may not know where the road ends but you keep walking. The kind grounded in the faith of your labor.

So, as the sunsets and we return to the week – in a time of seemingly unending turmoil – be like John: grab your wild honey, keep moving, and have faith in your work. I know I will. Amen.

~ Dani Mendez



December 6-7 Financial Report

Sunday Collection Envelopes: \$2,569.00

Loose Checks: \$790.00

Loose Cash/Coins: \$582.00

Online Donations: \$9,733.53

Total Collected: \$13,674.53

Budgeted: \$10,000.00

Difference: \$3,674.53

YTD Collected: \$220,314.22

YTD Budgeted: \$550,000.00

Difference: -\$329,685.78

NCA/Events Around the Archdiocese



Worldwide Candle Lighting for the Loss of a Child is This Sunday, December 14

The Elizabeth Ministry of Queen of All Saints parish will host the annual Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting service on Sunday, December 14 at 6:45 pm in the basilica, 6280 N. Sauganash Avenue, Chicago.

The Compassionate Friends is an organization supporting grieving families in all fifty states and across thirty countries. Every second Sunday in December, families and friends around the globe

unite in lighting candles to honor the memories of children of any age who have died, at any time, for any reason. Everyone is welcome to participate in this non-denominational service of prayer and music as we remember children who have gone too soon. The service will also be live-streamed on our parish website.

Email elizabethministry.qas@gmail.com with questions, or to request the name of a loved one to be read during the service. Find more information about The Compassionate Friends organization and grief support at compassionatefriends.org.

Find more information about Queen of All Saints at www.qasparish.org.

St. Scholastica Monastery: Advent Retreats Offered

Join us for the final Advent evening retreat which will offer an opportunity for inner reflection and sharing. We will practice lectio divina, visio divina, and walking meditation using chapter 1 of the Gospel of Luke.

The retreat will be in the Oasis Room at St. Scholastica Monastery on Tuesday, December 16 from 7:00-8:30 pm.

Please RSVP to Sr. Virginia Jung at vjung@osbchicago.org or 773.764.2413 ext. 262.



Parish Information

Schedule for Ministers of the Word, Eucharistic Ministers, & Altar Servers

Ministers of the Word

- Saturday, December 13 at 5:00 pm - Joseph McMahon, Christine Lincoln
- Sunday, December 14 at 8:00 am - Anthony Myers, Jennifer Kiedaisch
- Sunday, December 14 at 10:30 am - Troy McMillan, Liam Benham

Eucharistic Ministers

- Saturday, December 13 at 5:00 pm - Millie Slane
- Sunday, December 14 at 8:00 am - Hallie Burhoe
- Sunday, December 14 at 10:30 am - Sarah Millar, Michael Kowalsky, Steven Monti

Altar Servers

- Saturday, December 13 at 5:00 pm - cross bearer: Danna Salinas; acolytes: Carter Dant, Wyatt Dant
- Sunday, December 14 at 10:30 am - cross bearer: Wyatt Dant; acolytes: Kora Cunningham, Daniel Cunningham

Please Pray for our Parishioners and Friends

- | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| • Mary Amelse | • Thomas Hajduch | • Delphine Richert |
| • Victor Ayes | • Anne Marie Hamde | • Joan Ross |
| • Carlos Barragan | • Rochelle Hernandez | • Willy Spalla |
| • Patrick Barton | • Tricia Hernandez | • Floret Spalle |
| • Zara Bradley | • Maria Hertl | • Mary Pierce Spalla |
| • Maggie Callahan | • Tony Hunter | • Frannie Swaine |
| • Aida Calvopina | • John Kahoun | • Nancy Tarallo |
| • Marta Carlson | • Mary E. Kelley | • Christopher Thomas |
| • Terrence Carmichael | • Marilyn Klein | • Elinora E. Tolentino |
| • Kathy Catrambone | • Jim Laczkowski | • Joe Touchstone |
| • Cavicke Family | • Joseph Lambin | • Manuel & Norma Viray |
| • Mary DeBois | • Carleen Lory | • Tayana Wallace |
| • David Denegas | • River Malik | • King Wallace |
| • Ann Collins Dole | • James Mann | • Christian Wallace |
| • Renee Elhoumaidi | • Alex Marks | • Kevin Walsh |
| • Mr. and Mrs. Emin Euman | • Nancy Michael | • Leon Ward |
| • Luke Fitzgerald | • Steve Monti | • Ron Whitfield |
| • Adolf Gabriel | • Hilda Mora | • Janice Wittenberg |
| • Marie Galoney | • Patti Paul | • Dawn Wyman |
| | • Dealina Peon | • Yyes Yoza |
| | • Claude Poulsen | • Joel Pozzi Zio |

Contact the Parish Pastoral Council

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) can be reached at stgertrudeparishcouncil@gmail.com.

Upcoming Mass Intentions

- Monday, December 15: 7:30 am - Communion Service
- Tuesday, December 16: 7:30 am - Pat Veccie+
- Wednesday, December 17: 7:30 am - Jacqueline Elwood+, Larry McCauley+
- Thursday, December 18: 7:30 am - Peter & Mary Tunney+
- Friday, December 19: 7:30 am - Eileen McGuire+
- Saturday, December 20: 7:30 am - Mary Amelse+ ; 5:00 pm - Joseph and Isabelle Laczkowski+
- Sunday, December 21: 8:00 am - Mark Schreiner+; 10:30 am - Joseph and Isabelle Laczkowski+; 10:30 am Gym - Maggie McSweeney+

Mass Times/Reconciliation/Rector Office Hours

- Sunday: 8:00 & 10:30 am Mass in Church, 10:30 am Gym Mass; Monday-Friday: 7:30 am (Monday is a Communion service); Saturday: 7:30 am & 5:00 pm.
- Reconciliation is offered on Saturdays from 4:15-4:45 pm in church or by appointment by calling the Rector at 773.764.3621.
- The office is open Monday-Friday from 8:30 am-4:30 pm and is closed on weekends. **The office will be closed on December 24-26 and January 1-2.**

Donate to our Parish

- PayPal link - visit our parish website at www.stgertrudechicago.org
- GiveCentral: www.givecentral.org/location/8/allevnts

Parish Staff and Contact Info

Rev. Sergio Romo, Pastor—sromo@stgertrudechicago.org
Patricia Branigan, Events/Room Booking Contact—pbranigan@stgertrudechicago.org
Eloy Escamilla, Pastoral Associate—eescamilla@stgertrudechicago.org
Jonathan Hannau, Music Director—jhannau@stgertrudechicago.org
Laurie Hasbrook, Heart to Heart Lending Closet Manager-lhasbrook@stgertrudechicago.org
Edgar Osorio Leon, Maintenance Director—esorioleon@archchicago.org
Sr. Susan Quaintance, OSB, Heart to Heart Director—squaintance@stgertrudechicago.org
Tracy Shields, Communications Director—stgerbulletin@yahoo.com
Eduardo Soto, Director of Parish Management—esoto@stgertrudechicago.org

Heart to Heart/Lending Closet Contact Info

To reach our Heart to Heart director, Sr. Susan Quaintance, OSB, call her at 872.296.2537 or email her at squaintance@stgertrudechicago.org. To reach Laurie Hasbrook, our Lending Closet manager, please call 773.973.5464 or email her at lhasbrook@stgertrudechicago.org.

Visit our Parish Website

For the latest parish events and information, visit our website at stgertrudechicago.org.