

St. Gertrude Chicago

1420 W. Granville Chicago, IL 60660 773.764.3621

stgertrude 1420@stgertrudechicago.org www.stgertrudechicago.org

Bulletin for Sunday,
December 7, 2025
The Second Sunday of Advent

The Latest Parish News

The Second Week of Advent

As we enter the second week of Advent, we light the candle of peace—reminding us that Christ comes not only to comfort us, but to calm the restlessness of our hearts. John the Baptist's cry in the wilderness urges us to prepare a straight path for the Lord, clearing away whatever keeps us from recognizing God's presence in our daily lives.

This week invites us to slow down, listen more deeply, and allow God's peace to take root within us. Even amid the noise and pressures of the season, the Lord is quietly at work, smoothing rough places and healing what feels broken. May we welcome that gentle work of grace, becoming instruments of peace to those around us.

Open Your Heart This Advent Season

Don't let the grace of Advent get lost in the rush of the season. Here are some simple ways to make this time truly meaningful:

- Our annual Giving Tree Program is underway. We are collecting gift cards to support RefugeeOne, St. Gertrude's Refugee Ministry, and Centro Romero.
- We are accepting donations for Care for Real this weekend and again December 27-28.
- St. Gertrude is participating in the Archdiocese's Harvest of Hope food drive, supporting Catholic Charities' food pantries.
- The Adult Spirituality and Formation Committee is hosting two sessions to enrich your Advent experience through prayer, art, and reflection.
- The Feast of the Immaculate Conception, a Holy Day of Obligation, is Monday, December 8. Mass will be celebrated at 7:30 am.
- The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe will be honored over three evenings with prayer and the rosary.
- A special holiday youth group event will take place on Saturday, December 13, where teens will make cards for homebound and sick parishioners.
- A deanery-wide reconciliation service will be held at St. Ita's on Monday, December 22.

More information about each of these special events is further in the bulletin.

Parish Events & Activities



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: Archdiocesewide Advent Food Drive Continues This Weekend

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.

Between November 29 and December 14, there will be a donation box labeled "Catholic Charities" in the vestibule in the back of church. Please consider donating canned chicken, canned soup, canned tuna, and canned beef.

Be a Part of our Giving Tree Program

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 <u>eescamilla@stgertrudechicago.org</u> or Joe McMahon at <u>ipmgmu@aol.com</u>.

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!

Care for Real Collection is This Weekend

Our Care for Real collection drive is December 6-7 before and after masses. Please place donations in the bins in the vestibule.

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 muchneeded supplies to our neighbors who are struggling.





Coat Drive for Organized by Teen Parishioner 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.

Your generosity will directly benefit children in our community who need support this winter.

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!



Order Your Trees, Garland, and Wreaths from St. Gert's Annual Greenery Sale!

Online Order Link is Live, Paper Forms Available, In-Person Sales Begin Sunday!

St. Gertrude is once again hosting our annual Christmas greenery sale, with a limited number of balsam pine trees, wreaths, and garland available for purchase. Our Christmas greenery sale is a great opportunity for parishioners to get ready for the holidays while supporting St. Gertrude 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 7, December 14, and December 21 from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. Only cash and checks will be accepted for in-person purchases.

Online Orders and Paper Forms

The option to purchase greenery online is available at bit.ly/StGertsChristmasGreenery or by scanning the QR code. Please note, if you are interested in having your item/items delivered, please add the delivery fee to your order in GiveCentral—it's a separate charge!

Order Via a Paper Form

Download a traditional paper form at <u>bit.ly/StGertsChristmasGreenery</u> or pick up an order form in church. Forms and checks or cash can be dropped off at the Rectory office, 1420 W. Granville Ave or placed in the mail slot in the side (west) red door next to the Rectory side yard if the Rectory office is closed. Checks should be made out to St. Gertrude. Please note "Greenery" in the memo line.

Deliveries

Deliveries will be offered for a \$6 fee. They will take place on Sunday, December 7 and Sunday, December 14 from noon - 4:00 pm. The greenery team will do their best to accommodate your preferred delivery date and will reach out to notify you when to expect your order. Please note, the boundaries for deliveries are north to Oakton, south to Irving Park, and east of the North Shore Channel.

Questions?

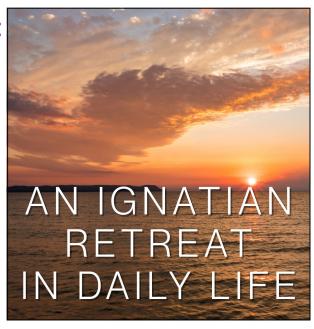
Contact St. Gertrude Business Manager Eduardo Soto at **esoto@stgertrudechicago.org** or call the Rectory at 773.764.3621.



An Ignatian Retreat in Daily Life: Information Sessions are December 7 and December 13

An "Ignation Retreat in Daily Life" will begin this coming January and end in June. The retreat follows the basic themes of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, but will take place in the midst of daily life rather than at a retreat center.

Participants commit to praying on themes from Scripture which will be selected for each day of the retreat. Small groups of retreatants will meet once a week to share their prayer experiences and receive guidance on the next week's themes.



The director of the retreat will be Jim Neafsey, a parishioner at St. Gertrude's who has given Ignatian retreats for 50 years.

There will be a basic orientation to the retreat offered in December. Information sessions will last 45 minutes. Information sessions will take place in the Ministry Center this Sunday, December 7 at 11:30 am (after Mass) and Saturday, December 13 at 9:00 am.

Each session will cover the same content, so you only need to come to one session. They are intended to help clarify what the retreat entails and whether it fits with your desires and pattern of life at this time. If you are interested, but cannot make any of these meetings, please call or text Jim Neafsey at 773.580.5212.

This series is sponsored by the Adult Spirituality and Faith Formation Committee.



Feast of the Immaculate Conception - Monday, December 8

We will celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception on Monday, December 8. This is a Holy Day of Obligation.

Mass will be held at 7:30 am. The rectory office will be open.



Celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 9-12

In honor of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Rosary Group invites the entire parish to three evenings of prayer and reflection. Bilingual reflections on Our Lady of Guadalupe will be offered on December 9, 10, and 11, from 6:00–7:00 pm in the church, and will include the praying of the Rosary.

These gatherings offer a beautiful opportunity to deepen our devotion to Mary, seek her intercession, and prepare our hearts for the joy of her feast. All

are warmly invited to join them.

Additionally, there is a Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at 7:30 am on Friday, December 12.

Book Club is Tuesday, December 9

Join us for a discussion of *Skipping Christmas* by John Grisham on Tuesday, December 9 at 6:30 pm at the Ministry Center, 6214 W. Glenwood.

New participants are always welcome!

For questions, contact Lea Cloninger (773.213.0509) or Sue Benjamin (773.551.8401).



November 29-30 Financial Report

Sunday Collection Envelopes: \$2,957.00

Loose Checks: \$465.00

Loose Cash/Coins: \$847.00 Online Donations: \$4,673.06

Total Collected: \$8,942.06

Budgeted: \$10,000.00 **Difference: -\$1,057.94**

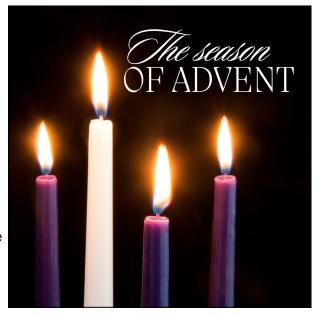
YTD Collected FY 2026: \$206,639.69 YTD Budgeted FY 2026: \$550,000.00

Difference: -\$343,360.31

Deepen Your Faith & Hope This Advent

This Advent, the Adult Spirituality and Formation Committee invites you to join the two remaining sessions designed to deepen our journey of awareness and hope. Each offers a unique way to encounter the sacred—through prayer, art, and reflection—as we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ.

Both sessions will take place from 7:00–8:30 pm in the Ministry Center Chapel. You are welcome to attend either one or both.



Session Two – Wednesday, December 10

A Pre-Instagram Birth: The Nativity of Jesus Told Through Art with Fr. Sergio Romo

Selfies and social media capture both the momentous and everyday moments of our lives. Although the technology we use is relatively new, the desire to preserve a moment and share it with the world is ancient. Come explore how, over two millennia, the story of Jesus' birth has been illustrated and retold.

Beginning with the earliest known depictions of the Nativity, Fr. Sergio—an artist in his own right—will trace the development of Nativity iconography, with special attention to works of art housed at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Session Three – Wednesday, December 17

Encountering the Mystery of God's Presence Through Sacred Art with Jim Neafsey

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.

Please consider being part of this Advent journey. While all are welcome to "drop in," we ask that you let us know if you plan to attend so we can prepare sufficient seating.

To register, email Mary Ann O'Connor at maryann.oconnor@rcn.com and indicate which session or sessions you will attend.

friend [frend] noun.

a person known well to another and regarded with liking, affection, and loyalty. a friend is a person who knows all about you and still loves you

Women's Friendship Club is December 11

St. Gertrude Women's Friendship Club meets monthly on the second Thursday of every month in the Ministry Center. The gathering begins at 11:30 am, attendees should bring their own (brown bag) lunch. Dessert is provided!

Their next gathering is Thursday, December 11. Consider yourself invited!

Youth Group Event is Planned for Saturday, December 13

Attention students in 7th grade and up! Save the date! On December 13, we've planned an afternoon of Christmas card-making and crafts, with cards going to those who are sick and homebound in our parish.

We'll gather in the Ministry Center from 10:00 am-12:00 pm. Snacks will be provided!

Please reach out to Eloy Escamilla at **eecamilla@stgertrudechicago.org** for more information.





Second Collection for Retirement Fund for Religious is December 13 and 14

The second collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious is taken up each year on the second Sunday of December.

Across the United States, hundreds of religious communities lack financial resources sufficient to meet the retirement and health-care needs of aging members. Your gift will provide essential care for nearly 31,000 senior sisters, brothers and religious order priests who have dedicated their lives to serving others. Let us show our gratitude to these

selfless individuals by giving generously!

"Brewed at St. Gertrude" is December 21

Please join us on Sunday, December 21 for another "Brewed at St. Gertrude", our monthly parish hospitality event!

These gathering are held following the 10:30 am church and gym masses in the Social Hall and feature pastries, coffee, tea, and hot cocoa.

All are welcome: new and long-time parishioners, families, and visitors! We would love for the entire parish to be there!

Our January gathering will be held on the 18th.





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.

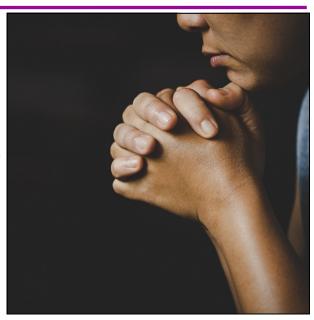
If you'd like to join or have questions, contact Eloy Escamilla at **eescamilla@stgertrudechicago.org** for

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.





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 **eescamil-la@stgertrudechicago.org**.

Christmas Mass Schedule

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

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



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.

Appointments can be made after Mass or online at <u>schedule.ucdir.com</u> (Church code: **IL 457**, Password: **photos**).

Parish News

Growing in Faith

I would like to give a personal reflection on Advent this year. I must admit, it can be difficult for me to get into the spirit of the season. Why? Because I worked retail years before I became a musician full-time and it was through that experience that I developed a "negative" feeling towards the holidays.

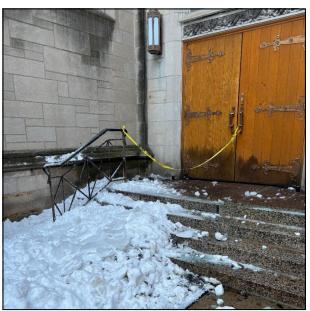
It's what companies and our system of society does as soon as Thanksgiving is over. Starting with Black Friday, the commercialization and push to buy and buy slaps us all pretty hard in the face—something that I experienced as a retail worker in a very real way. Ultimately, there is no time to rest or be in a



state of peace. I promise you will never see me shopping on that day. (I hide in my condo and put up the Christmas tree with my wife, Suzanne, and our dogs).

So, with that in mind, how did I eventually begin to reconcile this and enjoy the season again? It was being reminded that community—and allowing oneself to enter a time of contemplation and waiting—is what is at the heart of it all. I particularly love the quiet music of Advent, for example, the hymn "In the Bleak Midwinter." These pieces help me focus on meditation and prayer and guide me through the noisiness of the season, keeping me centered (and now excited) for what's to come.

~ Jonathan Hannau, Music Director, St. Gertrude



Safety Hazard: Avoid the Church's North Entry Doors

Please avoid using the church doors on the north side of the building by the Ministry Center. Heavy snow is falling off the roof and the door and the walkway is blocked out for safety purposes.

Parishioners are asked to use the front doors on Glenwood or the Granville entrance.

NCA/Events Around the Archdiocese



Playdates at NCA Every Monday and Friday Through December 19

Even Bring your little ones (ages 0-5) and join us for fun-filled playdate! Held at Northside Catholic Academy, 6216 N. Glenwood, on Monday and Friday mornings from 9:30 - 10:30 am. The hour is filled with a story, craft, and sing-a-long for kids, plus a chance to meet neighborhood families, and learn more about NCA.

Please scan the QR code to RSVP!

St. Scholastica Monastery: **Advent Retreats Offered**

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

The retreats will be in the Oasis Room at St. Scholastica Monastery on Tuesday, December 9 and 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.









Sunday/Domingo

Welcome the holiday season at a festive weekend with St. John XXIII Parish! All events held on the St. Nicholas Campus, 806 Ridge Ave, Evanston, IL 60202. / iDemos bienvenida a las Navidades con un fin de semana festivo con la Parroquia de San Juan XXIII! Todos los eventos en el campus de San Nicolás, 806 Ridge Ave, Evanston, IL 60202.



DEC. 5, 6:30 P.M. - 8 P.M. Visit from Bishop Nicholas and tree

lighting/Vista del Obispo Nicolas y encender la luces del arbol

Saturday/Sabado

DEC. 6, 8A.M.-4P.M.

DEC. 7, 9:30 A.M.-3 P.M. Craft fair, tree and greenery sale, bakery booth, and homemade Mexican food/ Feria de artesanía, venta de árboles y plantas navideñas, puesto de panadería, y comida mexicana cocinanda en casa





Parish Information

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

Ministers of the Word

- Saturday, December 6 at 5:00 pm Roman Reyes, Joe Tomaselo
- Sunday, December 7 at 8:00 am Kathryn Stimac, Jacalyn Meintz
- Sunday, December 7 at 10:30 am Bob Backis, Rose Karasti

Eucharistic Ministers

- Saturday, December 6 at 5:00 pm Millie Slane
- Sunday, December 7 at 8:00 am Mary Clare Barker
- Sunday, December 7 at 10:30 am -Sarah Millar, Annie Hasselbeck, Stephen Hasselbeck

Altar Servers

- Saturday, December 6 at 5:00 pm cross bearer: Wyatt Dant; aacolytes: Danna Salinas,
 Carter Dant
- Sunday, December 7 at 10:30 am cross bearer: Javi Lassus; acolytes: Oscar Lassus, Diarmuid McKeown

Please Pray for our Parishioners and Friends

- Mary Amelse
- Victor Ayes
- Carlos Barragan
- Patrick Barton
- Zara Bradley
- Maggie Callahan
- Aida Calvopina
- Marta Carlson
- Terrence Carmichael
- Kathy Catrambone
- Cavicke Family
- Mary DeBois
- David Denegas
- Ann Collins Dole
- Renee Elhoumaidi
- Mr. and Mrs. Emin Euman
- Luke Fitzgerald
- Adolf Gabriel
- Marie Galoney

- Thomas Hajduch
- Anne Marie Hamde
- Rochelle Hernandez
- Tricia Hernandez
- Maria Hertl
- Tony Hunter
- John Kahoun
- Mary E. Kelley
- Marilyn Klein
- Jim Laczkowski
- Joseph Lambin
- Carleen Lory
- River Malik
- James Mann
- Alex Marks
- Nancy Michael
- Steve Monti
- Hilda Mora
- Patti Paul
- Dealing Peon
- Claude Poulsen

- Delphine Richert
- Joan Ross
- Willy Spalla
- Floret Spalle
- Mary Pierce Spalla
- Frannie Swaine
- Nancy Tarallo
- Christopher Thomas
- Elinora E. Tolentino
- Joe Touchstone
- Manuel & Norma Viray
- Tayana Wallace
- King Wallace
- Christian Wallace
- Kevin Walsh
- Leon Ward
- Ron Whitfield
- Janice Wittenbera
- Dawn Wyman
- Yyes Yoza
- Joel Pozzi Zio

Contact the Parish Pastoral Council

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

New Parishioners

• Megan Nolan, James Hairston, and family

Upcoming Mass Intentions

- Monday, December 8: 7:30 am Communion Service
- Tuesday, December 9: 7:30 am Tricia Hernandez
- Wednesday, December 10: 7:30 am Arlene Kaspik+
- Thursday, December 11: 7:30 am Carillo family
- Friday, December 12: 7:30 am Marie Schonberger+
- Saturday, December 13: 7:30 am Michael Cannon+; 5:00 pm Richard Cenar+
- Sunday, December 14: 8:00 am Maggie McSweeney+; 10:30 am John Geshkewich+;
 10:30 am Gym Billy Tobin+

Mass Times/Reconciliation/Rectory 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 Rectory 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 Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and December 26.

Donate to our Parish

- PayPal link visit our parish website at <u>www.stgertrudechicago.org</u>
- GiveCentral: www.givecentral.org/location/8/allevents

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—eosorioleon@archchicago.org
Sr. Susan Quaintance, OSB, Heart to Heart Director—squaintance@stgertrudechicago.org
Tracy Shields, Communications Director—stgertbulletin@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.