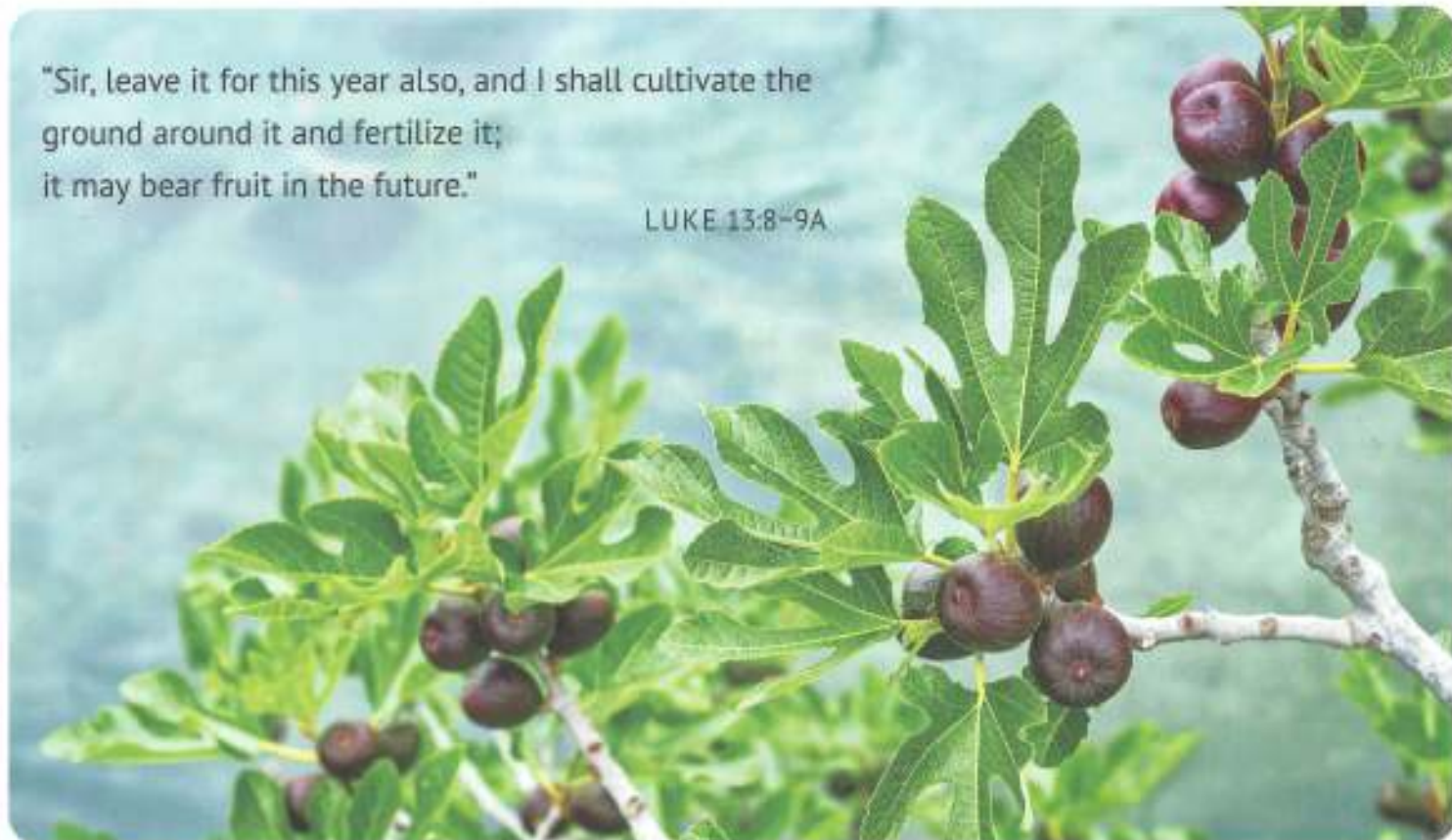




"Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future."

LUKE 13:8-9A



A Gardener God

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

Charles Baudelaire was a French poet and essayist in the mid-1800s. He once observed that life is like a hospital in which each patient is possessed by the desire to change beds. In other words, he thought everyone seemed to think life would be so much better if only they had a different set of circumstances, a different job, a different marriage, a different place in life. Like trees, however, not everyone grows and matures at the same pace. There are forty-year-olds who still act and think like teenagers, and there are ten-year-olds who have an attitude toward life like that of an elder. Over time, we all grow into the lives we're given.

In this week's Parable of the Barren Fig Tree, some think God is like the owner who planted the tree, as

if God is impatient with us to begin bearing fruit and quick to uproot us if we fail. A case could be made, however, for God to be the gardener who patiently fertilizes and nurtures. In the beginning, it was God who had a garden called Eden, filled with all kinds of trees and plants among which God walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the evening. After the resurrection, it was Mary Magdalene who went looking for the body of Jesus and mistook him for the gardener. It is God who hovers over us, watering and nudging and nurturing, waiting until in God's good time, we begin to bear fruit. ●

Reflect

***What needs nurturing in my life,
and what needs weeding out?***



St. Thomas More
 302 Chestnut Street
 Dalzell IL 61320
 Phone 815-663-6201
 Email: thomasmore32@gmail.com

Adoration Room at STM
 Open Daily from 9 am - 6 pm

Holy Trinity Catholic Church

212 S Main Street
 PO Box 159
 Cherry IL 61317
 Phone 815-894-2006
 Email: HolyTSP@gmail.com



Church Office Info

Pastor: Father Thaddeus Tran
 Pastoral Assistant: Julie Hollinger
 Parish Secretary: Melissa Pasillas Email: Melissahtc@outlook.com
 Office Hours at HT: Tuesday-Friday 9am-1pm
 Website: www.bureaucatholic.org

Emergency Number: 779-248-2164

Confession Info

Confessions: Saturday morning, alternating between STM & HT 10:30 am-11:15

Upcoming/Ongoing Church Events

Fundraiser: STM Rav/Tort | call 815-252-2215 (leave name/phone number/order) | \$9.00/bag

CCD Classes

Sunday, March 23rd - K-5th Grade

Sunday, March 30th- 6th & 7th Grade



Daily Mass Intentions for the Week of March 17, 2025

Monday	3/24			† No Mass
Tuesday	3/25	9:00 am	STM	† Robert Magnani
Wednesday	3/26	5:30 pm	HT	† No Mass-Assemb Day
Thursday	3/27	9:00 am	HT	† Alan Hahn
Friday	3/28	9:00 am	STM	† Liz Olivero
		6:00 pm	HT	Stations of the Cross

Mass Intentions for the weekend of March 22-23, 2025

Saturday	3/29	4:00 pm	St Thomas More	† Viola & Peter Gedvilas
Sunday	3/30	8:30 am	Holy Trinity	† For the Parishioners

The Never Ending Mercy of God for Sinners

Each year the first two Sunday's of Lent are linked with specific events in the life of Christ: the temptations He endured in the Judean desert and the Transfiguration on the mountain, as recorded in the Gospels.

The third Sunday of Lent, though, is not so much centered on an event in Christ's life, but is concerned with Jesus' teaching on the patience, mercy and love of our God. The three readings assigned for this Sunday all touch on the importance of placing hope in God, the All-Merciful and Giver-of-life, who is always ready to forgive.

The first lesson today recounts the memorable event of Moses before the burning bush at Horeb, the mountain of God. God tells Moses that the time has come for the Israelites to be freed from slavery in Egypt and that Moses would be the chosen instrument for bringing it about.

Continuing along the same line of thinking, Jesus uses in his preaching an image for God as the owner of the vineyard who notices a fruitless tree and orders it to be cut down.

The Gardener, though, pleads for another year in the hope that the tree may indeed bear fruit. The point being made by Jesus is that God is truly patient and merciful, more than willing to give innumerable chances for a change of heart.

The human heart may be so far from God that nothing less than God's all-powerful grace can redirect it. The reality of free will always has to be taken into account, of course, with the reminder that God never forces us to act against our will, but lovingly invites us to share in God's life.

Today is the acceptable time to return to God and to produce fruit in our life, the time to experience God's loving mercy and to offer our forgiveness to those who have offended us in the past or are offending us now. Christ can more freely enter our lives under such conditions, when we leave ourselves open to true life and love. (Excerpted: <https://christdesert.org>)

Church Announcements

Assisted Suicide Legislations

Bishop Tylka in his letter, dated March 12, 2025 asks church members to help stop the effort to legalize assisted suicide in Illinois. SB 9 and HB 1328 are two pieces of legislation currently being presented. In addition to the spiritual practices that we muster against this effort, He asks us to take action by writing, calling or e-mailing our state elected officials to vote "NO" on this legislation. Further information on how to reach our State Senator and State Representative can be found at www.ilcatholic.org or call 217-528-9200.

ADA Update

Again, we are asking parishioners to please consider donating to 2024-2025 ADA campaign. A gift to the ADA, large or small, can go a long way. Consider a one-time gift or a monthly pledge. Every dollar raised to make our goal supports important diocesan ministries. To date, we have received the following totals, along with the church goals. To those who have pledged, thank you!

HT - \$5,660.00 - Goal \$13,852.00

SP - \$670.00 - Goal \$9,257.00

STM \$4,123.95 - Goal \$10,663.00

Latest Offering's March 16th Weekend

HT - \$1021

STM - \$1211

SP- \$130

Stations of the cross Friday, March 28th 6pm at HT



Confessions

Sat. March 29th
10:30 am-11:15 am
St. Thomas More
in the confessional

Dear Padre,

May I receive Communion if I'm divorced and haven't gotten an annulment?

Yes, you may. Divorce, in itself, is not an impediment to the reception of Communion. Divorce, although regrettable because of the many ramifications that may be part of the experience, is not in itself a sin. There are situations when divorce may be the most loving choice and make it possible for all parties involved to live the lives God is calling them to live.

Remarriage, when a person is not free to marry because of the presence of a previous bond, is an impediment to the reception of holy Communion. Although this situation is more and more common, it does not mean that the law of the Church, representative of the teaching of Jesus, can be set aside. As part of the process of healing from your divorce and moving on with your life, you may want to seek an annulment, particularly if you think you might want to marry again. The annulment process can often be healing and a source of great blessing. It also provides a rare opportunity to reflect on what was lost as a result of the original divorce and what can be learned as a way of moving forward and building a second marriage that is strong and life-giving.



STEVE LOVAGROVE / SHUTTERSTOCK

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
March 24	March 25	March 26	March 27	March 28	March 29	March 30
<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>The</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Fourth Sunday of Lent</i>
2 Kgs 5:1-15b Lk 4:24-30	<i>Annunciation of the Lord</i> Is 7:10-14; 8:10 Heb 10:4-10 Lk 1:26-38	Dt 4:1, 5-9 Mt 5:17-19	Jer 7:23-28 Lk 11:14-23	Hos 14:2-10 Mk 12:28-34	Hos 6:1-6 Lk 18:9-14	Jos 5:9a, 10-12 2 Cor 5:17-21 Lk 15:1-3, 11-32



VATICAN MEDIA

A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

I like to think that a nice name for God could be “the God of another possibility”... [God] does not look at the achievements you have not yet reached, but the fruits you can still bear. He does not keep track of your shortcomings but encourages your potential. He does not dwell on your past, but confidently bets on your future.

ANGELUS, ROME, MARCH 20, 2022