



# Immaculate Conception

A Full Stewardship Parish ~ Partner Parish of Sacred Heart of Jesus, Dupou, IL  
411 Palmer Road, Columbia, IL 62236 | 618-281-5105 | Fax 281-6848

January 5, 2024

The Epiphany of the Lord

[www.icc-columbia-il.us](http://www.icc-columbia-il.us)

CHRISTMAS 2024

JOY  
TO THE WORLD

ROOTED IN THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST AND IN THE TRADITION OF CATHOLICISM AND UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF MARY IMMACULATE, WE COMMIT OURSELVES TO BE A WELCOMING COMMUNITY OF FAITH, WORSHIPPING WITH GENERATIONS OF BELIEVERS AND SERVING GOD IN ALL PEOPLE.

## *Welcome New Parishioners*

If you are new to our parish and reside within the parish boundaries, and would like to be members, please call the Parish Office at 618-281-5105, and our secretary will be happy to help make that happen!

Hola, Bienvenidos – a la iglesia Católica en Immaculata Concepcion. ¡Que tengas una bendita semana!

We livestream! To participate, please use this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/ImmaculateConceptionCatholicChurchColumbiaIL>

## Parish Office Hours

Monday-Friday  
8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Phone: 618-281-5105

## Parish Staff

**Pastor, Fr. Steve Thoma, C.R.**  
ext. 358 or 805-670-3541  
frsteve@iccmil.org

**Business Manager,  
Kara Dell-Hunt**  
ext. 350, kdell-hunt@iccmil.org

**Director of Liturgy & Music,  
Theresa Flores**  
ext. 312, tflores@iccmil.org

**Director of Faith Formation,  
Lizanne Young**  
ext. 354, lyoung@iccmil.org

**IC-PSR Coordinator,  
Rebecca Husman**  
ext. 353, rhusman@iccmil.org

**Bookkeeper,  
Sheryl Oglesby**  
ext. 351, shoglesby@iccmil.org

**Secretary,  
Michelle Muckensturm**  
ext. 300, iccmil@iccmil.org

**Spiritual and Mental Health  
Advocate, Shea Christensen**  
ext. 352, schristensen@iccmil.org

**ICS Principal,  
Dave Gregson**  
281-5353, ext. 202  
dgregson@iccmil.org

**Pastoral Council Chair,  
Tammy Hoefflinger**  
parishcouncil@iccmil.org

**School Board President,  
Jolene Sasser**  
boardpresident@iccmil.org

## Sacramental Information

**Baptisms:** Parents/guardians are asked to attend a Preparation Seminar scheduled on the second Sunday of the month after 9:00 a.m. Mass (approximately 10:00 a.m.) in the lower-level library. We celebrate Baptisms on the first Sunday of the month during any Mass, and the third Sunday of the month after the 11:00 a.m. Mass. (No Baptisms are scheduled during Lent.) Please call the office to schedule at 281-5105.

**Weddings:** The parish is happy to celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony with adults who are currently registered members of Immaculate Conception Church (bride or groom). If you are one of many who would like to “come home” to celebrate the Sacrament with family and friends, please provide the name of the parish where you are now a member, along with contact information. We ask that you contact the IC Parish Office a minimum of four months prior to Marriage, but in most cases couples will need to allow time for Pre-Cana formation, and we suggest beginning to plan your Sacrament 12 or 18 months prior to Marriage.

**Anointing of the Sick & Funerals:** Since individual needs differ, please contact the Parish Office at 281-5105 for pastoral care. Do not hesitate to call; we are grateful for the opportunity to open our hearts to you and your family and offer these sacramental services.

**OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults):** OCIA (formerly known as RCIA) is for everyone who has been drawn by God to form a deeper relationship. Wherever you are in your faith practice – baptized in another Christian faith, starting from the beginning, or simply enriching your Catholic practice – consider the OCIA. Get to know God better and find out what it means to be Catholic. Individuals will meet with our director of faith formation (Lizanne Young) to discuss the process. We meet as a group on Sundays (from Autumn through the Triduum just before Easter), starting with “Breaking Open the Word” dismissal from 9:00 a.m. Mass, and catechetical sessions from 10:00-11:30 a.m. Contact Lizanne at the Parish Office, 281-5105, ext. 354, or email lyoung@iccmil.org.

**Reconciliation:** Reconciliation is offered from 4:00-4:30 p.m. on Saturdays and by appointment.

## IMPORTANT VOLUNTEER INFO!

Anyone who wishes to volunteer at school or church when there are children present MUST be compliant with the Diocesan Child Protection Policy. Please be proactive! \*EVERYONE must have an IL state background check, as well as doing the online refresher and filling out CANTS forms. \*Coaches and employees will need to be fingerprinted in addition to the usual Child Protection paperwork. \*The initial course is now available online. Please contact Michelle at the Parish Office for directions. \*The refresher course for 2024-2025 IS AVAILABLE ONLINE! Follow the link on our website! If you can't find it there, it is also on the Diocesan website at <https://diobelle.safeenvironment.org/login/index.php>. Not sure if you are compliant, or have additional questions? Contact Michelle at the Parish Office at 281-5105. \*Sexual Abuse Hotline: Anyone wishing to report an allegation of sexual misconduct by a Priest or other Diocesan personnel, please call the hotline at 800-640-3044.

*Purchase Scrip Gift Cards from all of your favorite stores,  
restaurants, etc... in the Parish Office!*

## *This Week's Liturgical Celebrations*

Masses – Saturday, 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 a.m.

Monday, January 6	8:05 a.m.	We Remember Robert J. Schaefer
Tuesday, January 7	5:00 p.m.	We Remember Pat & Eugene Gilbreth
Wednesday, January 8	9:00 a.m.	We Remember Betty Lang
Thursday, January 9	8:05 a.m.	We Remember John Hart
Friday, January 10	8:05 a.m.	We Remember Mary Jane Frey
Saturday, January 11	5:00 p.m.	We Remember Angela Krupp
Sunday, January 12	7:00 a.m.	We Remember Donald & Josephine Raney
	9:00 a.m.	We Remember Elmer & Catherine Linnemann
	11:00 a.m.	We Remember Harold Netemeyer



## *Please Pray For*

Adam Brandt	Amanda Boitano	Curtis Sievers	K. Myers
Shane Martin	Trace Ahrens	Craig Greer	Jane Menner
Jacob Nelson	Molly Blevins	Janet Michael	Maryanne Klosterman
Bob Beckert	Richard Burroughs	Patricia Pulcher	Margie Kolaz
John Kirk	Vivian Sparks	Jim Vogt	

*Troops in Service...* SGM Joseph Pope, US Army; Colonel Brian Schoellhorn, Samuel Campbell, Navy; Captain Benjamin Thoma, United States Air Force; Captain Alex Kawalec, United States Air Force

**Prayer List Check:** Please take a moment and check on the prayer list above. Beginning this weekend, we will be starting a fresh list; sick and military. The list gets long throughout the year and during the holidays. Please call Michelle at the Parish Office at 281-5105 if you would like to add someone new.



## *Weekly Reflections*

*January 5, 2025*

**First Reading:** Isaiah 60:1-6  
**Second Reading:** Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6  
**Gospel:** Matthew 2:1-12



## Stewardship...

Thank you for sharing your blessings with us!

December 25, 2024

Actual	\$	30,764.30
Budget	\$	31,000.00
Actual YTD	\$	1,053,883.68
Budget YTD	\$	1,133,575.00
Over (under)	\$	(79,691.32)
Prior YTD	\$	971,574.46
Over (under)	\$	82,309.22
Guatemala	\$	75.00
Christmas Flowers	\$	15.00
Christmas Offering	\$	15,860.00
Needy	\$	1,473.00
Retirement Fund for Religious	\$	25.00
Phase 3	\$	5,481.00



*From Our Young Stewards*

Treasure: \$114.00

Time and Talent: Helped my baby cousin.

## SAVE TAXES ON IRA REQUIRED MINIMUM DISTRIBUTIONS

Individuals subject to Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) from their Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA) have an opportunity to use the distributions for charitable giving instead of taking a taxable distribution.

If you are age 70½ or older, the IRS will allow you to distribute up to \$105,000 annually directly to qualified nonprofit organizations without incurring any taxable income. The benefit is known as the Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD).

A QCD is a direct transfer of funds from your IRA, payable to a qualified charity, like Immaculate Conception Church. QCDs can be counted toward satisfying your required minimum distribution (RMD) for the year, if certain rules are met.

Here are the requirements:

- You must be 70½ or older to be eligible to make a QCD.
- QCDs are limited to the amount that would otherwise be taxed as ordinary income. This excludes non-deductible contributions.
- The maximum annual amount that can qualify for a QCD is \$105,000. This applies to the sum of QCDs made to one or more charities in a calendar year. (If, however, you file taxes jointly, your spouse can also make a QCD from his or her own IRA within the same tax year for up to \$105,000.)
- For a QCD to count towards your current year RMD, the funds must come out of your IRA by your RMD deadline, generally December 31.
- Any amount donated above your RMD does not count toward satisfying a future year.
- The QCD must be paid directly from your IRA to the charity to qualify.

In addition to the benefits of giving to charity, a QCD excludes the amount donated from taxable income, unlike regular withdrawals from an IRA. Keeping your taxable income lower may reduce the impact to certain tax credits and deductions, including Social Security and Medicare.

Also, QCDs require that you itemize, which, due to the tax law changes means you may decide to take advantage of the higher standard deduction, but still use a QCD for charitable giving.

Funds distributed directly to you, the IRA owner, which you then give to charity do not qualify as a QCD.

There are some other tax rules that may also apply to your situation, so consult with a financial professional for more details about this strategy.

– Immaculate Conception Planned Giving Council

# Parish Events & News...

## TEENS ENCOUNTER CHRIST

TEC (Teens Encounter Christ) is an opportunity for a young person's life. At TEC, you can experience that you are not alone at the in-between time of moving into adult life. In the three-day weekend of TEC, you can experience being part of a vibrant, loving, and supportive faith community in which the friendship of Jesus Christ becomes a real possibility that makes sense. TEC is open to Juniors and Seniors, and the next TEC will take place at Immaculate Conception on January 18-20, 2025. For more information and to apply to be a TECite or an adult observer, go to <https://bellevilletec.org/>.

## D.C. PRETZEL AND DONUT SALES...

The next Pretzel & Donut weekend will be January 18 and 19. All proceeds go to the 8th graders' trip to Washington, D.C.

## BULLETIN DEADLINE...

All submissions for the bulletin will need to be in to the Parish Office two Thursdays before you need it in the bulletin. Submissions will need to be sent to [iccmil@iccmil.org](mailto:iccmil@iccmil.org). If you have any questions, please call the Parish Office at 618-281-5105.

## SCRIPTURE DISCUSSIONS FOR MEN AND WOMEN

How's this for a Plan: Come to Mass on Sunday ready to engage in the Gospel, Old and New Testament Readings and even the homily by spending an hour praying with them in advance, with friends!

- Women's Bible Study meets every week in the Library on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- The Pathfinders Men's Group meets every week in the Knights of Columbus Room on Saturday mornings from 7:30-8:30 a.m.

Just show up; you're more than welcome!

PARISH WORK DAYS! January 11, February 8

# Ministry News & Happenings

## OUR CAMPAIGN PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, You have created us in Your own image, to love, serve and honor You with our lives. You have tasked us with building Your Church, and passing from one generation to the next the treasure trove of our faith. Bless the work of our hands as we undertake our next phase in serving You. Keep us strong in faith, hope, and love, so that all we do may bring glory and honor to You, forever and ever. AMEN.*



## Pope Francis Prays...

"Yet it would also be mistaken to view other living beings as mere objects subjected to arbitrary human domination."  
(Laudato Si # 82)

**What can I do?** Take a look at the book, *For Love of Animals: Christian Ethics, Consistent Action*, by Charles Camosy.

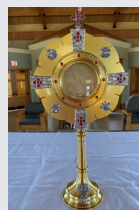
## ICY ODD SUNDAYS

Every Sunday with an odd date is an Odd Sunday ICY Meeting. Check out the QR code for more details.



## QUILTERS' CORNER

Join our super-fun quilters' group on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00-11:30 a.m. All skill levels welcome and appreciated, even beginners! Contact Carlene at 281-5877.



## EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Please join us for Eucharistic Adoration on Tuesdays from 4:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Spend some quiet time with the Lord.

## THE 2024 CATHOLIC SERVICE AND MINISTRY APPEAL

*Serve the Lord with gladness – Psalm 100*

“May God’s blessings pour upon you and grant you and your loved ones a healthy, prosperous and joyful new year. I send heartfelt thanks to all of you for your support of The Catholic Service and Ministry Appeal and our Belleville Diocese in the past year. You are remembered always in my prayers.”

– Bishop Michael McGovern

## SANCTITY OF LIFE

The Sanctity of Life Committee will be collecting new baby items for Life Network in Waterloo. Please pick up a tag from the Giving Tree in the Gathering Space and bring back your unwrapped item by Monday, January 6, 2025.

Thanks for your support. Most needed items include:

- Aveeno Baby Lotion
- Aveeno Baby Wash
- Butt Paste
- Diapers, especially Pampers or Huggies, sizes 4 and 6
- Infant Nail Clippers
- Laundry Detergent
- Pull-Ups, especially for girls, sizes 2T-3T and 4T-5T
- Sensitive Wipes
- Sippy Cups
- Teethers
- Toddler Meals/Snacks
- Twin Blankets
- Walmart Gift Cards
- Washcloths

## ACTS



**Stay Connected with the ACTS Community!**

**Embrace the calmness and reconnect with the ACTS family. If you're not receiving emails from [acts@iccmail.org](mailto:acts@iccmail.org), you might be missing out! Update Your Info Now! If you're not on our mailing list, simply send us an email at [acts@iccmail.org](mailto:acts@iccmail.org) with your latest contact information. Let's keep you in the loop and build a stronger, connected ACTS family together!**



**SAVE THE DATES!**

Upcoming ICC ACTS Retreats

**MEN'S RETREAT JAN 23 - 26, 2025**

**WOMEN'S RETREAT APRIL 24 - 27, 2025**

**MEN'S RETREAT OCTOBER 16 - 19, 2025**

**ACTS**

## BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY

### Tips about Grieving over the Holidays

If you have lost a loved one, there is NO right way to grieve that loss. Grief is individualized. Take away the “shoulds” about how to behave. There are no “have to’s.” The only way to heal is your way and letting “it” happen. And, “it” will happen!

- 1) Grief will happen – acknowledge it and accept it.
- 2) Expect the unexpected – you will see triggers everywhere – and allow yourself to feel.
- 3) Speak up – seek support, say NO, let friends be there when needed.
- 4) Invent new traditions – family, friends, all are sharing the void.
- 5) Remember them, honor them, let them live on in the new; share stories, donate.
- 6) Set realistic expectations for the future – spiritually, emotionally, physically, mentally.
- 7) Take care of yourself! Stay nourished physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally.

## COMFORT WITH A PRAYER SHAWL

If you, or someone you know, needs comfort and prayers, consider bringing them a Prayer Shawl, handmade by Immaculate Conception parishioners. Each crocheted or knitted shawl is unique, and prayers are said throughout the process of the creation. The goal is to provide comfort to the recipient, knowing that they are wrapped in the prayers of the parish. The Prayer Shawl can be delivered to you, or you may stop in the Parish Office during business hours and pick up what you need. Prayer Shawls are available for children as well. Call Helen Csik at 314-651-5033 or the Parish Office at 618-281-5105.

## PRO-LIFE/PREGNANCY RESOURCES...

- Free and confidential pregnancy testing, counseling, and practical support: Life Network of Southern Illinois (in Waterloo and Red Bud). 618-939-4224, mylifenet.org
- Birthright Counseling STL (3 locations in St. Louis) birthrightstl.org
- Free and confidential counseling for anyone hurt by Abortion; Project Rachel, 618-722-5068 hopeafterabortion.com
- A caring place for women who are pregnant and experiencing homelessness; Fontebella Maternity Home, 618-406-4355.

If you, or someone you know, has an unborn baby diagnosed with “fetal abnormalities” or an “adverse prenatal diagnosis,” please refer to: BeNotAfraid.net or PrenatalPartnersforLife.org. Both offer free parent-centered case management and parental support for parents carrying to term following a prenatal diagnosis.

Birthrightstl.org offers their Melissa’s Smile program, a counseling and supportive resource for mothers and fathers whose baby has been diagnosed prenatally with a genetic abnormality or whose baby has been born with a disability or serious medical condition.



## ST. VINCENT DE PAUL NEEDS COATS!

Cold winter weather has definitely arrived and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Belleville Council desperately needs coats to distribute to those in need. Gently-used or new coats of all types in all sizes for all ages – toddlers, children, teens and adults (men and women) are being requested. Items can be dropped off at the St. Vincent de Paul office located at 8800 West Main Street, Belleville, across from Blessed Sacrament Church, or call Joe

Hubbard or Pat Hogrebe at 618-394-0126 for additional information. Warm your heart by keeping someone warm and donate a coat today! Thank you very much.


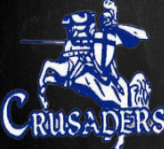
## What's Happening at Gibault?

**GCHS Informational Night**  
w/ICS

For 6-8 graders  
& their families

**January 15, 2025**  
**6:30 - 8:30 PM**  
**@ ICS Garden Level**

Hosted generously by the Wachtel family



**FUTURE HAWKS NIGHT**

Bring your Future Hawk!  
January 10, 2025  
6:30pm basketball game

Future Hawks can run out with the team & sit in the Student section to cheer on the Hawks as they take on Steeleville High School!

**GIBAULT**  
// VS //  
**STEELEVILLE**

Jan. 10, 2025  
GCHS in the Fr. Hustedde Gymnasium

**SIGN UP NOW!**





# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SCHOOL

409 Palmer Road ~ 281-5353

School Principal: Dave Gregson, ext. 202 ~ dgregson@icsmail.org

School Administrator: Beverly Epplin, ext. 200 ~ bepplin@icsmail.org

Administrative Assistant: Lori Deffenbaugh ~ ldeffenbaugh@icsmail.org

MISSION • COMMUNITY • SERVICE

Upcoming Parents and Friends Meetings: January 13, February 10



ICS PARENTS & FRIENDS PRESENTS:

## DERBY & DINNER

HORSES, HATS & HIGH BIDS



**ICS DINNER AUCTION**  
**SATURDAY, FEB 22, 2025**  
**6:00 IN THE EVENING**

**IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**  
**409 PALMER ROAD, COLUMBIA, IL**

**EARLY BIRD TICKETS ON SALE NOW**  

# GOLF BALL DROP





## FIFTY-FIFTY



Proceeds benefit ICS 7th Grade Trip to Space Camp

## FRIDAY JANUARY 17, 2025

### Tickets -\$10 Donation

-  **Purchase tickets from any participating ICS 7th grade student or from the church office**
-  **Ticket sales end at 8:00 am on Jan. 17th**
-  **Golf Balls will be dropped at ICS near the main entrance at 9:00 am**
-  **All golf balls that land in the hole will split the prize money. If no golf balls land in the hole, the prize will be awarded to the closest to the pin.**
- Need Not Be Present to Win**

## Diocesan and Area Interests...

*"Virgin of Guadalupe, Patroness of unborn children, we implore your intercession for every child at risk of abortion. ... Guide our public officials to defend each and every human life through just laws. Inspire us all to bring our faith into public life, to speak for those who have no voice. We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, who is Love and Mercy itself. Amen."*

*USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities,  
"A Prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe"*

*"Virgen de Guadalupe, patrona de los niños en el vientre materno, te imploramos tu intercesión por cada niño en peligro de ser abortado. ... Guía a nuestros funcionarios públicos a defender cada vida humana mediante leyes justas. Inspiráanos a todos a traer nuestra fe a la vida pública, para hablar por aquellos que no tienen voz. Te lo pedimos en el nombre de tu Hijo, Jesucristo, quién es Amor y Piedad. Amén."*

*USCCB Secretariado de Actividades Pro-Vida, "Oración a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe"*



## DOCTORS OPPOSE ASSISTED SUICIDE

The American Medical Association (AMA), American Psychiatric Association, and dozens of other medical groups oppose assisted suicide. The AMA says “Physician-assisted suicide is fundamentally incompatible with the physician’s role as healer.” Physicians are entrusted with saving lives, not ending them, and assisted suicide violates the Hippocratic Oath. Tell your state legislators to Vote NO on SB 3499 - assisted suicide. Visit [www.ilcatholic.org](http://www.ilcatholic.org) for additional information and resources.

## CATHOLIC HOME MISSIONS APPEAL

Support the Catholic Home Missions Appeal today! Over 40% of dioceses in the United States and its territories are considered mission territories because they are unable to fund essential pastoral activities needed in their communities. Your support funds religious education, seminary formation, lay ministry training, and other programs that build vibrant faith communities right here in the United States, including in our own Belleville Diocese. Please be generous. More information can be found at [www.usccb.org/home-missions](http://www.usccb.org/home-missions).

## Seeds of Healing through Faith, Hope, and Love

Please join us for our 2nd annual Seeds of Healing retreat on Saturday, **January 18, 2025**, from 9 am – 7 pm, at Marianist Retreat Center. This event is designed to bring God’s healing touch to anyone who has lost a loved one to any tragic death, including suicide. This day of reflection is designed to help in the journey through grief emotions and come out renewed with confidence in God’s love and care for each one of us.

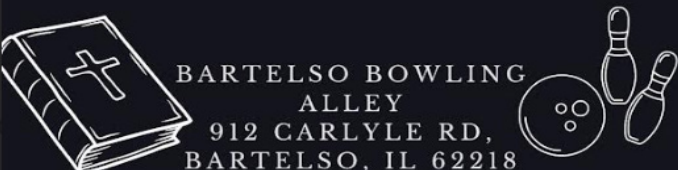
There will be time for healing prayer, discussions, sharing, learning techniques for healthy outlet of emotions, and testimony from those who have healed from the same pain you may be feeling. For more information, don’t hesitate to reach out to Barb @ 314.910.3942 or Mary @ 314.210.5098 or Shelby @ 636.288.9841

<https://marianistretreat.com/events/seeds-of-healing-retreat-2025>



## THE MESSENGER:

Start your New Year off great, by subscribing to *The Messenger!* To subscribe online for the paper or e-edition, go to: [www.bellevillemessenger.org](http://www.bellevillemessenger.org) or call 618-233-8670.





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# YOUNG ADULT BIBLES AND BREWS

with Fr. Thomas Lugge

FOR YOUNG ADULTS 21-35 YEARS OLD

Thursday, January 9, 2025  
6:30pm



# Holy Hour Happy Hour

Third Thursdays 6 p.m.  
January 16, February 20, March 20

Adoration Followed by Fellowship and a Few Beers

Cathedral of St. Peter  
200 W. Harrison St.  
Belleville, IL

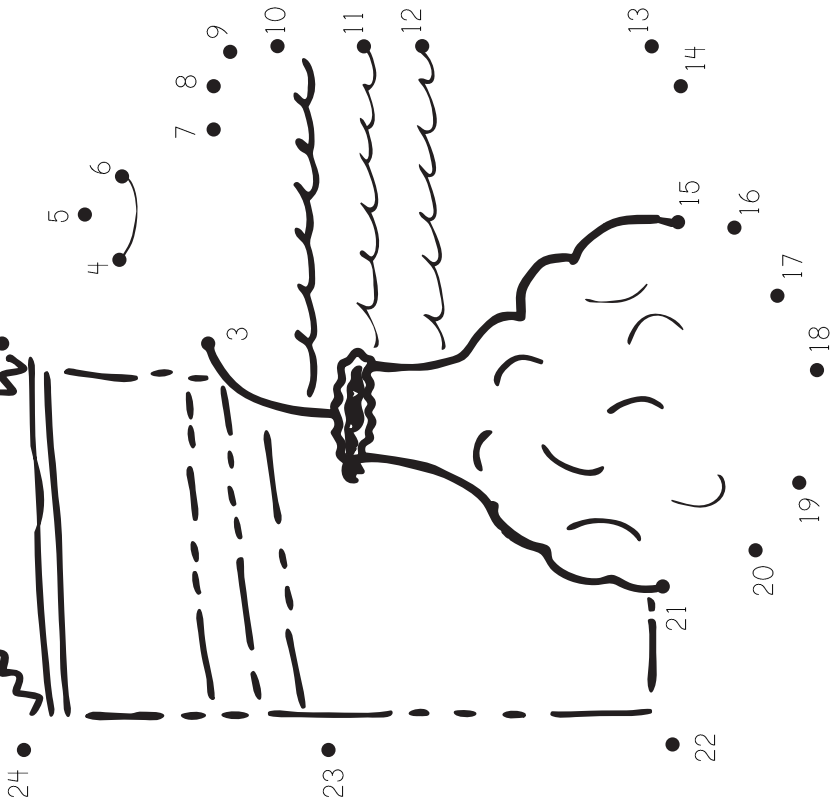
Ages 21-35



Follow the dot-to-dot to draw gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Where is the newborn King of the Jews?

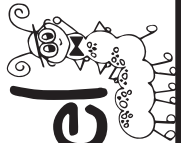
We have come to give Him homage.



Homage means worship!



# Gospel



The Magi saw a star rise over Bethlehem and followed it to visit baby Jesus. They brought Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.



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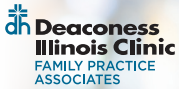
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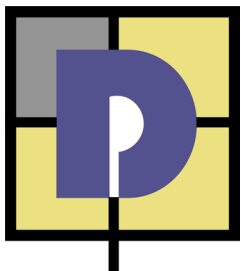
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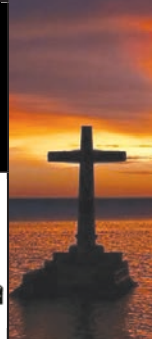
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