



The Parish of Saints Philip and James
1 Carow Place, St. James, NY 11780

631-584-5454

February 25th, 2024
The Second Sunday
Of Lent



*“This is my beloved Son.
Listen to him”
Mark 9:7*

*“With Philip & James we pray to live lives worthy of the call to be
Apostles of Hope”*

Daily Mass: 7:30am and 9:15 am
Saturday 5pm Sunday: 8am 10 am 12noon

STS. PHILIP & JAMES PASTORAL STAFF

Parish Center Phone: 631-584-5454 Parish Fax: 631-862-9675

Website—www.sspj.org

PARISH CENTER OFFICE HOURS

Open Monday, Tuesday Wednesday 9am-6pm

Open Thursday 9am-6pm

Closed Friday, Saturday and Sunday

CLERGY

Father Tom Haggerty, Pastor
Father Joe Lobo-Associate Pastor
Deacon John Keenan

PASTORAL ASSOCIATE

Sister Theresita Donach, CSFN

BUSINESS MANAGER

Virginia Portanova

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: 631-584-3204

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR Grades 1-3

Charlotte Czujko~cczujko@sspj.org

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR Grades 4-6

Barbara Luna~bluna@sspj.org

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR Grades 7-8

Dominick Avento~davento@sspj.org

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Margaret Adams

COORDINATOR OF PARISH SOCIAL MINISTRY

Lynn Sisti

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY

Dominick Avento

DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES

John Cordes

SSPJ SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Diane M. Anderson

School Phone-631-584-7896 School Fax: 631-584-3258

TRUSTEES

Brendan McGovern ~ Tina Cafaro

PASTORAL COUNCIL

Michael Sharkey, Lou Guerra, Cynthia Lombardi, Paul Damato
Lisa Keane, Maureen Burke, Nancy Sanders, Peter Suski, Sheila Cavooris

Collections: ~

Thanking you for your generosity

Financial Support Needed weekly to meet Parish budget:

\$16,700

Weekly Collection: Sunday, February 18th, 2024:

Collections from Weekend masses: \$7,987

Mail Collections: \$1,135

Faith Direct(126Participants) WEEKLY \$3,374.04.

Total Collection: \$12,496.04

FAITH DIRECT: VISIT SSPJ.ORG CLICK ON FAITH DIRECT ICON: USING
SSPJ PARISH CODE: NY232

Sacraments

Baptism— Celebrated twice per month. Parents are asked to register at the Pastoral Center for Pre-Baptism Program.

Marriage—Couples are asked to contact the Pastoral Center before visiting the reception hall. The Marriage Preparation process is nine months before your proposed wedding date.

Confirmation—Seventh and Eighth grade students are prepared to celebrate through Religious Ed or SSPJ School. Adults prepare through RCIA.

Reconciliation— Available Saturdays from 4:00pm-5:00pm in the Church or by contacting the Parish Center for an appointment.

Anointing of the Sick— In case of serious, unexpected illness, please contact the Parish Center office to arrange for a Priest to pray with the person who is ill. Anointing of the Sick is held on the first Sunday of the month following the 8:00am mass please see the Sacristan before mass.

R.C.I.A.— Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (non-Catholic adults desiring to become Catholic) are asked to contact the Parish Center Office.

Eucharistic Adoration In The Church— Monday 1:30pm -7pm

PLEASE REMEMBER THOSE WHO SERVE FOR US IN YOUR PRAYERS



LCDR. MEGAN M. SHUTKA-VIK, USN
CAPT. WILSON MARKS- USN
CAPT. MICHAEL T. DOLAN- JR. -D.O, US ARMY
LT. COL. JOHN KAIREZ
SPC. NICOLE A. CANNON
SGM. MICHAEL P. BORRELLI-US ARMY
CAPT. JOHN TULLY- USN
LT. COL. JAMES TULLY-US ARMY
JOSEPH SAGGIO- USNC
CAPTAIN PAUL WILLMS
STAFF SGT. MICHAEL LONGHENRY
LT. COL. PAUL T. JACKSON-
STAFF SGT ALEXANDER PARRELLA-USAF
RICHARD SOTOMAYER- USAF
SGT. CONNOR F. SCOTT- USMC
SGT. CORY O'HARA -USMC
CDR. ROBERT J. MARSH-USN
PFC. CHARLES CHRISTOPHER HOWELL
STEVEN CAVA-USN
ERIC SEELIN- USMC
CW2 CHRIS MUNZ
CW2 NATASHA WORTMAN
CORPORAL JAMES T. CASEY-USMC
SGT. JOSHUA MAHONEY- US ARMY
KEVIN JONES-USCG
PRIVATE JOSHUA OLSEN-USARNG
GLEN CRIMA-US ARMY
MARIO CATANIA-USMC
RYAN ANTHONY NASCIMENTO-USMC
KYLE ANTHONY NASCIMENTO-US ARMY
ENS. RYAN M. SHOWS -USN
STAFF SGT. RYAN REXRODE-USMC
DR. KARA VANDEKIEFT, COL.-USAF
SGT. STEPHEN D. OUTCAULT-USMC
PAUL MUMOLO-USN
VICTORIA ZEMAN, USCG
KYLE J. GRUNER -US ARMY
MARK GIORDANO—US COASTGUARD
KELLI MCLAUGHLIN- LT. US ARMY NATL.GUARD
1 LT MICHAEL J BANG -MILITARY INTELLIGENCE US ARMY
MATTHEW PATRICK GALLAGHER US ARMY
LT. COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER SHANK MD
MIDN ERIN NICASTRO, USN.
MAJ. BRENDAN JOHNSTON-USAF
CHRISTOPHER A. HIONIDIS-USAF
EMMETT MOLONEY -USN
HANK MOLONEY—USAF
CARL JOSEPHSON-USAF
DANIEL JOSEPHSON-USAF
SAMANTHA JOSEPHSON-USAF

LIVE-STREAMING THE 8:00AM SUNDAY MASS

The Sunday mass at 8:am is available to view on our SSPJ Church Facebook page, while it is live at the 8am mass, it can be recalled at any time.

Father Tom's Letter

Dear Friends,

Today's first reading typically bothers many of us. Additionally, if we let it, the reading also begs the question who or what is my Isaac? Am I willing to offer it to God? In other words, am I willing to seek my base of security, to find my center and reason for living and being in God? Do I first and foremost seek the reign of God in my life? Am I content to trust that all else will be given to me besides? Am I willing to let go of the reins of self-control and self-determination in order to let God lead me and teach me? Or, if my Isaac is a weakness of an addiction or abuse that will bring harm to me or to others, am I willing to relinquish it to the God who will reprove and forgive me, heal and renew me? Certainly, some challenging questions emerge from that first reading. The Lenten season invites us to wrestle with a few of them.

By the way, as if to answer the question, "with what gift shall I come before the Lord? Must I give my firstborn son?" (Micah 6:6-7), this story from Genesis responds with a resounding "No!" From Abraham, believers are to learn that the true value of sacrifice consists not only in what is offered but, in the manner, spirit and motivation with which that gift is offered. Moreover, Abraham's sacrifice was in no way diminished by the fact that he did not take Isaac's life. Rather, his willingness to offer to God the most precious gift he had ever received was more valuable than any blood offering. Our God in fact, desires to give us back to one another, - hence our Lenten renewal.

Many thanks to all who made for the prayerful experiences of Ash Wednesday, including all who assisted with the distribution of the ashes and Lenten bracelets. Thanks also to Maria Sehne for her reflection last weekend inviting us to "receive one another as Christ."

As we continue our Lenten journey, I again invite you to take part in one or more of our Lenten offerings. Perhaps you might join in one of the daily Masses or make a visit to church during the week. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament occurs on Monday afternoons. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available on Saturdays at 4pm. Might you join the Lenten Book Club to discuss *The Beautiful Eucharist*? Please try your best to attend our Lenten Mission March 4, 5, and 6. We also have the family Lenten Retreat on Saturday, March 2nd. And we pray the Stations of the Cross every Friday evening. Many opportunities to choose from! Please prayerfully consider how you will attend your Lenten journey.

And finally,

Due to my time alone, yesterday I finished three books. That's a lot of coloring!

Today I melted an ice cube by just staring at it. It took longer than I thought it would.

Struggling to get your wife's attention? Just sit down and look comfortable.

Just sold my homing pigeon on eBay for the 22nd time.

One minute you're young and fun. Next you're turning down the car stereo so you can see better.

Peace,

Father Tom

Mass Intentions, For the week of February 25th, 2024

Eucharistic Adoration **Monday** **In the Church** **1:30-7:00pm**



We Pray for those who are ill...

Andy
Anna Capizzio
Anna Maria
Alfred Fox
Antonette Sabatino
Angie Mingione
Angela Amoroso
Arthur Gureck
Austin Rocky
Baby Ben
Baby Penny Grace
Candela
Barbara Bombace
Brian
Mattia Rose Lubrano
Barbara Sammarco
Belinda Groneman
Benito Fernandez
Betty DiSimone
Bob DelCielo
Rob Remhild
Carol
Carolyn Nehl
Cathleen Henchey
Chase Addonisio
Christella Stewart
David Beleck
David McCue
Deirdre W.
Diane LaPorte
Donna Patrissi
Dorothy Mitchell
Ed Ceraso
Eleanor Bayley
Elizabeth Martin
Elizabeth Smith
Eileen
Emily Schiaratta
Emily Souders
Flo Donohue
Gail Lumley
George Fitzpatrick
Gloria Montesano
Ginny & John Rief
Gregory Parker
Helen
Harold Scott
Jack Donohue
Jakob King
Jamie Accardi
Jean Saladino
Jenny Bonanno
Jerry
Joelle Nicholas
Joni Deleo
John Capizzio
John Cronin
John DeStefano
John Maynes
John Mattia
Joseph
Joe Benaburger
Joseph Domizzio
Judy Rampola
Joe Dorrian
Joseph Costa

Joseph Domizzio
Kaitlyn Remhild
Kathleen Draper
Kathleen N.
Kerry
Karl Walz
Kitty Cronin
Kristin Galetta
Laura Kennedy
Lauretta Prague
Laura Bode
Leon Donach
Lola Santangelo
Lori Cearney
Marjorie Fox
Mary Monte
Margaret Remhild
Mark Hildreth
Mark Wagner
Mary Ryan
Marie Feicco
Maria Clark
Maria Collaro
Marie del Cielo
Maureen Litten
Mary Ann Cesarski
Mary Beth McGovern
Matthew Parrella
Michael Fisher
Mike Lofaro
Michael
Nick Lella
Patricia Acker
Patricia Trippree
Pasquale Savarese
Pat McCumber
Peter Donach
Peter Portanova
P.I.
Ricardo Buffit
Rob Remhild & Family
Riordan Cavooris
Rogelio Martinez
Rose
Ryan Duffy
Sara Jean Andersen
Stanley Stura
Stephen Dolce
Susanne Smith
Tonia Perdue
Tara Cesarski
Teresa Mattered
Tina Cafaro
Tiffany Lochan
Thomas Liffrieri
Tom Ryan
Tom Focone
Vivien & John
Cordes
Wayne Smith Sr.

Saturday February 24th Cantor: <i>Feeney</i>	<i>Presider: Father Joe</i> <i>Lector: Dreschler/Thompson</i> <i>EM: Calderone/Byrne/</i> <i>Dreschler/Urce</i>	9:15am 5:00pm	Thomas Devaney Pat Henrich
Sunday February 25th Cantor: . <i>Meringolo</i>	<i>Presider: Father Joe</i> <i>Lector: Luna/Koke</i> <i>EM: Rizzo/Koke/Portanova/</i> <i>Sehne/Sica</i>	8:00am	For the People of SSPJ Parish
Cantor: <i>Lupinaci</i>	<i>Presider: Father Tom</i> <i>Lector: Zahorodny/Smith</i> <i>EM: Mantia/Licari/Parish/</i> <i>Clarke/Keane/McKi</i>	10:00am	James Trefx & Joseph Bitet
Cantor: <i>Lupinaci</i>	Collective Mass <i>Presider: Father Tom</i> <i>Lector: Kenton/Rubano</i> <i>EM: Margaret/Rubano/</i> <i>Settineri/Consenz</i>	12:00pm	Anthony Miceli Maximo Collado Anthony & Filomena Mauceri
Monday February 26th		7:30am 9:15am	Lidia Venturini Living~Peter & Virginia Portanova
Tuesday February 27th	St Gregory of Narek	7:30am 9:15am	Ryan Birbiglia John Kelly
Wednesday February 28th		7:30am 9:15am	Patricia McNeely Anna Lukowsky
Thursday February 29th		7:30am 9:15am	Living~Steven Cara USN Collective Mass: Carolyn Johannesen
Friday March 1st	World Day of Prayer	7:30am 9:15am	Living~Victoria Zeman Nelzi Kucich
Saturday March 2nd Cantor:	<i>Presider: Father Joe</i> <i>Lector: Healy/Student</i> <i>EM: Rizzo/Sisti/Anderson/</i> <i>Byrne/Taurassi</i>	9:15am 5:00pm	Marty Rizzo
Sunday March 3rd Cantor:	<i>Presider: Father Joe</i> <i>Lector: Halluska/Cavooris</i> <i>EM: Clarke/Dervan/Diaz/</i> <i>Koke/LaSerra</i>	8:00am	For the People of SSPJ Parish
Cantor:	<i>Presider: Father Tom</i> <i>Lector: Tomasino/Smith</i> <i>EM: Licari/Consenz/</i> <i>Parish/Amen/Luna/</i> <i>Sotomayer</i>	10:00am	Kevin Hauth
Cantor:	Collective Mass <i>Presider: Father Tom</i> <i>Lector: Latino/Rubano</i> <i>EM: Chilton/D.</i> <i>Napolitano/Settineri/</i> <i>Stack</i>	12:00pm	Joyce Lamb Maria Fazio

**LAST DAY TO REGISTER FOR THIS FUN FILLED EVENT IS TOMORROW: MONDAY FEBRUARY 26TH!
PLEASE CALL PARISH CENTER OFFICE AT 631-584-5454**

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR SECOND ANNUAL
FAMILY LENTEN RETREAT**

"I am HIS Reflection"

**SATURDAY, MARCH 2ND, 2024
FROM 10:30AM-12:30 NOON IN THE PARISH
AUDITORIUM**

**JOIN US AS WE SHARE THE SEASON OF LENT TOGETHER
WITH
PRAYER, FAITH SHARING ,TEAMWORK AND
ACTS OF LOVE IN SERVICE FOR OTHERS**

**WE WILL BE ACCEPTING DONATIONS OF DOLLAR STORE ITEMS SUCH AS; SOAP,
DETERGENT, DISH SOAP, BODY LOTION, TOOTHPASTE, TOOTHBRUSH, PENS, NOTE
PADS, SHAMPOO , CONDITIONER TO ASSIST OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN NEED**

Jesus

FAMILY NAME: _____

CHILDREN ATTENDING: _____ GRADE: _____

_____ GRADE: _____

_____ GRADE: _____

_____ GRADE: _____

_____ GRADE: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____



HIS WORDS.
YOUR JOURNEY.
TOGETHER.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024

"Almsgiving, prayer and fasting are not mere external practices; they are paths that lead to the heart, to the core of the Christian life. They make us realize that we are ashes loved by God, and they enable us to spread that love on the "ashes" of so many situations in our daily lives, so that in them hope, trust and joy may be reborn.

Dear Jesus,

I sit before you reaching for silence amidst the chaos that surrounds.

Please accept my worries this day; bring me the peace that only your love and your will can provide.

Dear Jesus~ it is I walking beside you in this Lenten desert of hope.

In the stillness let me hear your voice as I surrender my heart to the will of your grace.

Help me receive your compassionate embrace as I am held deeply in the palm of your hands...

I pray for each of your hearts to receive a blessed Lenten journey....

MUSIC MINISTRY

Jesus' Transfiguration

We are children of light surrounded by your divine light. Show us your reality Lord and let us not shy away from being dazzled by you.

Our Communion song is, There is A longing. We want God to reveal himself to us. A longing in our hearts for love we can only find in our God.



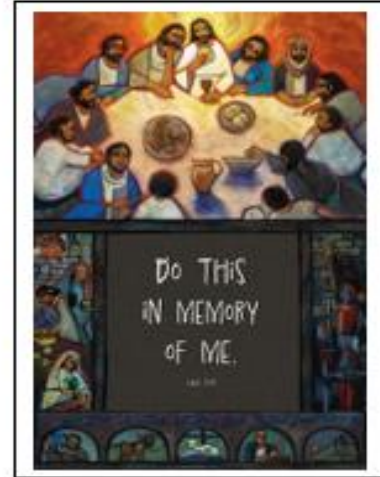
SSPJ Youth Group will be making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the Gerald Ryan Food Pantry on Saturday, March 9th. Donations of peanut butter, jelly, and bread can be dropped off in the St. Anthony's Bread Closet. Thank you for your generosity!

PARISH LENTEN RETREAT~ A LOVE BEYOND TELLING

MONDAY, TUESDAY, AND WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4TH, 5TH, AND 6TH
AT 7:00PM IN THE CHURCH

Lent and the Eucharist – A Love Beyond All Telling

Looking for something to do this Lent? Consider joining us for three evenings of reflection on Jesus' words at the Last Supper, "Do this in Memory of Me." During these three evenings, March 4, 5, and 6 - at 7 pm in the church. We will explore, through prayer, ritual, and reflection, the meaning of these words that Jesus left us. The Passover meal, the bread that becomes his body, the wine that becomes his blood, the water and the basin used to wash the disciples' feet, and Jesus' death on the cross are his great gift to us and reminders of a love beyond all telling. We hope you can join us for any or all of these evenings as we seek to deepen our understanding of this great mystery of faith. ~ Tom Petriano



We encourage you to fully open yourself to receive the gift of Christ as Real Presence in the Eucharist by participating as much as you feel comfortable with during these three evenings. Each evening will be filled with music, prayer, a presentation by Tom Petriano, reflection, and gesture.

On Monday we are inviting you to reflect on what weighs you down. What heavy burden do you carry? What keeps you from receiving Christ as real presence?

Write that word or phrase (anger, envy, resentment, bitterness, etc.) on a stone and drop that stone at the foot of the cross (set up in the church lobby) turning stones into bread. We will then have the opportunity to break bread and offer hope and vision for receiving Christ as real presence and becoming Eucharist for each other.



On Tuesday we will offer Taize - Ignatian Prayer of Imagination. we ask you to bring a candle (votive in a receptacle, a Mason jar, battery operated, etc.) You will be invited to carry your light and place it around the cross during the evening. An evening of Prayer, silent meditation, reflection and song.

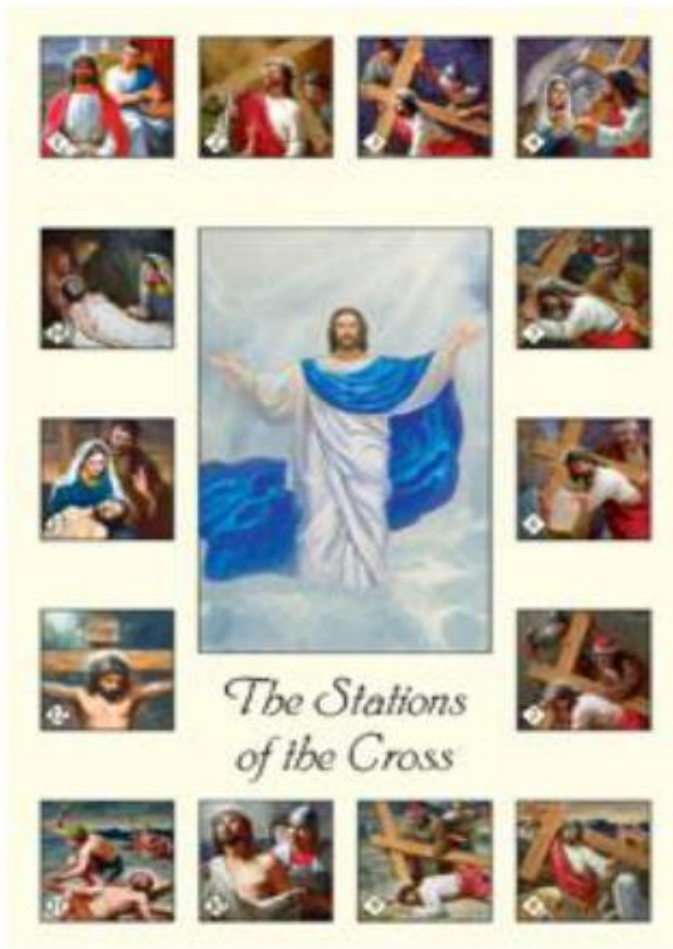
On Wednesday we invite you to deposit into a basket your written prayer, personal offering to bless and received others as Christ. There will be opportunity to see Christ reflected in yourself and in each other and to bless the hands that serve. Christ has no body but yours.



We hope you join us this Lenten Retreat as we awaken and receive Christ as real presence, food for the journey. ~ Virginia Portanova

PREPARING FOR LENT...

“Heavenly Father, grant the strength and discipline to make this Lent a time of spiritual growth. May my fasting, prayer, and almsgiving draw me closer to you.”



Join us every Friday Evening

In the church

at 7:00 pm during Lent

as together we journey the Stations of the Cross focusing each week on hope and healing that unites Christ journey to the cross through prayer with our lives today.

Praying the Stations of Mercy 2/23

Praying through the eyes of Mary 3/2

Praying through the eyes of St. Joseph 3/8

Praying for the Elderly 3/15

Praying with Pope Francis 3/22

Praying as Witnessed by the Crowd 3/29

Prayers of the Resurrection 4/5

Stations of the Cross Through the Eyes of Laudato Si



Third Station - Jesus Falls for the First Time

“Yet it was our pain that he bore, our sufferings he endured. We thought of him as stricken, struck down by God and afflicted, but he was pierced for our sins, crushed for our iniquity. He bore the punishment that makes us whole; by his wounds we were healed.” Isaiah 53:4

The suffering of the earth and of the vulnerable is not a punishment by God but is a result of our thoughtless exploitation of Earth’s finite resources. We fall by failing to see the interconnectedness of the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor with our habits of consumption. “Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat [global] warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it.” (LS 23) Christian spirituality encourages growth and fulfillment marked by moderation and the capacity to be happy with less. “Purchasing is always a moral - not simply an economic - act”, as Pope Benedict XVI reminded us. The United States, with just over 4% of the world's population, consumes more than 25% of the world's resources. As followers of Jesus, we must learn to weigh the difference between needs and wants, and to consider the environmental impact of what we consume.

Fourth Station – Jesus Meets His Mother

Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, His Mother: This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too”. Luke 2: 34-35

LENTEN BOOK CLUB OFFERING



Join the SSPJ Lenten Book Club!

The Parish Council is excited to be offering a Lenten Book Club based on the book *Beautiful Eucharist* from Dynamic Catholic. The book consists of a dozen short passages and inspiring stories from various authors who share personal encounters with Jesus in the Eucharist, provide new insights into the Mass, and inspire a deeper relationship with

God. Books will be provided free of charge in the Parish Center to those who want to commit to reading and participating in the two book discussion sessions. All sessions will be held in the Philip & James Room. Session choices are:

Session 1:

Sunday 2/25 1:00 - 2:00

Wednesday 2/28 10:00 -11:00 or 6:00 - 7:00

Session 2:

Sunday 3/10 1:00 - 2:00

Wednesday 3/13 10:00 -11:00 or 6:00 - 7:00

**SIGN UP
SHEETS AND
BOOKS
AVAILABLE
AFTER MASS IN
THE PRAYER
ROOM**



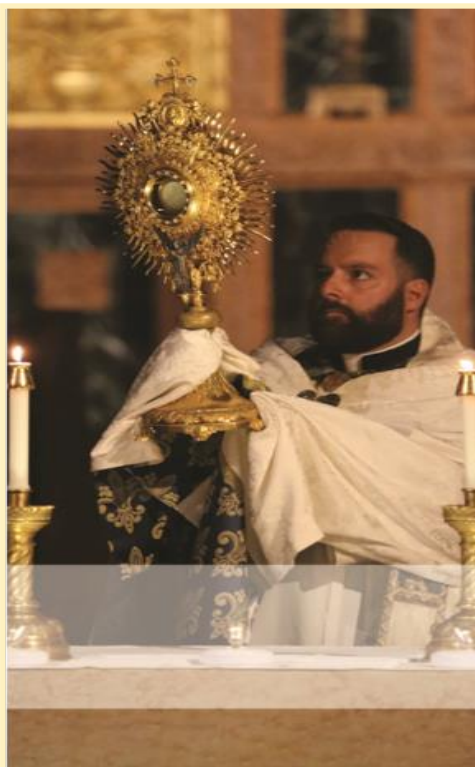
**WE ARE GRATEFUL TO
OUR
PARISH FAMILY FOR THE
GENEROSITY OF YOUR
STEWARDSHIP.**

**OUR CATHOLIC
MINISTRIES APPEAL
GOAL FOR 2024
IS \$102, 000**

**THE CATHOLIC
MINISTRIES APPEAL
WILL BEGIN
NEXT WEEKEND:
FEBRUARY 25TH, 2024**

**GOD BLESS YOU AND
YOUR FAMILIES.**

**LET US WALK THIS
LENTEN JOURNEY
HOLDING OUR
BROTHERS AND SISTERS
WHO NEED BASIC LIFE
SUSTAINING SUPPORT,
IN OUR HEARTS AND IN
OUR PRAYERS.**



2024

CATHOLIC MINISTRIES APPEAL

DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

*Revitalizing our Faith –
Renewed by the Eucharist*

**Please consider making a gift to the
2024 Catholic Ministries Appeal.**



**For more information, to watch our video
or to make a donation,
visit www.catholicministriesappeal.org
or call us at 516-678-5800 ext. 296**



INTRODUCING OUR RCIA CANDIDATES

PLEASE KEEP THEM IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS LENTEN SEASON

FROM KRISTINA QUADRINO

Write a little about yourself and why you came to RCIA:

Hi everyone! I live in Setauket with my husband Brian and our dog, a mini berne-doodle, named Bonnie. I work in marketing at Northwell Health and have been an athlete my entire life — I grew up playing soccer competitively and ran the New York City Marathon, my first marathon, this past November. I started coming to SSPJ with my husband years ago and we were married here in 2022. After attending mass here consistently I quickly fell in love with the values the Roman Catholic Church embodied and wanted to fully make them part of my life.



How has this process affected, touched your heart and relationship with God?

This process has helped teach me that by showing up consistently in your faith — not just on Sundays — and by keeping God at the center of your life, your relationship with him can grow in ways you'd never imagined. As someone who used to live overwhelmed by anxiety and worry, I am in constant awe of how strengthening my relationship with God has helped me to now live with a sense of peace and comfort. RCIA has helped me to more deeply understand my Catholic values and the power of faith.

Why and would you invite others to experience this RCIA process?

I absolutely would! It has helped me develop a stronger appreciation and understanding of Roman Catholic values and traditions, and what it really means to have a relationship with God — something I think everyone could use always, but especially at this day and age.

FROM NICK HOFFMAN



Why I came to RCIA: I have always had a strong faith in God, however, with the birth of my children and the love of my wife, I realized that I wanted to learn more. My son, Lucas, was enrolled at the SSP J School, and I witnessed his spiritual growth firsthand. His thanks for all that is good and his praise to God is something I wanted to emulate. Through his eyes, I was seeing the grace of God. He's always expressing his gratitude and he says so often, "I'm so happy." I now see why.

How has this process affected my Relationship with God?

I find myself praying more to help others than for my own needs.

Would I invite others to experience this RCIA process?

I would invite others and have invited my best friend who is Catholic. He is going through some serious health issues. His medical treatments render him exhausted so he has not been able to attend. I've shared some of the work we are covering in class, and he is grateful. The class has enabled me to reflect on the blessings in my life. It has strengthened my relationship with God.

INTRODUCING OUR RCIA CANDIDATES

PLEASE KEEP THEM IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS LENTEN SEASON

FROM CHRISTIE GALLINA

Why I came to RCIA:

I currently work in the Accounting field and I am pursuing my Master's degree in Accounting. I was raised in San Diego, California and moved to New York in 2022. I came to RCIA because I wanted to learn more and become more involved in the Catholic faith.



How has this process affected my Relationship with God?

This process touched my heart because I have met so many people who all have different journeys in their life and faith, but we are all here with the purpose of strengthening our relationship with God.

Would I invite others to experience this RCIA process?

I would definitely invite others to experience RCIA. I think it's a great way to become more involved with the faith, and learn about its roots. The speakers always encourage the class to be involved and to share their thoughts, and it has been a very positive and open experience for me.

FROM MARIANA AVELLAN



Why I came to RCIA: I am an older sister, I attend Smithtown High School East, I have been on my school's cheer team for 3 years and I have been dancing at Chorus Line Dance Studio for 13 years. I came to RCIA because my family and I have become closer to God and more involved in the church, so we wanted me to receive all my sacraments.

How has this process affected my Relationship with God? I have certainly become closer to God and my relationship with Him has gotten stronger. The RCIA team has helped me learn more about my heavenly father and I look forward to every sunday.

Would I invite others to experience this RCIA process? I would invite others to experience the RCIA process because of how much it really helps you know more about God. I have learned so much during class, and it is a warm welcoming environment. I've always wanted to know more about God, and I finally understand my religion more thanks to RCIA.



God's Blessings upon each of our RCIA Catechumens and their Sponsors.

Pictured is Christie Gallina and her Sponsor, Joe Montesano, at the send off from SSPJ by Father Joe Lobo on Sunday February 18th.

Christie then attended the Rite of Enrollment Mass at the Church of St. Anne in Brentwood. Christie is seeking the Sacrament of Baptism at the Easter Vigil Mass on Saturday, March 30th, 2024



"LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO ME, AND DO NOT HINDER THEM
BECAUSE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN BELONGS TO SUCH AS THESE."

Matthew 19:14



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES
FOR THE WEEK OF

FEBRUARY 18TH- FEBRUARY 22ND

WILL BE ON VACATION!

WISHING OUR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES
A WONDERFUL WINTER BREAK!

CLASSES WILL RESUME THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 25TH

ATTENTION SSPJ COMMUNITY!
DONATE FOR OUR SCHOOL
EASY AS 1, 2, 3!

WHAT: "Clothing Drive" is an organization that picks up *clothing, stuffed animals and other used goods*. They will pay our school by the pound for our donations...EASY!!

**Please have items in bags*

WHEN: Saturday, March 23rd from
9:00 am - 12:00 am
(Drop off between these hours)

WHERE: Drop off location will be in the **SSPJ School** side parking lot

HOW: Pull up, drop off, leave, done!

DONATION ITEMS: **Stuffed Animals, Clothes, Bicycles, Accessories such as:** POCKETBOOKS, BELTS, BABY ACCESSORIES, BACKPACKS, HATS, SCARVES, BRIEFCASES, GLOVES, TIES, HANDBAGS
Household Items such as: BLANKETS, TABLE CLOTHS, BED SHEETS, DRAPERY, CURTAINS, PILLOWS, TOWELS, QUILTS, COMFORTERS

PLEASE DO NOT DONATE: Hard toys, baby gear, books, pots, pans, etc...

Please visit the website for a full listing of acceptable and non-acceptable donation items:

www.clothingdrive.net

For Questions Call or Text:
Faye Saladino 646-573-9014



SSPJ YOUTH GROUP MEETING

Calling all Seventh and Eighth Graders at SSPJ Parish!

For our Lenten Youth Group Meeting, we are focusing on helping our neighbors in need. We will be making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, which we will donate to the Gerald Ryan Food Pantry. Supplies will be provided, but please feel free to bring peanut butter, jelly, or a loaf of bread (or two!)

Details: When: Saturday, March 9th
 Where: SSPJ Cafeteria
 Time: 3:30-4:45pm followed by 5pm Mass

Please contact Sandy Rago with any questions at srago@sspj.org.

----- CUT ALONG THIS LINE -----

Please detach this page and return to SSPJ Parish or School by Thursday, March 7th.

My child _____
will be attending Youth Group on Saturday,
March 9th.

My child is in:

7th Grade

8th Grade

Please check all that apply. My child will be staying for:

Youth Group Meeting (3:30-4:45pm)

Mass (5:00pm-6:00pm)

Primary Contact

Name: _____

Mobile: _____

Home number: _____

Relation to child: _____

My child will be picked up by:

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Allergies or medical concerns: _____

LET ALL BE RECEIVED AS CHRIST~ Lenten Reflection by Maria Sehne

"You promised me Lord, that if I followed you, you would walk with me always. But I have noticed that during the most trying periods of my life there have only been one set of footprints in the sand. Why, when I needed you most, have you not been there for me?" The Lord replied, "The times when you have seen only one set of footprints, my child is when I carried you." ~Mary Stevenson

"Let me carry you"...those words consoled my soul as I walked home from mass Friday morning. It was clear. "Let me carry you".

I knew the voice; I have heard it during my happiest moments and during moments that were most heart wrenching...

I recognized the voice. It was the voice of my Lord Jesus Christ. It has been a comfort since I was a child, as I witnessed the great faith of my mothers' hands. She encouraged me to cultivate a relationship with that comforting voice within.

"Let all be received as Christ"...that, became my storm...as I pondered the depth of its meaning, I struggled to swim against the currents of an angry ocean of doubt.

It is deep.....we could boldly proclaim, "Let all be received as Christ" as we chant kumbaya and shake our timbrels . But can I sustain that enthusiasm on my own; when the evil one fills the crevices of despair with doubt, hypocritical thoughts, or anger when others cannot see as I see...? How can I receive what I don't allow myself to accept?

So, I pose to each of you, me included, to harness that special gift of Jesus Christ within ourselves this Lenten season. That is, to make his loving presence the main event of the 35 days remaining in Lent. I don't believe there is an app that contains this content similar to the one that trains me to become a 5k runner from a couch potato in 30 days: BUT, I believe it is, and can be cultivated very simply: By spending 7 quiet minutes a day in HIS presence... to PRAY. Prayer, our first pillar of lent...

Pray...."Jesus, I am empty".... "Jesus, I am worried ...Jesus, I am lost. "Jesus, I am addicted" "Jesus I am scared." Jesus, I am dying... Jesus, I am grieving.

*He knocks upon the sacred door of our hearts..."Ephphatha"
HE SPEAKS(EFATHA),BE OPENED! Be opened to his voice.*

7 quiet minutes each day...to offer our longings in prayer...

Fasting, our second pillar of lent...Fast from that which pulls you away from his Presence. Detach from that which distracts you. Detach from phones!! Detach from "All the things I have to accomplish" Detach from "fear of solitary oneness with the Lord", embrace what feels uncomfortable...for in that discomfort, HIS PRESENCE will meet you.

Remember, it is but 7 quiet minutes each day...to offer our longings in prayer, detach from chaos, and REST in his gentle presence...

Our third and final pillar of Lent...Almsgiving that which is defined as giving money or food to the poor...

"But Lord, it is I who hunger; it is I who am poor; when I am too busy to share just 7 quiet minutes in your grace filled presence.

*Give to thyself, Maria; Then your father, who sees what is done in secret will reward you.
Mathew 6:6-7*

LET ALL BE RECEIVED AS CHRIST~ Lenten Reflection Continued...

For when we come to experience HIS PRESENCE within, it is then that we are gifted with eyes to see HIS PRESENCE among...

HE IS THE HOSPICE NURSE THAT IS STANDING BESIDE A GOODBYE

HE IS THE SECURITY GUARD THAT escorts you through the doors of a psychiatric emergency room.

HE IS THE HANDS OF A PASSERBY THAT SEES A SOUL IN NEED AND BRINGS A WARM DRINK AND A SANDWICH.

HE IS THE PHARMACIST THAT OPENS A CLOSED STORE TO FILL A MUCH-NEEDED PRESCRIPTION FOR A FAMILY KEEPING THEIR LOVED ONE COMFORTABLE

HE IS THE ENVELOPE OF GENEROSITY RECEIVED AS A STRUGGLING YOUNG FAMILY SEEKS ASSISTANCE FROM PARISH SOCIAL MINISTRY

HE IS THE STRANGER WHO OFFERS TO HELP YOU FIGURE OUT HOW TO USE THE COFFEE MACHINE IN THE WAITING ROOM AT SLOAN KETTERING HOSPITAL.

HE IS THE BEAUTIFUL CHILD LIVING WITH AUTISM THAT GIVES YOU A HIGH FIVE AS HE COMES INTO CLASS ON AN EARLY SATURDAY MORNING.

HE IS THE NURSING HOME RESIDENT SINGING THE WORDS TO HOW GREAT THOU ART; BUT DOESN'T REMEMBER HER DAUGHTER'S NAME.

The Lord Says, "let me take you by the hand and lead you" I will prepare a place for you, and I will come and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there, you also may be.

As I was walking with the Lord; discerning this script, I began to collect rocks ...he assured me that when my burdens became too hard to carry that I was to place them upon his yoke...I said lord... when I let go of these rocks...who will carry them? he replied...maria I will carry you..., for you are carved into the palm of my hands...

I share with you today these prayer stones of hope I collected. In the past I would have identified them as burdens or splintered crosses that I carried. This time is different. Because the collection was meant for you.....as I held them in the palm of my hand, I prayed for each of you... that your hearts be opened to the light of Christ within . I prayed they bring you comfort, that they anchor you and most importantly they reassure you of HIS presence beside you and within the brothers and sisters that walk alongside you.

I CARRY BUT ONE STONE TODAY...PAINTED BY A RELIGION CLASS I SHARED 10 YEARS AGO. THE LESSON WAS THE RESASSURING PRESENCE OF GOD. THAT GOD IS ALWAYS WITH US. EACH STUDENT DREW A SIMPLE DECORATION UPON IT; BUT ELIZABETH ADORNED IT WITH THE WORD TRUST.

This rock STILL sits upon my kitchen sill...

TRUST this time...bless yourself...give what the Lord has given you...so that the light of Christ illuminating within can be seen by all who walk in your presence.

A very special circle of faith reminded me:

WE, are all a different color of Christ;

and together we are on a pilgrimage of faith,

as we walk one another home... "Just 7 quite minutes each day"

"JUST 7 quite minutes each day."

Please open your hearts to these beautiful ministries;

The Lector Ministry and the ministry of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

If you are feeling a calling to either, kindly write a note to Father Tom describing your desire to share your time and gifts .

Kindly send your letter to Father Tom by April 10th, 2024

Liturgical Minister Training- Spring 2024

The Diocese of Rockville Center will offer training in Spanish and English for those who wish to serve as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and Lectors. No walk-ins permitted, all participants must be registered in advance with a letter from their pastor.

Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion: Part A - This training is required for all those who are beginning as Ministers. This "BASIC" training is required for all Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Those who wish to minister in hospitals, nursing homes and to the homebound are required to attend Part B training in addition to BASIC training. One must attend Part A training prior to Part B training. A **Lector Workshop** is available for both new and experienced lectors.

Dates and Locations for Liturgical Minister Training

Training in SPANISH:

- **Lector Workshop:** Sat., April 20 – Our Lady of Loretto / Hempstead – Divine Mercy Chapel 9:00 – 1:00 pm
- **Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion – Part A:**
Sat., April 27 - Our Lady of Loretto/ Hempstead – Divine Mercy Chapel 9:00 – 1:00 pm

Training in ENGLISH:

- **Lector Workshop and Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion – Part A:**
Tuesday, April 16 - St. Elizabeth / Melville - Msgr. Kane Hall; 7 pm - 10 pm
Sat., April 27 – Immaculate Conception/Westhampton Beach - Parish Hall; 9 am – 12:00
Tuesday, May 21 – St. Christopher/Baldwin – McGoldrick Hall; 7 pm – 10 pm
You may register for EITHER Lector OR Extraordinary Minister training at each session.
Doors open 30 minutes before the training start time.
- **Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Part B** – presented in conjunction with Catholic Health
Sat., April 27* – Immaculate Conception/Westhampton Beach - Parish Hall; 1 – 4 pm
Tuesday, May 14 - St. Elizabeth / Melville - Msgr. Kane Hall; 7 pm - 10 pm
Tuesday, June 4 - St. Christopher/Baldwin – McGoldrick Hall; 7 pm – 10 pm

*On April 27, we are offering Part A and Part B on the SAME day. Those who attend Part A in the morning are welcome to bring lunch or leave for lunch and return for the 1 pm Part B session. Please indicate if you are doing BOTH on your registration letter from your pastor. This will be in English only.

A letter from your pastor will be required to reserve your space at any of these trainings and must be received at least five days prior to the session you wish to attend. To request registration for any of these sessions, please contact your rectory. Do not call the host parishes with questions. For questions relating to the Spanish training, call Ingrid Oliva at 516-678-5800, ext. 560. For questions regarding the English training, call Suzanne Lynn at 516-744-6850. Thank you for your interest.

A REFLECTION FROM SISTER T...

Dear Friends,

We are already in the first week of Lent and before I continue, I really want to share with you a story about Ash Wednesday from a long time ago. I was assigned to distribute ashes to our Religious Education Children and so after an explanation of Lent, Ashes and what we were going to do I began distributing them. As one of the younger children approached me, I moved toward putting the ashes in his forehead. "WOAH, you're not putting those hot ashes on my head!" The Woah with a little hand up stopping the placement got me! After a hearty laugh (imagine that on Ash Wednesday!) I convinced him they were not HOT, and he allowed me to put the ashes on his forehead. Mission accomplished!

There is a connection with this story and the second "Be Attitude" of Pope Francis. The next "Be Attitude" is to

Be Missionary

You see there were several ways I could have responded to that wonderful child. It comes under the first reflection question that asks -

- ◆ Am I able to accompany people on their journey? Especially if their journey is different than mine? Am I able to listen to another's way of thinking and love them no matter what?
- ◆ Am I able to do this when it takes me out of my comfort zone? This is a hard one as each of us has all the right way and for some flexibility is not in their vocabulary. How do I learn to grow when I am being called to be flexible and move out of my comfort zone?
- ◆ How do I react when people interrupt me when I am busy? As simple as this may seem, it is another situation where we need to learn how to be able to be kind and gracious when MY plans are being interrupted. Where do you fall on this scale?
 - ◆ Can I stop to be present to others in their time of need? To be missionary is not to be preachy but to be. To be present to another when they need you. To be willing to sit and listen when you would rather solve the situation.

As you look at all of these reflections it is easy to see there is a lot more giving up of yourself than candy or soda, TV etc. May your week be filled with all kinds of WOAH moments.

Till next week,

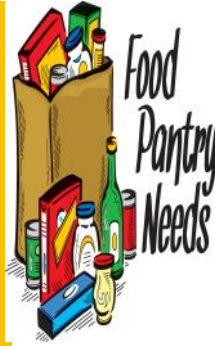
Sister T



BE MISSIONARY

Parish Social Ministry

Our Food Pantry Needs:
Thanks to your
overwhelming
generosity, we
are fully stocked
again!



We remember the family and
friends of,
Pasquale S. Iacullo
Safely Home in the arms of
our Lord

Prayer Shawl Ministry



*Blessing of the Prayer Shawls; Sunday, March 3
at the 12 Noon Mass*

*If you know someone in need of healing
And would like them to be wrapped in the
love of our SSPJ parish, please feel free to take one*

SSPJ SENIORS

The next meeting of SSPJ Seniors will be on
Monday, Feb. 26 from 1:30 to 3:30 in the
Sts. Philip & James Room.

40 DAYS FOR LIFE™

Has begun. Our parish prays on Friday mornings
in front of the clinic at 80 Maple Ave, Smithtown,
from
9AM to 12 noon. Please try to attend for whatever
amount of time you
can give. We stand on the left side of the entrance
(facing the clinic)
to join the Catholic Prayer group. All faiths have the
same goal
to help the moms and the babies. Any questions
call (631-862-9370)

Katie's Way

Collecting new and gently used baby items and delivering them
to the Life Center of Long Island. These items benefit mothers,
children, and expectant mothers in need. Your donations build a
community that supports mothers who choose life for their
unborn children under difficult circumstances. **Suggested
donation items:** Diapers, wipes, bottles. Gently used baby and
toddler items such as car seats, high chairs, strollers, clothing,
toys, etc. New baby and toddler items, including diapers, wipes,
formula, baby food, clothing, etc. **PLEASE DROP OFF AT:
56 TILLOTSON AVENUE, ST. JAMES, NY**

Helpful Phone Numbers~ YOU ARE NEVER ALONE

Dept. of Social Services: 631-854-2300
Alcoholics Anonymous 24-Hour Hotline: 631-669-1124
Al-Anon Suffolk County: 631-669-2827
Alzheimer's Disease: 631-954-2323
American Red Cross L.I.: 516-747-3500
Birthright (Pregnancy Support): 631-821-9727 or 1-800-
550-4900
Brighter Tomorrow (Domestic Violence): 631-395-1800
Brookhaven Youth Counseling: 631-451-8011
Catholic Charities (Food Stamp Info): 631-789-9546
Child Advocacy Center (CAC) (Child Abuse): 631-439-
0480
Children's Community: 631-585-2020, 631-476-9698
www.childrenscommunityhs.org
Domestic Violence Hotline (Vibes): 631-360-3607
Elder Abuse: 631-761-7470
Fidelis Insurance (Family Health Plus): 1-888-343-3547
Gamblers Anonymous Hotline: 1-855-222-5542
Good Shepherd Hospice: 631-376-3758
Hope House Ministries: 631-473-6030
In Home Care- Home Instead: 631-724-2273
LI Against Domestic Violence: 631-666-8833
LI Head Start: 631-732-7100
L.I. Women's Coalition (Domestic Violence): 631-666-8833
Memory Care in NY: www.memorycare.com
Mental Health Emergency: 631-952-3333
Narcotics Anonymous: 631-689-6262
Nassau/Suffolk Law: 631-232-2400
National Aging in place-L.I. Chapter: 631-383-4341
National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-784-2433
Office for the Aging: 631-853-8200
Overeaters Anonymous 631-260-6615 www.SuffolkOA.org
Rachel's Hope (Post Abortion): 888-456-4673
Response Crisis Center: (Suicide Hotline): 631-751-7500
The Retreat (Domestic Violence Hotline): 631-329-2200

Our Family Prayer Intention~ March

Your prayers will be offered to Jesus during all masses this month.
 Look for them beside the Tabernacle
 Please offer your intention at mass next weekend;
March 2nd & 3rd, 2024
 We as a Parish Family will be holding you in our prayers

FAMILY/STUDENT NAMES	STUDENT GRADE LEVEL/SSPJ SCHOOL

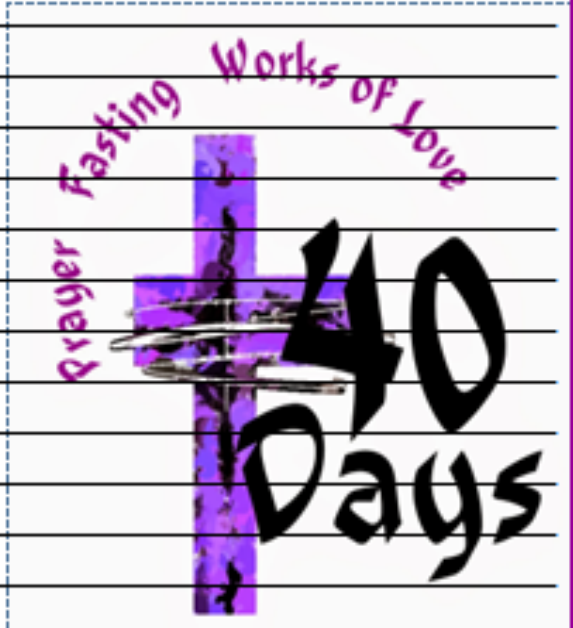
Dear Jesus,

We thank you for all the blessings we have received by your grace and love. We pray that you will continually remind us that we are never alone, and that you are always by our side.

Jesus, we offer you our hearts, our needs, our intentions, knowing that you hear us. Let your will be done.

Amen

Who do you know that might need some special love, some kindness, or a smile to cheer them?
 Together as a family we offer them in our prayers....



HOLY MAKERAL! DID 100 DAYS PASS THAT QUICKLY???
GOD BLESS SSPJ SCHOOL

**SSPJ
Students
Celebrate
100 Days
of Fun
and
Growing
in their
Faith!**



Good News

INSPIRATION FOR DAILY LIFE

3rd Sunday of Lent

Sunday, March 3

Ex 20:1-17
Ps 19:8-11
1 Cor 1:22-25
Jn 2:13-25

Monday, March 4

2 Kgs 5:1-15b
Ps 42:2-3; 43:3-4
Lk 4:24-30

Tuesday, March 5

Dn 3:25,34-43
Ps 25:4-5b,6,7b-9
Mt 18:21-35

Wednesday, March 6

Dt 4:1,5-9
Ps 147:12-13,15-16,19-20
Mt 5:17-19

Thursday, March 7

Jer 7:23-28
Ps 95:1-2,6-9
Lk 11:14-23

Friday, March 8

Hos 14:2-10
Ps 81:6c-11b,14,17
Mk 12:28-34

Saturday, March 9

Hos 6:1-6
Ps 51:3-4,18-21b
Lk 18:9-14

Jesus strongly reacted in Jerusalem when He drove out the money changers in the Temple. Remembering the psalm from Scripture, "Zeal for your house will consume me," imagine the disciples witnessing their beloved leader's assertive rampage of the temple that day. He was chasing away all that wasn't right and holy in the sanctuary of God. Jesus' righteous anger and firm actions were a clear sign from the beginning of His ministry that He would fiercely protect God's house, His truths, and teachings. He was serious about His mission to teach us to know God, to love Him, and to serve Him. Jesus showed us we could trust Him to keep us on the right path to heaven.

Just as Jesus was consumed with zeal for the Father's house in the Jerusalem Temple, He is also serious about His pursuit and protection of our souls, the temple of the Holy Spirit. He wants to keep us on track to our goal of heaven. Jesus suffered

and died for our sins and then resurrected from the dead so that we may have the hope of everlasting life in heaven.

If something or someone is blocking our relationship with God, making us less loving and less willing to sacrifice our selfish desires, Jesus will send the Holy Spirit to help us surrender our hearts to His Holy Will. He will pursue us with zealous passion; all we need to do is be open, listen, and follow Him. Jesus' passionate invitation and promise of heaven are there in front of us, but we must decide to answer His call, make our path straight, follow His Way to heaven, and lead others to join us.



A consistent prayer life, studying Sacred Scripture, participation in the Mass, and frequent reception of the Sacraments, along with love and service to others, are sure ways to cooperate with God's grace and strengthen our virtue and sanctity. This will surely lead to a zealous life for God and will likely draw others to Christ, too.

Reflect & Discuss:

- † What do you need to drive out of your life to help you stay on the sure-footed path of God's Holy Will?
- † In what ways are you ready to commit your life and total trust more fully to the Lord?
- † How has someone else's zeal for Christ drawn you closer in your own walk with Christ?
- † How are you showing zeal for Christ through the living example of your relationships and life?

AFTER THE BLOOM HAS LEFT THE ROSE

What is our deepest center? Normally we take that to mean the deepest part of our heart, the deepest part of our soul, our affective center, our moral center, that place inside of us which Thomas Merton called *le pointe vierge*. And that is a good way of imagining it. But there's another.

The classical mystic John of the Cross saw things differently. For him, the deepest center of anything is *the furthest point attainable by that object's being and power and force of operation and movement*. What does he mean by that? In essence, this is what he is saying: *The deepest center of anything, be it a flower or a human being, is the furthest point to which can grow before it dies.*

Take a flower for example: It begins as a seed, then grows into a tiny bud that sprouts into a young plant. That plant eventually bursts forth in a beautiful bloom. That bloom lasts for a while and then begins to dry out and wither. Eventually, what was once the substance of a beautiful bloom turns into seeds, and then in its very act of dying, the flower gives off those seeds to leave new life behind.

Thus, for John of the Cross, the deepest center for a flower is not its moment of spectacular beauty, its bloom, but its last moment when its bloom has turned to seed and it is able to give off that seed in its very act of dying.

There's a lesson in which goes against how we commonly assess things. When are we the most generative potentially? When do we have the greatest capacity to use our lives to give off the seeds for new life? What is our deepest center of growth?

Normally, of course, we think of the deepest center as the bloom, namely, that period or moment in our lives when a combination of good health, physical attractiveness, talent, achievement, and influence make us someone who is admired and perhaps envied. This is the time in our lives when we look our best and, as they say, are at the peak of our game. This is our bloom! The best we will ever look!

John of the Cross wouldn't denigrate that moment in our lives. Indeed, he would challenge us to be in that moment, to enjoy it, be grateful to God for it, and to try to use the advantages and privileges that come with that to help others. But, he wouldn't say this is the peak moment of our generativity, that this is the moment or period of our lives when we are giving off the most seeds for new life. No, like a flower that gives off its seeds in its very act of dying, we too are potentially most generative after the bloom has given way to the grey of age and our achievements have given way to a different kind of fruitfulness.

Imagine a young woman who is beautiful and talented and becomes a famous movie actor. At the height of her career, she is in full bloom and is given the gaze of admiration. Indeed, she is adulated. Moreover, in her life outside of the movies she may be a generous person, a wonderful wife, a dedicated mother, and a trusted friend. However, that bloom is not her furthest point of growth, her deepest center, that time in her life when she is giving off the most vis-a-vis generating new life. Instead, when she is an aged grandmother, struggling with health issues, her physical looks diminished, facing the prospect of assisted living and imminent death that, potentially, like the flower whose bloom has dried and turned to seed, she can give her life away in a manner that helps create new life in a way she couldn't do when she was young, attractive, admired, envied, and in full bloom.

A similar case might be made for a star male athlete. At the height of his career, winning a championship, becoming a household name, his envied youthful athletic image seen everywhere in ads and on billboards, he is in full bloom; but at that time, he is not optimally generative in terms of his life giving off seeds to bring about new life. That can happen later, in his old age, when his achievements no longer define him, and he, like everyone else, with his hair greying, is facing physical diminishment, marginalization, and imminent death. It's then, after the bloom has left the rose, that in his dying he can give off seeds to create new life. We tend to identify a spectacular bloom with powerful generativity. Fair enough, that bloom has its own importance, legitimate purpose, and value. Indeed, one of our challenges is to give that bloom the gaze of admiration without envy. Not easy to do, and something we often don't do well. The bigger challenge however is to learn what we ourselves are called to do after the bloom has left the rose.