

SS. PHILIP  
& JAMES

CATHOLIC PARISH

1 Carow Place, St. James, NY 11780

(631) 584-5454

**August 10, 2025**

**Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**



*The Last Judgement, Master of 1549, 16th century. MNAANational Museum of Ancient Art, Lisboa, Portugal.*

Philip said to him, "Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us." - John 14:8

**MASS TIMES**

Weekday 7:30 AM, 9:15 AM

Saturday 9:15 AM , 5 PM (Vigil)

Sunday 8 AM (Live-streaming via Facebook), 10 AM, 12 NOON

**RECONCILIATION**

Saturday 4 – 5 PM

**EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION**

Monday 1 – 7 PM

# The Parish Directory

## Parish Information



### GENERAL INFORMATION

Phone Number (631) 584-5454  
Parish Fax (631) 862-9675  
Website [www.sspj.org](http://www.sspj.org)  
Address 1 Carow Place  
St. James, NY 11780

Office Hours Mon. & Thu. 9:30 AM - 5 PM  
Tue. & Wed. 9:30 AM - 8 PM  
Fri. 9:30 AM - 1 PM

### CLERGY

Pastor Rev. Sean Magaldi  
Associate Pastor Rev. Dennis Gannon  
Associate Pastor Rev. Martin Adu Gyamfi  
Deacon John Keenan

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Phone Number (631) 584-3204

### GRADE LEVEL COORDINATORS

Grades 1-3 Charlotte Czujko  
cczujko@sspj.org  
Grades 4-6 Barbara Luna  
bluna@sspj.org  
Grades 7-8 Dominick Avento  
davento@sspj.org

### MUSIC DIRECTOR

Margaret Adams

### COORDINATOR OF PARISH SOCIAL MINISTRY

Lynn Sisti

### DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY

Sandra Rago

### DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES

John Cordes

### SSPJ SCHOOL

Principal William Biangasso  
Phone Number (631) 584-7896  
School Fax (631) 584-3258

### TRUSTEES

Brendan McGovern  
Jennine Cullen

### PASTORAL COUNCIL

Michael Sharkey Lou Guerra  
Cynthia Lombardi Paul Damato  
Lisa Keane Maureen Burke  
Nancy Sanders Matthew Carey  
Sheila Cavouris

*Thank you for your generosity  
Financial Support Needed Weekly  
to Meet Parish Budget: \$16,700*

*Weekly Collection -  
Sunday, August 3, 2025:*

Collections From Weekend Masses: \$12,189.00

Faith Direct  
(126 Participants Weekly): \$ 3,374.00

**Total Collection: \$15,563.00**

*Faith Direct:  
Visit [sspj.org](http://sspj.org) and Click on the Faith Direct Icon.  
Use SSPJ Parish Code: NY232*

## Sacraments and Sacramentals

### SACRAMENTAL RECORDS

To request a copy of your certificate of Baptism, Marriage, First Holy Communion, or Confirmation please call the rectory.

### OCIA

For adults looking to become Catholic or receive Confirmation, please call the rectory to ask about our OCIA program.



### BAPTISM

Celebrated twice per month. Parents are asked to contact the rectory for a Pre-Baptism Program.

### RECONCILIATION

Available Saturdays from 4 - 5 pm in the Church or by contacting the rectory for an appointment.

### ANOINTING OF THE SICK

In case of serious, unexpected illness, please contact the rectory to arrange for a Priest to pray with the person who is ill.



### FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION

For First Holy Communion, second grade students are prepared to celebrate through Religious Ed or SSPJ School. For Confirmation, seventh and eighth grade students are prepared to celebrate through Religious Ed or SSPJ School. Adults prepare for both sacraments through OCIA.

### 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.

## Please Remember Those Who Serve For Us In Your Prayers



LCDR Megan M. Shutka-Vik -USN | CAPT Wilson Marks -USN | CPT Michael T. Dolan Jr. -D.O, ARMY  
 Sgt Cory O'hara -USMC | Lt Col John Kaires | SGM Michael P. Borrelli -ARMY  
 CAPT John Tully -USN | LTC James Tully -ARMY | Joseph Saggio -USNC | Richard Sotomayer -USAF  
 SSgt Michael Longhenry | Lt Col Paul T. Jackson | SSgt Alexander Parrella -USAF  
 Christopher A. Hionidis -USAF | Sgt Connor F. Scott -USMC | PFC Charles Christopher Howell  
 Hank Moloney -USAF | Steven Cava -USN | Emmett Moloney -USN | CW2 Natasha Wortman  
 LT Kyle Melvin -USN | LT Jillian Melvin -USN | Cpl James T. Casey -USMC | Glen Crima -ARMY  
 SGT Joshua Mahoney -ARMY | Spc Nicole A. Cannon | 2LT Dillon Reynolds -USAF  
 Private Joshua Olsen -USARNG | Mario Catania -USMC | Cpl Larissa Dorrian -USMC  
 Ryan Anthony Nascimento -USMC | Kyle Anthony Nascimento -ARMY | ENS Ryan M. Shows -USN  
 SSgt. Ryan Rexrode -USMC | Dr. Kara Vandekieft, Col -USAF | Sgt Stephen D. Outcault -USMC  
 Paul Mumolo -USN | Victoria Zeman -USCG | Kyle J. Gruner -ARMY | Mark Giordano -USCG  
 Lt Kelli McLaughlin -USANG | 1LT Michael J Bang -Military Intelligence ARMY | Richard Wulforst, III -USA ANG  
 Captain Paul Willms Kevin Jones -USCG | Michael Hionidis -USMC | Elizabeth C. Oliver -QM 2<sup>ND</sup> Class SW USN  
 CW2 Chris Munz | Carl Josephson -USAF | Daniel Josephson -USAF | Samantha Josephson -USAF  
 MIDN Erin Nicastro -USNA | MLDN Kate Nicastro -USNA | Justene Patch -2<sup>ND</sup> Class USN  
 Matthew Patrick Gallagher -ARMY | LT Commander Christopher Shank MD | Eric Seelin -USMC  
 2LT James A Koester -ARMY | Maj Brendan Johnston -USAF | Lt Connor Toomey -USMC  
 Dakota Barnett -2<sup>ND</sup> Class USN | Erin Morpheyy -2<sup>ND</sup> Class USN | Peter Fortunato -QM 2<sup>nd</sup> Class USN



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## A Letter from Rev. Dennis Gannon

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On June 8th, I had my one year anniversary as a priest. With the Feast Day of St. John Vianney, the patron saint of parish priests, just having past on August 4th, I reflect on this year gone by. The two things that come to mind right away are how quickly the year went by, and just how much I love being a priest.

Something I have been asked recently is “Can you believe you have been a priest for more than a year already?”, to which my answer as honestly been, “No, I cannot”. I know that people always say time flies when you are having fun, but I really do feel like I blinked, and it was already July 2025. I suppose between my parish ministry, my working with the school, and helping occasionally at Stony Brook University, I always had plenty to do, but it never felt burdensome or difficult. Looking back through the year, there were so many moments of joy and learning, and while the year went quickly, it was a year I loved.

I don’t think, even in my expectations in seminary, I could have understood just how much I love the priesthood before being a priest. Being able to say the sacraments is a gift beyond words. Confecting the Eucharist in Mass, saying the prayer of Absolution in Confession, anointing someone in Last Rites, it is an incredibly humbling and beautiful thing. Even the simply being called “Father”, something I waited 9 years for, is a privilege I treasure. When I am called to a home or hospital to anoint someone, I am not being called because I am Dennis Gannon. I am being called because I am a priest, a priest of Jesus Christ. And that is something I am grateful for each and every day.

The priesthood is the greatest gift God has ever given me. The same gift He gave to Fr. Sean, Fr. Martin, St. John Vianney, and the countless priests throughout the history of the Church. It is a gift that I treasure, and a gift I am so happy to be able to live here at SSPJ. In the spirit of St. John Vianney’s feast, I ask for your prayers for myself and for all priests, as well as for any man who is called to the priesthood. May He continue to bless His priests, and may He continue to bless us here at SSPJ.

In Christ,  
Father Dennis

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**SS. Philip & James Adoration**

“Could You Not Keep Watch with Me for One Hour?” (Matthew 26:40)

**Monday’s 1PM – 7PM**

<https://stsphilipjames.weadorehim.com/en/signup>

EUCCHARISTIC  
*Adoration*



If you would like to serve as a weekly Adorer for Monday Exposition,  
you can sign up by scanning the QR code above,  
contacting an Adoration Coordinator or by visiting:

<https://stsphilipjames.weadorehim.com/en/signup>

**Adoration Coordinator’s**

Bill Toscano – 631-312-2172

Sarolta Toscano – 646-287-0661

**Email:** [stsphilipjames@sites.weadorehim.com](mailto:stsphilipjames@sites.weadorehim.com)

SS. Philip and James Catholic Parish

One Carow Place

St. James, New York 11780

# Altar Memorials, Prayer Intentions, Mass Intentions and Schedule

Please contact the rectory at (631) 584-5454 to request a memorial.



## WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF PRAYER

Please contact the Office of Parish Social Ministry, (631) 584-5454, to include the name of a brother or sister in need of prayer.

Louis Fabiano, Maria Lee, Margaret Remhild, Samya Salama, Barbara Hobbes, Michael Mattia, Michael Scorca, Grayson Danielski, Ann Marie, Amanda Rose Critella, Amanda Cacoperdo, Carmela Montesano, Donna Fabrizio, David Beleck, Brittany Lundberg, Ed Ceraso, Edward Luna, Jessie Lokai, John V Leone, Kathleen Martin, Kerry Larry, Mia Mednick, Patrice Henry, Rob Remhild, Ronnie Reichert, Stephanie Seban, Tonia Perdue, Joan Cooper, Tim Tippet, Madeline Kelley, Diane Toto, Phillip Giarrupeto, Judy Hanrahan, Patricia Schecher, Nora Danko, Joanna Szymanski, Luke Salvatore Montesano, Anthony D'Angelis, Katie Hobbes, Leon Donach, Paul Robertelli, Donna Belulloovich, Theresa Quinn, Janet Ocasio, Stephanie Eagle, Baby Brooks, Anna Marie, Matthew Cooke, Brian Stewart, Sheila Eith, Samantha Misurda, John Vincent Leone, Roger, Thomas Brick, Mariella Rooney, Bella Rigogliosi, Rob Remhild

<b>Saturday, August 9th</b>	Reconciliation 4:00-5:00pm Lector: Lombardi/Tomasino EMs: Mantia/Byrne/Licari/Drechsler/Suski	9:15am 5:00pm	Tom Focone Suzanne Orlando
<b>Sunday, August 10th</b>	Lector: Dervan/Koke EMs: Kenney/Czujko/Schne/Tully/Tully  Lector: Cullen/Cassidy EMs: Napolitano/Conti/Parish/Mulhall/Orlando/Consenz  Lector: Just/Doran EMs: Stack/Samson/Margaret/Chilton	8:00am 10:00am 12:00pm	For the People of the Parish  Maria Fazio <u>Collective Mass</u> Michael Colletta, Rita Stasiak, Delores Zandler and Olivia Remhild & Family (Living)
<b>Monday, August 11th</b>	Adoration 1:00-7:00pm In the Church	7:30am 9:15am	Kathy & Tommy McGrath Gaspare Joseph Messina
<b>Tuesday, August 12th</b>		7:30am 9:15am	Joan Cooper Arthur Byrns
<b>Wednesday, August 13th</b>		7:30am 9:15am	Kathy & Tommy McGrath John DeLorenzo
<b>Thursday, August 14th</b>		7:30am 9:15am 5:00pm	All Souls in Purgatory Thelma Lettieri and Susan Renda Vito & Mary Stangarone
<b>Friday, August 15th</b>	Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Holy Day of Obligation	7:30am 9:15am 7:00pm	Margaret & Michael Walsh Patricia Tobin John DeLorenzo
<b>Saturday, August 16th</b>	Reconciliation 4:00-5:00pm Lector: Smith/Healy EMs: Damato/Mantia/Sisti/Drechsler/Ruggieri	9:15am 5:00pm	Lois Gorham Kenneth Maher Jr.
<b>Sunday, August 17th</b>	Lector: Czujko/Carey EMs: Koke/Portanova/Ramos/Schne/Tully  Lector: Luna/Dias EMs: Calderone/Luna/Lombardi/Mulhall/Orlando/Sotomayer Lector: Kenton/Rubano EMs: Rubano/Settinieri/Consenz/Rubano	8:00am 10:00am 12:00pm	For the People of the Parish  Alfred Fox <u>Collective Mass</u> Patty Tobin, Michael Colletta, Leonard J. Henderson, Remhild Family (Living)

# Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

August 15, 2025.  
Holy Day of Obligation

August 14, 2025	August 15, 2025
5:00 PM	7:30 AM
	9:15 AM
	7:00 PM



## Music Ministry

### WEEKLY REFLECTION FROM MUSIC DIRECTOR MARGARET ADAMS

This week we find stars and sand in the theme. Stars are infinite, beautiful, and give off light. Sand, also infinite. We follow Jesus daily. Our music this weekend tells that God's love for us is endless, like the stars and sand. We need to open our eyes to see, ears to hear His love.

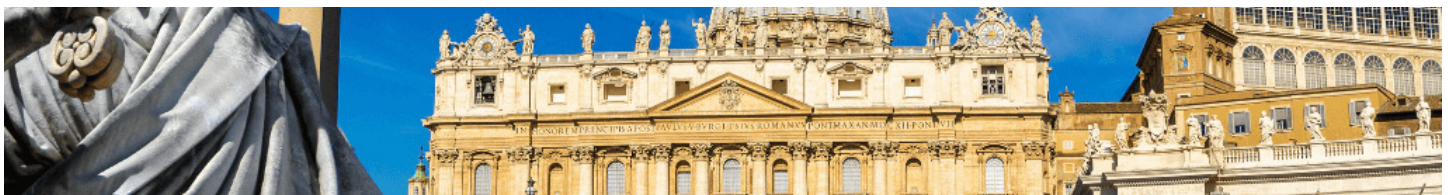
August 15, Friday is the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Our songs center around Mary. Sing loud and strong for our Lady!

Think about the choir!! Adult and teen singers only at this time. Please consider and join.

Sing your praise to God!!

## Calling All Pilgrims!

Msgr. Brian McNamara, along with Fr. Louis Cona, is hosting a pilgrimage to Rome/Loreto/Cascia/Orvieto and Assisi from November 3 to November 12, 2025, during the Jubilee year. We will see Pope Leo XIV at the General Audience and visit the main shrines and basilicas, with daily Masses at the shrines and basilicas as well. For more information, check the St. Patrick (Smithtown) bulletin OR check the pilgrimage website: [www.206tours.com/msgmcmnamara/jubilee](http://www.206tours.com/msgmcmnamara/jubilee).





## Parish Social Ministry

### WE REMEMBER, ALL THOSE WHO ARE SAFELY HOME IN THE ARMS OF JESUS

Please contact the Office of Parish Social Ministry, (631) 584-5454, to include the name of a brother or sister.

### BOOK KIOSK NEWS

**If you write a check for a book, please make sure you put the name of the book on the message line of the check!** If you have already submitted a check, please place your name on a piece of paper (from the note pad) with the name of the book you purchased and slide it into the payment slot. Check out our books on the lives of the patron saints of mothers and grandmothers. More books are coming soon!

### LAUDATO SI

Ecological conversion is not just about caring for the environment, it's about letting our faith reshape how we live.

### THE RESPECT LIFE COMMITTEE

*The Respect Life Committee invites all to join us in praying the Rosary at 8 AM, M-F, in the prayer room of the Church.*

This month we celebrate the time when Our Lady was welcomed body and soul into heaven amidst the acclaims of the angels and the saints! Won't you join us on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15, seeking Our Lady's intercession for all our needs? We will meet at 8AM at the Bernadette Grotto, weather permitting, otherwise in the prayer room of the Church.



## 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**

### OUR FOOD PANTRY NEEDS:

Canned Tuna in Water

### SENIORS

The next meeting of the Seniors will be on Monday, August 11, 2025 in the Sts. Philip & James Room, from 1:30 - 3:30pm. You are welcome to join us for an afternoon of faith, friendship, and fun.

### SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Once again, it is time for our school supplies collection. We have children in our community in need of teacher mandated items. If you can help, kindly take a school supply card from the baskets in the back of the Church. You may return your **UNWRAPPED** donation, along with the card to the parish office during the week, or place in the St. Anthony's Bread closet in the back of the Church. Monetary donations are also gratefully accepted. As always, thank you for all you do! **Our school supply collection will be ending on August 22. This is to allow time for sorting, packing backpacks, and distributing them before school starts.**

### HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS: You are never alone

AA 24 Hour Hotline	(631) 669-1124
Al-Anon	(631) 669-2827
Birthingright	(631) 821-9727
Child Abuse	(800) 342-3720
Dept. of Social Services	(631) 854-2300
Domestic Violence	
-Brighter Tomorrow	(631) 395-1800
-Vibes	(631) 360-3607
-The Retreat	(631) 329-2200
LI Against Domestic Violence	(631) 666-8833
Elder Abuse	(631) 761-7470
Food Stamps	(631) 789-9546
Gamblers Anonymous	(855) 222-5542
Good Shepherd Hospice	(631) 376-3758
Mental Health Emergency	(631) 952-3333
Narcotics Anonymous	(631) 689-6262
Nassau/Suffolk Law	(631) 232-2400
Poison Control	(516) 542-2323
Hope House	(631) 473-6030
Office for the Aging	(631) 853-8200
Overeaters Anonymous	(631) 260-6615
Rachel's Hope-Post Abortion	(888) 456-4673
	(631) 751-7500
Suicide Hotline (Services in English and Spanish)	
Catholic Charities Mental Health Clinics:	
Medford	(631) 654-1919
Bay Shore	(631) 665-6707

NYS Catholic Conference



# Stop Physician-Assisted Suicide in New York

**New York is on the brink of legalizing physician-assisted suicide. Bill A136 has already passed the Senate and Assembly. The only thing standing in its way is Governor Hochul's veto – and she needs to hear from you.**

This bill would allow doctors to prescribe lethal medication with the sole purpose of ending a patient's life. It puts the most vulnerable among us – the elderly, people with disabilities, and those facing emotional or financial despair – at even greater risk. **Suicide is not healthcare.**

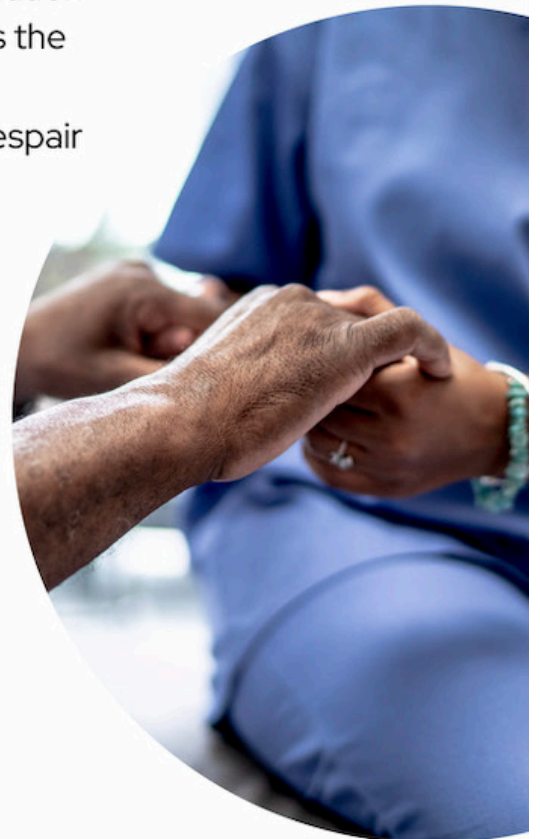
**We must speak out to protect the dignity of every human life.** Assisted suicide is a dangerous and deadly path – one we must not go down.

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## Take Action!



Contact the Governor's office now to oppose this deadly practice! Visit [bit.ly/veto-pas](https://bit.ly/veto-pas) or use the QR code.



*The New York State Catholic Conference represents the Bishops of New York State in public policy matters.*  
www.nyscatholic.org • 518-434-6195 • info@nyscatholic.org

## TELL A NEIGHBOR - TELL A FRIEND

### OCIA PROGRAM STARTS IN SEPTEMBER

The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (formerly RCIA) is the process by which adults are gradually introduced to the Catholic faith and sacramental life.

This process is intended for:

- **Unbaptized adults who seek to receive the Sacraments of Initiation:**

**Baptism, Confirmation, and the Holy Eucharist.**

- **Baptized non-Catholic Christians, who desire to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church.**

- **Baptized Catholics, who have not yet completed their sacraments of initiation (Confirmation and/or First Holy Communion).**

Here at Saints Philip and James, the OCIA process begins in September and culminates at the Easter Vigil on April 4, 2026. If you know anyone —be it a neighbor, a friend, or a family member—who may be interested in this process, please share the program with them and ask them to **call the Parish Center at 631-584-5454** for more information. You may be doing them the greatest favor they have ever received.



FATHER SEAN BAPTIZING  
KATIE KIRK  
AT THE EASTER VIGIL  
2025.



THE OCIA CANDIDATES AND  
THEIR SPONSORS AT THE  
EASTER VIGIL 2025



FATHER SEAN  
ADMINISTERING  
CONFIRMATION TO  
SUSAN CORWIN  
AT THE EASTER VIGIL 2025



# SSPJ Youth Group



**ON WEDNESDAY JULY 16<sup>TH</sup> WE HAD OUR FIRST SUMMER FAITH AND SPORTS NIGHT.**

**OUR NEXT FAITH AND SPORTS NIGHT WILL BE ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20<sup>TH</sup> FROM 7:00PM-8:30PM.**

**ALL 7<sup>TH</sup> -10<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.**



# BLAISE

## NORTH SHORE YOUNG ADULT CATHOLICS

COMMUNITY, PRAYER, AND EDUCATION  
FOR YOUNG ADULTS 21+

SCAN TO VIEW OUR  
UPCOMING EVENTS



CONTACT US:  
BLAISECATHOLICS@GMAIL.COM

VIEW OUR EVENTS:  
[HTTPS://LU.MA/CALENDAR/CAL-  
U6NKDHATL2NWAB](https://lu.ma/calendar/cal-u6nkdhatl2nwab)





# OPERATION ANDREW

An evening of prayer, fellowship,  
and discernment for men (18+),  
with **evening prayer and dinner.**

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**AUGUST 20, 2025**

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**BEGINS AT 6:00 PM**

**LOCATION:**

**The Cathedral of St. Agnes**

*in* ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NY



**TO REGISTER**

Please visit:

**[drvcvocations.com/andrew](https://drvcvocations.com/andrew)**





# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Registration is now open for the  
2025-2026 Religious Education year!

In order to register please go to our website – [www.sspj.org](http://www.sspj.org) and look for Religious Education on the top bar. Click on that and “**Registration**” will be the first choice. Please read the “**Registration Checklist**” first as it lists all the forms that must be filled out. For payment, there is a direct link to Faith Direct.

Religion Books for the 2025-26 calendar year will be distributed for grades 1-7 on the following dates:

**August 13: from 9 am – 12 pm, in the Bethany Center**

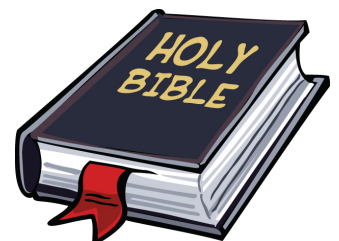
**August 14: from 2 pm – 5 pm, in the Bethany Center**

**August 19: from 5 pm – 7 pm, in the Bethany Center**

All returning 8th graders should already have their Decision Point books! Looking forward to seeing everyone!



## PLEASE REGISTER EARLY!!



# *No One's Alone*

**Our Community Commitment To You Is  
That No One Feels That They Are Alone**

If you are an individual who lives alone without local family or friends to support your well being, we would like to hear from you!

**Our New Ministry** is all about sharing our Christian love by making a weekly phone call to reach out to you and check on your well-being. Life Alert Systems are greatly encouraged. However, loneliness, not feeling needed adds to accidents. A friendly weekly call will give you something to look forward to, and we want to do just that!

**Sign up now** by filling out the attached form, and place it in the collection basket, bring the completed form to our office, or call Parish Social Ministry. It's as simple as that, and you will receive a weekly call to brighten your day!

## *Release Form*

No One's Alone Ministry:

In signing this form, I am asking for a member of my church community to call me to check on my well-being and/or visit me with a house call either to check on my well-being and/or bring me communion.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name & Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature for phone call or house visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# SERVING MOMS IN NEED

## LIVING THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

On March 25, 2020, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, the Church celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the papal encyclical *Evangelium vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*). This prophetic document, written by a great saint of our time, Pope John Paul II, reaffirmed the Church's constant teaching on the value and inviolability of every human life.

In this encyclical, the Holy Father explains that the Gospel of Life is at the *heart* of Jesus' saving message to the world. Through the Incarnation of Christ, God reveals to us the dignity of all human life. Each of us is made in the image and likeness of God, reflecting his glory and his imprint. We are therefore called to "respect, defend and promote the dignity of every human person, at every moment and in every condition of that person's life."<sup>1</sup>

*Evangelium vitae* highlights the special and particular role of women in bearing the gift of life to the world. Pope John Paul II offers heartfelt thanks to these "heroic mothers," who, placing their trust in God, "devote themselves to their own family without reserve, who suffer in giving birth to their children and who are ready to make any effort, to face any sacrifice, in order to pass on to them the best of themselves."<sup>2</sup>

Pope John Paul II also outlines the many challenges that expectant mothers may face, including lack of support from the father, financial strains, concerns about her own health or that of her child, and pressures from family and friends. The Holy Father recognizes that an "unborn child is totally entrusted to the protection and care of the woman carrying him or her in the womb."<sup>3</sup> For this reason,

it is particularly important that the Church come alongside mothers, offering them encouragement, assistance, and support.

Through Christ, we have received the gift of the Gospel of Life in its fullness. As members of the Church, we are the *people of life and for life*. It is our duty to proclaim the truth of the Gospel of Life to the world, for "to proclaim Jesus is itself to proclaim life."<sup>4</sup> Pope John Paul II tasked us with building a culture of life to combat the forces at work in the culture of death. He challenged us:

**With great openness and courage, we need to question how widespread is the culture of life today among individual Christians, families, groups and communities in our Dioceses. With equal clarity and determination we must identify the steps we are called to take in order to serve life in all its truth.<sup>5</sup>**

In honor of *Evangelium vitae*'s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and in answer to Pope John Paul II's call, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Pro-Life Activities launched a nationwide effort entitled, ***Walking with Moms in Need***. Parishes, through the support of their bishops and pastors, are invited to join this effort to increase the Church's outreach and support to pregnant women facing difficult or unexpected pregnancies. This special anniversary has provided the Church with an opportunity to assess, expand, and better communicate resources to pregnant moms and families in need.

Pregnant and parenting moms in need are in our parishes and our neighborhoods, but in



desperation, they are turning to other places for help. We know the needs and challenges can be immense for women in difficult pregnancies, especially women in poverty, and the sources for help may not be apparent to those most needing support. Women facing challenging pregnancies should see the Church as a place where they can find help, especially with its extensive social services dedicated to meeting the needs of people in crisis.

Through *Walking with Moms in Need* the Church is being asked to respond to Pope John Paul II's call and honestly assess the pastoral and practical assistance that it currently provides to pregnant moms and families in need and how effective it is in communicating such help.

Pope John Paul II wrote that,

**"gratitude and joy at the incomparable dignity of man impel us to share [the Gospel of Life] with everyone."**<sup>6</sup>

He said we need to bring this message "to the hearts of all people and make it penetrate every part of society."<sup>7</sup> By reaching out to lovingly support and care for pregnant women and their children, we witness to the sanctity of every human person, in every stage and every circumstance.

*Evangelium vitae* emphasizes that, "where

life is involved, the service of charity must be profoundly consistent. It cannot tolerate bias and discrimination, for human life is sacred and inviolable... We need then to 'show care' for all life and for the life of everyone."<sup>8</sup> Pope John Paul II highlights the incredible history of service and charity that the Church has provided throughout the centuries to those abandoned and forgotten by society. He urges that "every Christian community, with a renewed sense of responsibility, must continue to write this history."<sup>9</sup>

We are called to reverence and love every human person as ourselves. It is our responsibility to care for and protect human life, especially the lives of the most vulnerable among us. *Evangelium vitae* teaches us that "the task of accepting and serving life involves everyone; and this task must be fulfilled above all towards life when it is at its weakest."<sup>10</sup>

Pope John Paul II wrote, "the Gospel of God's love for man, the Gospel of the dignity of the person and the Gospel of life are a single and indivisible Gospel."<sup>11</sup> The Gospel of Jesus is the Gospel of Life, and to love Jesus is to love and serve life. As followers of Christ, may we strive to continually respond to the needs of the poor and vulnerable entrusted to us by God.

As part of *Walking with Moms in Need*, the USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities is providing educational, pastoral, and action-oriented resources to help parishes go to the peripheries and bring hope and help to mothers in need. Through the combined efforts of parishes nationwide, we hope to move closer to the day when every pregnant mother in need knows where to turn for help, and abortion is unthinkable. Visit [WalkingWithMoms.com](https://WalkingWithMoms.com) to learn more and to pledge to prayerfully walk with mothers in need.

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1 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995), 81.

2 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 86.

3 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 58.

4 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 80.

5 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 95.

6 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 80.

7 *Ibid.*

8 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 87.

9 *Ibid.*

10 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 43.

11 Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 2.



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## Gospel Reflection

### Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year C

August 17, 2025

**Gospel - Luke 12: 49-53**

**A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke**

Jesus said to his disciples:

"I have come to set the earth on fire,  
and how I wish it were already blazing!  
There is a baptism with which I must be baptized,  
and how great is my anguish until it is accomplished!  
Do you think that I have come to establish peace on the earth?  
No, I tell you, but rather division.  
From now on a household of five will be divided,  
three against two and two against three;  
a father will be divided against his son  
and a son against his father,  
a mother against her daughter  
and a daughter against her mother,  
a mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law  
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

#### **Gospel Reflection Process**

- ◆ **Pray** a simple prayer to the Holy Spirit: "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening."
- ◆ **Read** the passage slowly. As you listen, ask in silence, "Lord, what are you saying to me in this passage?"
- ◆ **Listen** for a word or phrase that calls your attention or touches your heart.
- ◆ **Share** a brief story or experience of how the word or phrase connects to your life at this moment.
- ◆ **Ask** in silence, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" Share what Jesus is inviting you to do.